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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 28, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April as National Donate Life Month.

As the co-chair of the Congressional Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Caucus, I believe it is important to help people understand that, while organ and tissue donation is serious, just like any other medical or surgical procedure, there are many misconceptions and myths surrounding the donor process, and it is important that we educate the public about them.

Technology today allows us to do amazing things in the donation of organs and tissues, and new drugs have advanced the opportunity to ensure that these organs, these tissues, are not rejected.

My hope today, as a member of the caucus, is to encourage Americans to get educated and understand the dire need for tissue and organ donations. This is an opportunity to save lives.

Sadly, there are over 120,000 men, women, and children who are on waiting lists for lifesaving organ donations around the country. For these patients, an organ donation simply is a matter of life and death.

I would like to commend the organizations that raise awareness and that are on the front lines about these important issues every single day throughout our country.

I would like to thank the National Kidney Foundation and the American Liver Foundation for their efforts to raise awareness, support patients, and support funding for advancements in this field. They are always trying to advance the opportunities for lifesaving organs that will make a difference in our communities throughout the Nation.

SUPPORTING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced House Concurrent Resolution 129 along with my south Florida colleague and friend, Congressman TED DEUTCH, urging Germany to honor its commitments and moral obligations to Holocaust survivors by providing for their unmet needs.

There are an estimated half-million survivors worldwide, about a quarter of whom live here in the United States. Nearly 15,000 survivors call the great State of Florida home, and I am proud to represent so many of them in my south Florida district.

But the sad reality and, really, humanity's great shame is that about half of all Holocaust survivors live at or below the poverty line. Tens of thousands of survivors, if not more, are suffering without basic, life-sustaining services and care that they need in their advanced years.

Many live alone or without family support and lack the funds for home care, from medicine to hearing aids, to food, to utilities, to rent.

What a tragedy, Mr. Speaker, that so many Holocaust survivors are unable to maintain even a modest and dignified standard of living.

These individuals have suffered for nearly three-quarters of a century from the physical and emotional scars that they have endured and carry with them to this very day. They have lived through the torture, the experiments, the labor camps, the loss of loved ones, and even the murder of their entire families.

Because of all of this, Holocaust survivors' needs are unique. They are more extensive and more complex than the needs of other elderly individuals.

The time for justice, Mr. Speaker, is now. The time for action is now because there may not be a next year or even a next month for many of these Holocaust survivors.

That is why the German Government must honor Chancellor Adenauer's pledge from 1951, that Germany would take care of all of the needs of every survivor. That is why this resolution is so important, because time is of the essence.

But it is not as though our friends in Germany have done nothing to fulfill this pledge. The German Government has over the years provided some support through income assistance programs and has sought ways to improve and address the needs of the survivors.

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Germany has even doubled its funding for home care services in the past 5 years, but that, unfortunately, does not match the reality of what is required.

The German Ministry of Finance itself has admitted that the level of care financed by its government has been vastly insufficient to date, especially for those who are in dire need of intensive, long-term care.

The real issue of concern, one that is exacerbating the severe lack of funding and one where I think we can press the German Government and work with it to find a fair solution, is the inconsistent manner in which existing funding and care is being disbursed.

The current system places an undue burden on the Holocaust survivors and their families, forcing them to jump through bureaucratic red tape, causing harmful delays and waste.

This resolution is a simple one. It is straightforward. It is noncontroversial. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Congress is in a unique position to work for and fight on behalf of Holocaust survivors, many of whom are our constituents. We have a long history of working on behalf of Holocaust survivors and seeking out their long-overdue justice.

Next Wednesday, May 4, is Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. As we remember and honor the victims and survivors of the Holocaust, we are all compelled to do everything in our power to help those who have lived through those unconscionable atrocities.

These survivors, Mr. Speaker, have seen the worst that humanity has to offer. Let us show them now the best of humanity by ensuring that they can, indeed, live out their days in dignity.

FLOOD INSURANCE MARKET PARITY AND MODERNIZATION ACT

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2901, the Flood Insurance Market Parity and Modernization Act. I am a proud cosponsor of this bipartisan bill, which represents a positive step towards much-needed flood insurance reform.

This legislation provides clarity to States and private insurers and, in doing so, clears the way for competitive firms to play a much greater role in the flood insurance market.

For my constituents back home, the 705,000 western Pennsylvanians who sent me to Washington to look out for their interests, this means more choices, more competitive rates, and more innovation. Passing this legislation would be a win for western Pennsylvanians eager for change.

Although some tend to think of flood insurance as a concern for coastal States like Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, many Pennsylvanians are closely monitoring the ongoing debate about the future of flood insurance.

Many of my constituents live alongside rivers and streams and in valleys with a history of flooding. My district is also home to many older cities and towns like Johnstown that are filled with properties that predate the National Flood Insurance Program. People have lived in these places for generations and have a deep sense of community.

Rightly, my constituents who live in these flood-prone areas worry about the future availability of affordable flood insurance options in the marketplace. They want to remain in their homes, in the places where multiple generations of their families have lived and worked and built lasting connections with their neighbors.

My constituents need access to affordable flood insurance. As this debate continues over the next year, I will make sure that their concerns are addressed.

H.R. 2901 is a strong step in the right direction as we seek to reform Federal flood insurance policy.

I hope that H.R. 2901 will receive the same broad, bipartisan support it received in the Financial Services Committee when it comes up for a vote later today.

I look forward to working with my colleagues at the committee and on both sides of the aisle as work continues on flood insurance reform.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORMAN F. KYLE

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Norman Kyle, an Aliquippa native who passed away at the age of 95 this past Sunday, for his brave service to our Nation.

Norman served as a U.S. Army infantryman during World War II and, after being captured by the Nazis, was a POW for over 700 days.

He was born on August 24, 1920, in Aliquippa and was retired from J&L Steel Corp., where he worked for more than 40 years. Norman was a John Wayne fan, and he collected more than 100 trains.

In addition to his parents, Norman and Sadie Kyle, he was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth Kyle, two sons, Robert and Kenneth Kyle, and a grandson, John Scheeler, Jr.

Norman is survived by his 3 daughters, 9 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and 5 great-great-grandchildren.

It was men like Norman Kyle who made their generation great and who were a big part of making this country the leader of the world. His life, legacy, and service will not be forgotten.

''I AM JAZZ''

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, all across the country today, teachers, librarians, and parents will be reading the book ''I Am Jazz,'' a children's book about transgender youth, co-written by Jazz Jennings, pictured here, and Jessica Herthel.

Last year, legal threats from the anti-LGBTQ hate group forced a school in Wisconsin to cancel plans to read this book to support a transgender student. The local community rallied, holding a reading at the library that drew more than 600 attendees in support of the student.

Now this is a movement, with readings across the country to increase understanding and to show young people that they are welcomed and loved.

I am proud to join these readers today from the House floor. Now I am going to read this book, ''I Am Jazz.''

I am Jazz. For as long as I can remember, my favorite color has been pink. My second favorite color is silver, and my third favorite color is green.

Here are some of my other favorite things: dancing, singing, back flips, drawing, soccer, swimming, makeup, and pretending I'm a pop star.

Most of all, I love mermaids. Sometimes I even wear a mermaid tail into the pool.

My best friends are Samantha and Casey. We always have fun together. We like high heels and princess gowns or cartwheels and trampolines.

But I am not exactly like Samantha and Casey. I have a girl's brain, but a boy body. This is called transgender. I was born this way.

When I was very little and my mom would say, ''You're such a good boy,'' I would say, ''No, mama. Good girl.''

□ 1015

At first, my family was confused. They always thought of me as a boy. As I got a little older, I hardly ever played with trucks or tools or superheroes, only princesses and mermaid costumes. My brothers told me that that was girl stuff. I kept right on playing.

My sister says I was always talking to her about my girl thoughts and my girl dreams and how one day I would be a beautiful lady. She would giggle and say, ''You are a funny kid.''

Sometimes my parents let me wear my sister's dresses around the house, but whenever we went out, I had to put on my boy clothes again. That made me mad. Still, I never gave up trying to convince them. Pretending I was a boy felt like telling a lie.

Then one amazing day, everything changed. Mom and dad took me to meet a new doctor who asked me lots and lots of questions. Afterwards, the doctor spoke to my parents, and I heard the word ''transgender'' for the very first time. That night at bedtime, my parents both hugged me and said, ''We understand now. Be who you are. We love you no matter what.''

That made me smile and smile and smile. Mom and dad told me I could start wearing girl clothes to school and growing my hair long. They even let me change my name to Jazz. Being Jazz felt much more like being me. Mom said that being Jazz would make me different from the other kids in school, but that being different is okay. ''What is important,'' she said, ''is that I am happy with who I am.''

Being Jazz caused some other people to be confused, too, like the teachers at school. At the beginning of school, they wanted me to use the boys' bathroom and play in the boys' gym class, but that didn't make me feel normal at all.

I was so happy when the teachers changed their minds. I can't imagine not playing on

the same team with Casey and Samantha. Even today there are kids who tease me or call me by a boy's name or ignore me altogether. This makes me feel crummy. Then I remember that the kids who get to know me usually want to be my friend. They say that I am one of the nicest girls in school.

I don't mind being different. Different is special. I think what matters most is what a person is like inside. And inside, I am happy. I am having fun. I am proud. I am Jazz.

PENN STATE'S CONTRIBUTION TO CYBER AND DIGITAL MANUFACTURING

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am very excited to be on the floor this morning to talk about digital manufacturing and how that impacts the things that we make. This is a quantum leap in manufacturing: allowing objects to be rapidly printed and, in the case of cyber manufacturing, printed remotely.

Since 2009, I have proudly represented Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which is the largest geographically in the Commonwealth. It is also the home to Penn State University's main campus in State College, Pennsylvania, as well as to the Behrend campus in Erie County, and the DuBois campus in Clearfield County.

Over my time in Congress, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand how the university is leading in the field of digital manufacturing in areas that range from 3D bioprinting to cyber manufacturing—robotics and automation.

Portions of the Fifth Congressional District have a long history in the powdered metal industry. In fact, St. Mary's in Elk County, as well as in Cameron County, an adjoining county, have been known for years as the powdered metal capital of the world. A few months ago, I visited Penn State to take a look at their work in the field of additive metal manufacturing, which takes place in the university's applied research laboratory CIMP–3D lab. It was amazing to watch metal parts be created using what amounts to a 3D printer, and it is easy to see how this new technology will revolutionize careers in the powdered metal industry, which has meant so much to our region.

In the same vein, I have been so impressed with the university's efforts in hosting an additive manufacturing challenge for small businesses. The challenge will award five companies $40,000 to work with faculty and staff at Penn State CIMP–3D on projects to demonstrate this amazing technology.

Mr. Speaker, beyond the dividends that these new innovations are paying for the industries which drive America's economy, this research is also benefiting our national defense. Penn State is currently working with the United States Naval Air Systems Command to 3D-print, -qualify, and -certify a critical safety item—in other words, an important part of a Department of Defense vehicle—in titanium. This part will be flown in an aircraft next month and will be the first 3D-printed part to have gone through the entire process to become flight certified and tested in the military.

Now, I commend the pioneers of this exciting new technology from universities such as my alma mater, Penn State, but also universities such as Georgia Tech and Virginia Tech, along with companies such as the aircraft engine manufacturer, Pratt & Whitney, in helping students prepare for what are certainly the careers of the future.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus, I spend a lot of time visiting schools, visiting our high schools, secondary schools, and post-secondary schools that are providing training to greater opportunity. It is exciting to go into specifically high schools and see where this digital manufacturing—this additive manufacturing using the 3D printers and various types of materials—is now present in our high schools.

I appreciate the partnership that Penn State has had working with not just business and industry, but the collaborative work with our high schools to begin to introduce and to grow this new innovation in manufacturing and to introduce this to young learners, many of whom, I believe, are going to go on and will find great family-sustaining jobs through that type of career and technical education training, being exposed to the very newest form of innovation for manufacturing.

Some of them will go on to work for businesses and industries. Who knows? Some of them will become entrepreneurs and return to a day of cottage industries. Some of our most amazing discoveries have happened in basements, garages, and spare bedrooms where entrepreneurs have developed and invented. With the use of digital manufacturing, a return to cottage industries is, quite frankly, something that I think is going to happen in an overwhelming way as often entrepreneurs take that innovation and are able to do some very specific product development and manufacturing targeting, maybe some specific niche markets.

So I am very excited in how technology relating to career and educational training and information technology, as it relates to digital manufacturing or additive manufacturing, is going to have a very positive impact on our citizens, our families, our businesses, and, quite frankly, the competitiveness of our Nation.

SOLUTION TO FLOODING IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is a common refrain that you, I, and many others are quite familiar with. It is: but for the grace of God, there go I.

This refrain has significant meaning to all of us. I have used this refrain myself. I used it when it came to the East Coast and Sandy, the hurricane. I used it when it came to Flint and lead in the water. I have used it when we had the hurricane visit New Orleans—I am talking about Katrina. And I am using it as it relates to Puerto Rico. But for the grace of God, there go I.

But I will tell you, it takes on an even greater meaning when you become the subject of the refrain.

Mr. Speaker, I rise now because in Houston, Texas, over the last 2 years, we have had significant flooding. Over the last 2 years, in Houston, Texas, we had the Memorial Day flood. That flood created about $3 billion worth of damage. This year, we have had the tax day flood, which created about $5 billion. Combined, the two floods totaled $8 billion in damages.

We have had lives lost in Houston, Texas: four lives estimated for the Memorial Day flood; eight lives for the tax day flood. Lives have been lost.

But for the grace of God, there go I. And I have a greater understanding of what it means because of the way this has impacted the people in my city and in my State.

Mr. Speaker, they are citizens of this country. I come to the floor today with a hue and cry, an appeal that we do something about these circumstances because this will not be the last flood that will take place in Houston, Texas.

There is a possible solution to some of the problems. I don't know that we could ever eliminate all of the flooding problems in Houston, Texas. But I do know that the Corps of Engineers has projects that are already on their docket, on their agenda; and if these projects are properly addressed, we can mitigate a good deal of this flooding.

These projects that the Corps has would cost us about $311 million to complete. One such project is the Brays project. We authorized this in 1990, and we are projected to finish it in 2021.

Mr. Speaker, it didn't take that long to create the Erie Canal. It took us 4 years to complete the Golden Gate Bridge; the Hoover Dam was 5 years; the Erie Canal was 8 years. And it only took us about 8 years—maybe 10, by some estimates—to put a person on the Moon. Surely, we could have completed these projects sooner.

This bill, H.R. 5025, will accord us $311 million to finish these projects so that we can save lives, so that we can save money; and the bill, if properly implemented with the creation of these projects and the completion of them, will also create jobs. More than 6,000 jobs are estimated to be created.

So I come before my colleagues today asking that you kindly sign on to H.R. 5025. It is an opportunity for us to do something to help somebody, to help

those who are in harm's way and will continue to be in harm's way as long as they live in Houston, Texas, one of the great American cities. But I do believe that we can do this.

And while it may not be enough to eliminate all flooding, I live by the basic premise that when there are times in your life when you cannot do enough, when no matter how much you do, you will not do enough, I live by the premise that you do all that you can.

We can do more. We can do something to prevent a good deal of this flooding, save some lives, and create some jobs.

Finally this: I would remind my colleagues that Dr. King was imminently correct when he called to our attention that the truest measure of the person is not where you stand in times of comfort and convenience, but where do you stand in times of challenge and controversy? Challenge and controversy. When you have got cities with lead in the water, when you have got bankruptcy confronting one of that territories that is within our sphere, when you have got a city that is flooding continuously, where do you stand?

This is an opportunity for us to show that we stand with the people who are in need of help.

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

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Lead us this day in Your ways that our Nation might be guided along the roads of peace, justice, and goodwill.

Grant strength and wisdom to our Speaker and the Members of both the people's House and the Senate, to our President and his cabinet, and to our Supreme Court.

Bless as well the moral and military leaders of our country, and may those who are the captains of business, industry, and unions learn to work together toward the mutual benefit of all.

During the contentious times of campaign season, help us all to be our best selves and worthy of the freedoms our constitutional form of government guarantees.

May all that is done within the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

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

CONGRATULATING CHAIRMAN MAC THORNBERRY

(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, from 10 a.m. yesterday until nearly 3 a.m. this morning, the House Committee on Armed Services marked up the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA.

Under the able leadership of Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, the committee diligently executed the most important duty of Congress: to provide for the common defense. This bipartisan legislation strengthens our military and protects American families from new and emerging threats.

Additionally, this legislation fully resources our servicemembers, prioritizes cyber initiatives, and reforms our military healthcare system. The NDAA also stands up for South Carolina by continuing construction for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication facility, MOX, at the Savannah River Site and prohibits the transfer of terrorists from Guantanamo to American soil.

I am grateful to Chairman THORNBERRY, Ranking Member ADAM SMITH, my colleagues on the Committee on Armed Services, and dedicated staff members, especially Kevin Gates, Pete Villano, Neve Schadler, Katherine Sutton, and Lindsay Kavanaugh.

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

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month and in strong support of the Campus Accountability and Safety Act, bipartisan legislation that I authored with Congressman MEEHAN.

Sexual assault is truly a crisis on our college campuses, where a survey last year indicated that 23 percent of female students are victims.

In 2013, we passed the Campus SaVE Act, which I authored. It ensures campuses adopt clear, comprehensive procedures to investigate and report accurate statistics on sexual assault.

But this is not enough. One person becomes a victim of assault every 107 seconds in America. That is over 300,000 a year. Our bill would require a national survey of students to identify key risk factors for sexual assault and evaluate best practices to reduce sexual violence. The bill would also provide resources for victims of sexual assault, including confidential advisers.

These are commonsense reforms that will make a world of difference by keeping our students safer on our college campuses.

FARMERS AIDED BY CROP INSURANCE

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, just last month, prune growers in the Sacramento Valley of California were pretty optimistic about 2016. For the first time in a while, they saw some relief from the drought, and though crop prices were down, the little prunes on the trees gave hope for a healthy harvest with an estimated value of up to $120 million for the year.

Now, just a few weeks later, these same farmers are questioning whether there will even be a harvest following

very rough weather during the critical bloom period. Yet, this is the natural reality of the risks faced by farmers and ranchers.

Before blindly attacking sound agriculture policy, such as crop insurance, I ask my colleagues here to take a close look at what it takes to feed our Nation, especially in a year like this one where farm income is down over 50 percent.

These policies are not meant for the good crop years or in a good harvest. They exist for the terrible crop years.

Mr. Speaker, weather is unpredictable, as are natural disasters and fickle markets. However, we can make sure farmers have access to tools that manage these risks in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Let's not jeopardize this successful and vital program.

ADHERING TO OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, so-called flags of convenience have decimated the U.S. maritime industry to a tiny fraction of its former size. It is a system where owners chase the cheapest, most exploitable labor, and the least regulation around the world.

Now the Department of Transportation under the Obama administration, in its infinite wisdom, wants to bring that system to aviation. Won't that be great when we are all flying in planes with crews coming out of Indonesia or India or somewhere else where they can be exploited, paid less, and maybe have kind of questionable credentials.

Actually, they are issuing pilot certificates in India to people who have never ever flown a plane. That will just be dandy. But, hey, the tickets will be cheap. You might not get there, but you paid less to get on.

This is absolutely absurd. We have the safest and best system of aviation in the world with our proud domestic airlines. Their employees get decent wages, we fly safe, and we want to now go to flags of convenience?

They are ignoring the clear language of the Open Skies Agreement in making this decision. No to the Obama administration.

DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, talk to your neighbors, turn on the local news, and you hear the tragic stories of how opioid abuse is devastating families across the country and in my State of Michigan.

Combating this epidemic requires us to work together to tackle it head on. No effort is too small, and each of us can do our part. One way to help is participating in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, which takes place this Saturday, April 30th. It is an opportunity for citizens to clean out their medicine cabinets of unwanted medications with no questions asked. Safe disposal of expired prescription drugs is an important step to preventing abuse.

Authorized drop-off sites are located all across Michigan's Seventh Congressional District, and I will be stopping by one of those sites, the Jackson Police Department, on Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a Republican or Democrat issue. It is a human issue, and it affects us all.

101ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the Armenian community to commemorate 101 years since the start of the Armenian genocide.

On April 24, 1915, more than 300 Armenian leaders were taken from their homes, arrested, and systematically executed. They were the first killed in what would eventually become a genocide resulting in the deaths of 1.5 million innocent men, women, and children.

Over a century later, the Armenian people have vowed to never forget these atrocities. The children and grandchildren of the genocide's victims have worked hard to remember and honor those who suffered. For too long, this crime has gone unrecognized and unpunished.

This weekend in Los Angeles, California, 60,000 people came together outside of the Turkish consulate to rally for long overdue acknowledgment of their ancestors' murders.

I am proud to be a member of the Congressional Armenian Caucus, and I stand by the Armenian American community in Los Angeles and throughout this country in their call for recognition and justice.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JIMMY HAYLEY

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

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the passing of lifelong Galveston County resident, Jimmy Hayley.

A fixture in our community, Jimmy Hayley was the president and CEO of the Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce for almost 30 years, where he helped foster economic development that brought positive growth to our community.

Jimmy was the model for other chamber leaders in our region. He set the bar for how to run the organization helping businesses around the area grow and become a positive influence in our community.

Not only was Jimmy an amazing family man to his wife, two sons, and seven grandchildren, he was a great mentor and a wonderful friend to so many folks.

While our community has suffered a great loss in the passing of Jimmy Hayley, it is important that we celebrate his life and all the growth and progress during his tenure that will continue in his memory.

My thoughts and prayers are with Jimmy's family and friends during this difficult time. God bless them all.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Deer Lodge, Montana, June 7, 2015:

Arie Arlynn Lee, 37 years old;
Augustine Lee Bournes, 5;
Woodrow Lee Bournes, 4;
Arie Lee Bournes, 1.

Belfair, Washington, February, 26, 2016:

Donna Reed, 68 years old;
Lana Carlson, 49;
Tory Carlson, 18;
Quinn Carlson, 16.

Flour Bluff, Texas, September 14, 2014:

Pamela Kay Rhodes, 63 years old;
Ricky Ray Collier, 56;
Laura Elaine Ogden, 32.

Orange, California, February 19, 2013:

Melvin Edwards, 69 years old;
Jeremy Lewis, 27;
Courtney Aoki, 20.

Menasha, Wisconsin, March 3, 2015:

Jonathan Stoffel, 33 years old;
Adam Bentdahl, 31;
Erin Stoffel, 31;
Olivia Stoffel, 11.

Akron, Ohio, April 18, 2013:

Ronald Roberts, 24 years old.

CONGRATULATING DR. DIANA NATALICIO

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

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary career of Dr. Diana Natalicio.

One of our Nation's foremost experts on higher education, Dr. Natalicio has transformed the University of Texas at El Paso into a premier institution and a national success story. For her distinguished career, Dr. Natalicio was recently recognized by Time Magazine as one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World.

In 1988, she was named president of the university and has since increased enrollment from 15,000 to 23,000 students who reflect the demographics of the Texas-Mexico border region. UTEP is the only research institution in the United States that serves a predominantly Mexican American student body.

UTEP's continued success under Dr. Natalicio's leadership serves as a

model to universities across the country, and I am truly proud to congratulate her for the remarkable achievement to be named one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World.

□ 1215

FAMILIES OF FLINT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to cosponsor the Families of Flint bill, introduced by Mr. KILDEE, who has been working tirelessly to help his community cope with the crisis there. It is our moral obligation to make sure that those families get the help they need.

The tragedy in Flint has brought to light the danger of using lead pipes to deliver drinking water, particularly in older cities. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 10 million American homes and buildings receive drinking water via pipes that contain lead, a known neurotoxin.

The time to act is now, but Congress has cut infrastructure funding for this purpose. This year, Congress budgeted just $906 million for the safe drinking water fund. That is a cut of 34 percent compared to 2010, and far below the $334 billion that is needed over the next 20 years. We can do much better.

I don't know whether a national lead pipe replacement program would have prevented the crisis in Flint, but I do know that without one, the next tragedy is inevitable.

CARVER COUNTY IS MINNESOTA'S HEALTHIEST

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to celebrate Calvert County, located in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, for being named the healthiest county in Minnesota. This is the fourth consecutive year that Calvert County has received this impressive ranking. These rankings are completed by the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program and are based on multiple factors, including: health, social, and economic factors, as well as clinical care, physical environment, and quality of life.

We are incredibly proud of the people, businesses, and healthcare providers in Calvert County for working to ensure that everyone in our community has the ability to lead a healthy life, for encouraging our many local leaders to implement change, and for constantly striving to influence health in a positive way. It is because of the residents' hard work and determination that Calvert County is the wonderful community that it is today—and for that, we all say thank you.

VOTE FOR EMERGENCY FUNDING TO FIGHT ZIKA VIRUS

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Zika virus results in devastating human illness, like small, deformed brains in infants and paralyzing neurodegenerative diseases. It has already infected over 900 people in the United States and its territories, and it is just a matter of time before it will rapidly spread in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to do its job and protect the health security of the American people and vote for emergency funding to fight Zika now before we adjourn and before it is too late. Listen to the scientists, to the public experts, and to the CDC. All of them are echoing the same warning. Funding is imperative to prevent the spread of Zika, and it is our responsibility, our moral obligation, as Members of Congress, to protect the public against this potential crisis.

What are we waiting for? The House should not adjourn until we have passed H.R. 5044, the emergency supplemental on the Zika virus.

REJECT NEW FIDUCIARY RULE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of hardworking Americans trying to save money for their retirement without government intrusion.

This week, I join a majority of House Members in voting to disapprove of the Department of Labor's new fiduciary rule that will make it harder for low- and middle-income families to save for their retirement.

This extreme, partisan rule, if it is allowed to be implemented, will have a far-reaching negative impact on all Americans currently saving for their retirement. It is yet another attempted power grab by administration bureaucrats to impose more regulations that Americans do not need and are not asking for. It will narrow the options for retirees and drive up costs preventing smart investment.

Estimates show retirement planners would have to spend up to $4.7 billion complying with the rule in the first year alone and another $1.1 billion annually thereafter. We all know who will pay for these costs: the consumer, the saver, the man and woman who are simply trying to invest in their future for their families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to reject this new fiduciary rule and help all Americans retire with the financial security and peace of mind that they deserve.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. As a father of two daughters, this issue is deeply personal for me.

When I think of my daughters' future, few things terrify me more than knowing that one in five women have experienced sexual assault on college campuses. That is why we need to pass the Campus Accountability and Safety Act. This is a commonsense, bipartisan solution to protect students and boost accountability and transparency at colleges and universities. Every day that goes by without passing this bill, more students are put at risk; and for me, that is simply unacceptable.

This issue obviously isn't just limited to college campuses, so I want to take a few moments to commend some of the amazing organizations that are working to keep families safe in our community.

The Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center and A Safe Place have both done incredible work in Illinois' 10th Congressional District. Not only have they worked tirelessly to provide resources and shelter for the survivors of sexual assault and domestic abuse, but they have also demonstrated a strong commitment to fighting the root cause of these tragedies.

We must provide these incredible organizations with the resources they need, so together we can prevent sexual assault and keep families safe.

RECOGNIZING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ATTENDING UNITED STATES SERVICE ACADEMIES

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize 11 young men and women from the Ninth District of Georgia who have the honor of attending one of our four United States service academies next fall.

The United States service academies provide an outstanding opportunity for motivated young people to receive a fine education while gaining the skills necessary to serve their country as professional officers.

I take this time to congratulate each one of these individuals for their tremendous accomplishment.

Jacob Heydinger, Jacob Shewbert, Tiffany Haddock, and Cory Campbell will be attending the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Matthew McClelland will be attending the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Sawyer Madsen, Gino Saponari, and Jonathan Olson will be attending the

United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

John Gallagher will be attending the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

Austin Pierce and Garrett Sellers will be attending the United States Naval Preparatory School on Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island.

I rise today to acknowledge these outstanding young people for not only their accomplishments today for being selected, but for the impact they will have on our communities for tomorrow.

I would also like to take just a moment as well to thank one of our interns who will be leaving us next week, Kip O'kelley, for his hard work in not only preparing this 1-minute, but also for all of the hard work that he has done in our office. And we look forward to seeing him back in the District.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL S. WILSON

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a gentleman who has dedicated his life to serving our Nation, a true American leader and hero who hails from the State of Florida, Mr. Michael S. Wilson.

Mike is retiring from General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems after 47 years of service to our war fighters and the defense industry. He has distinguished himself throughout his career, most notably by developing and fielding over 15 programs for our Armed Forces.

One of Mike's proudest career achievements is the performance of ordnance and tactical systems during the urgent ramp-up required for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Virtually overnight, he oversaw the ramp-up of all General Dynamics production lines to provide ammunition when it was needed the most.

Mr. Speaker, the munitions industrial base, commercial industry, and each branch of our Armed Forces will miss Mike Wilson's leadership. As a nation, let us recognize his intrepid service and dedication to the mission of supporting our warfighters.

I ask that this body join me in honoring and congratulating Mike on a most honorable and truly energetic and innovative career.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a momentous event: the 75th anniversary celebration of the United States Army Officer Candidate School.

The Army Officer Candidate School program was established in 1941 when the Secretary of War, the War Department, and the Army Chief of Staff agreed that a training program was needed to quickly commission new officers. Since its inception, the demand for well-trained junior officers has expanded and contracted as American soldiers have been involved in conflicts spanning World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and the war on terror.

The Army Officer Candidate School continues to demonstrate unparalleled flexibility, professionalism, and an exceptional ability to provide the U.S. Army with competent, well-trained, and fearless officers in the most responsive time possible. The graduates are recognized as leaders in the Nation's first and best line of defense in the Army and are essential to fighting and winning our Nation's wars.

Again, I would like to congratulate them on the 75th anniversary celebration of the United States Army Officer Candidate School.

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

(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, April is Autism Awareness Month. According to the CDC, 1 in 68 children in the United States have been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, and about 3.5 million Americans are living with some form of autism.

As a member of the Congressional Coalition for Autism Research and Education, I am working with my colleagues to ensure that children with autism have the same opportunities as anyone else to lead productive and meaningful lives in adulthood. It is simply unacceptable that 35 percent of young adults with autism are unable to get a job or study in college after high school.

We must continue, Mr. Speaker, to make progress toward an effective treatment and cure so that all individuals are able to achieve their full potential and leave their own beautiful mark on the world.

NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Saturday, April 30, as National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

In the 30 years I served as a community pharmacist before my election to Congress, I saw prescription medications save lives. However, at the same time, I watched people's addiction to those same medications ruin careers, families, and lives.

Today, 44 people in the U.S. die every day from prescription painkillers and overdoses. Overdoses are now the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S., exceeding even car accidents.

Prescription medications have become the target of theft and abuse. It is critical we are all playing our part in combating the prescription drug abuse epidemic by safely disposing of unused medications.

On Saturday, across the country, the DEA will host collection sites where Americans can drop off their pills and other solid, unused prescription drugs. In the First Congressional District of Georgia, I am proud to say that 12 military and law enforcement organizations will be hosting collection sites.

To find a collection site near you, visit www.dea.gov, and click on the ''Got Drugs?'' icon. The service is free, with no questions asked.

Together, we can end this epidemic plaguing our Nation, and I encourage everyone to take part in this event.

MORE BAD NEWS FOR THE U.S. ECONOMY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced that the gross domestic product, an important measure of our Nation's economic health, grew by a negligible 0.5 percent in the first quarter of 2016. It is the worst performance in 2 years and dismal news for the U.S. economy. During the last 3 months, consumer spending has slowed, business investment has plummeted, and exports have continued to decline.

We need a stable and predictable Tax Code under which families and businesses are best able to plan for the future. It is also possible to relieve the regulatory burden on small businesses and other job creators while balancing environmental stewardship, public safety, and consumer interests.

While our economy has been hampered by the progressive ideology of the current administration, my Republican colleagues and I will continue to pursue our agenda of economic growth so Americans can feel confident in their future.

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.

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 28, 2016 at 11:45 a.m.:

Appointment:

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4901, SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 88, DISAPPROVING DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RULE RELATED TO DEFINITION OF THE TERM ''FIDUCIARY''; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MAY 2, 2016, THROUGH MAY 9, 2016

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 706 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 706

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4901) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any 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 Oversight and Government Reform; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''Fiduciary''. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any 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 Education and the Workforce; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. On any legislative day during the period from May 2, 2016, through May 9, 2016—

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

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

SEC. 4. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 3 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 5. The Committee on Armed Services may, at any time before 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, file a report to accompany H.R. 4909.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), 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

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 706 provides a closed rule for the consideration of H.R. 4901, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, as it is the product of careful bipartisan and bicameral negotiations.

It also provides a closed rule for the consideration of H.J. Res. 88, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''fiduciary,'' which is traditional for Congressional Review Act resolutions.

The underlying bill and resolution we will consider today are important steps forward on two issues of great concern to Americans: education and retirement savings.

H.R. 4901, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, also known as the SOAR Reauthorization Act, would continue important funding provided to help young students here in Washington, D.C., reach their full potential.

This legislation would provide $60 million annually for 5 years, split equally among the District's public schools, charter schools, and the District of Columbia Opportunity Scholarship Program, which enables low-income students to attend a private school that would otherwise be out of their reach.

I have great confidence that the SOAR Reauthorization Act is a positive step for students in the District of Columbia and that, through its example, it will provide a model for success that could be adopted by States across the country.

With the adoption of this rule, the House will also provide for the consideration of H.J. Res. 88, a Congressional Review Act resolution disapproving of the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule, a rule that will otherwise soon take effect and limit the ability of Americans to receive adequate advice on how to allocate their retirement savings.

If enacted, this resolution will prevent the red tape and other burdensome mandates that threaten to cut off access to trusted financial advisers and may result in lower savings rates and returns on investment.

As Americans are clamoring for more assistance with retirement savings and financial decisions, we must ensure that they are encouraged to continue saving and are able to receive helpful guidance. Stopping the harmful fiduciary rule is an important step in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this rule and both the underlying bill and resolution. I ask my colleagues for their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Today the majority intends to pass a resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act to overturn the Department of Labor's recent rulemaking requiring financial advisers who provide retirement investment advice to abide by a fiduciary standard, meaning that they must act in the best interests of their clients, which seems perfectly legitimate to me. That is right. The House majority is disapproving of financial advisers acting in the best interests of their clients.

Despite the growing importance of individual workers and retirees to obtain sound investment advice, many financial advisers are still not legally required to meet the fiduciary standard of acting in their clients' best interests but, instead, are required only to meet a lower ''suitability'' standard.

This creates a conflict of interest where advisers are permitted to promote investments that maximized their own returns rather than their clients' returns as long as the investments were still ''suitable'' for their clients.

That means a small few—and a very small few—unscrupulous financial advisers have been legally permitted to steer clients towards financial products that maximize the advisers' profits through higher fees and commissions even if investments that would produce greater returns for the clients are available.

Few financial advisers, I am sure, are taking advantage of their clients in their saving for retirement. Some experts, however, feel that this rule is necessary. In fact, the White House Council of Economic Advisers estimates that the cost to American retirees is $17 billion annually. That is no small sum, and I think it does cry out for attention.

It is absurd that, due to loopholes in the current system, retirees do not have a legal right to expect that their financial advisers will act in their best interests.

When you visit your doctor, you have the legal right to expect that he or she will prescribe whatever treatment is in your best interest. You shouldn't have to guess whether or not your financial adviser is following the same fiduciary standard.

The Labor Department's final rule will close these loopholes, protect workers' savings, and ensure that financial advisers act in their clients' best interests.

The final rule is the result of a thoughtful, thorough, and transparent

multiyear process that stands in stark contrast to the majority's decision to rush to judgment and to overturn this rule at a record, unheard-of pace.

The majority marked up the resolution, H.J. Res. 88, only 13 days after the final rule had been published. So, in 13 days, it understood that it was totally unnecessary despite the $17 billion lost to clients.

This is far shorter than the 55 days that other committees wait, on average, to ensure that there is ample time to fully understand the impact of a final rule.

In its rush to judgment, the majority has been blinded by its ideological opposition to any action taken by the Obama administration and has missed the many changes that have left industry leaders optimistic, including many of the major financial houses and many of the people whose livelihoods are in this kind of advising.

The majority is ignoring the two important protections that this rule will provide to American workers who are trying to save for their retirements. The first is peace of mind, and the second is to make sure that everything is done in their interests.

Mr. Speaker, all of us are sent here to work in the best interests of the American people, not to shield financial companies. So I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this disapproval resolution.

What is more, in yet another grab bag rule that joins two unrelated measures under a single rule, the Republicans are proposing another misguided bill to meddle in the District of Columbia's local affairs.

The majority has already tried to overturn the District's marijuana, gun, and abortion laws, and now it intends to rewrite D.C.'s education laws in an attack on the District of Columbia's right to home rule.

The D.C. voucher program exempts students from the protection of Federal civil rights laws that apply to public schools—why in the world would we want to do that to them?—and federally funded programs that go with those civil rights laws protections.

Under the voucher program, the Federal funding is considered assistance to the voucher student and not to the school; therefore, the voucher program is not considered a federally funded program.

The program is exempt from titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; from title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; from the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; from the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and from titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

I appreciate that we are not doing anything here that is really going to affect the government in any way. Undoubtedly, again, this will be a one-House bill, and we have wasted a week's worth of money—about $24 million—that it takes to run the House. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

The Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act is a program that makes students the priority.

First authorized in 2004, this program has provided significant, life-changing benefits to students for over a decade. It is no secret that many students in the District of Columbia have not received the education they deserve.

Fourth graders in the District scored below all 50 States in average math and reading scores in 2013, and eighth graders had the lowest average math and reading scores in the country.

The SOAR Reauthorization Act continues a three-sector strategy to improve education in the District of Columbia.

First, it provides additional resources to the public school system for its use in improving student achievement.

An equal amount is provided to the innovative charter schools that are opening across the District, which provide a valuable alternative for students who seek a different experience.

Finally, through the Opportunity Scholarship Program, students receive potentially life-changing scholarships to attend private schools that offer opportunities that are rarely seen by low-income students.

We often speak of the States as laboratories of democracy. But, in this instance, it is the District of Columbia that is providing an instructive example of the value of trying different approaches, of studying them, and then of replicating the solutions that work, not the solutions that benefit entrenched interests.

That is why I am so pleased to see that this legislation includes important reforms to the program to ensure it performs at the highest standards and is fully assessed for its effectiveness. It is my hope that these assessment standards will be applied to many other programs at the Department of Education and across the Federal Government.

Parents have also expressed a higher satisfaction rate with their children's schools and have reported that they believe those schools are safer for their children. Both parents and the community support the Opportunity Scholarship Program, with 74 percent supporting a continuation of the program.

It is not hard to understand why that program has that level of support when you consider that 90 percent of students who are participating in the program graduate compared to only 64 percent of students in the schools they left behind.

Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that. Ninety percent of students who are participating in the program graduate compared to only 64 percent of students in the schools they left behind.

□ 1245

How could our colleagues possibly oppose this opportunity for students in the District of Columbia? And that 90 percent graduation rate is even better than the national rate of 82 percent.

It is important to recognize that this legislation has support from across the aisle at the local level. In March 2016, a majority of the D.C. Council and Mayor Muriel Bowser wrote in a letter that ''these funds are critical to the gains that the District's public education system has seen in recent years.''

I commend the SOAR Reauthorization Act to my colleagues for their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, the colleagues who have requested time have not shown up. I am prepared to close if Ms. FOXX is.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

This is not the first time Congress and the public have debated a fiduciary rule conceived by the Department of Labor.

The Department first proposed a rule in 2010, but was later forced to withdraw it due to significant bipartisan opposition. A wide array of stakeholders, both those saving for retirement and those providing assistance to savers, raised legitimate concerns that the Department would be limiting available advice and raising costs.

Unfortunately, the Department chose to ignore the lessons of that debacle and embarked again in 2015 on a misguided effort to create a new fiduciary rule.

Mr. Speaker, it may be helpful to explain exactly why the Department is promulgating rules governing retirement advice whatsoever.

Under the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, also known as ERISA, Federal law establishes ground rules for defined contribution pension plans, which may be 401(k)s, IRAs, or other tax-preferred savings vehicles.

Anyone who exercises discretionary authority over those plans or provides investment advice for a fee to those plans is considered a fiduciary and triggers certain regulatory restrictions that govern their actions. Since 1975, the Department of Labor has used a five-part test to determine when a provider of investment advice is a fiduciary.

As I mentioned earlier, the Obama administration first proposed in 2010 and then in 2015 to expand significantly the definition of fiduciary, which would subject a significant number of new individuals and firms to fiduciary status and have a chilling effect on the willingness of them to provide advice whatsoever to those saving for retirement.

On April 6, the Department finalized its regulation, which will significantly

impact the ability of Americans to receive advice on how to save for retirement and make it more difficult for businesses, in particular small businesses, to establish retirement plans.

At a time when Americans want to save significantly more for retirement, the Department of Labor wants to make it cost prohibitive to offer advice or services to low- and middle-income Americans by increasing compliance costs and the risk of litigation.

Many of the Department's compliance requirements will be counterproductive, as those saving for retirement will be forced to review and sign a number of government-mandated documents instead of focusing on identifying the best options for their retirement savings.

There are also issues related to specific savings vehicles for retirement, such as variable and fixed-indexed annuities, which must comply with the new requirements.

There are also potential class action lawsuits under state law that could prevent good actors in the industry from taking clients and impose an additional cost on savers.

Beyond its impact on individuals saving for retirement and those assisting them, the fiduciary rule will have a negative impact on the businesses that attempt to offer pension plans that benefit their employees.

The rule holds large and small businesses to different standards, with negative implications for those most in need of assistance, which are small businesses with less than $50 million in assets in their retirement plan. As with so many other provisions of the fiduciary rule, that will raise costs and reduce the choices available to small businesses.

These concerns have been echoed by the National Federation of Independent Businesses and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Even the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy submitted a comment letter stating that ''The proposed rule would increase the costs and burdens associated with serving smaller plans . . . and could limit financial advisers' ability to offer savings and investment advice to clients.''

In order to stop the Department of Labor's misguided efforts, Representatives ROE, BOUSTANY, and WAGNER introduced this Congressional Review Act resolution to disapprove of the fiduciary regulation.

The Congressional Review Act provides a special process for consideration of joint resolutions disapproving of a regulation. Should a resolution, such as the one we will consider today, be enacted into law, it will prevent the rule from taking effect or being reissued.

Clearly, if the fiduciary rule comes into effect, millions of Americans and the businesses employing them will be provided with fewer investment opportunities and higher costs, limiting their return on investments and the amount they are one day able to retire with.

That is why I cosponsored H.J. Res. 88 to disapprove of this harmful rule and enable Americans to continue working with the adviser of their choice and save for retirement in a prudent and cost-effective way.

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

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

Hardworking Americans deserve solid advice about how to save for retirement, not conflicted guidance from financial counselors.

The Department of Labor's fiduciary rule is the product of thoughtful, long-term planning and research because the estimate is that $17 billion a year is lost to this industry.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule by voting ''no'' on this rule we have before us.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill that would provide desperately needed funding to combat the Zika virus. We can't put off when the Zika virus is going to arrive. We make no appointments with it. It shows up, and the devastation it produces is well known.

We must not in the Congress of the United States turn our backs on this impending problem facing the United States. It is already here, and I heard just this morning that this summer they are expecting quite a lot of infection to spread. The administration requested this funding more than 2 months ago, and it is reckless to delay the response to this crisis any longer.

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' to defeat the previous question and vote ''no'' on the rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would like to say a few additional things on the benefit of the SOAR Reauthorization Act.

When the Opportunity Scholarship Program, OSP, was first designed, D.C. public school students had the lowest test scores in the Nation. D.C. schools have improved since then, but D.C. public school students continue to test well below national averages. D.C. OSP students are seeing improved achievement against non-OSP students in reading and in graduation rates.

In addition, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program does not take away money from the D.C. public and charter schools nor does it reallocate D.C. education money. In fact, H.R. 4901 directs additional Federal resources to the D.C. education system that would not otherwise be available if not for the OSP.

Finally, there are thousands of families on charter school waiting lists who aren't able to access the schools their children need. OSP allows income-eligible families to get into high-quality district or charter schools who would not otherwise have access to education alternatives.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few minutes here talking about precisely what has been going on in this Congress.

Well, 3 or 4 weeks ago the Rules Committee passed out to the House of Representatives three measures. One was to stop all class action lawsuits. One was to damage the Clean Water Act. The third one was that no Federal agency would any longer be allowed to do regulations. It would be done by a group of people set up to do that. I use that illustration a lot because it shows what we are doing here in the House.

Anybody who is familiar with sheet music—and that does go back a long time—when you are playing the piano, do you remember it used to said ''vamp till ready'' and you would continue playing until the singer would start to sing?

We have been waiting here for a very long time for the singer to start to sing. We have no budget. We don't exactly know where we are going here. The Zika virus is bearing down on us. We have crumbling infrastructure that everybody is worried about. Kids are still drinking lead in Flint, Michigan.

But that is not the only place. In almost every city of the old cities in the Northeast, they still have brick water conduits and wood. Believe that. The city that I represent has some very, very old pipes as well.

So the schools in my district—and I am sure in all the rest of your districts—are finding out that there is lead in the water in their schools as well.

Well, we are going to mess around here with things that happen. And then, when Zika comes and we are not ready, I hope that we will—that we are sitting in this room with people who could do something about it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

We are considering crucial legislation today impacting two important issues, ensuring Americans are able to save for retirement and enabling the education of our next generation.

As any parent knows, the education of our children is one of our highest priorities. For far too long, children in Washington, D.C., have not received the education they deserve, and have suffered from unacceptable achievement levels and graduation rates.

The SOAR Reauthorization Act, which this rule provides for consideration of, continues a successful three-

sector approach to improving the lives and educational outcomes of low-income students in the District.

It provides $60 million in funding for students, split equally among D.C.'s public schools, charter schools, and scholarships for students to attend private schools that would otherwise be out of reach.

Students receiving private school educations have demonstrated higher test scores and significantly higher graduation rates, showcasing the importance of continuing students' access to these institutions.

Students participating in the Opportunity Scholarship Program reauthorized in this legislation have graduated at a rate of 90 percent, besting both other schools in D.C. where only 64 percent of students graduate and the national graduation rate of 82 percent.

These programs are an important example of the need for innovation and experimentation in how to best reform our education system to benefit students, not entrenched interests.

It has been an honor for me personally to witness some of the students who benefited from the programs included in the SOAR Reauthorization Act. After seeing the hope for the future those students have in their eyes, I cannot fathom preventing other students from receiving their own second chances.

It has also been my pleasure over the past several decades to join my husband in working with a number of financial advisers on how best to save for retirement and our other financial goals. Those advisers have always acted in the best interest of our family and provided useful advice that has enabled us to meet our goals.

Unfortunately, I believe that not everyone in Washington believes financial advisers are well-intentioned and skilled. It is my fear that, as private sector actors, not government employees, they are suspected by some of being motivated by greed and taking any opportunity available to take their clients' money for their own.

□ 1300

That is a disturbing viewpoint that has no place in reality. These advisers work with their friends and neighbors in their home communities. The larger companies are brands that have been well established for decades and are subject to significant regulation and public scrutiny from customers and the marketplace. If there were widespread fleecing of those saving for retirement, we would all rightly hear about it.

The reality is that the vast majority of financial advisers, large and small, have been and will continue to act in their clients' best interests. There are laws and regulations in place to ensure bad actors are identified and punished, and I support those enforcement efforts wholeheartedly.

What I and other Members cannot support is another effort by the Department of Labor to vilify an industry with real consequences for the ability of Americans to save affordably for retirement. We must strengthen our focus on stopping and punishing bad actors instead of increasing rules and regulations that hinder the countless good actors in this industry.

We have a retirement savings crisis in this Nation, Mr. Speaker, and it is vital that every American has access to high-quality advice and an array of financial products available at a low cost.

We can continue to trust Americans to make the right choice. The fiduciary rule takes that right away, and therefore, I am pleased to have an opportunity today to vote on H.J. Res. 88, disapproving the fiduciary rule.

Mr. Speaker, I believe both the underlying bill and resolution are necessary steps on issues of great import to our Nation, and I commend them and this rule, providing for their consideration, to all of my colleagues for their support.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 706 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER

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

SEC. 6. 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. 5044) making supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2016 to respond to Zika virus. 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 among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. 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. 7. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 5044.

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.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). 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.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. 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 will be followed by 5-

minute votes on adoption of House Resolution 706, if ordered, and the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 5019.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 231, nays 182, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 173]

YEAS—231

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
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)
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
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
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
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
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
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
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
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)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (UT)
Black
Collins (NY)
Costa
Davis, Rodney
Fitzpatrick
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hanna
Issa
Jeffries
MacArthur
Rothfus
Scott, David
Stutzman
Takai
Torres
Van Hollen
Westmoreland
Whitfield

□ 1323

Messrs. DOGGETT, BISHOP of Georgia, and NORCROSS changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. LUETKEMEYER changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 173, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 183, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 174]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
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
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
Rouzer
Royce
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
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—183

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
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)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Collins (NY)
Fitzpatrick
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hanna
Issa
MacArthur
Rothfus
Russell
Scott, David
Stutzman
Takai
Torres
Van Hollen
Westmoreland
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1329

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.

FAIR ACCESS TO INVESTMENT RESEARCH ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5019) to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 6, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 175]

YEAS—411

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
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Graves (GA)
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Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
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Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
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Holding
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Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
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Jackson Lee
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Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
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Joyce
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Kelly (IL)
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Langevin
Larsen (WA)
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Lawrence
Lee
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Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
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Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
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Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
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Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
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McDermott
McGovern
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Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
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Ratcliffe
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Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
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Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
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Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
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Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
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Takano
Thompson (CA)
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Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
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Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
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Wagner
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Walden
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
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Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—6

Capuano
Fattah
Huffman
Lynch
Nadler
Sires

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Collins (NY)
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Gutiérrez
Hanna
Hunter
Issa
MacArthur
Olson
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Scott, David
Stutzman
Takai
Torres
Walker
Westmoreland
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1337

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 175 on H.R. 5019, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

DISAPPROVING DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RULE RELATED TO DEFINITION OF THE TERM ''FIDUCIARY''

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 706, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''Fiduciary'', and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 706, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 88

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, ThatCongress disapproves the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Definition of the Term 'Fiduciary'; Conflict of Interest Rule—Retirement Investment Advice'' (published at 81 Fed. Reg. 20946 (April 8, 2016)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The joint resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.J. Res. 88.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.J. Res. 88. I was proud to introduce this resolution, along with Representatives BOUSTANY and WAGNER, to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable retirement advice.

Today, there are far too many men and women in this country who don't have the retirement security that they need and deserve.

In 2015, the GAO found that 29 percent of Americans 55 years and older have no retirement savings and no traditional pension. In fact, today, nearly 40 million working families haven't saved a dime for retirement.

This is a serious problem, and we need to make it easier for families, particularly low-income and middle-income families, to save for their retirement years. That means making sure that every American, regardless of income, is able to access the tools they need to plan for the future. It also means ensuring financial advisers act in their clients' best interests.

Let me say that again. It also means ensuring financial advisers act in their clients' best interests, a priority we all share.

Since the Department began its efforts more than 5 years ago, we made it clear that we believe retirement savers need greater protections. That is why we held numerous hearings, sent letters, and engaged in other oversight activities to advance a responsible solution to help those saving for retirement; and it is why our committee put forward a legislative alternative requiring high standards for retirement advice, while also ensuring access and affordability.

Rather than engaging with Members advancing a thoughtful alternative, however, the Department opposed our bipartisan proposal outright. Instead, the Department of Labor rushed a finalized, misguided rule that will hurt the very people they intended to help.

Does anyone think that a 1,000-page rule that I hold in my hand here will make it more likely for Americans to save for retirement?

In my left hand here, I hold a Webster's dictionary, which defines every word in the English language, and it only has a few more pages than this 1,000-page rule that defines one word, Mr. Speaker, ''fiduciary.'' The last thing Washington should be doing is making it harder for working families to save and invest, but because they took their my-way-or-the-highway approach, we now have a rule that will do exactly that.

The fiduciary rule will make it harder for working families to save for retirement. It will restrict access to some of the most basic financial advice, and it will create new hurdles for small businesses who want to offer their employees retirement options.

These are consequences many Americans cannot afford, and they are consequences we will not accept. That is why this resolution is so important: to put a stop to this fundamentally flawed rule and protect the men and women working to retire with the financial security and peace of mind they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.J. Res. 88.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 88. This Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval would undo the Department of Labor's final rule that simply ensures financial advisers act in the best interests of their clients with retirement funds.

Now, this is a Department of Labor rule that only applies to workers' retirement funds. In times past, people would retire and receive a defined benefit. They would just retire and get their promised income. But now, we have what are called defined contribution plans, where the money is invested and, over the years, if someone, even a modest-income person, invests over his 40-year career, he could easily amass a fund of hundreds of thousands of dollars, even $1 million if they start early and invest consistently.

So we are talking about people who may not have bought a single share of stock or a bond or mutual fund in their life, who walks into an investment adviser's office with all of the savings that could amount to as much as $1 million.

□ 1345

For far too long, certain financial advisers have been able to exploit loopholes in the decades-old regulation that governs investment advice for retirement savers. Right now, financial advisers can easily steer retirement clients towards financial products that may yield the adviser a big commission but may not be in their clients' best interest. Of course, not every financial adviser does this, but some do.

This unscrupulous practice of providing what is called conflicted advice insidiously erodes workers' retirement nest eggs. According to the White House Council of Economic Advisers, retirement savers lose $17 billion a year as a result of receiving conflicted advice about their retirement savings.

The Department of Labor recognizes the magnitude of this problem, and the department took action to protect workers' retirement savings. All told, they have been working on this issue for nearly 6 years. Over the past year alone, they conducted hundreds of meetings and provided the American public and industry representatives with nearly 6 months to weigh in on their proposal to fix the problem.

Secretary Perez and his colleagues listened to and repeatedly assured industry officials, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders that the final proposal would reflect the input that the department received and that the department would get the rule right. I believe the department did just that. The final rule addresses the legitimate concerns raised by Members of Congress, industry, and other stakeholders without compromising the main goal: ensuring that retirement clients receive investment advice that is in their best interest.

I am not alone in believing this. The broad and diverse coalition of stakeholders, including AARP, AFL–CIO, NAACP, National Council of La Raza, and many others have registered strong support for the rule.

But let's be clear: support for the final rule is not limited to those who represent and advocate for consumers and workers. Initial reactions to the final rule from Merrill Lynch Wealth Management, TIAA, Morgan Stanley, and others in the financial services sector have been positive and encouraging. Other companies appear to be reserving judgment on the rule until they better understand its full implications, and that is understandable.

But House Republicans have not reserved judgment. They have rushed to judgment in their opposition to the final rule. That is unfortunate because the final rule is a responsible solution to a real problem. The rule will help workers enjoy a dignified retirement, and this resolution would reject the rule.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution should be rejected for what it is: an effort to perpetuate an unacceptable status quo that allows some advisers to operate under a business model that puts their

interests and their financial interests ahead of their clients' interests. We should protect workers' hard-earned retirement funds and reject this resolution.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. CHARLES BOUSTANY, a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, planning for retirement can be a difficult and often bewildering task. Consumers have to choose from a complex web of plans, including traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs, SIMPLE IRAs, Qualified Plans, 403(b) accounts, or 529 plans.

Let's face it, the average American oftentimes has a difficult time understanding what these types of plans do, which is why it is necessary to have licensed, professional retirement advisers and financial advisers to help navigate the system.

Today, baby boomers are retiring at a rate of 10,000 a day. In 2014, an estimated $325 billion was withdrawn from 401(k) plans in the United States for retirement purposes. This is a big deal. But the Obama administration is now proposing new rules that will make it so costly to use a retirement adviser, most low- and medium-income families will be locked out. This is just not right.

The heavy burdens imposed by the administration's fiduciary rule could result in fewer Americans saving for retirement using private-sector vehicles such as 401(k)s or IRAs. Don't take it just from me. Take it from a licensed financial adviser from my hometown of Lafayette, Louisiana, who said the following in comments to the Department of Labor: ''This proposed regulation could force some investors into a fee-based account arrangement which could actually be to their detriment. Just as in most things in life, a one-size-fits-all solution would most certainly not be best for all.''

Ultimately, this will stifle individual choice and empower government bureaucrats to make decisions on behalf of those saving for retirement instead of professional retirement advisers with the knowledge and qualifications to provide advice for their clients.

I ask this question: How can a regulation that could disqualify up to 7 million IRA holders from investment advice and potentially reduce the number of IRAs opened annually between 300,000 and 400,000 be a good idea?

That just defies common sense. I believe policymakers should do everything they can to help Americans prepare for retirement and not create red tape that makes saving for retirement more difficult. That is why I urge passage of this bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88, which would invalidate the Department of Labor's recently finalized fiduciary duty rule and threaten our seniors' retirement savings to the tune of $17 billion per year.

The rule closes loopholes and gaps in our laws so that all financial advisers act in their clients' best interest when providing advice on retirement investments. This is an essential reform that will protect our seniors and ensure our retirees are financially secure.

Not only is this rule a commonsense update, but the Department of Labor worked diligently to address all legitimate stockholder concerns. Secretary Perez should be commended for his exemplary leadership on this issue.

The Department of Labor spent countless hours reviewing comments, meeting with industry and other interested stakeholders, and responding to lawmakers' concerns. That effort has resulted in a strong, workable rule that takes into account different business models across the industry.

For example, the final rule specifically allows firms to recommend proprietary products as long as they make certain disclosures and act in the clients' best interest. It streamlines those required disclosures to make it easier for firms to comply. It provides flexibility in the timing of a contract between a client and an adviser, and it establishes clear distinctions between what is considered education and advice.

Overall, the final rule is carefully crafted to protect investors while creating a workable process for financial advisers. What is more, the rule is supported by hundreds of stakeholders who represent the financial services industry, the public interest, civil rights, consumers, labor unions, and many investment advisers who are already providing advice to savers under a fiduciary standard, yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are so intent on dismantling this crucial rule.

This resolution is not their first attempt. H.R. 1090, which went through my committee and passed the House largely along party lines, would have imposed unacceptable delays on the Department of Labor's rulemaking effort. Different measures were considered in other committees that would have replaced the rule with a harmful alternative, and riders were attempted on appropriations bills to prevent the department from working on this rule altogether.

Now, Republicans may have the votes to pass the disapproval resolution on a simple majority, but the President will veto this bill, and Democrats will stand strong to ensure that they cannot override that veto. We will ensure that the laws protecting our seniors' savings are as robust as possible in a fair market. We will ensure that hardworking Americans can trust their financial advisers and make sound investments, and we will ensure that everyone has a right to retire with dignity and security.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I want to put one thing to rest now. This $17 billion you are going to hear over and over again, what they simply did with this formula was take the amount of money in retirement savings and assume that if you used any other adviser other than a fiduciary through the life of the investment, you would get 1 percent less earnings. That is how you get to $17 billion. It has been refuted by numerous people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), who serves on the Committee on Financial Services.

Mrs. WAGNER. I thank the chairman for his leadership and for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a resolution to stop the Department of Labor from attacking Americans' savings.

Mr. Speaker, investing in the future and saving for retirement can be some of the most personal and consequential decisions that families make. With three children to raise, my husband and I worked tirelessly to put food on the table each day while squeezing what we could into a retirement account.

For those families today living paycheck to paycheck, we must provide more opportunities to save for the future, not limit them. Mr. Speaker, this is about Main Street, not Wall Street.

The DOL's fiduciary rule is simply ObamaCare for retirement savings. It is clear that this top-down, Washington-knows-best power grab will only hurt those it claims it will protect: low- and middle-income families that are looking for sound investment advice in the midst of a savings crisis.

Today, sadly, 45 percent of working-age families do not have any retirement savings. Nearly half of our workforce is not saving for retirement. For those who are saving, the average retirement balance is only $3,000 for working-age families and $12,000 for families nearing retirement.

Every American should have access to sound investment advice, but the Department of Labor is going too far, increasing costs for advice and ultimately putting low- and middle-income, hardworking families at a severe disadvantage. Congress must act to stop this intrusion on Americans seeking to do the right thing regarding their savings responsibility.

Rarely in Washington do Democrats and Republicans find common ground on issues, but with the Department of Labor forcing more than 1,000 pages of investment regulations on American families, we have joined together with bipartisan concern.

Mr. Speaker, the choice is simple: either you stand with low- and middle-income families saving for the future or you stand with yet another Big Government takeover by this administration.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution that we will vote on today will stop this rule and give Americans the freedom—the freedom—to choose how they plan for and invest in their future.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to pass this resolution.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member for yielding. The gentleman has worked so hard on this with so many others.

Mr. Speaker, this fiduciary rule has had a long, dedicated and deliberative journey. The administration first issued proposed regulations on this issue in 2010. They received many comments from consumer and industry groups, and they decided to redraft the proposal. That new proposal, issued last year, prompted more than 3,000 comment letters. The administration and the Department of Labor actively took these comments and the numerous consultations on all sides of this issue into account when they prepared the final draft of the rule. It is the way government should act.

What the Department of Labor rule does is strengthen the trust between a financial adviser and their client. It says that a fiduciary or financial adviser must act in their clients' best interest. The Republicans oppose this rule guided by their ideological blinders.

□ 1400

This rule is important because when the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, ERISA, was first passed in 1974, 401(k) plans did not yet exist and IRAs had just been created. Today, more Americans have 401(k) plans than pension plans and must manage their own investments.

Republicans today continue their claim that this rule will make it more difficult for small businesses and low- and middle-income Americans to get financial advice because it will cost them more. The fact is that conflicted investment advice costs American families billions of dollars every year.

As the White House said: ''some firms have incentivized advisers to steer clients into products that have higher fees and lower returns—costing American families an estimated $17 billion a year.'' It continues: ''If the President were presented with H.J. Res. 88, he would veto the bill.''

This rule-making process isn't top down; this is from the bottom up. Listening to people, listening to everybody—to everybody—and coming out with a rule that is responsive to the needs of the American people, that is really what this is about. Instead, we have Republicans coming forth again, essentially, as I said, with their blinders on, opposing this rule, when they know that if it ever passed the Senate—and I don't think it will—it would be vetoed by the President.

I strongly urge that my colleagues vote against this resolution.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, here is what we do know. We do know that the negative impact of this rule on consumers is not hypothetical. The reason we know it is because the United Kingdom has already lived through an effectually identical rule. The result in the UK was an advice gap that locked out nearly half a million middle-and low-income savers.

Just last week, the head of the SEC's Division of Economic and Risk Analysis admitted that the Labor Department knew of the disastrous impact of what he termed the experiment in the UK that locked out these middle-income and low-income savers from advice, yet it moved forward to put us on that same path.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a country that ranks 19th in the world for retirement security. Half of Americans cannot find $400 in savings if hit with an emergency. We should be doing more to encourage Americans to save. This rule, obviously, does exactly the opposite.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI), a leader on the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, too many families and individuals across Oregon and across our country are struggling to get ahead. I know the sacrifice that is involved in each and every dollar they set aside to contribute to their retirement. Building a stable base for retirement security should be within reach for everyone. That is why I will vote ''no'' on H.J. Res. 88.

Consumer protection is one of the reasons I am standing on the House floor today. Throughout my career, I have advocated for families who, despite their best efforts, have found their financial and retirement security at risk. At Legal Aid, I helped families who were on the brink of losing everything; as a consumer protection attorney at the Federal Trade Commission, I took on mortgage brokers who had defrauded people out of their homes; and in private practice, I represented people who lost their life savings when they relied on misrepresentations by people selling securities and franchises.

I pay close attention to the fiduciary rule because I know that consumer protection laws can keep Americans financially secure and level the playing field. A thriving marketplace without deceptive practices can restore consumer confidence and grow the economy.

For too long, people saving for retirement have had few tools to know if their financial adviser was directing them to a product that was in their best interest and most appropriate for their specific needs and goals. Seeking to fix this uncertainty and put the interest of future retirees first, the Department of Labor took great care when crafting a final rule to remove conflicts of interest and restore confidence to savers. They heard from people around the country, including consumer protection groups and leaders in the investment industry. They heard from people who had lost their life savings because of financial advice that was not in their best interest.

Saving for retirement is crucial for our country's economic security, but too many Americans are uncertain about how they can stretch their hard-earned dollars to provide for themselves and their families. Products and choices are complex. The Department of Labor sought to protect these Americans from conflicted advice so they can be prepared for retirement while allowing financial advisers to continue to play an important role in this process. Stakeholders from all sides of the issue were involved in the rulemaking. The Department took time, listened to them, and made multiple changes to make sure this rule is workable.

I applaud the Department of Labor for their thoughtful and thorough rulemaking process. I urge my colleagues to oppose this misguided legislation that seeks to block this important fiduciary rule.

I thank Ranking Member SCOTT for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, a title does not make you honest. Bernie Madoff was a fiduciary, I might add.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), the distinguished chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

For several years now—about 7—we have heard from Americans, we have heard from employers, and we have heard from families that the American economy, the American people, and employers are under an assault from a blizzard of regulations. In the last year, as we near the closing months of this administration, the blizzard is almost a whiteout. You can hardly see, they are coming so fast.

This is one such regulation, and it is everywhere in industries across America. It is choking us. We have got to stop it. Please, please, let's start here today and support this bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. DELANEY), a Member who, before coming to Congress, had a long career in the financial services industry.

Mr. DELANEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we have a looming retirement crisis in this country. People are living longer, the cost of retirement is greater than it has ever been, Americans haven't been able to save for retirement because wages have not gone up, and across the last several decades we have shifted the risk of retirement from institutions to individuals.

In that context, the notion that we would allow, perhaps, upwards of 20 percent of hardworking Americans' savings to be eroded because of conflicted investment advice is preposterous. It is for that reason I am a strong supporter of the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule and stand here in opposition, against any efforts to undermine it.

The notion that average Americans, low-income Americans, and middle class Americans won't receive service in the context of this new rule is also invalid. One of the greatest expenses financial institutions have is customer acquisition, in other words, the amount of money they invest to acquire customers. The idea that they would somehow get rid of millions and millions of customers that they have already invested huge amounts of money in acquiring I find to be not only a bad business decision, but not logical in the context of the private market, the way we understand it.

Also, to the extent that they would do that, I believe right now, as we speak, there are entrepreneurs and investors sitting in conference rooms all over this country with whiteboards figuring out new business models that will deliver high-quality, fiduciary-level, nonconflicted financial advice to average Americans in an efficient manner that meet the standards of this fiduciary rule.

For all these reasons, I support the rule. I stand in opposition against any efforts to undermine it. This is an important step in dealing with our looming retirement crisis, and it is the proper role of government to level the playing field and then to allow the private market to solve the problem.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I will point out what has happened in England. We have a playbook by which to look at, where a very similar rule was implemented in England, about how many investors lost advice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the distinguished whip.

Mr. SCALISE. I thank my friend from Tennessee for bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do here is help people and encourage more savings. 401(k) plans were so good at making it easy for people to save money for their retirement. Frankly, we should be doing as much as we can here in Washington to make it even easier to encourage more people to save for their retirement.

But here comes the Department of Labor and, literally, with this massive document to define one word—what the term ''fiduciary'' means—is going to make it dramatically harder for Americans to save money for their retirement. Anybody who thinks that this massive document, defining the ability for people to save money, is going to make it easier or make it less costly to save money doesn't understand just how many teams of lawyers will be employed to go and try to figure out what this means.

What it will mean, Mr. Speaker, is that the cost for hardworking taxpayers to go and put more money in their retirement is going to go up dramatically. It also means—and you want to talk about a perverse incentive—the rule, this massive rule, actually imposes even more burdens on small businesses than it does on large businesses. So the very engine of our economy—small businesses—will literally have to face the question of whether or not they can even afford to provide 401(k) services to their employees. Employees love the ability to have a 401(k).

Employees also move around a lot from job to job and enjoy the ability to roll over their 401(k), and this massive rule actually makes it nearly impossible for people to roll over their 401(k), dramatically increasing the cost. Why would you want to do that?

What we are trying to do here is say: Go back to the drawing board. This rule makes no sense. This rule actually hurts the ability for hardworking taxpayers to save money for their retirement, the exact opposite thing the Federal Government should be doing.

I applaud my friend from Tennessee for bringing this forward, and I urge adoption.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the ranking member of the Appropriations subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Department of Labor.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution, which would block the implementation of the Department of Labor's conflict of interest rule.

I strongly support what the Department of Labor is trying to do with this rule: simply to ensure that financial advisers act in the best interest of the consumer.

Unfortunately, the rule is necessary because some financial advisers are recommending financial instruments that offer rewards or commissions to the adviser for steering the client to those particular instruments instead of recommending retirement options that are in the best interest of the customer. This is about safeguarding worker retirement savings.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers estimates that conflicts of interest cost about $17 billion per year in lost savings for Americans who are trying to save for retirement. This is unacceptable.

When hardworking Americans seek advice on how to invest for retirement, they should not have to worry about being led to make decisions that are not in their best interest. By establishing this fiduciary duty that would require advisers to act in the interest of the customer, we could end this predatory practice.

The rule requires brokers to disclose their fees and financial incentives when offering a financial product, introducing much-needed transparency to the process. Right now, advisers are under no obligation to disclose this information.

When it comes to retirement, every penny counts. It is unconscionable that we would allow self-interested advisers to rob hardworking American families of their hard-earned retirement savings.

The bottom line is that we must pursue policy solutions that benefit working families and that help them to adequately prepare for retirement. Please oppose the resolution.

□ 1415

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, there we go again. No matter how many times you say ''$17 billion,'' it doesn't mean it is a fact.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER), my good friend. He has two very special guests today, his children, who are on the House floor with him.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I have Hudson and Ava with me. That is right. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 88, and I commend my colleague from Tennessee for bringing this important measure forward.

In life and in public service, we are not just responsible for our intentions, we are responsible for the results, the true consequences of our actions. Unfortunately, the Obama administration often seems to ignore this simple life wisdom.

My colleagues across the aisle have spent a lot of time today talking about their good intentions with this 1,000-page rule.

Do you know what?

It may be true that the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule was intended to protect consumers. The problem is the rule will, in fact, have the opposite result.

We need more families saving for retirement, and those families need sound financial advice. Instead of increasing access to financial advice for those who need it the most, this rule will cut off access to affordable retirement counsel for many lower- and middle-income Americans. That is the true result of the so-called fiduciary rule.

Dr. ROE's legislation, H.J. Res. 88, would stop this rule from taking effect, stand up to the Federal bureaucrats, and protect American families who are struggling to save for their futures.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from California (Mr. BECERRA), the chair of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, just as we expect our doctors to act in our best interests, so should the financial advisers, whom we pay to help us make those very important investment decisions for retirement. There is nothing strange about this rule. It is just trying to bring us up to speed with the times. This rule says that the saver's best interest comes first before the financial adviser's commission can be taken into consideration or before that financial adviser can make decisions based on his or her association to a particular type of investment.

Thirty years ago maybe this was not such a big issue because, 30 years ago, folks, like my parents, used to get their retirement savings through their pensions. You paid into it through your work, and you knew how much you would get out. It was fixed. It is what we called defined benefit plans. Your benefit was defined because you kept contributing while you worked. Those are pretty much gone.

Today it is all about 401(k)s and IRAs, and all of a sudden, you, the worker, have to make decisions on your investment because you do not know how much it will return once you retire. It is all based on what the market does; so now you have to make sure that your money that is in this 401(k) goes to the right investment vehicles.

The best thing to do is to go to someone who can give you advice. Too often, some of these advisers are advising you not based on what is in your best interest, but on where they can get extra commissions or if they have associations with particular investments.

This rule simply says to make your decision in the best interest of the saver, not in your best interest as the financial adviser. That is all it says. It is a big rule.

Why?

Because the financial services industry said: Wait a minute. You just can't say that. You have to say it in ways that don't affect the way we have a relationship with that saver.

So all of those accommodations were made to try to deal with it so we would always have investment advisers who would want to deal with American savers.

Remember, the problem here is that a lot of Americans don't have a lot to save, and a lot of investment advisers say: You are not worth my time.

What we don't want to do is restrict those investment advisers from talking to the average American who doesn't have all that much to save for retirement; but, by God, we don't want to say to that investment adviser to go ahead and take advantage of that saver.

This is a best interest rule for the saver. We should vote against this rule which rejects the Department of Labor's rule.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I inquire as to the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Tennessee has 15½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. I thank Chairman PHIL ROE for yielding, and I appreciate his leadership on this issue for American families.

Mr. Speaker, I am in strong support of the resolution to disapprove of the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule. This 1,000-page rule is yet another one of the President's burdensome, expensive regulations. Instead of helping American families by expanding access to financial advice, the Department of Labor has overly restricted the definition of a fiduciary and has created new obstacles for small business owners.

In just reading the rule of 1,000 pages, much less picking it up, it is going to cost consumers. This administration's misguided fiduciary rule will make it harder for small businesses to assist their employees in preparing for retirement; it will increase costs; and it will limit choices for those who need the advice most: American families.

In the past months, I have met with business leaders and financial advisers of the highest integrity across the Second Congressional District who share my concerns about the negative impacts of this unworkable regulation, which limits freedom.

Again, I appreciate Chairman PHIL ROE's leadership in sponsoring the resolution, and I urge my colleagues to vote in support.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), who has worked hard on this issue.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this resolution.

The Department of Labor's fiduciary rule is President Obama's top remaining domestic priority, and I think we owe the American consumer, the American people, and our seniors our support.

This rule advances a very simple principle: if you are giving investment advice to someone and if you are being paid for this advice, then you must put the interest of the consumer first. You must think about the consumer before you think about yourself or about making a fee or making your firm a fee or about helping someone else besides the consumer.

It merely says to think about the consumer and protect his interests. This is not just common sense—it is the fair, honest thing. We shouldn't have to legislate this. We are legislating this because there are abuses in this area. We are trying to stop these abuses and give good investment advice to good American citizens.

Let's not forget that most investors think it is already the law. They think that their advisers are giving them their best advice. This merely says that you have to think about the seniors and the American people. This should be like having a glass of water.

On this, there should not be a vote. The fact that we are coming to the floor to try to roll back a rule that helps Americans have fair and just savings is absolutely outrageous. If you have a problem, go to the Department of Labor. I have been there six times and I have raised concerns. They have incorporated every single change in the rule. They have given advanced time. They have bent over backwards to everyone who has raised an issue in this Congress and to every member of industry. That is why it is so long.

This protects the interests, the finances, of the American people. It puts money—saves money—in their pockets instead of forcing them to spend it on fees that are unnecessary and on products they don't need. A vote for this is a vote against the American family. Please vote against it. I believe that anyone who votes against this does not have the interests of America in his heart.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just to clear this up a little bit—and we all agree, everybody on both sides of the aisle, and Mr. SCOTT and I have agreed on this repetitively—if only best interests were the case, why isn't it just one sentence on one page and not 1,000 pages?

Number two, this is about small investors.

Mr. Speaker, a higher-income investor, like myself, this bill doesn't affect one bit—it will not affect me at all, and it affects nobody on Wall Street because most of us pay a percent of our assets in a fee. That is what we do and that is exactly what this joint resolution is doing. We are worried about small- and low-income investors. We have seen exactly this in England, and it is going to be repeated here once again.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), my good friend and fellow member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.J. Res. 88, a resolution disapproving of the Department of Labor's final rule that changes the definition of fiduciary.

This new definition hits low- and middle-income savers the hardest and would leave many unable to save for retirement at all. Additionally, it would make it significantly more difficult for small businesses to seek the investment advice they need to provide for their employees in order for them to plan and save for retirement.

In having owned and operated community pharmacies for nearly 30 years,

I take pride in having provided my employees with the tools they have needed to achieve financial independence, and retirement investment plans are one of the most important tools in this effort. Like many small business owners, I consider my employees to be part of my family. That is why H.J. Res. 88 is so important.

The new rule is a classic case of the Federal Government's stepping in the way of the Main Street success story with a ''Washington bureaucrats know best'' mentality, and it must be stopped. Americans have the right to choose how they save and what to save for, and this final rule from the DOL will only increase burdens on Americans and small businesses, limit opportunities, and ultimately hurt their chances to plan for their futures.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), a strong consumer advocate.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding to me and for his commitment to improving the lives of working Americans and retirees.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very dangerous bill as 86 percent of Americans believe that we are facing a retirement crisis in this country and as 75 percent are concerned about their own abilities to have secure retirements. More Americans fear outliving their money more than they fear death, and 8 in 10 want us to help them have guaranteed streams of income in retirement.

That is why I am just amazed that my Republican colleagues are pushing this resolution of disapproval on a carefully crafted, thoughtfully designed rule to improve retirement security, especially for people who need the help.

We have moved to an era when most workers, if they are offered any pensions at all, are given defined contribution options, like self-directed IRAs and 401(k)s. This means that their retirement security relies on the individual decisions they make, and many turn to financial advisers for guidance. They believe that when they pay for advice, that the advice that will be given will be in their best interests.

Why shouldn't they believe that?

The rule that my Republican colleagues want to overturn would ensure their best interests.

What happens when retirement investment advice isn't in the client's best interest?

Hard-earned retirement dollars are lost. It is estimated that Americans lose $17 billion a year because of conflicted advice, and individuals could lose nearly 25 percent of their assets over a 35-year period. Working women and men in this country and retirees are struggling, and the ''best interest'' standard is one step to help them.

I urge all of my colleagues to stand up for retirement security and reject this dangerous resolution. The ''best interest'' standard shouldn't just apply to financial advisers, it should apply to us here in Congress. Let's vote to protect the best interests of our constituents.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), my good friend and fellow member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. ALLEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 88, legislation that would disapprove of the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule.

This new DOL fiduciary rule definition will impose costly new mandates and burdensome regulations on retirement advisers. This will negatively affect and disproportionately hurt low- and middle-income families who seek retirement advice but who do not have enough in savings to afford an ongoing fee-for-service approach.

□ 1430

In other words, it is just another Washington one-size-fits-all solution that hurts those who may need financial advice the most.

Five years ago the Obama administration introduced a similar rule that was met with much opposition. Well, not much has changed in those 5 years. This rule will do more harm than good to the very people it is claiming to protect.

The majority of my time in Washington is spent fighting executive and agency overreach, and this rule is just another example of the failed Obama administration's attempt at Federal Government monopolization of retirement advice.

Everyone deserves accessible advice when planning and saving for retirement. The people in my district are sick and tired of these unelected bureaucrats in these departments and agencies imposing these rules.

I am proud to cosponsor H.J. Res. 88, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), a hard-working advocate for workers.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his hard work.

We know that, when people leave their jobs, they may get a call from an adviser offering to help the worker roll over their 401(k) or 403(b) into an IRA.

What the worker does not know is that the adviser oftentimes is really a salesperson. That salesperson has no responsibility to put the worker's best interest first. The law did not require a best-interest standard.

So some advisers steer people to high-cost products with hidden fees and hidden commissions. This practice by some, but not all, financial advisers strips wealth from families trying to save for retirement.

For 15 years consumer and investor advocates have fought to protect savers from these conflicts of interest. Finally, the Obama administration and Democrats worked with industry for a workable, best-interest standard.

Today's vote is clear: Do you support rules that protect savers' ability to build wealth? Do you want to protect investors from conflicts of interest?

I do. That is why I oppose today's effort by Republicans to put the profits of the financial advisers ahead of future retirees. Best interest of the saver and the worker, not the best interest of the industry, is how you should vote today. Vote ''no.''

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, the average Social Security recipient in this country gets $1,300. We have 29 percent of the people, millions of people over the age of 55, with no savings.

I don't believe for 1 minute anybody in this Chamber actually believes a 1,000-page bill is going to make that easier to do and less expensive to do. I have never seen that in the history of the world.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. GUINTA).

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in strong support of H.J. Res. 88, disapproving the harmful rule submitted by the Department of Labor.

It is 1,000 pages to define one word. No wonder the American people are angry and frustrated with Washington, D.C. They should be. I think people are a little bit smarter, and understand the term ''fiduciary.''

This rule threatens small businesses and individual savers by replacing current regulations dealing with investment advice.

But we want to make sure, of course, that consumers are being protected and given the best advice possible when it comes to their financial security, but the DOL rule is not the way to do it.

I am concerned that the Department proposal would be particularly harmful to low- and middle-income working American families looking for options to save, to invest, and to plan for their future.

Compliance with this rule would limit educational opportunities for individual retirement accounts and retirement savings plans, since distribution of materials about these services would be considered providing recommendations. That just doesn't make sense to me.

The proposal would actually make it much more difficult for people in my district and people across the country to save for their future.

The cost of compliance is significant. I urge my colleagues to vote for this joint resolution.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we possibly have two more speakers.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee advise me how many more speakers he has remaining.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, we have six remaining.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished

gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting listening to this debate. My friends across the aisle are telling me that this is going to help Americans.

Well, being creative, I can think of a few Americans that this will help: the loggers in north Wisconsin who are cutting wood and the papermakers in Wisconsin. It will help them for all the copies of this 1,000-page bill. Also, it will help the trial bar. If you look at a 1,000-page rule, how does anybody comply with that?

The Department of Labor doesn't understand this rule. No one across the aisle understands this rule. So when a small-town investment adviser breaks this 1,000-page rule, in comes the trial bar and sues. It is a giveaway to the trial bar.

Listen, we have had this conversation all afternoon. This is going to hurt middle-income, low-income individuals, low-income savers.

Listen, if you are a millionaire or a billionaire, don't worry. You are going to be fine. You are still going to get that personalized financial advice.

But if you are someone in my district, guess what they are going to say. Your financial adviser will say: I am sorry, sir. I can't service you anymore. I can't give you advice.

So what are my friends across the aisle going to ask my constituents to do? They will be asked to sign up online for a robo-adviser where they will answer 8 to 10 questions and the computer will spit out advice for them. They get computer advice, not personal advice.

So when people make erratic decisions, bad decisions, when markets move, you get your computer advising you. Instead of calling a person, an adviser who says, ''Listen, you are not going to retire for 10, 15, or 25 years, don't sell right now. Now is not the time to sell. Hold on,'' you don't get that advice because you have a computer.

I think we have to look at the real intent of this law. Less people are going to save, and more people are going to save even less.

So, at the end of the day, you are going to see Americans enter into their retirement years without having a little nest egg for their retirement, which means more Americans are going to be more reliant and more dependent on the government, which is what this has all been about: more government reliance.

Let's make sure we empower our citizens, our people, to get financial advice and be treated fairly and honorably by the men and women who serve our communities and our constituents.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this joint resolution. While this rule may be well intended, its effects will lead to higher fees, lack of diversity and choice, limiting access to professional retirement planning and guidance for those who need it the most, low balance, smaller investors trying to save every month for their retirement.

I have long believed that the Securities and Exchange Commission is the governing agency most expert and should have been taking the lead on this project of the fiduciary rule. The administration should have insisted on it.

Instead, they have been off track for 5 years. We are left with a 1,000-page rule that creates a confusing, bifurcated set of standards that will confuse investment advisers and their clients trying to save for retirement. Americans need more affordable retirement choices, not less.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee and Mrs. WAGNER for their work on this effort.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), a fellow classmate of mine.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I commend Dr. ROE for his significant effort in this regard.

I oppose the Department of Labor's recently finalized fiduciary rule. The new regulations will generate nearly 57,000 paperwork hours per year and cost Americans billions of dollars in duplicative fees.

It will hurt hardworking, middle-class American families as a similar rule hurt hardworking, middle-class British families. We have proof of this based upon what has happened in England.

Bipartisan legislation already advancing in the House protects access to affordable retirement advice, and that is the appropriate way to implement changes in the law.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 88 and oppose this most recent effort by the executive branch to bypass Congress and the American people and enact controversial policy by fiat.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS).

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule serves no purpose other than to make it more challenging for hardworking Americans to plan for retirement. This ill-advised rule will limit choice and access for those who seek financial advice to prepare for their future.

It will be especially damaging to middle-class families who will lose access to affordable retirement advice, and it will discourage small businesses from helping their employees save for retirement.

Saving for the future is difficult enough, and now this out-of-touch administration is stepping in to make it even more challenging. We can and we must get Washington out of the way.

Americans cannot afford to have the Federal Government interfering in their retirement planning. Under the Congressional Review Act, we can prevent implementation of this harmful rule. Congress should do everything it can to empower Americans to secure their future.

I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 88 to stop this misguided government intervention and allow the American people to achieve their retirement dreams.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy. It notes that ''The outdated regulations in place before this rulemaking did not ensure that financial advisers act in their clients' best interest when giving retirement investment advice. Instead, some firms have incentivized advisers to steer clients into products that have higher fees and lower returns . . .''

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.J. RES. 88—DISAPPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RULE ON FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY OF FINANCIAL ADVISERS—REP. ROE, R–TN, AND 30 COSPONSORS

The Administration strongly opposes H.J. Res. 88 because the bill would overturn an important Department of Labor final rule critical to protecting Americans' hard-earned savings and preserving their retirement security.

The outdated regulations in place before this rulemaking did not ensure that financial advisers act in their clients' best interest when giving retirement investment advice. Instead, some firms have incentivized advisers to steer clients into products that have higher fees and lower returns—costing American families an estimated $17 billion a year.

The Department's final rule will ensure that American workers and retirees receive retirement advice in their best interest, better enabling them to protect and grow their savings The final rule reflects extensive feedback from industry, advocates, and Members of Congress, and has been streamlined to reduce the compliance burden and ensure continued access to advice, while maintaining an enforceable best-interest standard that protects consumers. It is essential that these critical protections go into effect.

If the President were presented with H.J. Res. 88, he would veto the bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we have two additional speakers, but they are not here yet.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the H.J. Res. 88.

The Department of Labor's fiduciary rule would significantly affect constituents in my district. State Farm insurance in Bloomington, Illinois, is headquartered in my district.

State Farm and its agents all across this country offer services and products to help low- and moderate-income investors make the best decisions about their finances.

However, this rule by the Obama administration targets those service providers and its agents. It would raise compliance costs, limit the advice that companies can provide to their own employees, and penalizes small businesses that want to provide their employees with a 401(k) plan.

The bottom line is that this rule would drastically narrow the access that hardworking Americans have to retirement advice, hurting middle and working class families.

More bureaucratic burdens from the Obama administration in the form of a 1,000-page regulation is not a recipe for economic growth in this country. Stop choking the U.S. economy. Support this resolution.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 88.

I have been here now for 5 years, and it always seems to be the same theme: You poor, poor, stupid people. Only the government can help you decide how you should get ready for your retirement. I don't think there are any more 10 chilling words than: ''I'm from the government, and I'm here to help you.''

We are looking at the dismantling of people who help everyday people decide on retirement decisions. It is a very difficult thing to navigate, but, yet, we think we can do it better here because we do such a fantastic job.

My gosh, we are only $20 trillion in the red. Why wouldn't we advise hardworking American taxpayers how they should prepare for their retirement? We have already ruined their retirement for them.

It gets to the point of being a little bit stupefying to stand here in the people's House and think that somehow the administration and the Department of Labor came up with an 1,100-page definition of what the fiduciary responsibility should be. Stunning. Stunning.

The real fiduciary responsibility remains with the House. It is our responsibility to protect our hardworking American taxpayers. It is our responsibility to make sure that hardworking American taxpayers who advise people on their retirement should be allowed to exist. This is going to put them out of business. Why? Because we know so much better than they do.

This is misguided. This is misthought. This is about a bigger government, a more intrusive government, a government that taxes you more and serves you less. It is that simple.

□ 1445

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I include in the RECORD a letter in opposition to the resolution, in support of the rule, from a long list of consumer organizations, as well as five pages of quotes from industry officials in support of the rule.

SAVE OUR RETIREMENT,
April 26, 2016.

Re Oppose the Resolution to block DOL's final conflict of interest rule.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As organizations that support the Department of Labor's (DoL) rule to update and strengthen protections for retirement savers, we are writing to urge you to oppose H.J. Res 88, the Resolution of Disapproval that would block its implementation. This rule is a tremendous accomplishment in the fight to improve our nation's retirement income security and should be supported.

The rule will at long last require all financial professionals who provide retirement investment advice to put their clients' best interests ahead of their own financial interests. By taking this essential step, the rule will help all Americans—many of whom are responsible for making their own decisions about how best to invest their retirement savings—keep more of their hard-earned savings so they can enjoy a more financially secure and independent retirement.

In promulgating this rule, the DoL engaged in an open and inclusive process, and the final rule is better as a result. Specifically, the DoL responded to congressional and industry feedback by making significant revisions designed to facilitate implementation and compliance, while minimizing the harmful impact of conflicts of interest on the quality of retirement investment advice.

Small account holders and moderate-income retirement savers stand to benefit most from this rule. The academic literature makes clear that it is the less wealthy, frequently financially unsophisticated retirement savers who are most at risk when it comes to investment recommendations that are not in their best interests. Often, those recommendations promote investment products with high costs, substandard features, elevated risks or poor returns. While the financial adviser may make a substantial profit off these recommendations, the retirement saver pays a heavy price for investment advice that is not in his or her best interest, amounting to tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost retirement income.

Strengthening the protections for hardworking Americans who try to save for a secure and independent retirement is a key priority for our organizations, and to its credit, the DoL has worked diligently to make important and needed changes to an outdated rule. We urge all Members of Congress to join us in supporting this common sense and long overdue initiative and to reject this effort to block its implementation. Your hardworking constituents deserve no less.

Sincerely,

AARP, AFL-CIO, Alliance for Retired Americans, American Association for Justice, American Association of University Women (AAUW), American Federation of Government Employees, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Americans for Financial Reform, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Better Markets, B'nai B'rith International, Center for Economic Justice, Center for Responsible Lending, Committee for the Fiduciary Standard;

Consumer Action, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Demos, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), Justice in Aging, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Main Street Alliance, Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO, National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, National Consumers League;

National Council of La Raza, National Women's Law Center, OWL—The Voice of Women 40+, NAACP, National Education Association, Pension Rights Center, Public Citizen, Public Investors Arbitration Bar Association, Rebalance IRA, SAFER UMass Amherst (SAFER: A Committee of Economists and other Experts for Stable, Accountable, Fair and Efficient Financial Reform), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Social Security Works, United Food and Commercial Workers, United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union (USW), U.S. PIRG, Woodstock Institute, Young Invincibles.

FINRA: The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, the self-regulatory agency overseeing brokerage firms, was one of the most vigorous critics of the Labor Department's proposed fiduciary rule. The group ''filed one of the most pointed comment letters last summer about the proposed rule, which would require advisers to 401(k) and individual retirement accounts to act in the best interests of their clients,'' Investment News' Mark Schoeff Jr. reports. But the final rule gave big concessions to brokers, leading Finra's leader to effectively bless the new rule Friday. The organization's chair and chief executive Richard G. Ketchum told an audience at the Brookings Institution that the final rule is a ''big improvement.'' (Politico)

John Thiel, Head of Merrill Lynch Wealth Management: ''We are pleased that Secretary Perez and the Department of Labor staff have worked to address many of the practical concerns raised during the comment period. Most important, we support a consistent, higher standard for all professionals who advise the American people on their investments. As we study the details of the final rule, we hope to continue what has been a constructive dialogue with the Department about how to implement a best interest standard effectively and efficiently for the benefit of our clients, advisors and shareholders.'' (WSJ)

TIAA: ''Putting the customer first is a core TIAA value, and we believe adhering to a best interest standard under the Department's new regulation is an important way to help more people build financial well-being. IRAs are a key part of creating retirement security, so we agree with the requirement that distribution advice be subject to the same fiduciary standard as all other investment advice. This will ensure that rollover discussions, including whether to roll over from an employer-sponsored plan to an IRA, are always in employees' and retirees' best interest. Based on our preliminary analysis, it appears the Department has gone a long way toward making the best interest standard the industry standard. TIAA supports this direction, and we look forward to reviewing the full rule.'' (Statement)

LPL Financial Holdings Inc., which provides brokerage services to more than 14,000 independent advisers, said it was pleased with the Labor Department's changes to the fiduciary rule. ''In particular, we are encouraged by the increased time frame for implementation, the ability to easily enter into the best interest contract with our existing clients, and the freedom to recommend any assets that are appropriate to help investors save for retirement''. (WSJ)

Ray Ferrara, Chairman and CEO, ProVise Management Group: ''It's quite workable,''

says Ferrara, whose practice serves many small businesses and mid-level investors in the retirement space. ''Under the best interest contract exemption, firms and advisors can continue to receive commissions for the sales of financial products and for the advice and services they provide—they just have to make sure that the commissions are reasonable and that their advice is not influenced by the level of compensation they receive.'' (www.provise.com)

Jim Weddle, Managing Partner, Edward Jones: ''We've been adapting to new rules forever. The difference this time is that our compliance with the new rule will also grow the public's trust and confidence.'' (Statement)

Morgan Stanley: ''Putting clients' interests first is a core value of Morgan Stanley. While it will take some time to analyze all of the rule's details, we have been planning for it since it was initially proposed and have been making investments in the systems and technology that will enable us to offer compliant solutions to clients whose retirement accounts are affected.'' (Investment News)

Financial Planning Coalition: ''The Financial Planning Coalition opposes any effort by Congress to thwart the Department of Labor's final fiduciary rule, which reflects extensive public comment and articulates common-sense standards for ensuring financial advice in consumers' best interest. Initial reactions from many financial services firms and professionals—across business models—have been largely supportive and focused on implementation rather than opposition. We strongly urge Congress to step back, respect the comprehensive feedback process, and not to interfere with final implementation of this important rule to benefit millions of American retirement savers.'' (Statement)

Financial Engines: ''The new conflict of interest rule is an important step forward in our nation's retirement security and has the potential to positively impact retirement investors, regardless of their wealth or investing experience,'' said Larry Raffone, president and chief executive officer of Financial Engines. ''Financial Engines has always believed that it is not only possible, but absolutely necessary, for retirement advisors to provide un-conflicted advice and guidance to their clients. That's why we've made a point of operating as a fiduciary for our clients since founding 20 years ago.'' (Statement)

National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors: ''NAIFA members and others within the insurance and financial services industry worked diligently with the Department of Labor to address many concerns we had with the DOL's draft rule,'' said Jules Gaudreau, president of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors. ''We appreciate that DOL has accepted many of NAIFA's suggestions and reworked some portions of the rule to address concerns raised during the review process.'' (Statement)

The Rebalance IRA Investment Committee (Dr. Charles D. Ellis, Dr. Burton G. Malkiel, Scott Puritz, Managing Director, Mitch Tuchman, Managing Director, and Jay Vivian): As members of the financial advisor community, we are writing to express our appreciation for the leadership and hard work that you have devoted to the fiduciary duty rule just released by the U.S. Department of Labor. This extraordinarily important reform will protect millions of hard working Americans from the conflicts of interest that annually siphon away billions of dollars of hard-earned retirement savings due to inflated commissions and poor returns. (Letter)

Karen Barr, CEO, Investment Adviser Association: ''The IAA is pleased to see that the Department of Labor clearly recognizes that many advisers already commit to providing high-quality advice that always puts their client's best interest first. We have long believed that the fiduciary standard should be applied to all financial professionals giving investment advice. Our members, SEC-registered investment advisers, are already held to that standard. The IAA is also pleased to see that—based on preliminary information—the DOL appears to have taken many of our most significant concerns with the proposal into account. For example, the IAA and others commented that the proposal appeared to favor low-fee and low-cost—typically passively managed—investments over all else, ignoring returns, quality, and other factors that may be important to investors. The DOL expressly acknowledges that it did not adopt the low-fee streamlined option considered in the proposal because of that concern, and further clarified that the adviser is not required to recommend the lowest fee option if another investment is better for the client. These are welcome changes. We also welcome the DOL's clarifications on the timing of fiduciary status, as it appears that the final rule makes it clear that ''hire me'' discussions that do not include investment recommendations are not fiduciary recommendations.'' (Statement)

Jon Stein, CEO, Betterment: ''We support this rule for a lot of reasons. We've actually been engaged and involved with the Department of Labor and the OMB for a while supporting this rule,'' Stein told CNBC's ''Closing Bell.'' ''It's an unambiguous public good. This is one of the most exciting things to happen for investors in 40 years.'' (Business Insider)

Triad Advisors: ''We're in the process of reviewing the details of this recently finalized rule, but one thing is clear: Delivering maximum choice and flexibility in business and compensation models to independent advisors is more crucial than ever before. We're confident that our firm's focus since we were founded on supporting hybrid advisors uniquely positions Triad Advisors to best serve the evolving needs of independent advisors in this new regulatory landscape. We're also encouraged on a preliminary basis with modifications from previous versions of the rule in its final version, which seem to reflect the willingness of the DOL to listen to our industry and the investing public on a range of key issues.'' (Statement)

Legg Mason: Jeff Masom, co-head of sales for asset manager Legg Mason Inc. said the Labor Department had ''certainly made a lot of concessions'' including giving firms more time to comply and grandfathering in existing investments. While the rule is likely to require ''a lot of time and expense'' from intermediaries, Mr. Masom said Legg Mason is optimistic about the impact of the rule on its business. He said the firm benefits from not offering retirement plan record-keeping services and being a ''pure'' investment manager with a mix of products, some of which are low-cost. ''Competing with passive has always been on the table. Active managers always has to justify their fees. Nothing has changed on that front,'' Mr. Masom said. (WSJ)

Cetera Financial Group: ''Cetera has been aware of the broad brush strokes of the DOL rule for some time now, and we have been actively positioning our advisors to transition this situation from an obstacle to an opportunity. We have been utilizing our industry-leading scale and resources to develop multiple new tools and platforms to prepare our advisors for how to best operate their businesses and enjoy continued success in this new regulatory environment. Preliminarily, it appears the rule includes modifications that indicate the DOL has considered some of the industry's concerns. However, we will be studying the newly released details of the final rule in the coming days, and from there, we will announce a number of our initiatives to support advisors in this area in the coming weeks.'' (Statement)

Jason C. Roberts, CEO, Pension Resource Institute, and Partner, Retirement Law Group: ''Based upon our initial review, we believe that many of the challenges in the proposal have been modified to be more workable. We are sifting through the details but are generally encouraged—particularly with the lower bar for fee-based IRA rollovers and the extended timeline for implementation. We will be begin updating PRI's member firms next week and start developing the required forms, agreements, disclosures, policies and training in the coming months.'' (Investment News)

Morningstar: Scott Cooley, direct of policy research at investment-research and investment-management firm Morningstar Inc., said: ''One of my fears was that people who had already had paid a commission on their retirement accounts would be moved into fee-based accounts and then have to pay 1% of assets a year after they had already paid a commission.'' But the DOL has ''indicated that it would have to be in the best interest of the client to shift them to a fee-based account from a commission-based account. That's unambiguously pro-consumer.'' Mr. Cooley also said that because the final rule incorporates the financial-services industry's comments, ''It will be harder for people in the industry to argue that the DOL didn't take their feedback into account. I suspect the DOL drafted this with an eye towards potential court challenges.'' (WSJ)

Evensky & Katz: Harold Evensky, chairman of financial-advisory firm Evensky & Katz who champions the fee-only, fiduciary approach to financial advice and planning and who has long supported the rule, said: ''The DOL has indeed taken a major step toward a more secure and dignified retirement for millions of Americans. In addition, the DOL has obviously carefully listened and responded to the concerns raised by many financial service participants regarding the original proposal including easing the compliance process but maintaining a strong, legally enforceable best interest standard.'' He added: ''At this stage it seems that the Department of Labor's years of effort will be a major win for investors.'' (WSJ)

RBC Capital Markets: In an unexpected positive change for the industry, RBC Capital Markets said in a research note, the requirement that financial advisers enter into a separate fiduciary contract with customers when dealing in the retirement area got scrapped. Another positive: The Labor Department expanded the universe of 401(k) and other retirement plans that would be exempt from the new rule. The draft proposal would have covered plans under $100 million in assets, while the final rule drops that threshold to $50 million. RBC said annuity companies including Lincoln, MetLife and Prudential ''would still see a negative hit to variable annuity sales—although the impact would likely be slightly less than if the draft had been left unchanged.'' (WSJ)

UBS Group: Scaling back aspects of the rule will likely boost the stocks of the very firms most affected by the tighter restrictions, a team of researchers at UBS Group AG said in a research note. ''While the thrust of the rule remains unchanged and we still see longer-term headwinds, we believe the rule's softening could provide a relief rally in many of the most impacted stocks including asset managers, life insurers and [independent broker-dealers],'' the UBS researchers wrote. They based their analysis on a fact-sheet distributed by the Obama administration. (WSJ)

Bob Gerstemeier, President, Gerstemeier Financial Group: ''The responsibility of putting my clients' interests first will have little impact to the way I operate,'' he says. ''Ultimately, I think the new regulations requiring advisors to make more disclosures and put clients' interests first will not only make our profession better, it will ensure that more Americans receive competent, trusted and appropriate advice.'' (www.provise.com)

Guild Investment Management ''At Guild, which is an SEC-registered investment advisor, we have adhered to fiduciary standards for our entire life as a firm (more than four decades), and we certainly welcome the expansion of these standards, which we view as simple and fair common sense.'' (www.equities.com)

Rob Foregger, Co-founder, NextCapital: Rob Foregger, co-founder of Next Capital, says the Labor Department ''made very sensible amendments to the proposed rule. The final result strikes the right balance.'' ''The new DoL fiduciary rule is a major step forward for the modernization of the $17 trillion retirement industry—and perhaps the largest overhaul to the investment management industry in nearly three decades,'' he added. ''The DoL went to great lengths to integrate the productive feedback from the financial industry, while ensuring that a true fiduciary standard of care was enacted.'' (www.nasdaq.com)

United Capital: The Labor Department's fiduciary rule is an important step in providing more disclosure to investors, but ''this should really be viewed as a step one,'' says Terry Siman, a lawyer and a managing director with wealth-management firm United Capital Financial Advisers LLC who has supported the rule. ''It takes a long time to make the cultural shifts'' of moving the industry toward providing greater transparency, he said. Mr. Siman added the new rule would give retirement savers a boost by putting their interests ahead of advisers, while also empowering them to ask for more information around costs and conflicts of interest. ''The consumer ultimately will benefit, it's just going to be first and foremost the responsible consumers who know'' to ask their advisers for that additional information,'' said Mr. Siman. (WSJ)

Andrei Cherny, CEO, Aspiration: ''I've seen first-hand that the wheels of government can move slowly—especially when there are thousands of lobbyists and many millions in campaign contributions working against progress. But the new fiduciary role from the Department of Labor is a big step in the right direction. The financial industry is one of the least trusted in America—for some very good reasons. Too often, conflicts of interest lead to a 'heads I win, tails you lose' game where people's very livelihoods are on the line.'' (Statement)

Wells Fargo: ''Wells Fargo has been an active advocate for our clients and financial advisors during the DOL's rule-making process. We have a robust plan in place for reviewing the final rule, which we hope will reflect the suggestions that we and others have offered in order to avoid unintended negative impacts on investors. Wells Fargo has long supported a best interest standard and believes that professional financial advisors have a crucial role to play in encouraging retirement saving and investing. As one of the largest and strongest financial services companies, we enjoy a distinct advantage in our ability to adapt to this change.'' (Investment News)

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, there are two points that I would like to make. One is that when all you can complain about is the size of the bill, you know you have a very weak argument.

Second, they mentioned the United Kingdom. As I understand the United Kingdom plan, they banned commissions, so it is not the same thing. This rule will allow commissions if those commissions are in the best interests of the consumer.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Committee on Education and the Workforce hastily marked up this joint resolution only 48 hours after it was introduced. This week the House majority has rushed it to the floor for a vote, only 21 days after the rule was published. According to the Congressional Research Service, that is one-fifth of the average time between the time a final rule is issued or published and when the CRA vote occurs.

If anyone has concerns about the rule, those concerns can be addressed to the Department of Labor, and the Department can issue clarifications and guidance. But instead of reserving judgment and seeking clarification, this resolution is offered and would have the effect of not only rejecting this rule, but any similar rule in the foreseeable future.

This joint resolution may pass the House today and may pass the Senate next month, but the President will veto it. There are not the votes to override the veto, so that is simple arithmetic. We are just wasting our time.

Instead of wasting time on this sure-to-be-vetoed joint resolution, the House should be helping working people make ends meet and better provide a future for their children and grandchildren. We should be taking up legislation that would boost workers' wages, help workers achieve a better balance between work and family, level the playing field by strengthening protections from discrimination so everyone has a fair shot, and strengthening workers' ability to have a safe and secure retirement. All of that will be the focus of House Democrats.

For now, I urge my colleagues to protect workers' hard-earned retirement funds by voting ''no'' on this resolution.

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

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

I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for the civility of this debate.

In closing, I want to remind my colleagues that a ''yes'' vote on this resolution will protect access to affordable retirement advice and allow us to get back to delivering real solutions that will empower every American to save for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is wasting time to help and protect working families and small businesses from this onerous rule that may actually prevent them from saving for the future. As we have said here on the House floor, almost a third of all Americans—and it distresses me every day—do not have any retirement savings or pension plan. They are looking at $1,300 a month in Social Security to live a very long time. Our life expectancies are going up, so we should be doing everything we can to help people and make it easier for them to save for retirement.

I started a small medical practice—joined four other doctors—almost 40 years ago now. We started out with a very small pension plan for all of our employees. It was a broker-dealer investment situation. We have now grown that to 450 employees, and we have a totally different arrangement because we have a different business model now.

Higher income and higher earning people, like myself, don't have to worry about this rule. It will not affect us. It will affect small businesses that are trying to get started and individuals like my children who are out there starting their pension plans.

If you believe, as I do, that the American people deserve better than a flawed rule that will wreak havoc on workers and retirees, I urge you to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this is a 1,000-page bill to define one word. This is a Webster's dictionary that defines every word in the English language, which is only slightly bigger than that 1,000-page bill right there. I don't think anybody believes that is going to make it easier for people to retire in this country.

On behalf of every American family, I urge you to stand up for affordable retirement advice and support H.J. Res. 88.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 88, a joint resolution disapproving the rule promulgated by the United States Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''fiduciary.''

I oppose this resolution because it seeks to nullify a rule that was years in the making and which provides common sense protections for consumers by simply requiring retirement advisors to put the best interests of their clients above their own financial interests.

Currently, these retirement advisors are only required to recommend ''suitable'' investments, which means they can recommend investments that offer them a higher commission even where an otherwise identical investment with a lower commission is available.

Under current rules and regulations, this is all perfectly legal—but highly unfair, especially middle-class seniors dependent upon the investment income from the hard-earned money they saved during their working years and entrusted to a financial advisor.

Because those outdated regulations did not ensure that financial advisers act in their clients' best interest when giving retirement investment advice, some firms have found it profitable to incentivize their advisers to steer clients into products that have higher fees and lower returns at a cost to American families of approximately $17 billion a year.

The Fiduciary Rule issued and published by the Department of Labor (DOL) on April 8,

2016, bans these practices and removes the incentive for financial advisors to put their pecuniary interest ahead of their client's proprietary interest.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that DOL's Fiduciary Rules was thoughtfully, responsibly, and transparently crafted over several years in conjunction with hundreds of meetings on the rule with industry professionals and the public and after considering more than 3,000 public comments over a six-month period from the American people.

In comparison, House Republicans quickly convened a markup only two days after H.J. Res. 88 was introduced and only thirteen days after the rule was finalized and published.

This clearly shows that Republicans in Congress are more interested in attacking the Obama Administration than acting to safeguard the hard-earned retirement savings of the American people and working to ensure those savings are protected.

The DOL's fiduciary rule simply guarantees that those entrusted with the savings of millions of Americans act in the best interests of their clients.

The Department of Labor has done right by the American people.

Now it is time for this House to do right by the American people by rejecting H.J. Res. 88 and leaving the DOL Fiduciary Rule in place.

Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. Speaker, investment advisors in my district have contacted me expressing concern that the Department of Labor's fiduciary rule as currently written would make it difficult to continue serving clients with smaller portfolios. However, every investor deserves to be protected from bad actors who sell them products that do not fit their needs. The Department of Labor should continue to work with all stakeholders to craft a fair rule. The bill before us would do nothing to correct the rule, tying the Department's hands from establishing safeguards that work for everyone. It's unlikely the Senate will act on the bill. If they do, the President has indicated he will veto it. Our time would be better spent improving the rule to make certain investors are protected without diminishing advisors' ability to serve their clients.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88.

One of the biggest concerns I hear from my constituents in Houston and Harris County, Texas is having enough money for retirement. For decades, we have seen the private sector moving their employees from defined benefit to defined contribution retirement plans. Now we're seeing growing pressure to move public sector workers onto defined contribution plans as well.

Even more concerning is the current effort by multiemployer pension funds, like Central States, to pull the rug from under retirees and slash their pensions by hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This pattern has troubled me for years and I hope Congress will take action to ensure workers in Houston and Harris County and throughout our great country who have worked for decades get the secure retirement they deserve.

If American families are going to be required to secure their retirement in the private market, at the very least, they ought to have peace of mind that they are getting the best advice from financial professionals.

The Labor Department and Secretary Tom Perez worked for years to put together a fair and balanced rule that will ensure that when it comes to saving for retirement, customers—in other words, the American people—come first by holding advisers and brokers to a fiduciary standard.

The Council of Economic Advisers has reported that due to loopholes that had been on the books for 40 years, conflicted advice and hidden fees have cost American families $17 billion a year in lost retirement savings. These conflicts of interest can cost a retiree almost one-fifth of their savings by age 65.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle today to stand with our nation's retirees and working families and vote down this irresponsible resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 706, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 3 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Passage of House Joint Resolution 88;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 2901; and

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

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

DISAPPROVING DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RULE RELATED TO DEFINITION OF THE TERM ''FIDUCIARY''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''Fiduciary'', on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 183, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
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
Marchant
Marino
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
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
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—183

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
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)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Collins (NY)
Crawford
Fincher
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hanna
Issa
MacArthur
Massie
Moore
Rothfus
Stutzman
Takai
Torres
Westmoreland
Wilson (FL)

□ 1523

Mrs. CAPPS and Mr. ASHFORD changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. ROSKAM changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 176 on H.J. Res. 88, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye.''

Stated against:

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted:

On rollcall No. 176, ''nay.''

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted:

On rollcall No. 176, ''nay.''

FLOOD INSURANCE MARKET PARITY AND MODERNIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2901) to amend the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to require that certain buildings and personal property be covered by flood insurance, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 419, nays 0, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 177]

YEAS—419

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

NOT VOTING—14

Collins (NY)
Crawford
Fincher
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hanna
Issa
MacArthur

Massie	Stutzman	Torres
Rothfus	Takai	Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1531

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 177 on H.R. 2901, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for votes on Thursday, April 28, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall votes 173 and 174, "yea" on rollcall vote 175, "nay" on rollcall vote 176, and "yea" on rollcall vote 177.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

RECOGNIZING APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT, BRISTOL MOTOR SPEEDWAY, FOOD CITY, AND OTHERS FOR THEIR GENEROSITY

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Appalachian Service Project, the Bristol Motor Speedway, Food City, and scores of volunteers for their generosity in building a home for Colene and Steve Tredway and their family in Bristol, Tennessee.

The Tredway family first applied to ASP's home repair program to help make room in their small mobile home for their newly adopted children, Alexis and Kadin. When ASP heard the Tredways' story, they decided to do more than just renovations.

ASP, the Bristol Motor Speedway, and Food City partnered to build a brand new home for the Tredways in only 60 hours, all at no cost to the family. This new three-bedroom house will give the Tredways a better home to care for their children, and it will give Alexis and Kadin room to grow with their new family.

I am proud to recognize ASP; the ASP president, Walter Crouch; the Bristol Motor Speedway; Food City; Will Crumley and Ron Gouge, who oversaw the project; and countless volunteers for their kindness and generosity toward the Tredway family and our community.

41ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SAIGON

(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. Mr. Speaker, today I join the Vietnamese American community across this Nation and actually around the world to commemorate the 41st anniversary of the fall of Saigon.

We must remember our fallen soldiers, American veterans, and our South Vietnamese allies who fought and died in the name of freedom and democracy.

Unfortunately, the Government of Vietnam continues to crack down on its citizens by using article 79 of the Vietnamese penal code, which prohibits political pluralism or prohibits associating with pro-democracy parties.

Last week I met with Ms. Vu Minh Khanh, the wife of prominent Vietnamese political prisoner, Mr. Nguyen Van Dai. Mr. Nguyen is currently being detained by the Vietnamese Government after being severely beaten for peacefully expressing his views on democracy.

As President Obama prepares to visit Vietnam, I urge the President to make human rights a key priority, and I strongly urge the President to call for the release of human rights activist Mr. Nguyen Van Dai and Father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly.

It is time—it is time for the United States to take a strong and principled stand against Vietnam's ongoing human rights violations.

ROTARY CLUB OF LANSING'S 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a wonderful organization in my district, the Rotary Club of Lansing. This May, the Rotary Club of Lansing is celebrating 100 years of service above self.

The club was founded on May 29, 1916, and has been dedicated to many community and international service projects ever since.

Over the past 100 years, Lansing Rotarians have provided over $2 million in grants for local and international projects. Such projects include the Rotary Veterinary Clinic at Potter Park Zoo, the Hospice of Lansing Residential Facility, annual support to the H.O.P.E. Scholarship Program for Lansing at-risk youth, and the reconstruction of a school in Sri Lanka after the tsunami.

Lansing Rotarians also support the efforts of Rotary International in its fight to eradicate polio throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate the Rotary Club of Lansing on 100 years of service. I thank the Lansing Rotarians for their commitment to the people and their service to the Lansing community.

CONGRATULATING NORTH HOLLYWOOD HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE BOWL WINNERS

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, it fills me with great pride to congratulate students from my San Fernando Valley district at North Hollywood High School for winning the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Science Bowl Regional Competition. This academic competition tests students' knowledge in all areas of science, quizzing them in a fast-paced question-and-answer format.

These science bowls challenge and prepare our Nation's students to become researchers and engineers of the future. As an engineer myself, I know that there is an ever-growing demand for talent in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields right here in America.

It is thrilling to see the promising young men and women coming out of our San Fernando Valley schools with such great talent. You should all be proud of yourselves for making it this far, as it is a huge accomplishment. The entire San Fernando Valley and I will be cheering you on as you compete in the national finals here in Washington, D.C. Congratulations.

COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL OF WORLD WAR I

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, the world was in a war so big that it was called the war to end all wars. World War I started in 1914 and involved 32 nations. It pitted the Allies against the central powers and stretched across five continents.

The United States was isolationist at that time and was not in the war. But in 1917, the British intercepted a telegram called the Zimmerman Telegram from the German Government to Mexico, encouraging Mexico to join Germany. In return, Germany would help Mexico take and conquer Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

So after the sinking of seven U.S. merchant ships by submarines, the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and the publication of the Zimmerman Telegram, the United States Congress declared war in April of 1917.

Four-and-a-half million Americans signed up to fight, including a friend that I later got to know by the name of Frank Buckles, who was 16 when he joined the war in World War I. He lived to the age of 110 and died in 2011. American doughboys like him proved the decisive difference.

Just a year after the U.S. was in the war, the war was over on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour. In all, there were 30 million casualties worldwide, civilian and military.

Mr. Speaker, after the war, the United States became an international power. So 114,000 doughboys died over there in the great World War I. When they got home, an equal number died from the Spanish flu that they had contracted when they were in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, we remember them all 100 years ago this year, for the worst casualty of war is to be forgotten.

And that is just the way it is.

LEAD POISONING IN DRINKING WATER IN SCHOOLS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, we have a situation that is getting very serious in this Nation, and it is the issue of drinking water in schools.

I hail from the 10th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey, and after traveling to Flint, Michigan, on March 4 to listen to the people of that community talk about what had happened in their community around their drinking water and how their children have been poisoned—a potential of 9,000 children having issues with lead—I came back to Newark, New Jersey, my home, knowing that Newark is the third oldest city in the Nation.

I took action. I spoke to several mayors in my community, and I said: ''You need to pay attention to what is going on with drinking water. There is a problem.''

Lo and behold, 3 days later, in 30 schools in Newark, New Jersey, elevated levels of lead were found. So I took action, and I have introduced the TEST for Lead Act in schools. This will help States that get Federal dollars from the Federal Government test the water in schools for lead.

This is not only a cities issue. In several communities around Newark, this issue has also been found in the suburbs. It is coming to a community near you. So I ask my colleagues to support the TEST for Lead Act.

□ 1545

CHANGES TO THE WHITE COLLAR EXEMPTION

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, the current administration has changed the way business is done in America.

By making unilateral changes to the white collar exemption within the Fair Labor Standards Act, businesses across our Nation will be forced to change their investment and growth strategy. This Big Government pie-in-the-sky philosophy does not grasp the realities of Main Street America. The change would require employers to pay overtime for all employees who make $50,440 or less per year.

The administration's own Chief Counsel for Advocacy at the Small Business Administration pointed out that research for this comprehensive rule change was based on assumptions and lacked industry data and involvement.

Here is another example of an agency reinterpreting an old law from 1938 and changing it to fit the current administration's agenda. This is lawmaking by executive fiat and it is unconstitutional.

It is time for Congress to revive the legislative veto and hold an unaccountable executive branch accountable.

MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DESAULNIER. 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 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. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Raise the Wage Act that was introduced almost exactly 1 year ago today.

Raising the minimum wage is critical to addressing income inequality in the United States, one of the most pressing issues facing our Nation. But the majority has not even called a hearing on this issue.

Yesterday, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Democrats held our own forum on this issue, during which we considered the evidence in support of raising the minimum wage. We heard from business leaders and economists that raising the wage will reduce workforce turnover, stimulate consumer spending, and grow jobs.

The evidence is absolutely clear that raising the minimum wage will give 35 million workers a raise and lift 4.5 million Americans out of poverty. It is also abundantly clear that raising the minimum wage will benefit businesses in the U.S. economy. That may be why in a recent poll from Republican pollster Frank Luntz, 80 percent of business executives supported raising the minimum wage.

The record could not be more clear: raising the minimum wage is good for workers, businesses, and the American economy. That is why today I include in the RECORD testimony from yesterday's Member forum on the Business Case for Raising the Federal Minimum Wage, presented by David Cooper of the Economic Policy Institute; Sherry Deutschmann of LetterLogic, Inc.; Scott Nash of MOM's Organic; and Carmen Ortiz Larsen of AQUAS, Inc.

WRITTEN REMARKS FROM CARMEN ORTIZ LARSEN, PRESIDENT OF AQUAS INC. AND CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF THE HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

Submitted to the House Education & the Workforce Committee—Minority Panel on the Business and Economic Case for Raising the Minimum Wage, April 27, 2016

My name is Carmen Ortiz Larsen, and I support an increase in the Federal minimum wage to at least $12 by 2020; I support the Raise the Wage Act. I am the owner and President of an Engineering and Information Technology firm called AQUAS Incorporated. I am also the Chair of the Board of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County, Maryland.

AQUAS Inc. staff includes professionals, administrative personnel, and field technicians. Our lowest wage is $14 an hour. Our plan is to have the minimum wage in our workplace at $16/hour within the next 18 months.

Being a small business owner is hard work. Small business owners have to be frugal, prudent, smart and alert to opportunities, navigating cash flow ups and downs, and managing cost increases and price competitiveness. Controlling costs is essential to ensure sufficient margins for funding growth, long-term success and customer satisfaction. If I don't control costs wisely, though, the dollars I save in one area of the business could cost me more in other areas.

Some years ago we sought to keep costs down by using the lowest legal minimum wage as compensation for clerical and field staff. We found that these workers had a greater incidence of health issues, absenteeism and turnover. The cost of replacing and retraining staff outweighed any savings in keeping their pay rate low.

We found that it was a smarter business policy to raise the hourly rate for the lower paid jobs. The results were better staff morale, increased loyalty and better service to the customer. We gained a more stable workforce and improved performance.

Markets are competitive, and every year costs go up. We have to face yearly increases in cost of insurance, supplies, advertising, facilities, services. We take this for granted as the cost of doing business. It should be no different to expect wage increases, especially for the lowest paid workers. All employees deserve a wage that is sufficient to live without the anxiety of being left without food or shelter.

AQUAS does not believe that the answer to cost management or competitive challenges lies in paying our staff poverty wages; this simply diminishes the quality and ongoing success of our enterprise. Instead, we remain competitive through efficiencies and quality improvements, through innovative ways to maintain reasonable profitability and improve the customer's experience. Our staff is part of who we are as a company, and they deserve to make ends meet.

We look to you as elected officials to set boundaries that cut across special interest areas, to make those tough decisions that create a delicate balance between an unrestrained commercial interest and a level

playing field for businesses and acceptable conditions for individual sustainability. The current minimum wage adjusted for inflation is lower than it was in 1950. This is simply untenable and should be unacceptable in our country.

The current $7.25 an hour does not provide minimum wage workers with a wage with which they can live with dignity, have a decent home, nutritious food, and a reliable way to get back and forth from work, without worrying about whether or not they will lose their job or their family if they can't. The minimum wage is so low that workers have to seek a second job or public assistance of one kind or another. I want to contribute to my community—not burden it by paying wages my employees can't live on. Raising the federal minimum wage is long overdue.

In my community engagement as a business owner and as the Chair of the Board of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, I see an awful lot of the consequences of poverty wages in the community; I see families that fall apart and struggle to stay healthy, with each adult working more than one job, and still having a hard time making ends meet. These people are our consumer base, they are our neighbors, they buy from us, they vote for you. I don't want my government supporting policies like an inadequate minimum wage that promote poverty, weaken consumer demand, and ultimately hurt my business and other businesses. We have to set a reasonable wage floor.

I am here today to testify on behalf of a decent minimum wage that will reinforce employee productivity and ensure that when an employee goes home after work, they have the time, energy and enthusiasm to give to their families and community without fear, without anxiety and without hunger.

Thank you.

WRITTEN REMARKS FROM SCOTT NASH, OWNER, MOM'S ORGANIC MARKET

Submitted to the House Education & the Workforce Committee—Minority Panel on Business and Economic Case for Raising the Minimum Wage April 27, 2016

My name is Scott Nash. I am the founder and CEO of a grocery chain called MOM's Organic Market. With an investment of $100, I started MOM's in 1987 out of my mother's garage in Beltsville, MD. We currently have 15 locations in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia. By the end of this year as we expand into New Jersey and elsewhere, we will have 18 stores and more than 1,000 employees. Our annual sales are more than $200 million. We support raising the federal minimum wage to at least $12 by 2020.

In 1980, just as I turned 15, I took my first part-time job. I ran the fry station at Burger King for $3.10 per hour. That's actually more than today's minimum wage adjusted for the cost of living. I was surrounded by full time adult co-workers—some with children—and they relied on their paychecks to survive. Most of my coworkers had good attitudes, even though every day their lives were permeated with struggle and stress.

A minimum wage that is too low puts millions of people between a rock and hard place. Over the years, we at MOM's have gradually increased our hourly minimum wage from $8.00 to $11. I'm happy to report that after multiple raises to $9, $10, and $11, MOM's is the most profitable we've ever been.

All good businessmen know that their most important asset is their employees. At MOM's, we consider paying a higher wage not a burden, but rather a high-return strategic investment. Our workforce is more productive, engaged and dedicated. They are happier, have less stress in their overall lives, and feel appreciated and secure.

With this higher employee morale and strengthening of our corporate culture, our retention rates have skyrocketed over the years, which has driven down our training and hiring costs. Studies show that the costs of hiring and training are substantial—thousands of dollars per employee. An employee generally doesn't operate at full efficiency until he or she has been working for at least 5 months. Longer term employees also offer more expertise and better customer service, which helps increase revenues. Customers love shopping at places with engaged employees.

Raising the minimum wage is smart business strategy. I can't hire anyone unless people buy our products. People like me start companies to fulfill the needs and desires of consumers. These needs and desires are not created by entrepreneurs; rather they are fulfilled by entrepreneurs. When workers' purses and wallets have more money in them, they spend more at local businesses. Increased consumer spending means more entrepreneurs start companies, the economy grows, and more wealth is created at all levels. One of the best quotes I've heard on job creation was, ''For a CEO to take credit for job creation is like a squirrel taking credit for evolution.'' Contrary to what some CEOs claim, raising the minimum wage will actually create jobs, not cut them.

Many full-time hourly workers who are paid the minimum wage are also dependent on government subsidies, as the current minimum wage is not a living wage. A low minimum wage essentially amounts to a taxpayer subsidy for incredibly profitable large corporations and industries. Want to see unnecessary government spending go down, raise the minimum wage!

As a member of Business for a Fair Minimum Wage, I can share that raising the minimum wage has strong support from the business community. To summarize, raising the minimum wage will increase American productivity, decrease the number of full-time workers on government entitlement programs, grow consumer spending and the economy, increase wealth, and improve the lives of hard working people. It's time we raise the minimum wage to $12 by 2020.

WRITTEN REMARKS FROM SHERRY STEWART DEUTSCHMANN, FOUNDER AND CEO, LETTERLOGIC, INC. AND COUNCIL MEMBER, NATIONAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL

Submitted to the House Education & the Workforce Committee Minority Panel on the Business and Economic—Case for Raising the Minimum Wage, April 27, 2016

Representative Scott, thank you for inviting me to speak today. It is an honor.

My name is Sherry Stewart Deutschmann and I am the founder and CEO of LetterLogic, a small business in Nashville, TN. I am also a member of the National Women's Business Council, a small group of female business leaders whose role is to advise the Small Business Administration, the President, and Congress on issues related to female entrepreneurship.

Please allow me to share some basic background information on myself and my business. In 2002, as a single mom with only a high-school education, I cashed in my 401k and had a week-long yard sale to raise the capital needed to start my own company, LetterLogic, in the basement of my home. That bet on me turned out to be a good one because my company quickly outgrew my basement and is now a $36 Million company. Indeed, our growth has enabled us to be recognized by INC Magazine as an INC 5000 company for nine consecutive years, an honor bestowed upon the fastest growing privately held companies in the US.

My company processes and delivers patient billing statements for hospitals nationwide, doing so in both traditional print/mail formats and also electronically. Though our business has a high-tech component, most of our jobs are in the factory, where our employees operate machinery that prints, folds, inserts, and then sorts over 235,000 bills each day. These positions could easily be filled at the minimum wage, which is $7.25 an hour in Tennessee. However, our entire business model was built on my belief that I could build a better company if I took extraordinary care of the employees. I believed that well-cared for employees could better focus on turning out a high quality product and impeccable service, and their loyalty and dedication would create a corresponding loyalty among our clients. And, I believed that a loyal client base would happily pay a higher price for the best service.

Though we've always paid the highest wages in our industry, until a few years ago our entry-level pay was $12 an hour. At that time, we began looking at our employees and trying to understand the kind of life we were enabling them to create, and as our ''litmus test'' we used the following baseline: ''If the two lowest-paid employees of LetterLogic got married, what kind of housing could they afford? Could they afford to start a family? What schools would their children attend? How much of their income could they save?'' And, at that point, we raised our starting wage to $14 an hour, and then just a few months later, we raised it to $16.

In the months since we increased our minimum starting wage from $12 an hour to where it is now at $16 an hour, my company has grown from annual revenues of $27.5 Million to $36 Million, 25% growth over a 27–month period. But what happened to the bottom line is even more striking. In that same time frame, our net profit increased 300%. Yes, when we increased our minimum starting wage from $12 an hour to $16 an hour, our revenue increased by 25% and our profit margin tripled. Yes, we made other smart business decisions that helped us achieve those results, but we believe that putting the needs of the employees above all else was a major contributor.

Moreover, my fast-growth company has zero debt—also a factor we attribute to the financial results of paying our employees fairly.

We are confident that our results are duplicable, that putting the needs of the employees first is a great business model. During the last three years, we've polled our clients bi-annually and they express their happiness and loyalty when 100% of the respondents say they'd recommend us, and 99% say they rank our service as Excellent or Good. But they DEMONSTRATE their loyalty by staying with us. Indeed, over the last three years, our revenue churn rate has been only 3.2%.

I'd also like to touch briefly on how a higher minimum wage affects the local economy by sharing the story of Kim, a woman we hired a few years ago. She says this is the first workplace in her life that she is making enough money that she has to work only one job. She is now able to fully commit her energy and attention to her job at LetterLogic, taking great care of our customers and better care of her family. And, she left an open position for someone else to fill.

From my experience operating a small business, I can attest to the value of paying a living wage. When employees are paid a wage they can live on, they are better able to focus on the demands of their jobs. The

quality of the goods and services they create are much better and build customer loyalty to the point where the company can be more profitable and sustainable.

When I pay a starting wage of $16 plus benefits my employees have more money to spend at other businesses. The very least other businesses can do is pay a wage that allows their employees to afford the basics.

My business can set a good example, but I can't do it alone. The businesses with me in Business for a Fair Minimum Wage can't do it alone. The federal minimum wage, which Tennessee follows, has not been raised since 2009.

Increasing the minimum wage to $12 by 2020, as called for in the Raise the Wage Act, is an overdue step in raising the floor for businesses, communities and our economy. Raising the minimum wage will increase productivity and reduce the costly turnover that plagues so many short-sighted low-wage businesses. It will boost sales by putting more money in the pockets of workers who most need to spend it.

Raising the minimum wage is good for business!

THE IMPACT OF RAISING THE FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE TO $12 BY 2020 ON WORKERS, BUSINESSES, AND THE ECONOMY

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE MEMBER FORUM

(By David Cooper, Senior Economic Analyst, Economic Policy Institute, April 27, 2016)

Ranking Member Scott, members of the committee, and Members of the Democratic Caucus, thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. My name is David Cooper. I am the Senior Economic Analyst at the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), a nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization that focuses on improving the economic conditions of low- and middle-income workers and their families.

I am going to speak today about the appropriateness of a $12 federal minimum wage in 2020, and what the research tells us about the effect of raising the minimum wage on workers, businesses, and the economy.

First, it cannot be emphasized enough that the current federal minimum wage of $7.25 is incredibly low by every relevant benchmark. In 1968, the high point of the federal minimum wage in inflation-adjusted terms, the minimum wage was equal to roughly $10 an hour in today's dollars. (Using the Bureau of Labor Statistic's longest-running measure of inflation, it was worth $10.95 in today's dollars; using the Bureau's current method for measuring inflation, it was worth about $9.60.) This means that minimum wage workers today are paid between a quarter and a third less than what similar jobs paid almost 50 years ago, depending on how you measure inflation.

As a consequence, the majority of low-wage workers in America today must rely on federal and state public assistance programs in order to afford their basic needs: 53 percent of workers earning less than $12 an hour rely on some form of means-tested government assistance—such as food stamps, Medicaid, refundable tax credits, and housing and energy subsidies. The federal government spends over $78 billion dollars each year to support the families of workers earning less than $12 an hour, and this is undoubtedly an underestimate because it does not include the value of Medicaid or premium subsidies in healthcare exchanges. To be clear, these dollars are going to workers and families who desperately need this support and if anything, our anti-poverty programs need to be strengthened and expanded. Yet there is considerable savings to be had in these programs if businesses were simply held to the same standard to which they were held in the 1960s. In a paper EPI released last year, we estimated that federal antipoverty programs would save $17 billion annually if the minimum wage were raised to $12 by 2020. That very savings could be used to strengthen government's antipoverty tools.

The current minimum wage is also exceptionally low relative to the pay of typical workers. In the 1960s, the minimum wage was equal to just over half of the median full-time wage in the United States (between 52 and 55 percent of the median, depending upon how one measures wages). Today, the federal minimum wage is equal to roughly 36 percent of the median wage. This means that someone working at or near the minimum wage is much farther away from a middle class job than similar workers a generation ago. Sometimes it is said that minimum wage jobs are just starter jobs for young people entering the labor force. First of all, we know that is not true—the average age of workers that would get a raise from a minimum wage increase to $12 is 35 years old and the vast majority (90 percent) are 20 or older. Yet even in cases where it is true, those young people are starting off their careers much further from the middle class than young people of previous generations.

Raising the federal minimum wage to $12 by 2020, as the Raise the Wage Act would do, would restore the national wage floor to the same relative position that it had in the late 1960s. Under conservative assumptions for wage growth at the median, $12 in 2020 would be equal to roughly 54 percent of the full-time median wage, bringing low-wage workers closer to the pay of a middle-class job, and helping undo some of the growth in wage inequality that has taken place since 1968.

Whenever increasing the minimum wage is discussed, there is always concern that doing so might hurt job growth or imperil businesses that employ low-wage workers. In the 22 times the federal minimum wage has been raised, and the over 300 times that states or localities have raised their minimum wages just since the 1980, these concerns have never materialized. The effect of increasing the minimum wage on employment is probably the most studied topic in labor economics, and the consensus of the literature is that moderate increases in the minimum wage have little to no effect on employment. In fact, this was the conclusion of a letter signed by over 600 PhD economists—including 8 winners of the Nobel Prize—sent to the leaders of both houses of Congress in 2014. The letter stated, ''In recent years there have been important developments in the academic literature on the effect of increases in the minimum wage on employment, with the weight of evidence now showing that increases in the minimum wage have had little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market.

The most detailed study in recent years of the minimum wage's effects was published in a 2014 book by economists Dale Belman and Paul Wolfson. Belman and Wolfson conducted a meta-analysis (a study of studies) of over 200 scholarly papers on the minimum wage published since 1991. They conclude that ''modest minimum wage increases raise wages for the working poor without substantially affecting employment or work hours, providing solid benefits with small costs.'' (p.401) Belman and Wolfson's book was subsequently awarded Princeton University's Bowen award for the book making the most important contribution toward understanding public policy related to the operation of labor markets.

In recent years, research has found not only that have minimum wage increases have had no measurable negative effects, but they have often produced positive effects on the functioning of the low-wage labor market. Higher minimum wages tend to reduce turnover and increase job tenure among low-wage workers—leading to productivity improvements and lower turnover costs at affected businesses.

Most importantly, research has consistently shown that raising the minimum wage boosts the pay of low-wage workers who typically come from low- and moderate-income households. Because these households typically spend a larger portion of their income than wealthier households, the rising wage floor can provide a modest boost to consumer spending, generating new business activity, particularly in lower-income areas where consumer demand is more depressed. And this is true even if some firms have to enact small price increases as a result of the higher minimum wage. Pay raises for low-wage workers resulting from higher minimum wages are vastly larger than any resulting price increases—typically by a factor of more than 10 to 1. This is because labor costs are only one piece of businesses' overall operating costs, and as previously noted, raising pay simultaneously generates savings from higher productivity and lower turnover.

In summary, raising the minimum wage to $12 by 2020 would boost the wages of tens of millions of American workers, increase low-income households' buying power, reduce reliance on federal assistance programs, and bring the wage floor back up to the same relative value it had in the 1960s. The research indicates that such an increase would not be overly burdensome on businesses or hamper job growth, and could, in fact, strengthen the consumer demand that drives the U.S. economy. I strongly encourage Congress to pass the Raise the Wage Act.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, it is past time for Congress to raise the Federal minimum wage. We learned yesterday that, of the people who would most be impacted by raising the minimum wage, only 10 percent are teens, as opposed to a popular misconception. In fact, the average age affected is 35, and 56 percent are women. In addition, nearly one-third of all Hispanics and one-third of all African Americans would get a raise by enacting this act, and 30 percent of working mothers would get a raise.

It is time that we stand up for hard-working people all across America and give them a well-deserved and long-overdue raise.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the State of California, my home State of California, for yielding.

I am glad to stand here today in support of the Raise the Wage Act. I want to thank my colleagues for standing with me today to promote the benefits of increasing the minimum wage.

While critics warn of mass layoffs and economic calamity, studies consistently show that a higher minimum wage will stimulate the economy and lift workers out of poverty.

We cannot allow ideology and partisanship to stop millions of workers from earning a living wage. A report on poverty in my own community, which my office produced last year, revealed

the urgency of this issue. Here is what we found:

Last year, a single parent of two kids working full time at the minimum wage in Riverside, California, was likely to fall $600 short of what they need to get by every month. Not only does this situation violate the premise of the American Dream that working hard and playing by the rules will land you in the middle class, it also damages our economy.

A University of California, Berkeley study found that low wages cost American taxpayers $152 billion each year on social welfare programs for working families. We are effectively subsidizing companies that do not pay their workers a living wage.

Now, there is a myth—a myth—that the typical minimum wage earner is a high school student, a high school student living at home working part time. But young people make up just a tiny fraction of the minimum wage workforce. Eighty-nine percent of workers who would benefit from a Federal minimum wage increase to $12 per hour are actually age 20 or older. Nearly 40 percent of this workforce is older than 40.

These are not kids on a summer job. These are parents who are seeking to provide for their children. With more money in their pockets, these workers could take a few extra trips to the grocery store, buy new school supplies for their children, or save up to buy a home, all of which would help stimulate our economy.

All of us have expressed serious concerns about rising income inequality in our communities. We all understand that the economy has been thrown out of balance because the rules that protect workers from exploitation have atrophied over time. The minimum wage is a clear example of that trend.

The real value of the Federal minimum wage has declined 24 percent since 1968. Workers are not worth 24 percent less than they were 50 years ago, and families cannot get by with 24 percent less than they did 50 years ago.

Raising the minimum wage is not only good policy, it is popular policy. Paying workers a living wage reduces turnover, improves worker morale, and increases productivity. For those reasons, a poll by the American Sustainable Business Council found that 60 percent of small-business owners support raising the minimum wage to $12 an hour by 2020. And most revealing, the Republican pollster Frank Luntz found that 80 percent of business executives support raising the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article from The Washington Post describing this secret poll done by Frank Luntz of these business executives—the very one I mentioned in my remarks—that found that 80 percent of business executives support increasing the minimum wage.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 4, 2016]

LEAKED DOCUMENTS SHOW STRONG BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

SO WHY DO MOST CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE STILL OPPOSE IT?

(By Lydia DePillis)

Whenever minimum wage increases are proposed on the state or federal level, business groups tend to fight them tooth and nail. But actual opposition may not be as united as the groups' rhetoric might make it appear, according to internal research conducted by a leading consultant for state chambers of commerce.

The survey of 1,000 business executives across the country was conducted by LuntzGlobal, the firm run by Republican pollster Frank Luntz, and obtained by a liberal watchdog group called the Center for Media and Democracy. (The slide deck is here, and the full questionnaire is here.) Among the most interesting findings: 80 percent of respondents said they supported raising their state's minimum wage, while only eight percent opposed it.

''That's where it's undeniable that they support the increase,'' LuntzGlobal managing director David Merritt told state chamber executives in a webinar describing the results, noting that it squares with other polling they've done. ''And this is universal. If you're fighting against a minimum wage increase, you're fighting an uphill battle, because most Americans, even most Republicans, are okay with raising the minimum wage.''

Merritt then provided some tips on how to defuse that support, such as suggesting other poverty-reduction methods like the Earned Income Tax Credit. ''Where you might find some comfort if you are opposing it in your state is, 'how big of a priority is it against other priorities?'' he said. ''Most folks think there are bigger priorities. Creating more jobs rather than raising the minimum wage is a priority that most everyone agrees with. So when you put it up against other issues, you can find other alternatives and other things to focus on. But in isolation, and you ask about the minimum wage, it's definitely a winner.''

Sixty-three percent of respondents said they belong to a chamber of commerce, whether on the local, state, or federal level—suggesting that the groups' public statements might be out of step with their members' beliefs. The materials shed light on how some business trade associations operate, and why they've continued to oppose minimum wage increases even as the rest of the public thaws towards them.

The research had been commissioned by the Council of State Chambers, a small, nonpolitical umbrella organization that coordinates messaging across the dozens of groups that make up its membership. The main purpose of the survey, says Council director Joe Crosby, had been to assess what the broader business community thinks about state chambers, and what kind of language they respond to best. (Under the terms of its contract, Crosby says, LuntzGlobal was forbidden from discussing the survey publicly.)

So why do state chambers, which are usually the largest and most powerful business organizations represented in state capitols, seem so far apart from the broader business community when it comes to the minimum wage?

Crosby argued that modest minimum wage hikes don't impact the majority of chamber members, and so they actually tend to leave the issue to trade groups for retailers, hotels and restaurants, which employ most low-wage workers.

''In chambers, historically, it's more successful businesses that are in manufacturing and other higher wage industries,'' Crosby says. ''They tend to see themselves as the voice of business, but there are other groups that are focused on sectors that are focused on different wage mandates.''

In the more liberal areas where minimum wage increases have succeeded, that's often true: Broad-based business groups have hesitated to speak out too strongly against the popular measures, leaving those industries that are most affected out in the cold.

In some instances, advocates have even targeted low-wage service industries first—a hotel wage ordinance passed in Los Angeles before the across-the-board increase, for example, and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo raised wages for fast food workers before launching a campaign to do so for all workers (which New York City-based chambers of commerce actually supported).

But in most states, chambers of commerce haven't been as shy in their opposition to minimum wage hikes. Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry president Gene Barr says he canvasses his members regularly on lots of issues, and they are against raising the state's minimum wage above where it still sits at the federal floor of $7.25—even the big, high-tech industries that already pay well above it.

''Our larger businesses get that,'' said Barr, who sat through the LuntzGlobal presentation. ''We don't get pushback saying that 'you really need to get behind a minimum wage increase,' because they understand that it's really not appropriate.''

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce president Doug Loon says his members' opinions don't match those of the LuntzGlobal survey—including those regarding requirements that businesses offer benefits like paid paternity leave, which 82 percent of respondents supported, or more paid sick leave, which 73 percent supported. The Minnesota Chamber has found that even those of its members who are offering those benefits would rather have the choice of whether to do so, and how.

''It's what most employers are moving to,'' Loon says. ''Do we need to pass a one-size-fits-all on sick leave? We would argue that we do not.''

So Loon and Barr say they're just following their members' wishes. Some business groups have a different perspective—but don't necessarily have the power to combat a state chamber when it puts its mind to something.

The South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce has supported a higher minimum wage, but its president Frank Knapp says his members simply don't have the bandwidth to push for it, with so many other issues on their plate. ''When you actually talk to those people one on one, you find that yeah they're fine with raising the minimum wage,'' Knapp says. ''But they're not going to crusade for the minimum wage.''

That might be true of traditional chamber members too, Knapp thinks, many of whom mostly join for the networking benefits rather than the political advocacy aspect anyway. But within those groups, the industries that care most about a given policy matter—hotels and restaurants, in the case of the minimum wage—drive the organization's agenda. ''Usually the most vocal members of the state chambers dominate on that particular issue, and everybody else stays quiet,'' Knapp says.

When that happens, it's easy for politicians and the public to get the idea that the private sector stands united against raising the minimum wage, when opinions are actually much more diverse.

Holly Sklar is CEO of a national group called Business for a Fair Minimum Wage that favors raising the wage floor in states and nationwide, and she points to a number

of surveys by reputable pollsters—from CareerBuilder, Small Business Majority, and the American Sustainable Business Council—that found most businesses agree Many of those businesses don't join state chambers, which means their opinions don't filter up to the organization's leadership, so its positions don't change—and that's what gets conveyed to politicians.

''Sometimes you end up confused by the fact that someone has enough money to be in the halls of the state senate, day after day after day, funded by some of the bigger corporations that have more of an investment in the status quo,'' Sklar says. ''It has an impact on how it's perceived—you start thinking that's what business thinks.''

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to listen to their constituents, listen to these businessowners, and raise the minimum wage. It is past time that we took this action to improve the lives of millions of working Americans and strengthen our economy.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I am proud to join with him this afternoon to talk about an issue of critical importance to the people of this Nation.

Obviously, I want to be very, very clear about the issue of a rise in our minimum wage. For the length of time that I have served in this body, which is for 25 years, I have been a strong supporter of increasing the minimum wage. I believe that it has sustained America's working families and it is justified, which is why I strongly support the Raise the Wage Act.

We need to index the minimum wage. It needs to keep up with inflation. It is long past time that this gets done. Time goes on, costs increase, and the minimum wage ought to increase. We can't afford to settle for the status quo.

Full-time, year-round work at the current minimum wage of $7.25 leaves a family of three below the Federal poverty line. This disproportionately, by the way, hurts women, who make up nearly two out of three workers making the minimum wage. This means low-wage workers have to work longer hours just to achieve the standard of living that was considered the bare minimum almost a half century ago.

The greatest economic challenge that faces our Nation today is that too many Americans are in jobs that do not pay them enough to live on. Raising the minimum wage would directly or indirectly lift wages for more than 35 million workers—or more than one in four in the United States. The Raise the Wage Act would lift 4.5 million Americans out of poverty and reduce income inequality.

The low minimum wage, by the way, is not just bad for workers. It is bad for business, and it is bad for the entire economy. Low wages limit consumer demand, which stalls our country's economic growth. That hurts everyone.

A raise is long overdue for hardworking Americans if you realize, between 1948 and 1973, productivity and compensation grew at nearly equal rates; but from 1973 to 2014, American workers' productivity grew by 72 percent—they were producing more—while hourly worker compensation grew by just 9 percent.

Wages for the top 1 percent have grown 138 percent since 1979, while wages for the bottom 90 percent have only grown 15 percent. We have an opportunity to make a real step toward closing this gap.

There is a broad and growing consensus on a need to raise the wage. In a poll—and my colleagues have referenced this poll. This is a poll of business executives, and I think they were trying to hide it. I don't think that they wanted to get it out. But business executives—and this is a poll conducted by Frank Luntz, who is a Republican pollster, and he found that 80 percent supported raising the Federal minimum wage.

If our colleagues across the aisle want to make a real impact on poverty in the United States, they would support legislation that helps working families cope with rising costs like the Raise the Wage Act. The American people have waited long enough. It is time to make sure that all of our workers can make decent pay for a hard day's work, get a decent day's pay.

I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation.

Also, if I can, Mr. Speaker, Republicans contend that they can't raise the wage because doing so would kill jobs. So I include in the RECORD a paper from the National Employment Law Project describing, among other research, two meta-studies on the effect of the minimum wage on employment.

EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS EFFECTS OF MINIMUM WAGE INCREASES

INTRODUCTION

While the U.S. economy continues to see steady growth, wages have been flat or falling for much of the labor force. This dynamic has spurred the most significant wave of action to raise the minimum wage in fifty years, with momentum for significant increases at the federal, state and local levels. The growing momentum for raising the minimum wage has focused attention on the impact of higher minimum wages on employment levels. Supporters argue that higher minimum wages help workers and the economy, and that research shows any adverse effect on jobs is minimal. Opponents, by contrast, generally contend that higher wages will reduce employment or slow job growth.

The fact that many states and cities in the U.S. have raised their minimum wages in recent years while others have not has created a rich store of data for research and analysis and has made the minimum wage one of the most studied questions in economics.

This brief reviews the extensive body of research on the impact of higher minimum wages in the U.S. over the past twenty years and draws these key findings:

The bulk of rigorous research examining hundreds of case studies of minimum wage increases at the state and local levels finds that raising the minimum wage boosts incomes for low-paid workers without reducing overall employment job growth to any significant degree.

The minority of researchers reaching different conclusions rely on less precise or flawed methodologies that fail to take advantage of the most recent advancements in economic research.

Businesses are able to absorb the cost of paying higher wages without reducing employment through a range of channels, including savings from increased employee productivity and reductions in employee turnover that consistently result from minimum wage increases.

The minimum wage is one of the most studied subjects in the field of economics. Since the early 1990s, economists—armed with richer data than previously available and the computational power to analyze it—have conducted scores of studies in an effort to better understand the employment effects of raising the minimum wage. Many of these studies, often referred to as the ''new minimum wage research,'' have used sophisticated methodologies that control for variables unrelated to the minimum wage—such as regional employment trends not driven by minimum wage changes—that otherwise may bias a study's findings. The results overwhelmingly suggest that raising the minimum wage has very little effect on employment.

Most prominently, two leading ''meta-studies'' survey and pool the data from over four decades of research. The meta-studies represent the most reliable and sophisticated approaches to studying the employment impact of raising the minimum wage, as they aggregate data from dozens of studies containing thousands of different estimates of the employment impacts of minimum wage increases.

The first meta-study, by Hristos Doucouliagos and T.D. Stanley (2009), shows that there is ''little or no significant impact of minimum wage increases on employment,'' as noted by the Center for Economic and Policy Research in its review of the minimum wage literature. This is illustrated in Figure 1, which arrays 1,492 different findings from 64 different studies, mapping their conclusions on employment impacts against the statistical precision of the findings. As economist Jared Bernstein summarizes, ''the strong clumping around zero [impact on jobs] provides a useful summary of decades of research on this question [of whether minimum wage increases cost jobs].

Drawing on the methodological insights of Doucouliagos and Stanley, the second meta-study by Dale Belman and Paul Wolfson (2014) reviews more than 70 studies and 439 distinct estimates to come to a very similar conclusion: ''[i]t appears that if negative effects on employment are present, they are too small to be statistically detectable. Such effects would be too modest to have meaningful consequences in the dynamically changing labor markets of the United States,'' and too small to merit policy or political controversy.

In addition to these meta-studies, state-of-the-art individual studies have developed new research methods to enable economists to better isolate and analyze the actual impact of minimum wage increases—and have confirmed that raising the minimum wage does not reduce employment. Two of these leading individual studies are:

''Minimum Wage Effects Across State Borders,'' in which economists Arindrajit Dube, T. William Lester and Michael Reich (2010) apply innovative new research methods to examine the real-world impact of state minimum wage increases on employment. In order to completely isolate other factors influencing state job growth trends, the study compares employment trends in neighboring

counties that are economically similar except for having different minimum wages (by virtue of being on different sides of a state border). The study looks at employment levels among every pair of neighboring U.S. counties that had differing minimum wage levels at any time between 1990 and 2006—and finds that higher minimum wages did not lead business in those states to reduce their hiring or shift their hiring to neighboring counties with lower minimum wage rates.

''Do Minimum Wages Really Reduce Teen Employment?,'' in which economists Sylvia Allegretto, Arindrajit Dube and Michael Reich (2011) demonstrate that neglecting to control for regional employment trends leads observers to erroneously attribute reductions in employment in certain states to an increase in the minimum wage. They find that, after controlling for regional trends, the negative effects on teen employment in regions with higher minimum wages not only disappeared, but turned slightly positive, and that these observations hold true whether the economy is growing or in a downturn. The fact that there is no evidence that past U.S. minimum wage increases have reduced teen employment is significant since, if there were any adverse effects associated with minimum wage increases, one might expect to see them among teens who are new entrants to the labor market.

The innovative approach used by Dube, Lester and Reich in the 2010 study has won praise from leading labor economists at top universities, such as Harvard economist Lawrence Katz and Massachusetts Institute of Technology economists David Autor and Michael Greenstone. As Autor explained, ''The paper presents a fairly irrefutable case that state minimum wage laws do raise earnings in low wage jobs but do not reduce employment to any meaningful degree. Beyond this substantive contribution, the paper presents careful and compelling reanalysis of earlier work in this literature, showing that it appears biased by spatial correlation in employment trends.''

The new body of research has led to a shift in the views of mainstream economists on the employment impact of minimum wage increases. Indicative is a February 2013 poll of leading economists by the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, in which economists by a more than 3 to 1 margin believe that the benefits of raising the minimum wage and indexing it for inflation outweigh any costs. Similarly, centrist economists, including Larry Summers and Robert Rubin, have called for raising the minimum wage and empowering workers as part of a strategy to help grow the middle class and move the economy forward; and Goldman Sachs released an analysis of minimum wage increases, which did not mention disemployment at all—neither as an immediate effect, nor as a forecast.

The shrinking body of economic research that continues to argue that increases in the minimum wage cost jobs emanates in large part from a single source: University of California-Irvine economist David Neumark. Neumark is the author of both a survey that claims that the weight of minimum wage research points towards evidence of job losses, and of several studies that claim to show the same. However, both Neumark's survey and the methodology he uses in his individual studies have been shown to be skewed and inaccurate.

Neumark's 2006 survey (coauthored with William Wascher), ''Minimum Wages and Employment: A Review of Evidence from the New Minimum Wage Research,'' maintains that 85 percent of the ''most credible'' research on the impact of raising the minimum wage finds job losses as a result. However, other economists have pointed out that this survey—which is not a true meta-study—was conducted in a highly subjective manner, generating its unrepresentative conclusions. Specifically, Neumark's survey:

1. Fails to comprehensively review the economic research on the impact of raising the minimum wage, and instead selects just 33 studies that the author subjectively designates as the ''most credible;''

2. Omits several of the most important recent studies on the impact of minimum wage increases in the United States, with the result that half of the studies analyzed by Neumark focus on foreign labor markets, rendering their conclusions less relevant to the U.S.; and

3. Is skewed towards Neumark's own research, which makes up a full 26 percent of the U.S.-based studies that he elects to include.

Neumark's research, as well as the few other studies which continue to maintain that minimum wage increases cost jobs, have used variants on a single approach: comparing job growth in states with higher minimum wages against job growth in states with lower minimum wages.

However, as demonstrated by Dube, Lester and Reich (2010) and Allegretto, Dube and Reich (2011), Neumark's simplistic approach cannot accurately assess the impact of a higher minimum wage since It does not adequately control for the wide range of varying local economic conditions—such as regional trends in manufacturing jobs losses, population shifts to the sun belt, and the local severity of economic shocks such as the housing bubble collapse—that affect job growth in state labor markets. As a result of these inadequate controls, Neumark and other conservative economists erroneously attribute differences in regional job growth levels to minimum wage differences.

More recent and sophisticated research does a better job of controlling for those regional economic differences. The 2010 study by Dube, Lester and Reich, for example, uses a methodology similar to Neumark's. But rather than comparing job growth rates among all states nationwide, it focuses on comparisons among states in the same region of the country that have differing minimum wages. Dube, Lester and Reich show that when one uses a regional focus to control for extraneous economic trends, any evidence of job losses disappear.

The strength of the new research has led major business publications to endorse its findings and methodologies—and to reject opposition research as faulty and inaccurate. In 2012, Bloomberg News, for example, called for increasing the minimum wage and indexing it for inflation, writing that, ''[a] wave of new economic research is disproving those arguments about job losses and youth employment. Previous studies tended not to control for regional economic trends that were already affecting employment levels, such as a manufacturing-dependent state that was shedding jobs. The new research looks at micro-level employment patterns for a more accurate employment picture. The studies find minimum-wage increases even provide an economic boost, albeit a small one, as strapped workers immediately spend their raises.''

Despite the advances made in new research on the minimum wage, in 2014 the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published a report, based partially on older research, suggesting that an increase in the minimum wage would reduce total U.S. employment by about 500,000 workers—though it acknowledged the possibility of an impact ranging from near-zero to one million jobs lost. Economists who have studied the minimum wage, however, have criticized the report for a major flaw in its analysis: Despite acknowledging the greater accuracy of newer methodologies, in its synthesis of minimum wage studies the CBO gave equal weight to older methodologies as to new, without explaining its reason for doing so.

Michael Reich—one of the critics of the report and coauthor of two of the studies discussed above—notes the CBO erred when it took the findings of research by Neumark/Wascher and Reich/Dube and averaged them, as if those studies were similar enough in methodology, time and data sets used to justify doing so. He writes, ''We conclude, and many other labor economists agree, that our studies invalidate the previous approach used in many studies by Neumark and Wascher and others. It makes no sense to take an average between a rigorous study and one that has been shown to be flawed.'' Giving equal weight to these studies likely biased the CBO's conclusions.

Goldman Sachs analysts also reviewed the CBO report and concluded that its job loss estimates are overstated. The analysts cite the findings of the new minimum wage research, which find little to no effects on employment (see the first section of this brief); a boost in demand from higher earnings; a concentration of employment impacts on only two industries (retail and leisure & hospitality); and the fact that states and localities have taken the lead in increasing the minimum wage in the face of congressional inaction, as reasons the CBO estimates are likely too high.

Even with its flawed analysis, taken as a whole the CBO report nonetheless demonstrates that the benefits of raising the minimum wage far outweigh any drawbacks. Among its positive findings, the report concluded that 24.5 million workers would benefit from a wage increase to $10.10, and nearly one million would be lifted out of poverty.

In January 2014, House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner made the following claim in explaining his opposition to raising the minimum wage: ''When you raise the cost of something, you get less of it.'' This idea seems intuitive to many who learned about supply and demand in an introductory economics class. But in fact, both research and real life experiences show that, rather than automatically raising costs and forcing layoffs, higher wages can lead to significant savings for businesses, offsetting a large portion of the higher payroll costs. Among the leading factors explaining this seemingly counter-intuitive observation are two related concepts: employee turnover and productivity.

Low wages are associated with high levels of employee turnover. Workers earning low wages tend to be less committed to their jobs than better paid workers and are less likely to stay at their jobs for long. Unsurprisingly, the accommodations and food services sector—one of the lowest-paying sectors—has an annual turnover rate of nearly 63 percent, while ''limited service restaurants''—a subsector which includes fast food restaurants like McDonald's and Burger King—have a turnover rate of well over 100 percent each year. The retail trade, which employs cashiers, customer service representatives, stock clerks and other low-wage workers, has a turnover rate of nearly 50 percent.

Employee turnover forces businesses to constantly find and train new workers, costing firms significant amounts of money and time. In the fast food industry, the cost of turnover is approximately $4,700 each time a worker leaves his or her job. Studies show that higher wages can substantially reduce turnover and the costs associated with replacing lost workers. In the fast food industry, increasing the minimum wage could lead to as much as $5.2 billion in cost savings to businesses and as many as 1.1 million

fewer separations. Overall, savings from reduced turnover alone can offset as much as 30 percent of the cost of a minimum wage increase—even to $15 per hour.

Low pay also impacts productivity. While experienced workers tend to be more productive, new workers may not be as optimally efficient during their training period, and this can incur indirect costs to businesses from lost sales and imperfect customer service as new workers learn on the job. While the savings from greater productivity and lower turnover may not fully pay for a minimum wage increase, these savings can nonetheless substantially offset the higher labor costs associated with an increase.

The benefits from higher productivity and lower turnover helps explain why large companies as well as many small businesses have chosen to invest in higher wages as part of a highly competitive business strategy. As MIT business school professor Zeynep Ton explains, ''Highly successful retail chains—such as QuikTrip convenience stores, Mercadona and Trader Joe's supermarkets, and Costco wholesale clubs—not only invest heavily in store employees but also have the lowest prices in their industries, solid financial performance, and better customer service than their competitors. They have demonstrated that, even in the lowest-price segment of retail, bad jobs are not a cost-driven necessity but a choice. And they have proven that the key to breaking the trade-off is a combination of investment in the workforce and operational practices that benefit employees, customers, and the company.''

Many employers can afford to pay better wages. The vast majority of small businesses (89 percent) already pay their employees more than the federal minimum wage, a strong majority (60 percent) support raising the minimum wage to $12 and adjusting it for inflation each year, and a growing number of employers see $15 as a fair minimum wage. Many also believe that higher wages level the playing field by preventing larger or less scrupulous firms from gaining a competitive advantage through very low labor costs. Large businesses, in particular, are in the position to improve their wages. Corporations like Walmart, T.J. Maxx, Gap and Ikea, which employ the majority of low-wage workers, have been enjoying record profits for years. According to the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank, in the second quarter of 2015, corporate profits amounted to $1.8 trillion—the highest since the late 1940s.

CONCLUSION

''When employers stop thinking about employees as costs to cut, but instead as customers, they see it is in their self-interest to raise the minimum wage. We need to change their concept of self-interest.''—Nick Hanauer, entrepreneur and venture capitalist.

The most recent and sophisticated research—as well as the experiences of leading employers like Trader Joe's, Costco and thousands of small businesses—strongly suggest that higher wages increase incomes for low-wage workers without reducing overall employment or hurting businesses. Not only do employers benefit from the savings they accrue from lower turnover and higher productivity; they also benefit from an increase in demand for the goods and services they offer. As observers from Nick Hanauer to Larry Summers point out, workers are customers—and the better a worker's ability to participate in the economy as a consumer, the better off will be both individual businesses and the economy as a whole.

Ms. DELAURO. This document examined 64 minimum wage studies measuring the effect of minimum wages on teenage employment in the United States published between 1972 and 2007. While these studies estimated a range of employment effects, Mr. Stanley and Mr. Doucouliagos found the most precise estimates in the studies were around zero or near zero employment effects.

□ 1600

The second is from Paul Wolfson and Dale Belman. It examined studies published since 2007 on the employment effect on minimum wage increases. This meta-analysis also found that the best estimates in the compiled studies revealed no statistically significant negative employment effects.

We all have listened over many years that any increase in the minimum wage would, my gosh, send the U.S. economy into a tailspin, and every time it has proven false. It was false then; it is false now. Let us raise the minimum wage, and let us support the Raise the Wage Act.

I thank my colleague from California for including me in this Special Order.

Mr. DESAULNIER. My pleasure. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for her passionate advocacy on this issue and on others around wage inequality.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter sent to President Obama and signed by over 600 economists, including seven Nobel Prize winners, stating that the most recent economic research shows that increases in the minimum wage have little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum wage workers. In fact, the letter goes on to read that a minimum wage increase could have a stimulative effect on the economy as low-wage workers spend their additional earnings, thus increasing consumer demand and leading companies to hire additional workers.

OVER 600 ECONOMISTS SIGN LETTER IN SUPPORT OF $10.10 MINIMUM WAGE: ECONOMIST STATEMENT ON THE FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, SPEAKER BOEHNER, MAJORITY LEADER REID, CONGRESSMAN CANTOR, SENATOR MCCONNELL, AND CONGRESSWOMAN PELOSI: July will mark five years since the federal minimum wage was last raised. We urge you to act now and enact a three-step raise of 95 cents a year for three years—which would mean a minimum wage of $10.10 by 2016—and then index it to protect against inflation. Senator Tom Harkin and Representative George Miller have introduced legislation to accomplish this. The increase to $10.10 would mean that minimum-wage workers who work full time, full year would see a raise from their current salary of roughly $15,000 to roughly $21,000. These proposals also usefully raise the tipped minimum wage to 70% of the regular minimum.

This policy would directly provide higher wages for close to 17 million workers by 2016. Furthermore, another 11 million workers whose wages are just above the new minimum would likely see a wage increase through ''spillover'' effects, as employers adjust their internal wage ladders. The vast majority of employees who would benefit are adults in working families, disproportionately women, who work at least 20 hours a week and depend on these earnings to make ends meet. At a time when persistent high unemployment is putting enormous downward pressure on wages, such a minimum-wage increase would provide a much-needed boost to the earnings of low-wage workers.

In recent years there have been important developments in the academic literature on the effect of increases in the minimum wage on employment, with the weight of evidence now showing that increases in the minimum wage have had little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market. Research suggests that a minimum-wage increase could have a small stimulative effect on the economy as low-wage workers spend their additional earnings, raising demand and job growth, and providing some help on the jobs front.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here as a fervent believer in what we have advocated for and as someone who has spent 35 years owning and managing restaurants in an area of the country in which the economy is growing more rapidly than anywhere else in the country right now, which is the San Francisco Bay Area.

With that background, I also speak to this as somebody who has a good deal of empathy for small-business owners, particularly restaurant owners, who are looking at monthly and quarterly business reports and are wondering how they would accommodate the increase in the minimum wage. In California, of course, we are much higher than in the U.S., and many cities, including San Francisco, have gone to $15 with an indexed minimum wage.

I believe firmly in the research that shows that one of the biggest challenges to small businesses, particularly in the restaurant field, is not the challenge of minimum wage workers, but the fact that there is less disposable income in middle-income households to be able to have the discretion to go out and spend that disposable income in restaurants and on hospitality events. While I understand the angst, these are the kinds of things, once we take that step—from my experience and the experience in California and in high-cost areas like New York and San Francisco, which have gone ahead with raising the minimum wage—that would indicate the overall benefit to the economy and to everyone.

Lastly, I think the challenge of this time for us domestically is, as I said, the inequality in the country. In a country in which the economy is based on 70 percent consumer investments, having more disposable income is a good thing. As President Lincoln once famously said: In order for this democracy to thrive, there must always be a balance between capital and labor; and if there is ever an imbalance towards capital, we have, in effect, lost democracy.

There is no question that, at this point in time, capital investment is doing many great things, including in the bay area and in our venture capital community and in our innovation community. In having said that, one does not have to read Thomas Piketty to

understand that we have a huge imbalance between wages and labor and capital, which Lincoln warned about.

I ask the majority party to work with us to raise the minimum wage in order to help the economy.

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

1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE HBCU CAUCUS

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege and honor today to be a part of a Special Order on the 1-year anniversary of the bipartisan HBCU Caucus. For those who are listening or who are watching, let me make sure you understand that HBCU stands for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. That is what we will be talking about today.

I am the co-chair of this caucus, along with a Member of this body who came up with this idea and who has spearheaded this effort from the very beginning—she is the spirit behind it—Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS from the great State of North Carolina.

I yield to Congresswoman ADAMS so that she may speak to this House and to the Nation about the importance of this topic and about the importance of HBCUs to the United States of America.

Ms. ADAMS. I thank Congressman BYRNE. I appreciate the gentleman's yielding to me and his work with this caucus.

Mr. Speaker, today marks the first anniversary of the bipartisan Congressional Historically Black Colleges and Universities Caucus, known by many as the HBCU Caucus.

As a retired 40-year educator from Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, I have always believed that every young person who desires a college education should get that opportunity. Like many of the young people I taught at Bennett College for those four decades of my academic career, my story is one of perseverance.

I was a first-generation college student at North Carolina A&T. I came to school like so many students today—not fully prepared to do college work. A&T gave me a chance because it believed in opportunity and the fundamental importance of education that W.E.B. Du Bois spoke about when he said: ''Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental.'' That is why I advocate for HBCUs, for they advocated for me, and they invested in my success.

There are more than 100 HBCUs in the United States that enroll more than 300,000 students per year. HBCUs are taking our students in—students like me and like you—from diverse backgrounds and are giving them a chance, a chance that other schools might not have given them. Many HBCU students are often like I was—first generation from low-income families—so we must ensure that all students, including those from economically strained backgrounds, have access to a high-quality education and are equipped with the knowledge and the 21st century skills that they need to succeed. HBCUs do just that for so many students. HBCUs represent 3 percent of colleges and universities; yet we graduate 20 percent of African Americans with undergraduate degrees and 50 percent of African American educators. Despite these facts, HBCUs have historically been underfunded.

There are many unique challenges that HBCUs and the students they serve face. Many students don't have the luxury of being supported through school. Some have to work their way through, taking breaks along the way. It is imperative then that we work together to ensure that these institutions not only have the resources that are necessary to encourage enrollment and increase the graduation rates among these students, but also that they are capable of preparing these young people for the workforce. That is why I launched the first bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus with my Republican co-chair and former Alabama Community College System Chancellor, Congressman BRADLEY BYRNE from Alabama.

Representative BYRNE, I thank you for being my co-chair. It is a pleasure to serve our HBCUs alongside of you.

The purpose of the caucus is to create a national dialogue so as to educate other Members of Congress and their staffs about the issues that impact HBCUs as well as to address the needs of HBCUs and to support the students and graduates of these institutions by increasing access and career opportunities. With the help of Representative BYRNE, we have grown the caucus to 56 members now, from both sides of the aisle, over the course of this year. I am proud to announce that the caucus is now bicameral and has the support of my home State Senator, RICHARD BURR of North Carolina.

Those of us in Congress have more to learn from our HBCU institutions and from the students who attend them. That is why, when we first launched the caucus, our first goal was to listen, and we did just that—we listened. We have held several staff briefings on various topics that impact HBCUs. I hosted a roundtable in my district with presidents and representatives from 10 HBCUs in the 12th District of North Carolina. I hosted a roundtable in my district, as well, with the former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as well as with presidents and representatives from HBCUs in the 12th District to make sure that their needs were heard. We hosted a diversity in the workforce event with Fortune 500 companies to discuss the role HBCUs play in graduating a skilled and diverse workforce while learning more about the programs that are currently available to improve diversity at these companies. We surveyed members of the caucus and Members of Congress to find out what their priorities are for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, and we hosted conference calls with chancellors and presidents for their input. At the start of this year, we held a caucus meeting with the new Secretary of Education, Dr. John King, Jr., in order to share those priorities with him.

Caucus members have been steadfast in crafting legislation to positively impact our HBCUs, which I am proud to support, from the America's College Promise Act, which would grant any first-time student access to community college for free and sets aside special funding for HBCUs and other institutions that serve many low-income, first-generation college students, to the HBCU Historic Preservation Program, which would reauthorize funds for the preservation and restoration of historic buildings on these campuses.

Recently, I introduced the HBCU Innovation Fund Act, which would provide $250 million in competitive grants to these schools across the country in order to develop critical solutions to meet current and emerging needs, like student retention and improving graduation rates; but this is just the start, and it is, clearly, not the end of our work to support HBCUs.

Many of the members of this bipartisan HBCU Caucus have long been champions for education and for our schools. This bipartisan caucus is just another step in the right direction as we join forces across the aisle so that we can truly make a difference and deliver for our HBCUs: from Assistant Democratic Leader CLYBURN, who works to protect institutions like South Carolina State and who has helped start Centers of Excellence, which have had a tremendous impact on students in his State; to my ranking member on Education and the Workforce, Representative BOBBY SCOTT, who has used his leadership position to be a national voice for all HBCUs and institutions of higher learning; to Representative EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, a leader in STEM education and a steadfast voice for our students—and HBCUs in particular.

To Congressional Black Caucus chair and my colleague from North Carolina, Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD, I thank him for making HBCUs a priority for our Congressional Black Caucus and for Congress.

To our Democrat vice chairs—Representative BENNIE THOMPSON and Representative TERRI SEWELL—and our Republican vice chairs—Representatives BRUCE WESTERMAN and RANDY FORBES—who have all been fierce advocates for HBCUs in their districts, and to my colleagues—Representatives CEDRIC RICHMOND and CORRINE BROWN—

who are co-chairs of the CBC's HBCUs task force, they have all put HBCUs first and have brought Members and the administration to the table to highlight the issues of concern.

Thank you to all of these Members for doing this good work and for bringing their expertise to the HBCU Caucus, because we couldn't do it without strong leaders in our communities who represent these institutions.

The Thurgood Marshall College Fund, an organization that supports the 47 publicly supported HBCUs, and the Thurgood Marshall Foundation played a critical role in the caucus' inception, and their very own president, Johnny Taylor, was the host for the caucus launch.

Thank you as well to the United Negro College Fund, which works to support the 37-member private Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The UNCF has been instrumental in widening the caucus' reach and has helped provide more than $4.5 billion to help more than 400,000 students get college degrees. So we thank Dr. Lomax and all of those who work with him.

To the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, NAFEO, which has also remained a key advocate for our HBCUs and our students, thank you to that organization and, also, to Lezli Baskerville.

I also congratulate the 1890 land grant institutions on their 125th anniversary last year. I was honored to participate in the House Agriculture Committee's hearing, in July, with the presidents and leaders of those universities, and I look forward to continuing to work with these organizations.

We have come a long way this year, but with this crisis still existing in education and with those facing our HBCUs, we still have a long road ahead of us; so I look forward to growing this partnership with Representative BYRNE and with more Members from both Chambers and from both sides of the aisle. We can continue to collectively work together in a bipartisan fashion to make a difference for our HBCUs and to protect and advance the students they serve.

□ 1615

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I can't say enough about the leadership on this issue that Congresswoman ADAMS has provided. She just did a terrific job of explaining to us all not just the progress that we have made over the last year, but the promise we have in the years to come to take this area and continue to move forward on it.

What a rich tradition we have in this country with Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I come from the State of Alabama. We are justifiably proud of the great institutions in our State. I can only tell you about a few, but let's start with probably our flagship, which is Tuskegee University, worldwide famous and well known for so many different things.

It is not just what its history is, although it is a rich and storied industry. It is also what it continues to do today and what Tuskegee will do in the future to enrich the lives of hundreds, yet tens of thousands, of people who have gone on in their lives and will go on in their lives to do great things for our State of Alabama and for the United States of America.

I am blessed in my district to have Bishop State Community College. Bishop State is one of the public community colleges in the State of Alabama. It was under my jurisdiction when I was the chancellor of post-secondary education. It is rich in its own history with an incredibly important mission in our rapidly growing economy in the Mobile area of providing the trained workforce for all of the business and industry that have been coming and is already there in our district.

So Bishop State stands as a great symbol to me not just of what we are, but of what we can be as we work with these institutions throughout my State of Alabama, throughout the South, and throughout the Nation.

I stand here not as a Black person, not as a Democrat, because this is not a White or Black issue. This is not a Democratic or a Republican issue. This is an American issue. This is about providing opportunity for everyone in America.

So often we talk about opportunity. Here is an example of where we are doing something about opportunity. We can open all the doors we want in America, but if the people of America or a small portion of the people of America can't walk through those doors, then we don't have real opportunity.

This Congress has few opportunities to really do the things that need to be done to help people. Here is one. Here is one where we can really do something that will make a tremendous difference.

Congresswoman ADAMS really put her finger on it. There are many people that go to HBCUs who didn't get there with the sort of support that they needed, who didn't get there with the sort of academic preparation that they needed.

Now, we can say: Oh, well. That is their problem and they just have to find some way to deal with it. Or we can understand that that is not just a problem for them, but that is a problem for all of us.

If we can work with them and help them with those problems through the programs that we have at these HBCUs, not only have we given that individual an opportunity to lift themselves up, but as they lift themselves up, they lift up our communities and they lift up our Nation.

So I was very honored when Congresswoman ADAMS came to me to ask me to participate in this very, very worthy endeavor with her. I know we have done some great things over the last year, but that is just a foretaste of what we can do in the years to come with her inspiration and with her leadership.

We have a number of great members in this caucus. One of our most steadfast members is one of the great leaders from the State of Florida, Representative GWEN GRAHAM.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GRAHAM) for her to come forward and present to us her own background and her own feelings about HBCUs.

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BYRNE and Congresswoman ADAMS for hosting today's Special Order and for all you do to support our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

It was such an honor for me to join this caucus as a founding member with you a year ago. It is hard to believe it has already been a year. I am proud of the bipartisan work we have done on behalf of our HBCUs.

There are more than 100 HBCUs in the United States that enroll more than 300,000 students per year. HBCUs represent 3 percent of colleges and universities, yet graduate 20 percent of African Americans with undergraduate degrees and 25 percent of African American degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math fields.

In my district, I am so proud to represent Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, one of our State's most historic and important universities. Florida A&M—or FAMU, as it is more affectionately known in north Florida—was founded in 1887 with just 15 students and 2 instructors. Let me just say: Go Rattlers.

Today the university has grown to enroll nearly 10,000 students, and it was named by the U.S. News & World Report as the top public Historically Black College and Universities in the entire Nation for 2015.

It is also listed among The Princeton Review's Best in the Southeast Colleges and is one of the top picks for providing a high-quality education at an affordable price in Florida, according to The College Database. And FAMU is the Nation's top producer of African Americans at the bachelor degree level.

It is such an honor for me to represent FAMU and to join the HBCU caucus in supporting all of our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the wonderful students who attend them.

Again, I thank Congressman BYRNE and Congresswoman ADAMS for hosting this Special Order.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her leadership on this issue and so many issues. It is so important that we have the understanding, each of us, of the institutions in our own district. She talked about Florida A&M, a great institution of higher education in her district.

Part of what we hope to do in the caucus is to educate every Member in

this body about the institutions in their districts and—perhaps they don't have any institutions in their district—about institutions across America that are HBCUs and what they have done for their communities and what they have done for the United States of America and continue to do every day.

I am very blessed to have been able to work with a number of HBCUs in Alabama in my prior positions in the State school board and as a chancellor of post-secondary education. I must admit I didn't know very much about them before I was in those positions.

But as I learned about them, as I got to know the administration and the faculty, but, most importantly, the students at those institutions, I realized what a rich resource that is for those students and for the communities that they are founded in.

You look around the country at some of the great graduates of these institutions and you realize where would we have been without the HBCUs, particularly during a period of time when African Americans were denied access to regular institutions of higher education because of discrimination in American society.

Just because we have made progress in that regard doesn't mean that we have ended the need for HBCUs. In many ways, the need has never been greater, because what we need in our society from the people in our society—in order to perform at the levels that our economy requires, it requires ever greater levels of education, training, and expertise. What might have been enough to know 50 years ago, we need to know far more now and we need to know it at every level of education.

We are here today to talk about colleges and universities. Some of the great colleges and universities in America have understood the importance of this and have rallied around our cause. I will never forget our kickoff day when we had the chancellor of the University of North Carolina system here, one of the great university statewide systems that we have in this country, as a recognition of those universities and the role that HBCUs play along with them in providing higher education to people throughout the United States of America.

The United Negro College Fund says that a mind is a terrible thing to waste. A great country cannot waste any mind. We need every mind in America to get whatever they need to become the person that they want to become, to realize their dreams, as I said earlier, not only to lift themselves up, but to lift the rest of us up with them. That is what we are talking about when we talk about HBCUs.

I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina again for her leadership, for her inspiration, for her continuing to be somebody out there to tell us that we need to keep pushing, we need to keep pushing. As long as she is willing to continue to do that, I am willing to continue to do that with her.

I yield back the balance of my time.

THE DISPARATE IMPLEMENTATION OF AMAZON.COM'S PRIME FREE SAME-DAY DELIVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because, despite our best efforts, racial redlining is still alive and well today. I come to this Chamber because racial redlining has once again reared its ugly, evil head across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, on April 21, Bloomberg published an analysis entitled ''Amazon Doesn't Consider the Race of Its Customers. Should It?''

Bloomberg explains how amazon.com discriminates against mostly African American communities nationwide by shutting them out, shutting them off from receiving its Prime free same-day delivery service.

Mr. Speaker, it must be understood that mostly predominantly African American ZIP Codes in this Nation have been excluded from receiving Amazon's Prime free same-day delivery service. It must be understood, Mr. Speaker, that this is absolutely unacceptable.

Amazon's vice president for global communications, Mr. Craig Berman, feebly attempted to justify this by saying that ''demographics play no role'' in the determination by which neighborhoods have access to Prime free same-day service.

□ 1630

He goes on to state that distance matters and that in terms of determining factors, close proximity to a warehouse is certainly one of the factors that they consider.

Well, Mr. Speaker, on the face of it, that seemingly appears to be both logical and understandable. However, when viewed through a sharper lens, there are some glaring, flagrant inconsistencies.

In my hometown of Chicago, Illinois, just for example, same-day service is available to a majority of the city and its surrounding suburbs. This free, same-day delivery service is not available to my constituents in predominantly African American ZIP Codes.

Mr. Berman, the article explains, again, feebly blames this on the distance of these ZIP Codes from a distribution center that is located in Kenosha, Wisconsin. That would be understandable if not for the fact that this free, same-day Amazon delivery service is available to residents in Oak Lawn, Illinois, which is a community that is also in the district that I represent, but Oak Lawn is even farther south, farther away from Kenosha, Wisconsin, a greater distance from the distribution center in Kenosha, Wisconsin, than all these African American-predominant ZIP Codes.

Mr. Speaker, because I live in a predominantly African American ZIP Code, I cannot be served by the Amazon Prime free, same-day delivery service, but my White constituents can be served by Amazon with their Prime free, same-day delivery service.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, despite amazon.com's assertions of impartiality and a strictly numbers-based approach to the availability of this Prime free, same-day delivery services, Amazon's implementation of this service has been disparate, disappointing, disgusting, and apparently discriminatory.

Mr. Speaker, not only does this occur in the city of Chicago, but also Bloomberg found similar situations existing in five other cities. Not just Chicago, but Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, New York City, and Washington, D.C., all across our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, historically and unfortunately, the situation with amazon.com is not a unique experience for people of color. Today, in the year 2016, too many Americans still are denied services and access to goods based off the color of their skin and where they reside or the location of their ZIP Code. This is redlining. This practice is known as redlining. This redlining has been a major, significant obstacle to communities of color to gain access to the fullness of their American Dream, to the fullness of their American ideal.

For decades now, despite efforts during the civil rights era of our Nation, during similar efforts, not only before, but even after the civil rights era of our Nation, despite many multiple legislative attempts to stamp redlining out, this very injustice continues to spread, even among some of my corporate citizens who, on the face of it, would never accept the fact that they engage in discriminatory business practices.

But when you look at it from my perspective, look at it from my vantage point, look at it from the experience of my constituents who are African American, Amazon fails to meet the acid test. Its Prime same-day delivery service is far less than prime for too many of my constituents and too many American citizens.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this body of the U.S. House of Representatives, we cannot allow businesses in this country to discriminate against any particular group of Americans. We cannot allow businesses in this country to discriminate against neighborhoods, against communities based on their business's race-based perceptions.

Mr. Speaker, this body, this U.S. House of Representatives cannot allow the Amazons of the world, amazon.com to violate laws of our Nation, laws like the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Amazon cannot violate the laws of our Nation with impunity and without accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I must call upon amazon.com and its CEO, Jeff Bezos, to come and do what is right, to come and

right this wrong. Make Amazon's Prime same-day delivery service a prime service that is available to all the citizens of this Nation and not just to the White citizens of this Nation.

People all across this Nation like amazon.com. I am a customer of amazon.com, and amazon.com benefits from Black Americans' dollars because Black Americans' dollars are just as green as any other Americans' dollars. White Americans' dollars are not more powerful, aren't colder or hotter. These are Americans' dollars, greenbacks, and Amazon must respect the buying power, the consumer right of African American consumers just as it does all other American consumers.

Mr. Bezos, again, I appeal to you, do what is right and right this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I must call upon our colleagues in the executive branch to ensure that the laws of our Nation passed by this U.S. Congress are faithfully and equally executed so that communities of color get equal and fair treatment by its corporate citizens all across this country.

Redlining is an evil that has ripped apart the dreams and the aspirations of African American citizens and other minorities.

□ 1645

It is high time now. The hour has passed. It is time now to put redlining and all the vestiges of it aside, buried deep. Take it out of the consciousness of the corporate decisionmakers in this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is a service economy. Our economics are based on service. Our social contract means that all Americans should have access and a level playing field when it comes to getting service and being serviced in this service economy.

Now, amazon.com's Prime same-day delivery service stands as a stark example of how much still needs to be changed in our society. No matter how much things change, so much remains the same. Let us rise up to the call. Amazon, do what is right, and right this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we can do no less than our best for all American citizens. This is an extraordinary violation of not only the civil rights laws of our Nation, but it stands as a significant barrier to greater economic opportunities, to a greater sense of being treated equally and fairly. There is something called justice in our society, and any injustice must be courageously confronted. Any injustice.

Amazon.com, your Prime same-day delivery service is not so prime until all your customers are treated fairly and equitably in your business model. No excuses.

This is shameful. It must be corrected. Make the Amazon Prime same-day delivery service available for all Americans because we live in a society where being prime really should mean something—this America that we live in.

Mr. Speaker, again, I call upon Mr. Jeff Bezos, Amazon's CEO, to do what is right and right this less than prime wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the article: ''Amazon Doesn't Consider the Race of Its Customers. Should It?''

[From www.bloomberg.com, Apr. 21, 2016]

AMAZON DOESN'T CONSIDER THE RACE OF ITS CUSTOMERS. SHOULD IT?

(By David Ingold and Spencer Soper)

For residents of minority urban neighborhoods, access to Amazon.com's vast array of products—from Dawn dish soap and Huggies diapers to Samsung flatscreen TVs—can be a godsend. Unlike whiter ZIP codes, these parts of town often lack well-stocked stores and quality supermarkets. White areas get organic grocers and designer boutiques. Black ones get minimarts and dollar stores. People in neighborhoods that retailers avoid must travel farther and sometimes pay more to obtain household necessities. ''I don't have a car, so I love to have stuff delivered,'' says Tamara Rasberry, a human resources professional in Washington, D.C., who spends about $2,000 a year on Amazon Prime, the online retailer's premium service that guarantees two-day delivery of tens of millions of items (along with digital music, e-books, streaming movies, and TV shows) for a yearly $99 membership fee. Rasberry, whose neighborhood of Congress Heights is more than 90 percent black, says shopping on Amazon lets her bypass the poor selection and high prices of nearby shops.

As Amazon has expanded rapidly to become ''the everything store,'' it's offered the promise of an egalitarian shopping experience. On Amazon and other online retailers, a black customer isn't viewed with suspicion, much less followed around by store security. Most of Amazon's services are available to almost every address in the U.S. ''We don't know what you look like when you come into our store, which is vastly different than physical retail,'' says Craig Berman, Amazon's vice president for global communications. ''We are ridiculously prideful about that. We offer every customer the same price. It doesn't matter where you live.''

Yet as Amazon rolls out its upgrade to the Prime service, Prime Free Same-Day Delivery, that promise is proving harder to deliver on. The ambitious goal of Prime Free Same-Day is to eliminate one of the last advantages local retailers have over the e-commerce giant: instant gratification. In cities where the service is available, Amazon offers Prime members same-day delivery of more than a million products for no extra fee on orders over $35. Eleven months after it started, the service includes 27 metropolitan areas. In most of them, it provides broad coverage within the city limits. Take Amazon's home town of Seattle, where every ZIP code within the city limits is eligible for same-day delivery and coverage extends well into the surrounding suburbs.

In six major same-day delivery cities, however, the service area excludes predominantly black ZIP codes to varying degrees, according to a Bloomberg analysis that compared Amazon same-day delivery areas with U.S. Census Bureau data.

In Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and Washington, cities still struggling to overcome generations of racial segregation and economic inequality, black citizens are about half as likely to live in neighborhoods with access to Amazon same-day delivery as white residents.

The disparity in two other big cities is significant, too. In New York City, same-day delivery is available throughout Manhattan, Staten Island, and Brooklyn, but not in the Bronx and some majority-black neighborhoods in Queens. In some cities, Amazon same-day delivery extends many miles into the surrounding suburbs but isn't available in some ZIP codes within the city limits.

The most striking gap in Amazon's same-day service is in Boston, where three ZIP codes encompassing the primarily black neighborhood of Roxbury are excluded from same-day service, while the neighborhoods that surround it on all sides are eligible. ''Being singled out like that and not getting those same services as they do in a 15-minute walk from here is very frustrating,'' says Roxbury resident JD Nelson, who's been an Amazon Prime member for three years. ''It's not a good thing, and it definitely doesn't make me happy.'' Rasberry was excited when Amazon announced Prime Free Same-Day was coming to Washington. But when she entered her ZIP code on the retailer's website, she was disappointed to find her neighborhood was left out. ''I still get two-day shipping, but none of the superfast, convenient delivery services come here,'' she says. Rasberry pays the same $99 Prime membership fee as people who live in the city's majority-white neighborhoods, but she doesn't get the same benefits. ''If you bring that service to the city,'' she says, ''you should offer it to the whole city.''

There's no evidence that Amazon makes decisions on where to deliver based on race. Berman says the ethnic composition of neighborhoods isn't part of the data Amazon examines when drawing up its maps. ''When it comes to same-day delivery, our goal is to serve as many people as we can, which we've proven in places like Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, and Philadelphia.'' Amazon, he says, has a ''radical sensitivity'' to any suggestion that neighborhoods are being singled out by race. ''Demographics play no role in it. Zero.''

Amazon says its plan is to focus its same-day service on ZIP codes where there's a high concentration of Prime members, and then expand the offering to fill in the gaps over time. ''If you ever look at a map of service for Amazon, it will start out small and end up getting big,'' he says.

This is a logical approach from a cost and efficiency perspective: Give areas with the most existing paying members priority access to a new product. Yet in cities where most of those paying members are concentrated in predominantly white parts of town, a solely data-driven calculation that looks at numbers instead of people can reinforce long-entrenched inequality in access to retail services. For people who live in black neighborhoods not served by Amazon, the fact that it's not deliberate doesn't make much practical difference. ''They are offering different services to other people who don't look like you but live in the same city,'' says Rasberry.

Amazon cites several reasons a ZIP code within a city may be excluded: too few Prime members to justify the expense of sending out trucks and drivers, or the area is too far from the closest Amazon warehouse. ''Distance matters,'' Berman says. ''At some point, with the math involved, we can't make it work—in time or in cost for the carrier. There is a diminishing return on orders.'' In some cases, Amazon says, it's difficult to find delivery partners willing to serve the area. ''We deliver same day up till 9 p.m.'' says Amazon spokesman Scott Stanzel. ''There are a lot of carrier partners. A lot of variables.''

Amazon won't reveal specifics about how it decides its same-day delivery areas—the competition would kill for that info, says Berman. Broadly speaking, it comes down to cost. Same-day delivery is expensive to provide, in part because Amazon can't rely on

the built-in infrastructure and low negotiated rates of United Parcel Service and the U.S. Postal Service, which shoulder the retailer's standard and two-day Prime deliveries. To get packages out within hours, Amazon uses a mix of its own drivers, local couriers, and independent contractors making deliveries in their own vehicles through an Uberlike service called Amazon Flex.

Cities where Amazon offers broad one-day coverage appear to have something in common: close proximity to product warehouses, making it less expensive to reach all areas. ''It's not the only variable. It's certainly one of them,'' says Berman. ''It definitely has an impact if we have a fulfillment center that's outside a city, or we have a fulfillment center that happens to be on one side of it'' Amazon declined to reveal the locations of its same-day hubs, so it's difficult to tell how that works. In same-day cities Amazon hasn't yet surrounded with warehouses, the company must decide which neighborhoods are worth the cost of service and which aren't. That's where things get complicated.

ATLANTA

Amazon's Prime Free Same-Day Delivery closely mirrors the city's historical racial divide. The largely white northern half is covered, while the largely black southern half isn't. The company extends the service 35 miles north of downtown but excludes Norcross, a less distant eastern suburb where blacks and Hispanics outnumber whites, and Redan, with a black population of 94 percent.

BOSTON

Although Amazon's same-day service is available to most addresses in Boston and reaches almost to New Hampshire, the centrally located neighborhood of Roxbury, with a population that's about 59 percent black and 15 percent white, is excluded. The residents of the ZIP codes that border Roxbury on all sides are eligible for the service. Amazon's Berman calls Roxbury ''an anomaly.''

CHICAGO

Amazon's same-day service area includes about 2.2 million people in the city but excludes about 472,000 people in Chicago's predominantly black South Side. Berman says the South Side ZIP codes are beyond the reach of the company's distribution center in Kenosha, Wisconsin, about two hours north of the city. Yet same-day service is available to Prime members in Oak Lawn, which is eight miles farther south than the excluded portions of Chicago and has a white population of about 85 percent. The company does offer the service in largely black neighborhoods in the city's center, including Austin.

DALLAS

Amazon's same-day service area includes suburbs between Dallas and Fort Worth, but about 590,000 residents of eastern and southern Dallas, where a majority are black or Hispanic—such as Oak Cliff—are just outside the delivery area. Amazon cited distance from the company's warehouses and a low concentration of Prime members as reasons those areas were left out.

NEW YORK CITY

Amazon's same-day coverage area extends, unbroken, from New York City all the way south to Philadelphia, with one notable exception: The largely black and Hispanic borough of the Bronx, which is excluded from the service. The Bronx has the lowest percentage of white residents of the five boroughs at about 33 percent. Berman says the Bronx is difficult to reach because the warehouses that serve the area are in New Jersey.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

One of Amazon's largest same-day service coverage areas extends from Washington, D.C., north to Baltimore and encompasses much of the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Yet all neighborhoods in the capital's predominantly black southeast quadrant are excluded, along with several largely black Maryland suburbs to the southeast—notably Suitland and Silver Hill, which have average income levels comparable to those in some ZIP codes between Washington and Baltimore that do have same-day coverage.

Some excluded ZIP codes correspond with higher crime rates. Amazon won't say whether concerns about stolen packages or the safety of drivers figure into its decisions about where to deliver, saying only ''the safety of our employees is a top priority.''

Income inequality may also play a part. Many excluded areas have average household incomes below the national average. And households with Prime memberships skew wealthier—not surprising given the $99 membership fee. An April study of families with teenagers by investment bank Piper Jaffray estimates 70 percent of such U.S. households with incomes of $112,000 per year or more now have a Prime membership, compared with 43 percent for households with incomes of $21,000 to $41,000. Income differences alone don't explain the gaps in service, however. In Chicago, New York, Boston, Atlanta, and other cities, some areas that are excluded have household incomes as high or higher than ZIP codes Amazon does cover.

Berman points to cities where some black ZIP codes get same-day service and some white ones don't. In Los Angeles, black and Hispanic communities south of downtown have same-day service, but mostly white Malibu, on the far side of the traffic-clogged Route 27 and Pacific Coast Highway, doesn't. In several cities where the same-day service area encompasses the vast majority of all residents, including Los Angeles, San Jose, and Tampa, a higher percentage of blacks live in ZIP codes eligible for same-day delivery than whites. Overall, though, in cities where same-day service doesn't extend to most residents, those left out are disproportionately black. (In the six cities with disparities, Asians, on average, are as likely as whites to live in an area with coverage; Hispanics are less likely than whites to live in same-day ZIP codes, but more likely than blacks.)

''As soon as you try to represent something as complex as a neighborhood with a spreadsheet based on a few variables, you've made some generalizations and assumptions that may not be true, and they may not affect all people equally,'' says Sorelle Friedler, a computer science professor at Haverford College who studies data bias. ''There is so much systemic bias with respect to race. If you aren't purposefully trying to identify it and correct it, this bias is likely to creep into your outcomes.''

Amazon says it's misleading to scrutinize its current delivery areas so closely, because the service is new and evolving. Eventually, coverage will extend to every ZIP code in same-day cities, says Berman. The service is indeed expanding. Since Bloomberg first contacted Amazon for this article in February, the company announced 12 new same-day cities. As it adds locations, however, Amazon has yet to extend coverage to excluded majority-black ZIP codes in the existing cities with gaps in service. How long will those customers have to wait to get the full benefits of their Prime membership? Berman says there's no set timetable: ''We'll get there.''

Juan Gilbert, chair of the University of Florida's department of computer and information science & engineering, says Amazon has an opportunity to use its data resources to correct its oversight and avert falling into the retail patterns of the past. ''I think it was a mistake, and it never crossed their mind,'' he says. ''This is a perfect example of how Amazon had a blind spot.''

Update, April 21: Corrects the number of New York City residents who live in ZIP codes eligible for Amazon same-day delivery; updates the article and final chart to indicate cities where black residents are more likely than whites to live in zip codes eligible for same day service.

METHODOLOGY

Amazon's website allows users to type in ZIP codes to see where Prime Free Same-Day Delivery is available. Bloomberg entered every U.S. ZIP code into the tool, and mapped the results on top of a complete U.S. ZIP code shape file, provided by ESRI, to produce a coverage map of Amazon's Prime same-day delivery areas. Coverage maps show Amazon data as of April 8, 2016.

Population data were compiled using block group figures from the 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year estimates tables. Table B03002—Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race—provides population figures by racial category, including the following subsets: white alone, black or African-American alone, Hispanic or Latino, Asian alone, and other races. The data were released on Dec. 3, 2015 and are the most recent local population data available from the ACS. All ACS figures are estimates with a 90% confidence interval and are subject to a margin of error. City-level figures presented in the graphics and charts are compilations of individual block group estimates, and share the same 90% confidence level.

Each population dot represent 100 residents, and are evenly distributed across each block group. They do not represent exact addresses, and populations below a 100-person threshold within an individual block group are not shown.

In some cases, individual block groups straddle multiple ZIP codes or intersect a city boundary. Often these block groups feature clear divisions between residential areas, and nonresidential areas made up of parks, lakes, or empty land. In these cases, a block group was included in the ZIP code that included the residential area. When a block group was not clearly separated in this manner, the population was proportionally distributed based on the area of overlap.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 53 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 29, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5187. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a report entitled, ''Five-year Comprehensive Range Plan for Melrose Air Force Range (AFR)''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5188. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the report to Congress on Personal and Home Care Aide State Training (PHCAST) Demonstration Program Evaluation, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1397g(b)(5)(B)(ii); Public Law 111-148, Sec. 5507(a); (124 Stat. 667); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5189. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Quality Plans; Georgia; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard [EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0152; FRL-9945-60-Region 4] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5190. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities; Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incineration Units [EPA-R02-OAR-2015-0755; FRL-9945-71-Region 2] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5191. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections [EPA-R09-OAR-2016-0028; FRL-9945-78-Region 9] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5192. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Determinations of Attainment by the Attainment Date, Extensions of the Attainment Date, And Reclassification of Several Areas for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-HQ-OAR-2015-0468; FRL-9945-17-OAR] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5193. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Environmental Protection Agency Acquisition Regulation (EPAAR); Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern (iDURC) [EPA-HQ-OARM-2016-0046; FRL-9941-86-OARM] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5194. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0591; FRL-9945-28] received April 26, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5195. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final evaluation of vendor submittal — Safety Evaluation of BWRVIP-100, Revision 1, ''BWRVIP Vessel and Internals Project: Updated Assessment of the Fracture Toughness of Irradiated Stainless Steel for BWR Core Shrouds'' (TAC No.: ME8329) received April 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5196. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-143, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5197. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 16-001, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5198. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 16-003, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5199. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-131, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5200. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-145, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); and 22 U.S.C. 2776(d)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(d) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (90 Stat. 740); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5201. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, 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.

5202. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the stabilization of Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, 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.

5203. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Yemen that was declared in Executive Order 13611 of May 16, 2012, 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.

5204. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995, 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.

5205. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report of all programs or projects of the International Atomic Energy Agency in each country listed in Section 307(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2021 note; Public Law 105-277, Sec. 2809(c)(2); (112 Stat. 2681-850); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5206. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a determination by the Secretary, pursuant to sections 506(a)(2), 610, and 614(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5207. A letter from the Associate Administrator for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 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.

5208. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Family and Medical Leave Act; Definition of Spouse (RIN: 3206-AM90) received April 25, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5209. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Standards Branch, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Oil and Gas and Sulfur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf — Blowout Preventer Systems and Well Control [Docket ID: BSEE-2015-0002; 15XE1700DX EEEE500000 EX1SF0000.DAQ000] (RIN: 1014-AA11) received April 27, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5210. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition filed on behalf of workers at the Kansas City Plant, Kansas City, Missouri, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 7384q(c)(2); Public Law 106-398, Sec. 1, (as amended by Public Law 108-375, Sec. 3166(b)(1)), (118 Stat. 2188); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5211. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1086] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5212. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Wy-Hi Rowing Regatta; Detroit River, Trenton Channel; Wyandotte, MI [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0209] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5213. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone, John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse; Boston, MA [USCG-2014-0246] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received April 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5214. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a draft bill to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes, pursuant to 38 USC 8104(a)(2); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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 Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 5088. A bill to prevent abusive billing of ancillary services to the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 5089. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to maintain and operate at least one Doppler weather radar site within 55 miles of each State capital city in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. WESTMORELAND):

H.R. 5090. A bill to ensure that air transportation between the United States and the European Union complies with the intent of article 17 bis of the United States-European Union-Norway-Iceland Air Transport Agreement of June 21, 2011; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DENHAM (for himself and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 5091. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reinstate the requirement for an annual report on the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide for specialized treatment and rehabilitative needs of disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HARPER (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LANCE, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. POMPEO, and Mr. STEWART):

H.R. 5092. A bill to make exclusive the authority of the Federal Government to regulate the labeling of products made in the United States and introduced in interstate or foreign commerce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 5093. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to require a time limitation for consent orders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. COSTA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. KEATING, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. RIBBLE):

H.R. 5094. A bill to contain, reverse, and deter Russian aggression in Ukraine, to assist Ukraine's democratic transition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, and 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 Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia):

H.R. 5095. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health of Human Services to award grants to States (or collaborations of States) to establish, expand, or maintain a comprehensive regional, State, or municipal system to provide training, education, consultation, and other resources to prescribers relating to patient pain, substance misuse, and substance abuse disorders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. QUIGLEY):

H.R. 5096. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to establish the American Technical Training Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself, Mr. LANCE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. POMPEO, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 5097. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to require the termination of inactive investigations after a period of six months; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. LANCE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 5098. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to require an annual plan and a report on elder fraud, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ASHFORD (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. FORTENBERRY):

H.R. 5099. A bill to establish a pilot program on partnership agreements to construct new facilities for the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself and Mr. GRIFFITH):

H.R. 5100. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to protect at-risk youth against termination of Medicaid eligibility while an inmate of a public institution; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CULBERSON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia):

H.R. 5101. A bill to direct the Attorney General to establish a policy for the Department of Justice requiring all United States attorneys to prosecute offenses under sections 275 and 276 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CULBERSON (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 5102. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to establish a criminal penalty for an alien who lacks lawful immigration status and is present in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CULBERSON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia):

H.R. 5103. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require the inclusion of a term of supervised release as a part of a sentence for certain offenders, to provide for the removal of deportable alien offenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. HARPER, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 5104. A bill to prohibit, as an unfair and deceptive act or practice in commerce, the sale or use of certain software to circumvent control measures used by Internet ticket sellers to ensure equitable consumer access to tickets for any given event, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DELANEY (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mrs. COMSTOCK):

H.R. 5105. A bill to ensure that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority includes board members who have certified expertise in certain areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 5106. A bill to make college more affordable, reduce student debt, and provide greater access to higher education for all students of the United States; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. TONKO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. ELLISON):

H.R. 5107. A bill to prohibit employers and certain other entities from requiring or requesting that employees and certain other individuals provide a user name, password, or other means for accessing a personal account on any social networking website; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GRAYSON (for himself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 5108. A bill to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to penalize persons who fail to maintain nuisance properties; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 5109. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to require annual reports to Congress regarding the status of investigations of unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 5110. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to lower the action level for lead in drinking water to 5 parts per billion by the end of 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ISSA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. OLSON):

H.R. 5111. A bill to prohibit the use of certain clauses in form contracts that restrict the ability of a consumer to communicate regarding the goods or services offered in interstate commerce that were the subject of the contract, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 5112. A bill to amend the Consumer Protection Act of 2010 to grant the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection the authority to regulate certain acts and practices using processes and procedures consistent with and similar to those in place at the Federal Trade Commission, to encourage greater communication amongst regulators, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MOORE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 5113. A bill to encourage initiatives for financial products and services that are appropriate and accessible for millions of American small businesses that do not have access to the financial mainstream; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 5114. A bill to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. HARPER):

H.R. 5115. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to include requirements for declaring an unlawful act or practice, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. MULLIN):

H.R. 5116. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to permit a bipartisan majority of Commissioners to hold a meeting that is closed to the public to discuss official business; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PAULSEN (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 5117. A bill to ensure appropriate policies, planning, interagency coordination, and spectrum availability to support the Internet of Things '; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POMPEO (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. HARPER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 5118. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to specify certain effects of guidelines, general statements of policy, and similar guidance issued by the Federal Trade Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POMPEO (for himself, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 5119. A bill to prohibit the obligation or expenditure of funds available to any Federal department or agency for any fiscal year to purchase or issue a license for the purchase of heavy water produced in Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 5120. A bill to establish a penalty for the Department of Housing and Urban Development for failure to enforce compliance with the public housing community service and self-sufficiency requirement under law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, 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. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. FATTAH):

H.R. 5121. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out an energy storage research program, loan program, and technical assistance and grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, 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. FORBES:

H. Res. 709. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Iran, by failing to adhere to international maritime law, ignoring United Nations resolutions, and conducting military operations in a manner that raises tensions within the Arabian Gulf, has undermined stability in the Arabian Gulf, raised the danger of inadvertent escalation, and increased the risk to members of the United States Armed Forces overseas; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. PETERS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. TAKANO):

H. Res. 710. A resolution recognizing the 41st anniversary of the Fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. VELA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. SIRES, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H. Res. 711. A resolution expressing support for designation of April 30, 2016, as Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

210. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 500, condemning the global unrelenting persecution of Christians and acts of terror and aggression against Christians; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

211. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 481, urging Congress to pass bills for the implementation of the Veterans Affairs New Veterans Choice Program; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 5088.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 5089.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 5090.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3, and Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 5091.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the conunon defense and general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 5092.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 5093.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3:

''The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes''

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 5094.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 5095.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. ESTY:

H.R. 5096.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the U.S. Constitution, ''The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana:

H.R. 5097.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, CLuase 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 thereof).

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 5098.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (which states that ''The Congress shall have the Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States'') and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 (which states that the Congress shall have the Power ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes') of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. ASHFORD:

H.R. 5099.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 5100.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Title I Section 8. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for he common Defence and general

Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform in the Untied States;

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 5101.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 5102.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 5103.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 5104.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The ''necessary and proper'' clause of Article I Section 8.

By Mr. DELANEY:

H.R. 5105.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 5106.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 5107.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 5108.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 5109.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce . . . among the several States.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 5110.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 5111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Sec. 8, Clause 1, of the United States Constitution

This states that ''Congress shall have the power . . . lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 5112.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

Additionally, Article 1, Section 7, Clause 2 of the Constitution allows for every bill passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and signed by the President to be codified into law; and therefore implicitly allows Congress to repeal any bill that has been passed by both chambers and signed into law by the President.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5113.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, clause 3

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 5114.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 3—The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States;

By Mr. MULLIN:

H.R. 5115.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 5116.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States, ''to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 5117.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POMPEO:

H.R. 5118.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution, in that the legislation exercises legislative power granted to Congress by that clause ''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. POMPEO:

H.R. 5119.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 9 Clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 5120.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 5121.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, 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. 194: Mr. WELCH, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. GRIFFITH.

H.R. 250: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 266: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 292: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 449: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 672: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 711: Mr. YOHO, Mr. REED, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 775: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 816: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky and Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H.R. 845: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H.R. 864: Ms. MENG and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 923: Mr. SANFORD, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LONG, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. JONES, and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 953: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 973: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 1064: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 1109: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1192: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1218: Mr. MARINO, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 1233: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 1258: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1309: Mr. LOUDERMILK and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 1336: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1343: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 1427: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1457: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1492: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1559: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1602: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 1688: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 1718: Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 1722: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 1736: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 1798: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 1859: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1945: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 1961: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 2026: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2102: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H.R. 2148: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 2180: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 2189: Mr. LANCE and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 2218: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2237: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2285: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 2342: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 2350: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2366: Mr. WALZ, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2739: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 2759: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 2793: Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 2817: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 2903: Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 2911: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mrs. LOVE.

H.R. 2948: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 2991: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 3071: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 3119: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3222: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3237: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3250: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3308: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 3323: Mr. SIRES, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 3406: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3441: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 3542: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 3632: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3742: Mr. SIRES and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 3832: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 3957: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4006: Ms. NORTON and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 4007: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4073: Mr. WALBERG and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 4137: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 4172: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4177: Mr. YOHO, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4184: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 4185: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 4212: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 4216: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 4219: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 4223: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 4230: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 4247: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 4262: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 4266: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 4399: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 4443: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4448: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 4456: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 4561: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 4562: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 4563: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 4594: Mr. HONDA and Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 4606: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4611: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 4615: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 4625: Mr. BOST, Mr. BARR, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4640: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 4653: Mr. PAYNE and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4656: Mr. FARR, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4662: Mr. GRIFFITH and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4695: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 4730: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4732: Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 4764: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 4773: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 4774: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4775: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 4779: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 4792: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 4817: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 4819: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 4832: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4843: Ms. FOXX and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4884: Mr. FLEMING, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BRAT, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 4888: Ms. MOORE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LEE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. HAHN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 4907: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 4919: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 4928: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4955: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 4959: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4960: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4969: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 4978: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 4981: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 5025: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. VELA, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SIRES, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 5028: Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. AMASH, Mr. UPTON, Mr. TROTT, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 5033: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 5035: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 5047: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 5060: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 5063: Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 5064: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 5076: Mr. JOLLY, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. MEADOWS.
H.J. Res. 11: Mr. LAHOOD.
H.J. Res. 13: Mr. LAHOOD.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. TROTT.
H.J. Res. 90: Mr. CONYERS.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. TONKO, Mr. STEWART, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H. Con. Res. 100: Mr. HULTGREN.
H. Res. 569: Mr. FOSTER.
H. Res. 591: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. DUFFY.
H. Res. 665: Mr. AMASH, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. HARRIS.
H. Res. 707: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H. Res. 708: Mr. VELA and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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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.

Lord, You are in the midst of us and we are called Your children. We confess that we often fail to live worthy of Your great Name and generous mercies. We thank You for the opportunity to serve You as we strive to keep America the land of the free and the home of the brave. Abide with our lawmakers. Be their companion as they labor to keep this Nation strong. Drive away all snares of the enemy and may no weapon formed against them be able to prosper. Make our Senators models of excellence and integrity for our Nation and world.

We pray in Your great 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. ROUNDS). The majority leader is recognized.

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me quote from a letter I recently received from our colleagues across the aisle. Here is what they said:

We are writing to reiterate our interest in working cooperatively to facilitate the fiscal year 2017 appropriations process. As we see it—

Our Democratic friends said—

restoring the regular order promises not only a more open and transparent process, but a chance for Senators on both sides of the aisle to participate meaningfully in funding decisions. This is a win-win opportunity and we should seize it together.

That was a letter I received from all of our friends on the other side of the aisle. That is exactly what we have been doing—exactly. The appropriations process is off to a strong start, an ''excellent kickoff,'' in the words of the top Appropriations Committee Democrat, Senator MIKULSKI, with bills passing through the committee by unanimous bipartisan votes.

''If this is the way it is going to be to move appropriations,'' she said just a few days ago, ''then I think it is a good day.'' Senator MIKULSKI said: ''I think it is a good day.'' Democrats lauded the first bill on the floor and in press releases for helping promote American jobs and for addressing the cleanup of radioactive and hazardous contamination across our country.

They praised its key investments in research and water infrastructure. Then, what did they do? They filibustered—the very same people who wrote the letter, the very same people who praised the bill in press releases, the very same people who took credit for amendments in the bill, those same people.

It seems Democrats are more concerned with funding the acquisition of heavy water from Iran than funding water infrastructure in America. Let me say that again. It seems Democrats are more concerned with funding the acquisition of heavy water from Iran than funding water infrastructure right here in our own country.

As we all know, President Obama concluded a nuclear deal with Iran last year. Tehran is expected to reap approximately $100 billion, thanks to the deal, and the Obama administration itself has admitted the regime is likely to use that windfall to invest in its war economy, to defend its regime, and to strengthen the hand of the Revolutionary Guard, a group that has been accused of helping Shiite militias attack and kill American soldiers in Iraq.

Many of us, including myself, warned that this deal made little sense in terms of our regional strategy. We warned it would enhance Iran's capability and its power. Indeed, since signing President Obama's deal, Iran has tested ballistic missiles. It has deployed forces to Syria in support of the Assad regime. It has harassed American ships and those of our allies within the Persian Gulf.

So when the administration made an announcement over this past weekend that it would be purchasing so-called heavy water from Iran, a lot of us were concerned. That is right. Make sure everybody understands. U.S. funds would be sent to Iran. Nothing in the President's deal with Iran required the United States to make that purchase. It is likely it will effectively amount to even more money for Iran to invest in military modernization.

So Senator COTTON filed an amendment to prevent the money we are appropriating from being used for more of these purchases in the future—in the future. His amendment does not put the Secretary of Energy's current heavy water purchase agreement at risk. It simply tries to keep our Treasury from subsidizing the modernization of Iran's military or the procurement of ballistic missiles or air defenses that may be used against America or her allies.

I support his policy objective. I don't know why it would not be supported by every Member of the Senate, regardless of party, but apparently Democrats do not. They have filibustered the overall bill, a bill that passed committee with unanimous bipartisan support, remember, to prevent even the possibility—this amendment is not even pending—to prevent even the possibility of voting on this amendment. They could not wait a single week before throwing an

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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obstructionist wrench into the appropriations process they claim to want.

Some of us remember that the Democrats did not want to vote when they were in the majority. They also don't seem to want to vote when they are in the minority. I hope they are not dusting off the old filibuster summer playbook, especially in light of the letter they just sent to me about win-win opportunities and restoring regular order. Perhaps the most galling thing about Democrats again trying to blow up the appropriations process is this: They filibustered this appropriations bill and then walked into a press conference about Zika funding. They filibustered this bill and then walked into a press conference about Zika funding.

The appropriations process is the path for that funding. That is the way you do it. Preventing the spread of Zika is something both parties agree is a priority. The administration currently has funds to address the issue but has requested additional funds by the end of next month. Both Republicans and Democrats have been looking at different approaches to properly address the situation.

The senior Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, recently characterized that bipartisanship collaborative process as moving forward ''in good faith.'' That is especially notable when you consider how difficult it is for the committee to move forward when the administration keeps it waiting month after month after month for information it needs, as has been the case with Zika, but progress is being made anyway. Then Democrats filibustered and upended the process. So how do we move forward now? I remember the second-ranking Democrat, Senator DURBIN, once shared some wisdom that seems particularly relevant. Here is what he said:

> If you don't want to fight fires, don't be a firefighter. If you don't want to come to Congress and vote on tough issues, get another job somewhere else.

So here is the message to our Democratic colleagues: Do your job. Do your job. There are other areas where both sides have been able to find common ground. We have seen the truth of that in many important solutions passed by this Republican-led Senate already: permanent tax relief for families and small businesses, groundbreaking education reform that empowers parents and prevents Washington from imposing Common Core, the first long-term transportation solution in years—a solution that will finally allow us to address crumbling roads and infrastructure.

Whether it is pay raises for our troops, help for our veterans, or hope for the victims of human trafficking, we got a lot done last year with hard work and with cooperation. We have gotten more done this year with hard work and cooperation too. In the past 3 months, we passed a comprehensive North Korea sanctions bill, a bill to permanently ban Internet access taxes, a measure to give the public more access to government records, a bill to help safeguard American intellectual property from theft, and critical legislation to help address our Nation's prescription opioid and heroin epidemic.

Just last week, we passed both the most pro-passenger, pro-security FAA reauthorization in years and the first major energy legislation since the Bush administration. So where are we? We now have a bipartisan opportunity to responsibly work through the individual funding bills. We now have a bipartisan opportunity to responsibly continue addressing funding issues like Zika.

What will it take? What it will take is for our Democratic colleagues to end this obstruction and work cooperatively across the aisle instead. That is not too much to ask. So let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture. I believe that when you give Senators and the people they represent more of a say in the legislative process, they are bound to take more of a stake in the legislative outcome, regardless of party.

That is why we have empowered committees and Members to take the lead in more areas. That is how we have gotten the Senate back to work in so many ways. I think Members in both parties have seen the benefits of it. So, yes, some may see a short-term political benefit in blowing up the appropriations process now, but I would also ask my friends to remember this: Restoring the appropriations process is something we all should want. Democrats have said it is what they want. Republicans have said it is what we want. It is what I have set out to do. I think it is the best way to give individual Senators in both parties more of a voice for their constituents in the funding process, to empower them to make smarter decisions about how taxpayer dollars are spent.

So we are going to give our colleagues an opportunity today to reconsider this filibuster. They don't have to block the appropriations process, which is the path for funding priorities such as Zika. I hope they will make the right choice. We have gotten so much done already with hard work and cooperation. I know there is much more we can accomplish for our country with a little more of each.

So let's keep striving to get more done for our country. The only way to do that is together.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when I first came to the Senate, I was so fortunate I was put on the Appropriations Committee that very first day I was here. I loved my assignment. For many years, I had the good fortune of either chairing or being the ranking member of that Energy and Water Subcommittee. So I know a lot about that subcommittee—many successful bills, never an unsuccessful bill did we bring to the floor. We did them quickly. I worked mostly with the Senator from New Mexico by the name of Domenici. We worked together and got a lot done for the country. So I know this Water and Energy bill. The Republican leader complains about what happened yesterday on the Energy and Water appropriations bill.

On the Democratic side, there is no one who is more liked, appreciated, and who is more imbued as a historic figure than DIANNE FEINSTEIN of California. She became involved in politics at an early age and was thrown into a maelstrom of violence when the mayor was murdered. She had to step in and take over that very difficult job.

As a Senator, she has been valiant, and she wants to get things done. No one can call her rank partisan, because she isn't. But like all of us over here, she was terribly disappointed yesterday and the day before when all of a sudden, the bill is finished—the bill is finished; the Energy and Water bill is finished—and out of nowhere at 12:15 p.m. on Tuesday we get an amendment that really is something that is a poison pill if there ever were one.

The only thing holding up the bill is this poison pill amendment. We agreed to pass it yesterday. DIANNE FEINSTEIN agrees; pass it. She likes it the way it is. We like it the way it is.

So if they are as serious about doing their job as the Republican leader said, we are happy to vote on this bill now. But if Republicans continue to insist on these poison pill amendments—and there is no question that is what this is—we are going to have to continue as we have.

It takes a lot of gall for my friend the Republican leader to talk about filibusters. I repeat what I have said here before, but it is worth repeating. As soon as Obama was elected, the Republicans met in Washington, and they reported in a 2-day-long meeting—which had been reported on numerous times—that they came to two conclusions.

No. 1, Obama will not be re-elected. They failed at that miserably. He got more than 5 million votes than his opponent. But on the other thing they have succeeded in most instances, and that is to oppose everything President Obama wants. That continues to today.

As far as poison pill amendments, we are on record numerous times talking about why it is wrong to have these poison pill riders. For example, I said on the floor:

> True bipartisanship also requires both parties to resist the temptation to pursue poison pill riders that appeal to their own supporters, but that are so strongly opposed by the other party that their inclusion in appropriations bills would grind the process to a halt. No doubt there will be many opportunities next year for both sides to score political points. But the appropriations process is

not the place for that. And I hope members in both parties will agree that it's more important to fund the government than to play politics.

That is what I said when we started this Congress, and that is what the Senators who wrote this letter, which my friend the Republican leader talked about, want to do. We want to do appropriations bills, and we were on a rush to get the first one done. We were headed to victory, and then out of nowhere comes a poison pill rider. Everyone acknowledges that is what it is. There are many definitions of a poison pill rider but, of course, as the President has said, one is when you can't sign the bill.

So it would be to everyone's interest if we would simply step back, pass the bill that exists, and figure out some other way to try to embarrass the President. This is not the way to do it.

Finally, my friend the Republican leader comes to the floor and talks about what a great amount of work we have done in the Senate. We have done as much as we can. We have tried to support everything.

We are a responsible minority. We have not done to them what they have done to us. They opposed everything we tried to do—everything. We had to move to hundreds of motions to proceed.

We are pleased we got the energy legislation done. We tried for 5 years to get it done. We were filibustered every step of the way. We couldn't get it done. So it was brought up again. We cooperated, and we got it done. So virtually everything the Republican leader talked about were things that we tried to do before and they wouldn't let us.

Let's talk about what we haven't done. They talked about having passed opioid legislation. Oops, there is one problem. They didn't fund it. Flint, MI—oops, they did nothing. They ignored it for months and months and months.

There was a mistake. No one disagrees there was a mistake made—not by us but by the Republicans—in drafting a deal with renewable energy credits—not done.

There is the Zika virus. My friend says: Well, we are trying to get information. That is ridiculous. We will hear more about that in a few minutes.

There are no district court nominations, no hearings on the Supreme Court.

There is no need to go over what hasn't been done.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3038

Mr. REID. Mr. President, imagine though, if you will, that this great country is facing a potential outbreak of a dangerous virus. It is nothing that was made up in the movies, nothing that is on a special TV show. It is actually a potential outbreak of a dangerous virus.

Imagine, mosquitoes are carrying a virus that affects pregnant women, a virus that causes birth defects in babies, not allowing their brains and skulls to develop. The skulls collapse on a number of them. Brains don't develop. It is a virus that can cause men and women to develop nervous system disorders that can result in paralysis. We don't know the full extent of this.

We had a briefing here a week ago today with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health. We had the Secretary of Health and Human Services here. They are in a state of emergency. They need to do something. They need to develop a vaccine. This is on its way. It is here.

It is here in Puerto Rico. We have cases reported in the State of my friend, Florida. He is someone with whom I have served in the House and in the Senate. Senator NELSON of Florida is one of our very outstanding Members.

We already know there are cases in Florida. Thirty States are going to be affected with these mosquitoes as the weather warms. I have been told in the past that mosquitoes have never caused birth defects. They have caused all kinds of problems with malaria and other things, but not birth defects. Now they are here.

Imagine, after what I have just laid out to you, that those in control of Congress do nothing to address the imminent danger posed by this virus. It sounds like some science fiction novel; doesn't it? But it is not.

This is real life in America. This is the reality—the Republicans' refusal to respond to the threat of Zika. My friend mentioned that the senior Senator from Washington is involved in trying to come up with something for Zika. She said yesterday she hasn't heard a word from the Republicans in more than a week on this important issue.

This is real life. Zika is a scourge that is already affecting our country, as I have outlined. It is time we pass an emergency appropriations bill to take care of it, to fight it. Out of tradition, common sense, and precedent, a public health threat is an emergency, and it demands a response.

As I indicated, hundreds of people in Puerto Rico—quickly approaching a thousand—are infected. As the weather warms, as I have indicated, it is going to multiply throughout the continental United States. Thirty States will likely be affected with this mosquito—this killer mosquito.

More than 2 months ago my friend said: We need more from the administration. More than 2 months ago the administration—desperate as they were—sent a letter to Congress saying we need an emergency request of $1.9 billion—out of desperation.

What did the White House do? Two years ago we were fighting Ebola. It is still a serious worldwide problem and a problem for our country. They had to take money from vaccines they were working on for Ebola and other things and start doing Zika. Now we have a situation where both the mosquito-caused Zika and the Ebola scourge are underfunded now. Republicans have done a double whammy here. We need to give the money back to the agencies that are doing something to help Ebola and fund Zika.

They haven't lifted a finger that we are aware of. As I said yesterday, the senior Senator from Washington hasn't heard from the so-called negotiators in more than a week. They refuse to do anything, even as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health are pleading for us to act. They have been very clear about the funding they need to fight Zika. They are not making up things. They have told us in line and verse.

My friend, the Republican leader said: We need more from the administration. It wasn't all that long ago that my friend the Republican leader was singing a much different song. This is what he said about funding the outbreak of Ebola 2 years ago, and it is a direct quote:

> I think they should have anything they want. . . . Whatever the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] thinks they need, we'll give it to them.

He said the same thing 7 years ago when we were faced with another real problem, swine flu. This is what he said then: ''So if [the Administration] needs anything additionally from Congress, I know we'll be happy to provide it on a totally bipartisan basis.''

Fast forward 7 years, and the Republicans now in the majority won't provide the requested funding for Zika. Why? We know why. They can't get it through over here. They can't get it done.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health know what they need. They have told us. They told anyone who will listen.

So why can't the Republicans give it to them. If they won't give the experts the resources they need to combat Zika, what do they propose? We could ask the Zika-carrying mosquitoes: Don't breed this year.

Remember, anyway, that it is in the last term of a two-term President. Maybe we shouldn't do it this year.

The Senate should not leave today without addressing this serious issue. We shouldn't be taking 10 days off as a dangerous virus threatens this Nation—and it is threatening us. The Republicans should do their job and pass a $1.9 billion emergency spending bill to help protect Americans from the Zika virus.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, will the Senator yield before he makes the request?

Mr. REID. I am pleased to do that. I want the record to be spread with the fact that this good man—more than any other Senator, because of what he

is facing and will face in the very hot, humid, and sometimes tropical State of Florida—recognized this a long time ago. I admire him being ahead of this issue. He has been out there in the front and some of us have been trying to catch up with him.

I yield to the Senator.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for yielding. I wish to add to his comments from this Senator's personal perspective.

The State of Florida presently has 94 infected cases that we know of, including 5 pregnant women whom we know of.

We also have a very mobile and sizeable population of Puerto Ricans who go to that island, where, lo and behold, it is estimated that up to 20 percent of the population could ultimately be infected. There are upwards of close to 100 cases—multiple hundreds—that we know of. I think the actual number is in the eighties of pregnant women whom we know of who are infected in the United States.

As the leader has already described, this has horrendous consequences, not only to the families but there is also the cost to society because of the deformed babies that result—and not necessarily at birth. These defects may come years later, but that is a huge cost to society, not even to speak of the human tragedy.

So is it any wonder that I join with the minority leader in begging for this emergency appropriations of $1.9 billion.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a summary of the amendment and a letter from the President detailing his request be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST TO FIGHT ZIKA—$1.9 BILLION (S. 2843)

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)—$1.509 BILLION

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—$743 million to support Zika prevention and response strategies, including: domestic response efforts to prevent, detect and respond to Zika; providing grants and technical assistance to Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories; and international CDC response activities, including expanding field epidemiology resources and infectious disease surveillance.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—$246 million to support increasing the Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 55 to 65 percent for one year in Puerto Rico and other U.S. Territories.

National Institutes of Health—$277 million to support efforts to develop a vaccine for Zika, as well as to support basic research on Zika virus.

Food and Drug Administration—$10 million to support vaccine and diagnostic development review.

Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA)—$188 million to support vaccines and diagnostics development and procurement.

Health Resources and Services Administration—$20 million to support health centers, the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant/Home Visiting, the National Health Service Corps, and the Countermeasures Injury Protection Program.

Other HHS activities—$25 million for urgent and emerging threats.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE—$41 MILLION

Supports U.S. citizens in affected countries, medical support for State Department employees in affected countries, public diplomacy, communications, and other operations activities. Also supports the World Health Organization and its regional arm, the Pan American Health Organization. These resources would support critical public health actions underway, including preparedness, surveillance, data collection, and risk communication. Activities would also include support for the UN Children's Fund's (UNICEF) Zika response efforts in Brazil, and support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to bolster diagnostic capabilities through deployment of equipment, and specialized training and to implement projects to suppress mosquito populations in affected areas.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—$335 MILLION

Supports affected countries' ability to control mosquitoes and the transmission of the virus, support maternal health, expand public education on prevention and response, and to create new incentives for the development of vaccines and diagnostics.

The bill also replenishes Ebola money that was reprogrammed for Zika—$510 million on April 6, 2016, the Administration announced that it had to act to address the growing Zika emergency, so it identified $589 million—including $510 million of existing Ebola resources within HHS, State and USAID—to be redirected to immediate activities to fight Zika. The $1.9 billion will replenish the redirected Ebola funds: $215 for HHS Ebola balances and $295 for State/USAID Ebola balances.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, February 22, 2016.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Today, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2016 emergency supplemental appropriations request of approximately $1.9 billion to respond to the Zika virus both domestically and internationally. This funding would build upon ongoing preparedness efforts and provide resources for the Departments of Health and Human Services and State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Funding would support immediate response activities to prevent the spread of, prepare for, and respond to Zika virus transmission; fortify domestic public health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to Zika virus transmission; speed research, development, and procurement of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; provide emergency assistance to States and the U.S. Territories to combat the virus; provide additional Federal Medicaid funding in Puerto Rico and the other U.S. Territories for health services for pregnant women at risk of infection or diagnosed with Zika virus, and for children with microcephaly, and for other health care costs; and enhance the ability of Zika-affected countries to better combat mosquitoes, control transmission, and support affected populations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports 50 laboratory-confirmed cases of the Zika virus among U.S. travelers from December 2015–February 5, 2016. In addition, the Pan American Health Organization reports 26 countries and territories in the Americas with local Zika transmission. On February 1, 2016, the World Health Organization declared the Zika virus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

My foremost priority is to protect the health and safety of Americans. This request supports the necessary steps to fortify our domestic health system, detect and respond to any potential Zika outbreaks at home, and to limit the spread in other countries.

The request includes approximately $1.9 billion to respond to Zika virus transmission across the United States and internationally. In addition, transfer authority is requested to allow for sufficient response and flexibility across the Federal Government to address changing circumstances and emerging needs related to the Zika virus.

My Administration requests that the funding described above be designated as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

I urge the Congress to act expeditiously in considering this important request, the details of which are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA.

Mr. REID. The record should reflect that the people of Puerto Rico are American citizens.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 157, H.R. 3038; that all after the enacting clause be stricken; that the Nelson substitute amendment to enhance the Federal response and preparedness with respect to the Zika virus, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that there be up to 2 hours of debate, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The assistant majority leader.

Mr. CORNYN. Reserving the right to object, there is bipartisan support for doing what we need to do to address the Zika virus, which, as the Senator from Florida correctly pointed out, has dramatically affected the territory of Puerto Rico. Fortunately, according to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control, there is no single case in the continental United States of a mosquito-borne infection in someone in the continental United States. But that is not to say this is not a serious matter. In fact, it is. That is why Republicans were glad to see the administration use the unexpended funds for the Ebola crisis—some $500 million—as a downpayment on what is going to be necessary to deal with this.

But the fact is, our friends across the aisle have requested a $1.9 billion blank check, and they haven't told us what the plan is for the use of the funds. In the bill filed by Senator NELSON, he said those funds will be spent until they are gone. And, of course, it is emergency spending, which is deficit spending and adds to the debt. But the

legislation completely lacks any sort of accountability that would only come through a regular appropriations process where we consider this in a deliberate sort of way. So I have a number of questions for the Senator that I would ask.

I would note that I have traveled to the Galveston National Laboratory, which has done some world-class research in this area and also on the Ebola virus and other infectious diseases. Last Friday I was in Houston at the Texas Medical Center talking to the experts and trying to learn more about this so I can do my job as a Senator in a responsible sort of way.

We all agree that this is a serious matter and it should be negotiated on a bipartisan basis, but we should at least have a plan from the administration for how the money is going to be spent. There is no plan. It is a blank check. And until we get a plan and can sit down and avoid the histrionics and the gamesmanship and the partisanship on something that should be nonpartisan, we object to the request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend the assistant Republican leader has a lot of nerve. There have been a lot of States affected with emergencies in the last decade, and Texas has had its share. We have been willing to help them on floods and fires and all the other problems they have had, some of them manmade, some of them not so. Those were emergencies; this is an emergency.

For the Republicans to come to this body this morning and say there is no plan—there is a plan. Of course there is a plan. There is $1.9 billion. Pay back the money for Ebola so we can continue that. That is $500 million right there. We also want to do something to help Puerto Rico, which needs to be done. That is approximately $200 million. We have some help—a minimum amount—for countries outside the United States where these mosquitoes are breeding. We want to try to do something about that. And, of course, most of the money here is for research to come up with vaccines and other programs to alleviate the disaster facing this country. The President has outlined that, and the Senator from Florida has outlined that.

To have the assistant majority leader say that we need to sit down and negotiate—we are not in the majority. They have an obligation to bring something to the floor. If there is bipartisan support to do something, why aren't the Republicans doing something? Wait and wait while we are home glad-handing people during the next week? We should be doing something here to address this emergency. It is an emergency.

Mr. NELSON. Will the Senator yield, Mr. President?

Mr. REID. Yes, I will.

Mr. NELSON. In answering directly the question of the Senator from Texas, before he objected, he wanted to ask this Senator a question as to what is the plan.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, has the Democratic leader yielded the floor, or is it for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader has yielded the floor for a question.

Mr. NELSON. All right, I will put it in the form of a question.

Does the Democratic leader believe that this Senator has spoken many times on the floor laying out the specifics of the request of $1.9 billion, which includes the replenishment of $589 million to the Ebola fund which had been advanced to fight this emergency? Does the Senator believe that? And does the Senator further believe that I have in my hand that breakdown that I have had printed in the RECORD?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, to my friend from Florida, yes. And where did he get that information in preparing this legislation? He got it from the administration. Everybody knows what is in this legislation. What my friend the assistant Republican leader said is nonsense.

If there is some bipartisan support—and I am confident they would come up with something—we would do our best to try to support it, but this is the legislation we need. This is a desperate situation, and it is going to become more desperate as each day goes by because the summer season is fast approaching.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, let me just suggest that, contrary to what the Democratic leader has said, the questions I have asked about where their plan is are not nonsense, and let me demonstrate the specific questions which I have and which I think other responsible Senators are going to want answers to before we write a blank check for $1.9 billion to the administration, particularly when they already have access, as the Senator from Florida said, to the $589 million, which are unexpended Ebola funds.

One of the questions I would like to get answers to—and I think we can then have a meaningful discussion and act responsibly—is, What specific activities are going to be funded by the $1.9 billion plan? For example, the bill from the Senator from Florida provides $743 million to the Centers for Disease Control. Is that for domestic activities? Is it focused on Puerto Rico? Is it for CDC international activities? And if so, where?

The second question I have is, What are the agency's priorities? Continuing with the CDC issue, will they focus on vector control activities, outreach, and education? As we know, this is a mosquito-borne disease. It is not the only mosquito-borne disease, but unfortunately this mosquito has not only been present in Central and South America but is now, as the Democratic leader says, present in some of the more tropical climates, the warmer climates, including my State of Texas. So I take this personally and seriously. But it also affects Florida, no doubt about it, Louisiana, and we don't know how it might spread or how this virus might morph over time.

Another question I have is, How long does the administration expect to use the funding? For example, we have an annual appropriations process, which has been filibustered by our Democratic colleagues, starting with the Energy and Water bill, and now they want us to fund an emergency appropriation for an unlimited period of time without any plan to spend the money. That is irresponsible.

The request from the Senator from Florida in his bill says the money will be spent ''until expended,'' until it runs out, and they have provided no further details on what will be funded this year and in future years.

The reason I mention the appropriations process is that we all know we are in the appropriations season now, and it would be appropriate for the Committee on Appropriations to process this request and to come up with a recommendation for the full Senate, but that has not yet happened. I am told the discussions are ongoing, which is a good thing, and that is where this ought to be resolved, not through grandstanding on the Senate floor in an effort to try to make this a partisan issue. This is not a partisan or political issue. It should not be. There is bipartisan concern and willingness to address this issue. But can they spend $1.9 billion before the end of the fiscal year, when the appropriations process will start up again? In other words, it doesn't take a lot of thought to realize this is a request for a blank check without regard for the accountability that comes from what we call the regular order here in the appropriations process in the Senate.

We know the administration transferred funding from unobligated Ebola funds 2 weeks ago. What is the administration using that $589 million for that is related to Zika? I think we should know the answer to that. And that also demonstrates what happens when Congress appropriates money on an emergency basis without knowing what the plan is, because obviously the Ebola crisis has abated to some extent. I am not saying it has gone away completely, particularly in countries like Africa, but there is a pot of money—$589 million—which suggests maybe we inadvertently appropriated more money on an emergency basis for the Ebola crisis than ultimately was necessary. I am not faulting anybody for that; I am just saying that is the way this works when you ask for the money first without a plan and there is no accountability for how the money is spent. You have these pots of money out there that are—fortunately in this case—available now to deal with the Zika issue.

In the Health and Human Services request contained in the bill from the

Senator from Florida, there are other issues. One, they ask for a government-wide contingency fund that Health and Human Services controls and can transfer funds elsewhere. So what they want to do is play a shell game with this money. They want to get the money, and if they do not need it to deal with Zika, they can transfer it for other purposes—again, without any transparency or any real political accountability.

I think responsible Members of the Senate—and I would expect all 100 of us would put ourselves in that category—would want to know where the transparency is, where the accountability is, where the plan is, so we can sit down and do this as mature adults in a nonpartisan way in order to solve the problem.

Here is another thing that sort of jumps out at me: When I look at the President's request for $1.9 billion, they actually talk about funding matters unrelated to Zika. They talk about funding things at the Environmental Protection Agency. And looking at the request to transfer funds government-wide, basically they are requesting money, it appears—unless there is some logical explanation as to why we should, which they have not yet made—on an emergency basis, to grant funds to the Environmental Protection Agency. That is a little hard to understand.

Finally, there is this: All of us are willing to deal with this in a responsible, nonpartisan way. That is the reason I have spent time at the Galveston National Laboratory and the Texas Medical Center trying to learn as much as I can about this, so I can do my job, just as I am sure every individual Senator wants to do their job in a responsible way. But to come in and ask for $1.9 billion in emergency funding, which means it is not paid for—it is borrowed money, which adds to the deficit and the debt—is a pretty serious matter, especially when our national debt is $19 trillion and has almost doubled under the Obama administration.

This is a very serious matter, and I treat it seriously, and I trust all 100 Senators believe this is something we ought to deal with responsibly and in a deliberate sort of way, and we will. But it is not by coming to the floor and grandstanding by asking for $1.9 billion blank checks without any plan to spend it in an appropriate sort of way.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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 Washington.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, there are already nearly 900 cases of the Zika virus in the United States and its 3 territories, including actually 2 confirmed cases in my home State of Washington. A recent survey showed that 40 percent of adults in our country see this virus as a reason to delay starting families. Those are disturbing statistics. They make it clear that the Zika virus is a public health emergency, and there is no good reason for the delay we are seeing from our Republican colleagues in addressing this.

Months ago, the administration put forward the strong proposal that Senator REID introduced today. Republicans refused at the time to even consider it, and I am disappointed again this morning that they weighed in on the side of further delay rather than acting on this. As a result, we are getting closer to the summer and to mosquito season, but we still here in this body have not moved on emergency supplemental funding that would put much needed resources into preventing and treating this frightening virus.

Too many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle still don't seem to see Zika as an emergency. Some Republicans are insisting we shouldn't give the administration a penny in additional funding to support the response we need to make. Others are saying that action on Zika can wait—wait for weeks or months. Republicans in Congress might be able to simply wait, but families across this country cannot.

Addressing this Zika virus shouldn't be controversial. With women's and children's health and well-being on the line, it certainly should not be a place for partisanship.

Democrats are at the table. We want to get this done as soon as possible. In fact, as recently as a few days ago I was hopeful Republicans were truly interested in working with us to get this done and to be able to find an actual path forward. We had some good conversations last week. But I am worried that in the last few days it has become clear once again that the extreme right, like the Heritage Foundation, is in control, and Republican leaders have been unable to demonstrate to this point a path on how we can get a bipartisan deal signed into law. This issue is far too important to have Republican infighting hold it up. So I urge my Republican colleagues to join us. We are ready to be at the table to work with them. We need to address this as an emergency.

Then I hope we can move on to work on the other really critical issues before us: the opioid epidemic that so many have been here to talk about; the families in Flint who are suffering; ensuring our Supreme Court nominee gets a fair consideration—a hearing, even. There is so much work to be done.

I am here to urge our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to recognize this is an emergency. It cannot wait. Families are waiting for us to act. We need to get the research. We need to have an understanding of what this disease is. We certainly need to put into place prevention, and we certainly need to work on the important path forward in making sure we have the right kinds of education out there as well as a solution to this problem that is rapidly becoming an American problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, if this isn't an emergency, then I don't know what is. Zika is a public health emergency. It defines a public health emergency, and we really have to act now to fund the administration's full $1.9 billion supplemental funding request.

I want to respond to the assistant majority leader's concerns that there is no plan. With due respect—and I know he is working hard on this as well—that is just not accurate. The legislation propounded by Senators NELSON and others has a very specific plan. I was fortunate enough to visit the headquarters for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. They have a very specific plan. It is vector controlled. It is developing the diagnostic tests necessary to figure out whether or not people are carriers of the Zika virus. It is working on a vaccine. They have a high degree of confidence that they are eventually going to get a vaccine. But this takes time, and this takes resources. It is public health outreach regarding mosquitos and how this is transmitted, and it is assurance regarding the safety of our blood supply. So they have a plan.

Let me be a little more specific: $743 million for CDC—this money would include grants and technical assistance to Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories and help our domestic and international response activities; about $250 million for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, or CMS, to increase the Federal match rate to Puerto Rico where there have been 500 active transmission cases—and, unfortunately, that number continues to go up; several hundred million dollars for the National Institutes of Health and BARDA to invest in vaccine research and development. That is the end game, but in the meantime, we have to prevent the transmission as our country warms up and as the mosquitos become more prevalent across the country with $10 million to the FDA for a vaccine and diagnostics development review and $335 million to USAID's efforts abroad to support affected countries' public health efforts on mosquito-borne diseases.

I will make a couple of specific procedural points. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I believe it is really important that we are trying to move in the regular order on each individual Appropriations subcommittee.

We have been working on a bipartisan basis. So we are trying to move in the regular order, and that is good news. We are moving a little more quickly than I think has been done in many years. That is good news. But the practical fact of that also means that we are not in the middle of working on legislation that must be passed by today or must be passed by next week because whatever we do—whether it is the Energy and Water title, whether it is THUD coming next, maybe MILCON-VA after, whatever it may be—we are going to be waiting for the House to act, and we are going to be conferencing. It is not at all clear when we will actually move appropriations measures to the President's desk, but it is fair to say those things are not exactly legislatively on fire. We could wait 2 or 3 legislative days. We could wait 2 or 3 legislative weeks. We are ahead of the game. That is not to say we don't have our own challenges with each of these individual appropriations measures, but this defines an emergency. This defines an emergency. This is an actual public health emergency, which means the idea of a pay-for for this is antithetical to the way we ought to work. This is what government does.

Whatever your political persuasion, whatever your ideology is about the size and scope of the Federal Government, I think we can all agree that the most basic responsibility of the Federal Government is to keep us all safe. This is a real risk. This is not an imaginary risk, this is not a trumped-up risk, and this is not a partisan thing. If you talk to the CDC, if you talk to your local departments of health, vector controls, mosquito control areas—talk to them. They are very nervous, and it is increasing. The only reason this hasn't totally popped both epidemiologically and politically is that it is still cold in a lot of places and mosquitos aren't out. This is a real emergency. There is no reason we shouldn't be taking this up as the emergency starts to happen. There is no reason we can't take a couple legislative days to deal with that.

To address the senior Senator from Texas, the assistant majority leader's questions about whether the plan addresses his concerns about accountability, about the ability to move money from one account to the other, about backfilling the Ebola funding—fine. Those are all legitimate questions, and I think they can all be addressed.

But here is my question: Why not get on the bill? Why object to a UC request that we get on the bill? All of those questions can be addressed on the floor or in committee or in conversation. There are many ways to address those questions. But the refusal to even acknowledge that this matter is sufficiently urgent that it should be the thing we are dealing with right now, that THUD could wait a week, and that whatever we are planning to do next is not quite as urgent as the Zika virus—that is the point we are making today. Not that there isn't going to be some legislative wrangling and not that we are supposing that the President's request is exactly perfect, it is just that this is a real emergency, and we ought to get this thing onto the floor so we can take some action. That is what we have to do.

I know the Senator from Missouri is working very hard on this. I know others are too. We don't want this to be a partisan issue either. But to object to a request to get on this bill fails to acknowledge what a serious public health emergency the Zika virus is.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I came to the floor today to talk about another issue, and I will talk about the issue I had scheduled to talk about earlier this week. But in regard to the issue of Zika, it does need to be dealt with. It is being dealt with.

The good news is that there was substantial money various departments had that could be reprogrammed, and the fact that they have reprogrammed it indicates to me that there is a genuine belief in the administration, which I share, that this is an emergency. Over half a billion dollars has already been reprogrammed to deal with that emergency. I believe some of that reprogramming money needs to be restored, and some of it probably doesn't. The Ebola crisis is not what we thought it might be in Africa, but it is still in existence there. I think some of that money needs to go back into the accounts it had been reprogrammed out of.

But if anybody listening to this debate believes that nothing is happening, that is not accurate. I do appreciate my friend from Florida recognizing that a lot of discussions are going on. I was in several this week, and some yesterday with House Members and Senate Members.

The House could pass a bill first. That may or may not happen, but what really needs to happen is a bill that gets on the President's desk. I think there is almost no chance the Senate would pass a $1.9 billion bill as proposed. The best place to debate that could be the Senate floor for several days or it could be to work on a bill that could come to the floor quickly, go to the House, and be passed by the House. If there were a slim chance that the Senate could pass the bill we have been talking about—the bill as proposed that would spend $1.9 billion, in big hundred-million dollar chunks, which we talk about as if that is no money at all and is somehow a plan—that in all likelihood wouldn't pass the Senate, and I am absolutely sure it wouldn't pass the House. What would we have gained? This is something we need to work out. We can work it out. I believe we will work it out.

The goal is not for the Senate to pass a bill. The goal is for the Congress to pass a bill and the President of the United States to sign that bill. I believe that will happen. Many people, including me, are working to see that happens. The majority leader knows that, and others who have spoken today reflect the fact that they know those discussions are going on.

FALLEN HEROES FLAG ACT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, what I came to talk about today is a bill we did pass a couple of weeks ago. As we get ready for police week early in May—I think the week of the 9th of May—there are people we want to recognize and do recognize and do appreciate. I am cochair, along with Senator COONS of Delaware, of the Law Enforcement Caucus. I want to speak today about something we have just done to honor our first responders.

I want to start by recognizing the first responders from my State of Missouri who lost their lives in the line of duty last year. In Missouri, four law enforcement officers died in the line of duty. Deputy Sheriff Steven Brett Hawkins of the Harrison County Sheriff's Office, Trooper James Matthew Bava of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Sergeant Peggy Marie Vassallo of the Bellefontaine Neighbors Police Department, and Officer Ronald Eugene Strittmatter of the Lakeshire Police Department lost their lives.

Deputy Sheriff Brett Hawkins of Bethany, MO, suffered a fatal heart attack on September 13 following an emergency response. He was 34 years old. Deputy Sheriff Hawkins suffered that attack after returning home from his shift, which included the search of a residence and surrounding property. He had served with the Harrison County Sheriff's Office for 3 years. He is survived by his wife, daughter, and three sons.

Trooper James Bava of Mexico, MO, was involved in a fatal vehicle crash while pursuing a motorcyclist for a traffic stop on August 28. Trooper Bava had served with the Missouri State Highway Patrol for 2 years. He was 25 years old the day he lost his life serving us. He is survived by his parents, a brother, three sisters, and his fiancee.

Sergeant Peggy Vassallo of Bellefontaine Neighbors Police Department was struck and killed by a vehicle on August 24 while rendering aid to another driver after being involved in an accident en route to work. Sergeant Vassallo had served with the Bellefontaine Neighbors Police Department for 15 years and had previously served with the St. Louis County Police Department for over 13 years, almost 30 years' service. She is survived by her husband, son, and two grandchildren.

Officer Ronald Strittmatter suffered a heart attack after attempting to help an older person who had fallen. Officer Strittmatter had served in the Lakeshire Police Department for 4 years and had previously served in the

St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department for 24 years. He is survived by his wife and a son.

In Missouri, we also lost five firefighters and first responders in the line of duty last year.

Battalion Chief Chris Tindall of Raymore, MO, died shortly after responding to an emergency incident in January 2015. He was a 19-year veteran of the South Metro Fire Department.

Larry Lawhorn, a volunteer firefighter with the Orchard Farm Fire Protection District, suffered a fatal medical emergency in May of last year while driving a first responder vehicle en route to a structure fire. He had been a volunteer with the department for 20 years and had previously served 15 years with the St. Charles County Fire District.

In October 2015, two firefighters were killed in Kansas City in the line of duty. Larry Leggio, a 17-year veteran of the Kansas City Fire Department, and John Mesh, a 13-year veteran of the Kansas City Fire Department, were able to save two residents from a burning apartment complex before a wall collapsed on them after they had evacuated other people from the building.

EMS pilot Ronald Rector of Linn, MO, was killed during a flight operation in March 2015. He was inbound to pick up additional crew members at St. Louis University Hospital in a medical helicopter when his helicopter crashed.

Early this month, I introduced the Fallen Heroes Flag Act, which creates a program to provide a flag flown over the Capitol to the family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who lose their lives in the line of duty. I thank my colleagues for unanimously passing that bill last week. The House had already passed a similar measure introduced by Congressman PETER KING, and I hope to get a final bill on the President's desk in very short order.

Our Nation's first responders put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe, and we mourn the loss of all those who have given their lives in the line of duty. We can never in any way fully repay the debt we owe them and their families. These are people who go to work every day, with the greatest goal for their families being that they come home safely that day, and they have more reason to worry about that than most of us have. All we can offer instead is our gratitude. My hope is that each flag that is flown over the Capitol and provided to these families will be a lasting symbol of our appreciation and a fitting honor to those who embody the very best of what we stand for as a nation.

SILVER STAR SERVICE BANNER DAY

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, as I conclude, one other thing I want to mention is Silver Star Service Banner Day. I thank my colleagues for unanimously passing a resolution I submitted with Senator MCCASKILL last week to designate May 1 as Silver Star Service Banner Day. It is a day we honor our Nation's servicemembers who have been injured or become ill while serving, and we also honor their families on that day.

I am grateful to work for this cause and for the work the Silver Star Families of America do. This is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Clever, MO. In 2004, that group began its work to remember, to honor, and to assist members of the Armed Forces from every branch of the military and from every war. This organization assists veterans who have suffered physical or emotional trauma from war and distributes Silver Star flags and care packages to wounded veterans and their families.

Our military men and women put their lives on the line to defend our Nation, and many have done so in ways that result in tremendous personal cost for them and their families—from loss of life, to injury, to trauma of all kinds. On Silver Star Service Banner Day, I hope all Americans will take a moment to reflect on the countless sacrifices and appreciate the blessings of freedom their service has provided.

We salute our former and current servicemembers and encourage all Americans to do the same with the presence of a Silver Star service banner in the window or a Silver Star flag flying in the front yard. Those who serve deserve and should receive the gratitude of the Nation, whether they serve in the military or as first responders, and in the last few days the Congress was able to step forward and recognize those who serve in unique ways.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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.

THE NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, the talk of the debt in our Nation has been diminishing. Unfortunately, debt itself has not also diminished. While the deficit has been reduced significantly over the last several years, the debt continues to grow. It is now crossing well over $19 trillion. It is my concern that we as a body continue to get distracted with other things and lose track of the looming debt issues we will still continue to face and we will be held to account for, and rightfully so.

The American people expect us to come here and solve a lot of issues—solve not only crisis issues such as Zika and other issues around the country, but also what we are going to do with national defense and security. There is an expectation that we will be able to do multiple things, but over all of that, there is an expectation that we will balance the Nation's checkbook and find a way to be able to solve these issues. I don't think that is an unreasonable request.

When we cross over $19 trillion, at what point do we as a body decide that this is enough and that we need to work together to solve the issues we face? The Congressional Budget Office continues to challenge us and to tell us that this is an unsustainable pace, and the Nation as whole continues to push back. I think we should pay attention to it.

I thank Gene Dodaro and the good folks from the Government Accountability Office for putting out their latest report on what they define as opportunities to reduce fragmentation, overlap, duplication, and achieve other financial benefits. It is the report that GAO puts out every year that we often call a duplication report—here are the problems, here are the unresolved issues.

Last year, I asked Gene Dodaro and GAO specifically to break it up and to make it very clear—not just to say where it is in government but whose responsibility it is, who can actually fix this. They broke it up this year into two different sections basically saying: This is the administration and the agencies. They already have the authority to fix this, and these are the issues they face.

He also identified 63 areas that specifically only Congress can fix. It is a to-do list for us of things that we need to either vote on and discuss or we need to disagree with GAO and be able to push back on, but we shouldn't just ignore it and say we are going to do nothing on it.

We have dealt with this every single year for the last several years. We all face the duplication. We all hear the stories about it. My challenge is, How do we actually bring this to the floor, vote on it, solve it, and move forward from here? It will leave some things actually addressed.

Part of the issue we face every year with duplication is that duplication is buried into the governmental system, and it takes a GAO report to pull it out.

I have proposed a bill for several years now. I did it in the House and brought it over to the Senate. It is called the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act. The Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act already passed the House this year, and it has not yet cleared the Senate. The Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act is a very clear transparency piece. It says: Shouldn't we have a list of every program in the Federal Government, how much we spend on that program, how many staff are committed to it, what that program does, and, specifically, how it is evaluated? It is a very straightforward, transparent piece.

Everyone in this body continues to talk about duplication and says we should do something about it. GAO then highlights it for us, but the challenge is that you can't easily identify it until you do a very deep search on it. I think we should be able to have a level of transparency so we can see where the duplication is by comparing one program to another. That way we can all address it and talk about it.

Yesterday, at the Indian Affairs Committee hearing, we were doing a markup. The conversation in that markup was about several programs that seemed to be very good ideas to serve Indian Country. The problem is that many of them already exist in another agency, and they are not doing their job very well. The challenge is this: Can we get rid of it in another agency and not just start it in a second, third, or fourth agency?

We can't continue to say: It is not working over there. So let's just do it somewhere else. Every time I bring up the issue, they say: We don't know what agency it exists in. The Taxpayer's Right-to-Know Act provides a very simple list that should be searchable and public and that everyone would be able to see. It is currently being held up right now and going back and forth in this ongoing conversation about something as simple as: How many programs should we see?

OMB has pushed this issue back on us and said: We will have program transparency but only for the biggest programs.

We basically said: If you spend $1 million on this program, you should have transparency.

They said: No, let's do a much higher number. Let's do $10 million or more.

Yesterday, we asked Gene Dodaro: If we dropped this number from $10 million to $1 million, how many programs will suddenly go away?

He said: It is in the thousands. That just puts us in the same spot. We can't eliminate duplication we can't see. The famous philosopher Muhammad Ali said: ''Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee, the hands can't hit what the eyes can't see.''

We, as a body, spend a lot of our time saying: I would love to get rid of duplication, but we can't see it. Let's actually expose it. Let's get it out there so everyone can see it and we can clear this issue. Let's just solve this very simple issue. Let's make it transparent, and then let's work together.

Senator TESTER and I had a great conversation after the Indian Affairs Committee hearing yesterday. We agreed that we would look for areas of duplication in Indian Country. We are not looking for more programs. We are looking for programs that actually work and accomplish what they should accomplish, and for things that don't work, we can eliminate them. We can take that money from one area and put it in another area where it actually does work. At the end of the day, we have to get back to balance. We can't keep funding duplicative programs that don't work, and we should be able to accomplish this together.

Last year, I put out a report called ''Federal Fumbles: 100 Ways the Government Dropped the Ball.'' Two-thirds of that book identified duplication and waste in the government. We have made progress on some of those already this year. We have so much more to do. The key to it is that we actually need to get busy working on it instead of just talking about it.

Yesterday, Gene Dodaro, who is with GAO, also mentioned a bill that BEN SASSE is working on called the new hire database bill. I think it is a very good bill, and I am glad to be supportive of what he is trying to accomplish there. Senator SASSE wants to do one thing, and that is to be able to say that when we actually do means-tested programs, we should be able to see the employment records. That should be a very open process for those who are in the means-tested program, but right now GAO and other groups do not have access to the new hires database. So there is no way to see those in the means-tested program.

There are people who self-report their income, and there is no way to be able to verify that. Shouldn't we be able to verify that?

It is a straightforward solution in a day and time when they continue to bring up obvious things year after year, such as having the same person being eligible for disability and unemployment insurance at the same time. That person will actually receive unemployment and disability benefits simultaneously. Disability benefits, by definition, means you cannot work anywhere in the economy, and that is why you get disability benefits. Unemployment benefits, by definition, means you can work in the economy, but you are not currently employed. Why should you be eligible for both? GAO has brought that up to us. That is not a partisan issue. That should be a solvable issue, and it is costing taxpayers billions of dollars. It is one of the things that we have to be able to work on together so we can actually solve this problem. This is not too hard for us, and the American people expect us to get it done.

My only challenge is this: Let's actually get it done.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to address two different issues this morning, but I think both are timely and important.

The first issue I will address has to do with a telephone conversation I had a few minutes ago with Dr. Thomas Frieden. Dr. Frieden heads up the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA. Most Americans don't know much about the agency, but the title speaks for itself. The CDC, as we call it, is America's first line of defense in a public health crisis. When we think that Americans—individuals and families—are in danger or vulnerable, we call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and ask them to analyze the challenge and then give us the right public health response to that challenge.

A few months ago, I went to their campus in Atlanta, GA. It is very impressive, not just for the buildings but also for the people who are there. We have some of the best health researchers in the world working for our Federal Government at CDC—most of them at financial sacrifice. They want to be part of solving problems and protecting America. Just as the folks in the Pentagon across the river believe in the protection of America, so do the people at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC is our first line of defense against public health attacks.

This morning I called Dr. Frieden to talk about the Zika virus. I have come to know him and have worked with him over the years. Most people have learned about it by now. We are learning more about it every single day. We have kind of traced its origin to South America, and now it is moving north. It is moving north into Puerto Rico in a big way, and Florida is likely to be the next State to witness the Zika virus being transmitted by mosquitoes. Then, frankly, the whole United States is vulnerable. Not only can this virus be transmitted to an individual if they are bit by a mosquito, but it can also be transmitted by the sexual contact of a person already infected by the virus. If you have the virus and a mosquito bites you and then bites your wife, you may have just transmitted the virus to her through that mosquito. We are learning.

The reason why this is more than just a mosquito bite and an irritation is that this virus can cause serious public health problems. We know that pregnant women with this virus run the risk of giving birth to babies with difficulties and serious problems, and so we are monitoring it very closely.

How many employees at CDC are working on the Zika virus threat to America? There are 1,000. When you think of all of the things that we need to worry about, they believe—and, I think, rightly so—that this is the imminent public health threat to our country. There are a lot of unanswered questions about the Zika virus, such as these: How long does it stay in an individual? How long can an individual who is infected with the virus transmit it to another person? For those who are carrying the virus, what impact does it have on their health? What impact does it have on a pregnant woman carrying this virus?

It turns out there are literally hundreds now in the United States who have been infected with the Zika virus. We expect some lull in the number of

cases, and then they are going to pick up in intensity and number this summer. We also know—and the announcement will be made soon—that there are pregnant women in the United States who have been infected by the Zika virus.

The obvious question is this: Are we doing everything we should be doing to protect America?

Sadly, the answer is no, we are not.

Two months ago, President Obama said to the Congress: I need a supplemental emergency appropriation to deal with this threat. He asked for $1.9 billion. They want to monitor the Zika virus and how it is traveling across the United States. They want to monitor those who have already been infected. They want to develop a vaccine that we can take that will protect us in the future.

From where I am standing, I can't think of a single public health challenge in America as great as this Zika virus at this moment. One would think that the Congress, now that they know the facts, would have moved instantly to provide the money to the President—this emergency supplemental appropriation of $1.9 billion. But the answer is they have done nothing. The leaders in the House and in the Senate have done nothing to provide emergency funds to this administration to deal with this public health emergency.

It is so bad that this week a Republican leader in the House announced publicly that he didn't see any emergency. He thinks we may get around to an appropriation for this in October. Well, I don't know what his lifestyle is like, but in the Midwest we have a tendency to get out on the patio and have barbecues and invite our friends and neighbors over. We worry about mosquitoes. It doesn't start in October. It starts now. I don't know if this Republican Congressman plans on sending a memo to the mosquitoes across America saying: no buzzing and biting until October when we get around to this. It won't work.

This has been declared an emergency by not only the President but by the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Why aren't we acting? Why aren't we doing something? We should be doing something.

We are going to leave today. This afternoon we will vote and go home. We will be back in probably 10 or 11 days. Maybe then the Republican leadership in the House and Senate will decide this is an emergency that needs a response. The numbers will start coming in—the number of people across America who are facing this virus—and the concern among American families is going to grow. This is not just an irritation. This is a danger to many people and certainly to women who could be pregnant. This is something we ought to be taking extremely seriously. We have been waiting for 2 months for this Congress to respond with an emergency appropriation to do something.

I have called on the leadership in the Senate this week, and I will continue to do so today and when we return. There is no excuse. God forbid this gets worse and we look back and say: We waited too long; we didn't respond.

Let me add one other thing. The only suggestion we have heard from the Republican side is this: Let's take some of the money we set aside to fight Ebola in Africa and use it for this purpose.

I talked to Dr. Friedman about that. He said: It is true; there has been a real drop in the number of Ebola cases.

Ebola is a deadly disease in West Africa and other places, and we worried about it coming to the United States. He said that we are still learning about how this disease travels.

There was a man who was cured after being diagnosed with Ebola in Africa, and they just learned that a year after he was cured, he transmitted the disease by sexual contact to another person. Even when we think we have cured and solved it, there is still a danger.

Let's make sure that we treat all of these public health hazards for what they are—dangerous to the United States and dangerous to our families. God forbid that something terrible happen. I hope it doesn't. Let's do our job here on Capitol Hill. When the President says we need resources to fight this, we do. I hope we move on it very quickly when we return.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, immigration is an issue which divides America. You only have to tune into the Presidential debate to hear it. Most everyone would agree that the immigration system in America is broken. I believe it is. I was part of an effort with some colleagues to try to come up with a comprehensive immigration reform bill, which passed the Senate 3 years ago by a vote of 68 to 32. We worked long and hard on that bill. We brought this bipartisan bill to the Senate, and it passed with an overwhelming majority. The House refused to consider the measure. Speaker Boehner never called it to the floor. The bill we passed never ever got a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives, and so here we sit today with the same broken immigration system.

Let me tell you that one part of that is very important to me and to many of my colleagues. Fifteen years ago I introduced a bill called the DREAM Act. The genesis of that bill—as I have said on the floor many times and will quickly repeat—began after we got a call in my Chicago office from a Korean American woman who had a daughter who was a musical prodigy. She was an amazing pianist and had been accepted at two of the best music schools in America. She was filling out her application and asked her mom: What do I put down for my nationality or citizenship. Her mom said: I don't know. When we brought you here, Tereza, you were 2 years old and came here on a visitor's visa. I never filed any more papers. So I don't know. The daughter said: What are we going to do? The mom said: We are going to call Durbin's office.

So they called our office and we said: Let us check the law.

The law was very clear. This 18-year-old girl, brought here at the age of 2, under American law had to leave the United States for 10 years and apply to come back in. Does that sound right? When she was 2 years old, she had no voice in the decision to come to America, no voice in the decision of filing papers. Yet our law basically told her to leave.

That is when I introduced the DREAM Act. It says that if you are brought here under the age of 16, complete high school, no serious criminal issues in your background, we will give you a chance. We will give you a path to become legal and ultimately become a citizen. That is what the DREAM Act is.

We haven't passed that bill. We have passed it maybe once in the Senate, once in the House but never brought it together to be sent to the President. This President, Barack Obama, was my fellow Senator from Illinois for 2 years and he cosponsored the DREAM Act.

So a few years ago, I joined in a letter to the President, with Senator Dick Lugar, a Republican from Indiana, and said to him: Help us protect these young people from being deported until we can finally pass comprehensive immigration reform or the DREAM Act. The President listened and did it. He created what is known as DACA. What DACA says is, if you are such a young person, you may step forward, register with the government, submit yourself to a criminal background check, pay a several-hundred-dollar filing fee, and then we will give you temporary protection from deportation. Then, 2 years later, 3 years later, you have to reapply—go through the same process—pay a fee and do it again.

As it turned out, 700,000 young people, who were in the same situation as the Korean girl I mentioned from Chicago, have applied for this DACA protection so they can stay here on a temporary basis and go to school, work, and be a part of the United States. There is no guarantee they will ever become permanently legal or citizens—I hope they will—but at least they are protected on a temporary basis.

Two years later, the President said: If you are in a family where one of the kids in the house is an American citizen or here legally in the United States as a permanent resident, we are going to give parents the same opportunity to register with the government, to go through a criminal background check, to pay their fee to the government, then to be given a temporary work permit to work in the United States. That is known as DAPA. So we have DACA and DAPA. It is currently being challenged in the Supreme Court.

I went over for the argument before the Supreme Court last week. The State of Texas and 25 other States have challenged this saying it will create benefits for these individuals under DACA and DAPA that will cost the States money. It turns out, the whole story is that once these people are working in the United States and paying taxes, the State of Texas and all the other States are going to make quite a bit more money off these workers when they actually are required to pay taxes, as they should. So this economic argument doesn't go too far.

The point I have tried to make to my colleagues in the Senate, as long as I have been here and as long as I have had this opportunity to talk about the DREAM Act, is that they ought to take a moment, stop listening to the Presidential debates, and just pay attention to the lives which are at stake in this conversation.

I have come to the floor quite a few times to talk about young people who would be helped if the DREAM Act became the law of the land. This morning I am going to introduce Cynthia Sanchez to those who are watching.

Cynthia Sanchez is another young person who is living in the United States and is undocumented. She was brought here at the age of 7 from Mexico. She grew up in Denver, CO. She was an excellent student. In high school, Cynthia was a member of the National Honor Society and made the President's honor roll every semester with a 4.0 grade point average. I wish I could say the same about my high school experience.

Cynthia was vice president and co-president of the Student Council. She volunteered as a peer mediator and volunteered at the local library. She went on to attend the University of Denver where she received lots of awards and scholarships and was an active volunteer.

For the record, undocumented young people like Cynthia receive no Federal assistance to go to college—no Pell grants, no government loans. They have to find a way to pay for it. They can't use any government benefits to move forward with their education.

She was a member of a student organization called the Pioneer Leadership Program. She helped to develop Denver University Senior Connect, an organization to help raise awareness about the needs of senior citizens.

As a member of the Volunteers in Partnership Program, Cynthia organized workshops at high schools and middle schools with low-income and minority student populations. She helped the students fill out their college applications and write scholarship essays, and she brought the students to visit her campus at the University of Denver.

She graduated in 2010 with a degree in cognitive neuroscience, which is a double major in psychology and biology, and she even minored in chemistry on top of that.

Because of her immigration status—and despite the fact that she had this amazing college experience and was academically successful and had this important degree—she couldn't find a job. She wasn't even able to volunteer at a local hospital because she lacked a Social Security number, being undocumented.

I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you.

Cynthia's dream to become a doctor was on hold because of her immigration status. Only nine schools told her she might be able to apply and be considered as an undocumented student. Two years after graduating, Cynthia was working as a nanny and questioning whether all the hard work and time in school was wasted.

Cynthia cried as President Obama made the announcement about creating DACA. She realized she was going to be given a chance. She applied for DACA immediately. She was approved in the summer of 2013. By September, Cynthia was working at Northwestern University in Chicago doing clinical research in the Department of Medicine's Division of Cardiology. Her research focuses on improving treatment options for patients facing heart failure.

She sent me a letter, and this is what she said:

> DACA has meant a new realm of opportunities for me, it has opened new doors for me, and it has allowed me to once again see my dream as a reality. I truly believe that if those opposed to DACA or the DREAM Act had the chance to sit down and meet undocumented students, their opinions might change. They would see capable, smart, hard-working individuals who are Americans in every sense of the word, love this country and want to contribute to its prosperity. After all, this is our home.

Cynthia and the other DREAMers have a lot to give to America. Like many Americans who have come to this country, they are willing to sacrifice. They are willing to go to the back of the line. All they are asking for is a chance.

I urge my colleagues—particularly my Republican colleagues—to join us in doing the right thing for these DREAMers, doing the right thing for Cynthia, and thousands of others who are just asking for a chance to make America a better nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, the fight against muscular dystrophy is a cause I have championed since my days in the House of Representatives. My fight against Duchenne muscular dystrophy began when a parent told me about his son's diagnosis with the disease.

This parent refused to accept that there was no hope. The House and Senate agreed with the MD-CARE Act and, since that time, the life expectancy of the average Duchenne muscular dystrophy patient has increased by a full decade. This is progress we have made on behalf of sick people whose lives were threatened, and this is an example of government at its best.

On Monday of this week, I saw the same devotion in the hundreds of Duchenne families who attended a meeting of the advisers of the Food and Drug Administration. The meeting's attendance broke records. I thank the FDA for making the appropriate accommodations to handle a crowd of this size. Some 11,000 people also tuned in remotely, watching the meeting via live stream.

Monday's gathering was about what could be the first disease-modifying therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. For more than 3 hours, the advisory committee heard from parents, doctors, and patients about the drug's impact on their lives. The stories were heartfelt and hopeful, reinforcing the importance of patient engagement in the drug approval process. The dedication of the Duchenne community continues to set an example for advocates of other rare diseases.

Patient voices should be part of the drug review process, and I am glad to see the FDA is implementing greater stakeholder involvement in this process. This was one of the goals of the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act, which Congress passed in 2012. It continues to be a goal of my Patient-Focused Impact Assessment Act, introduced last year, which would require FDA to share how they use feedback from patients and advocates in the drug approval process.

Unfortunately, the advisory committee decided this week not to recommend the approval of the first Duchenne drug. This is disappointing news for me and for thousands of Duchenne families, even those who might not benefit directly from this drug but from other advancements that could stem from it.

Before a final decision is made next month, I hope the FDA will take into consideration the perspectives of Duchenne patients and parents. The individuals fighting the good fight every day are ''the real experts,'' to quote Austin Leclaire, who suffers from Duchenne and has experienced increased mobility because of the drug. People like Austin have a life-threatening disease now. They don't have much time.

No matter the outcome of the FDA's decision next month, I will continue to fight the good fight on behalf of those with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. In the 15 years since I introduced the MD-CARE, I have learned that small wins can lead to big victories.

MD-CARE was the first Federal law to focus on muscular dystrophy. It helped set in motion the research and

trials that have produced groundbreaking therapies. The life of muscular dystrophy patients now is an average of 12 years longer—I think I earlier said a decade; it is actually 12 years longer than it was in 2001—a wonderful achievement. There are more trial participants needed today than there are Duchenne patients.

Young adults with Duchenne were a population that did not exist when we first funded research for the disease. They never got to adulthood. Today they are getting to adulthood because Congress acted. Because of the MDCARE amendments that became law last Congress, research at the National Institutes of Health has been updated in ways that could help patients lead even longer, healthier lives. We want this research to continue. We want companies to continue to invest in drugs and therapies that could change the lives of those with rare diseases.

Duchenne is still a fatal disease, affecting 1 out of every 3,500 boys—mostly boys. Most young men with Duchenne live only to their mid to late twenties. We should take every opportunity to find a breakthrough. We should take every opportunity to improve quality of life. This is about the futures of young people who face this disease every day and the families who refuse to give up hope.

I look forward to the FDA's full and final decision on this matter next month, and I certainly am hoping for a positive answer from the FDA.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

REMEMBERING TERRY REDLIN

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to display this Terry Redlin painting during my speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Terry Redlin, a citizen of South Dakota who rose to fame in the 1970s as an artist known for his vivid and vibrant outdoor paintings.

On Sunday, April 24, 2016, Terry passed away at the age of 78 in Watertown, where he was born and raised. Our entire State was deeply saddened to hear of his passing. Terry spent his life promoting South Dakota, and he shared his appreciation for our great State with the entire world through his paintings. He will be missed deeply, not only by his family and loved ones but by all who admired his work throughout his very distinguished career.

Growing up, Terry liked to draw. He didn't think he would become an artist, though. As an avid outdoorsman, he wanted to be a forest ranger so there would be plenty of opportunities to hunt and fish when he wasn't working. Then, tragically, at the age of 15, his life was changed forever. He was badly hurt in a motorcycle accident, and his leg had to be amputated. Becoming a forest ranger was now impossible for Terry, but Terry didn't let that stop him from pursuing greatness.

After graduating high school, Terry received a disability scholarship to help further his education. Using it, he earned a degree from the St. Paul School of Associated Arts and spent 25 successful years working in commercial art as a layout artist, graphic designer, illustrator, and art director. In his spare time, he enjoyed photography, particularly of the outdoors and wildlife. Then he started painting from his photographs and from his memories.

In 1977, at the age of 40, Redlin's painting ''Winter Snows'' appeared on the cover of The Farmer magazine. He quickly rose to prominence as an exceptional artist and started painting full time. From 1990 to 1998, each year's poll of national art galleries by U.S. Art Magazine selected Terry Redlin as ''America's Most Popular Artist.''

Over the years, many people have tried to describe the effect Terry's paintings had on them. People connect with his paintings. They inspire us to remember personal memories of past times, places, and experiences. Your heart is tugged when you look at them. There is peacefulness and warmth. Terry used to call it romantic realism, but mere words simply cannot describe it. As you can see from this Redlin painting beside me entitled ''America, America,'' which I brought with me from my front office where it normally hangs, the beauty of his paintings is truly indescribable.

His son convinced him to stop selling original paintings and just sell prints. Someday, he said, they would build a beautiful art gallery to display all of the originals. And they did. It could have been built in the Twin Cities, where he lived for a time, or a large metropolitan area, because Terry's paintings are loved everywhere. Terry chose his hometown of Watertown, SD, for the construction of the Redlin Art Center. It was a gift to his home State and hometown for that $1,500 scholarship he was given all those years ago, which created a wonderful life for him and his family.

Three million visitors came to the Redlin Art Center in the first 3 years and many more millions since then. Terry would sometimes walk into the galleries unannounced and visit with guests who would then ask the front desk: Who is that nice guy? When told it was Terry, they were shocked and delighted.

Once Terry was seen driving slowly through the parking lot. When asked what he was doing, he said he was looking at all the different license plates and what they were doing there. He said he was amazed that people would travel so far just to see his paintings.

Terry was also generous to the subjects of many of his creations. His paintings and prints have been used by various wildlife and conservation groups to raise more than $40 million to benefit their causes.

For those of us who were blessed with the opportunity to meet and know Terry Redlin, we always came away feeling like he was our friend—so wonderful, so kind, and so humble. For those who know him through his paintings, his spirit shone brightly in all of his work.

As we mourn his death and pray for his loved ones during this difficult time, may we find comfort knowing that the legacy which he leaves behind through his paintings will be enjoyed and appreciated for generations to come. He was a great painter but an even greater human being.

Terry once said that he wanted to paint forever, that he had to paint. Terry said it was like breathing to him. Unfortunately, illness forced him into retirement in 2007, and on Sunday, April 24, 2016, the Lord brought Terry up to Heaven. Now he can breathe again.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2028, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Alexander/Feinstein amendment No. 3801, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 3804 (to amendment No. 3801), to modify provisions relating to Nuclear Regulatory Commission fees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to start by expressing my appreciation to all of my colleagues who are joining me on the floor today, and I thank them for all the work they do every day for women and their health care.

As of last week, the CDC reported nearly 900 cases of Zika here in the United States and three U.S. territories, including actually two confirmed in my home State of Washington.

A recent survey showed that 40 percent of adults in the United States see

the Zika virus as the reason to delay starting a family. Like so many of my colleagues, I am hearing from women across my State who are very frightened about this virus. They want to know how to travel safely in light of Zika. They want to know whether they should wait to start their families. Tragically, I am hearing from expectant mothers who are concerned about what this virus could mean for the babies they have on the way.

Women and families at home and abroad need Congress to take action against this virus, to help raise awareness about its impact, to expand access to contraception and family planning, to improve vector control, and to accelerate our efforts to find a vaccine. That is why for months Democrats have urged Republicans to come to the table and work with us on making sure we put the needed resources into this fight against Zika.

The administration has put forward a strong proposal, but Republicans refused to even consider it. While some in the Republican Party indicated last week they wanted to work with us on emergency supplemental funding, it has become pretty clear that unfortunately they have been beaten back by the extreme rightwing who do not want to do anything at all. These extreme conservatives do not recognize that Zika is an emergency. They don't want to give the administration a penny more. As a result of that delay, we are behind the eight ball as mosquito season comes this summer.

That is why we have come to the floor together today to send a very clear message to Republicans today: We need action now. Women simply cannot afford to wait, and they should not have to. Democrats are ready to get this done as soon as possible. And for families and communities who are looking to Congress for action, I hope Republicans join us now so that we can deliver what families are asking for in our country.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I want to start by thanking Senator HEITKAMP for pulling us in here today to talk about this emergency and Senator MURRAY for her strong voice on this and many others who will be speaking out today.

In 2014 Ebola broke out in West Africa. As it advanced, the international community came together to combat the outbreak. Doctors from around the world traveled to West Africa to set up emergency hospital units to help the sick and to attempt to contain the virus. President Obama deployed thousands of troops to support the effort.

With the media focused on the outbreak right in the middle of the 2014 election, Republican Senators and Republican candidates across the country seized on this global health crisis. No, they didn't swoop in to rescue; in fact, Republicans did nothing to support the actual Ebola response before the elections. Instead, they terrified the American people with totally made-up stories of Ebola-infected immigrants coming across our southern border. They loudly trumpeted a number of dangerous and irresponsible solutions, such as travel bans that would actually make dealing with the problem more difficult.

Ebola ravaged West Africa, but only four cases were ever diagnosed here in the United States. Republican politicians didn't care—they had found something to blame on President Obama and the Democrats, and they were happy to do it. They exploited the situation to help win an election. And it worked. Not all of the fearmongering candidates won, but most of them did, and they won in part because they promised to protect the American people from these horrible contagious diseases.

Today, Republicans run the Senate, and we face a terrible threat right here in America—the rapidly spreading Zika virus. So I come to the floor to ask a simple question: Why haven't Republicans lifted a single finger to stop it?

Unlike Ebola, Zika is not confined to one small region of the world; it has already spread through most of South America and through Mexico. Unlike Ebola, which can be transmitted only by direct contact with bodily fluids, Zika can spread rapidly across distances by transmission through mosquitoes. Unlike Ebola, our leaders at the NIH and CDC are raising the alarm that Zika is an imminent threat to Americans. Nearly 900 cases of Zika have already been reported on American soil.

Zika can be devastating. Most people who contract Zika show no symptoms or only very mild symptoms, but Zika infections can trigger Guillain-Barre syndrome, a condition in which the body attacks its own nervous system, which can cause permanent and severe damage, hospitalizing some people for weeks and killing others. In addition, babies born to mothers who were infected with Zika may suffer severe and permanent brain damage. The World Health Organization estimates that 4 million people could be infected with Zika by the end of the year.

The threat is real, but where are the Republicans? For weeks Senate Democrats have called for emergency supplemental funding to support public health efforts both in research and prevention. Republicans have done nothing. For weeks the President has called for emergency supplemental funding to protect the American people. Republicans have done nothing. For weeks leaders at the WHO, NIH, and CDC have begged Congress for resources to fight this disease. Republicans have done nothing. The President has been forced to divert funds intended for work on Ebola over to work on Zika. That is a very short-term strategy. Ebola has dropped out of the news, but the threat has not ended. We need funding for work on both, but still the Republicans have done nothing.

Now Senate Republicans are taking us on a week-long recess. Where is the Republican plan to fund the Zika response? Where is the Republican plan to replenish the Ebola funds? Apparently, when there is no immediate political benefit, the Republicans can't be bothered to act. Forget Ebola. Forget Zika. They want to go on vacation.

Well, I have news for my Republican colleagues: That is not good enough. They won the election by telling Americans they would protect them from scenarios just like this. Republicans run the Senate now, so it is time to govern. There is a public health crisis bearing down on this country. Babies will be born permanently disabled, and families will be devastated if Republicans keep blocking funding to deal with this problem. It is up to you to act.

This is what government is for—to help protect the people of the United States from serious threats, from real threats. The Republicans are failing the people of the United States.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, lest anyone think that they are immune or that this is only about the tropics, I don't think a lot of people in the United States of America would call the State of North Dakota the tropics. Today I hold up the first noted case of a pregnant woman who has been infected by Zika. She was traveling, probably bitten by a mosquito, and somehow contracted the Zika virus. She will now live in fear that the baby she is carrying will suffer the birth defects we know are associated with this potential pandemic.

Where is the answer for her? The answer that the North Dakota epidemiologist gave for her, which is good advice, is: Don't travel anywhere where we have Zika virus infections. I guess she is not leaving her house because the way this is spreading and the way this is moving, it will be everywhere in the United States of America.

Once it migrates, and once it moves, what is going to stop it? Who is going to stand on the floor of the Senate and take responsibility for the lack of action, for the lack of responding to this public health crisis? That is why we are coming here today. This is not about politics. This is not about a public health emergency. We need resources. We need answers. We need tests. We don't need to rob from other potential pandemics like Ebola to get this done.

There is not a citizen in the country who would not say this is an obligation of the government to protect their people. We anticipate in Puerto Rico, a territory of this country—a lot of people travel to and from Puerto Rico—

one in five people in Puerto Rico will be infected by the Zika virus. Do they know it? Probably not. Frequently no symptoms come with the infection. So now we have to respond. Now we have to do what is right.

People will say: We can take this in regular order. That is what I hear is happening over in the House. They want to take this in regular order. Well, if it is a regular problem, why has the State of Florida declared a state of emergency? In February—this is not new—it is estimated Florida will continue to be the next big place of infection as the Zika virus migrates.

What does that mean to Florida? Not only does it mean you have created huge insecurity for the families—particularly young women the age of our children who are now thinking about having babies you have created huge insecurity. If the answer is don't have babies, how many generations do we have to go? We don't know. That is the problem. We don't know. There is no test. There is no way to verify at this point—no rapid test.

So when we look at this and we look at the effect it is having not only on our families and on family decisions but look at the effect it is having on tourism—we all know the Caribbean depends on tourism dollars to have stable governments. We all know Florida is heavily dependent on tourism. People in my office have already canceled plans for Caribbean vacations. People I know have already canceled plans to go to Florida because they are afraid.

What happens when everybody is staying home because they are afraid? This is not something we can play politics with. This is something that should unite all of us. We should all be coming together. If you don't like the President's plan, tell us what is wrong with it. Tell us what you need to change. Tell us what your experts,—contrary to the experts at CDC who have arrived at this plan—tell us what your experts think needs to be changed and what level of accountability you need.

I understand this morning the argument is not that we should spend the money, the argument is there is no accountability. Tell us what accountability. Come together. Let's solve this problem. Let's rise to the occasion in the Senate. When confronted with this virus, let's come together. Let's show the people we can respond.

I don't think I am exaggerating the potential health care effects. The World Health Organization has declared it an emergency. A conservative Governor in Florida has declared it an emergency. Certainly for this young North Dakota woman, it is an emergency. She needs to know and her family needs to know exactly how this virus is transmitted and what she can expect going forward.

She is just one of, I think, the first cases. My great friend the Senator from Washington—not exactly the tropics in the State of Washington as well—also has one case. We don't know how many more. We don't know how many more.

So I am pleading, let's not wait. Let's treat this like the emergency it is. Let's do what we need to do to protect American families, particularly young women of child-bearing age who are going to be devastated if this happens in their families. So let's do the right thing. Let's come together. If there is a problem with the proposal, let's debate what that proposal should look like. Let's bring it to the floor. Offer amendments for accountability.

Why are we waiting? Someone needs to answer that question, not just to me but to American families and to the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to the floor to join my colleagues because I share their very real concerns about the impact of the Zika virus on families in New Hampshire—also not a tropical State—the impact on people across the country here in the United States, and also on people around the world.

As has been pointed out, we have seen reports in regions with active mosquito-borne transmission of the virus, places such as Brazil, where they are about to host the Olympics. People will be traveling there from all over the United States, from all over the world. We have seen those stories of women who have had children with severe birth defects, with microcephaly, as a result of their exposure and contracting the virus during pregnancy.

We have also seen impacts on adults. The connection that seems to be there, and I think we are still waiting on definitive research, but the connection in adults between Guillain-Barre syndrome and the Zika virus is also very real. While fortunately in America in most cases that can be treated, the reality is, in a lot of places around the world and for some people, it causes severe paralysis and sometimes even death. So this is not just something that affects pregnant women, but there are also concerns about who else might be affected by this virus.

As we have heard from North Dakota, as we have heard from other States, as mosquito season arrives in this country, we can expect additional Zika cases, transmitted often by mosquitoes from tropical areas, that people contract when they are traveling. We know this mosquito is coming to America. In New Hampshire, where neither of the two known mosquito vectors currently live, we have already had three cases of Zika, with about 150 possible cases that are still being tested.

Two of those cases were acquired as a result of traveling to Zika-impacted regions, but the third was contracted because of sexual transmission of the disease from a partner who had been traveling. Last week I chaired a roundtable on Zika in Concord, NH, in our capital. We had representatives who are looking at what might happen with the virus and our planning for an outbreak, which we hope we can avoid.

We had doctors from the State, we had the State epidemiologist, we had the director of the State lab, and we had people who are working on mosquito control. They talked about how over the last several months they have been getting more and more questions about Zika, particularly from women who are planning to have children in the near future, and for pregnant women and their families or women and their partners who are beginning to think about starting a family.

As Senator HEITKAMP pointed out, the threat of Zika is very real. We had one of the doctors, an obstetrician, at that roundtable who reported that many of her family patients are canceling vacations they had planned and some of her patients whose husbands are in the military who are stationed in Zika-infected countries are concerned about how to protect themselves and what they need to do when they return.

We heard from folks at our New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services who talked about the importance of increased access to family planning and contraceptives and the Zika outbreak impact on the need for those services. It gives us a new lens on the importance of making sure women and families have access to this health care.

We need to make sure all women at risk or diagnosed with Zika have access to comprehensive, patient-centered contraceptives and preconception counseling. We also heard from the folks involved with mosquito control. What they told us is, there are two mosquitoes that can spread the Zika virus, that we know of at this time. One of those is a mosquito that is only in the tropics, that we are never going to see in northern New Hampshire and in northern New England.

The second mosquito, we have already found in Connecticut and Massachusetts. The mosquito control folks said that unlike the usual spraying for mosquitoes, which is in wetland areas and swampy areas in New Hampshire, this is a mosquito that, as Secretary Burwell has described it, ''can breed in as little as a capful of water.'' They are mosquitoes that bite people four times in order to get a meal, so they spread very fast.

What we heard from the mosquito control folks who were at this meeting was that they are encouraging people to look at places in their yards where water might collect in small spaces, in wheelbarrows, in paint cans, in places we would not normally think about mosquitoes growing.

They also encouraged people to think about protecting themselves. When you are going out, think about covering up, wearing long sleeves, wearing slacks, wearing socks when you are outside at a time when mosquitoes might be around.

The other concern about the Zika mosquito is that it also is active during the day. It is not like most of the mosquitoes we see in New Hampshire, which are active at night. This is a mosquito that is also active during the day. So we need to be taking action now. I listened to the head of the State lab in New Hampshire talking about the challenge of getting results from the lab for people who had been tested for Zika.

He said: Sometimes we have to send out to labs. We don't have the capacity in New Hampshire to do the analysis that is required. We are still looking for a test that can definitively determine if somebody has had Zika in the past. He said: Something as small as the ability to ferry the samples and the results back and forth to a lab is one of the things we need so we can get answers so we know how to act.

The folks who are trying to get information out to the public talked about the need to have support so they could get information out, both to the medical community and to individuals, about the importance of what individuals need to do to take action.

They said very directly to me, as I said that I appreciate this is something we need to work with you on in Washington, they said: We don't have the resources to respond to this in the way we need to in New Hampshire. For those people who would say: Don't worry. You are exaggerating. This is never going to come to New Hampshire, well, that is what they told us about the West Nile virus. That is what they told us about EEE. We have had deaths in New Hampshire in recent years from both of those viruses. So I think we need to act on this. I know there has been an agreement in the Appropriations Committee, among the appropriators on both sides of the aisle. It has been a bipartisan agreement to help get a supplemental funding bill to the floor to address this because in New Hampshire what I have heard is that we need help. We need Washington to help us. If we are concerned about the cost of this, just think about what our inaction will do? What if we have an outbreak and we have people who—we have thousands of women, as they do in Brazil, who have been infected and who have had babies with microcephaly. What are the health care costs to people who might have been infected by the Zika virus, with Guillain-Barre syndrome, with other birth defects as a result of being infected during pregnancy?

So this is a bill we can't afford to wait on. We need to address this. If folks are not willing to do it because it is the right thing to do, they ought to be willing to do it because it is the cost-effective thing to do. I hope we can come together. I know people on both sides of the aisle are concerned about this. We need to come together. We need to address this. It is a pending public health emergency. We have to respond.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I rise to join my colleagues in raising awareness about the Zika virus and the need to pass the President's emergency appropriations request to get ahead of this crisis in the making.

Some question the need for this emergency appropriations request. Perhaps those who believe that funding the President's request is a waste feel that we are not at immediate risk, but you have heard my other colleagues talking about how this is an impending crisis. While Zika may not seem like a threat in the United States now because we have not hit peak mosquito season, this head-in-sand mentality is irresponsible. Zika is ravaging South America, which is having its summer right now. Zika is on the move. The mosquito that is the main Zika carrier is already in 13 States, and another mosquito also capable of spreading the Zika virus is in 30 States. As families travel this summer, they will be moving in and out of States and countries impacted by Zika.

To my colleagues who aren't worried about the spread of Zika right now, it is time for all of us to wake up. With summer comes mosquitoes—including, of course, the mosquito that carries Zika. We must do all we can to ensure that Zika does not gain a foothold in the United States. Let's act, not react, to this Zika threat. This means funding the President's $1.9 billion request for Zika.

Hawaii knows firsthand the impact of vector-borne diseases such as Zika and of the resources and effort it takes to contain an outbreak. Seven Hawaii residents have already been diagnosed with Zika. One infant born to a mother with Zika has been diagnosed with microcephaly, a devastating birth defect.

On top of that, Hawaii has been dealing with an outbreak of dengue fever, which is spread by the same mosquito that carries Zika. The dengue outbreak in Hawaii began in September, and only yesterday were we able to go 30 days without a new dengue case.

The unique location of Hawaii means it serves as transit location for many Pacific Island nations where Zika outbreaks have occurred in the recent past, places such as Yap and French Polynesia. We know that this disease can migrate and that it can migrate quickly. That is why we have to get ahead of it.

Having the administration shift Ebola funding around is not the answer. That is akin to robbing Peter to pay Paul. What will we do if Ebola has a resurgence this summer—shift money back from Zika?

The United States is in a strong position, compared to many other countries, to fight Zika. We have indevelopment vaccines, blood screenings, cleaning tools, and research that will be game changers.

When the President sent his $1.9 billion request to Congress, he laid out how the funding would be spent or used. It would go toward vector control, public education campaigns, and vaccine development. It would go toward the work of companies such as Hawaii Biotech, which is racing to complete work on a vaccine.

We must fund the emergency request so Federal agencies that stand on the battle lines of combating disease can do their work. We must also strengthen vector control programs and emergency preparedness programs. It is imperative that we give our communities the tools they need to fight Zika. Time is still on our side right now, but time is running out and we must act quickly. Let's come together to ensure that Zika does not become a full-blown public health emergency in the United States. Let's fund the President's request.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise today to discuss this urgent public health emergency. I am honored to be here with Senator MURRAY, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator HEITKAMP, and Senator HIRONO as we look at this serious crisis facing our Nation, and that is the Zika virus.

The World Health Organization has declared that Zika is spreading explosively and will affect nearly all countries in North America and South America. The virus has already infected nearly 400 Americans who have traveled abroad from 40 States, including my home State of Minnesota. Over 500 people in Puerto Rico have the disease. Nearly all of them contracted the virus locally. These numbers will only continue to grow as the warmer months bring more mosquitoes that transmit this disease. In fact, researchers calculate that 60 percent of the people in our country live in an area that will likely be affected.

Zika is a rapidly evolving mosquito-borne virus. Most infected patients develop mild flu-like symptoms that last for a week. However, the virus has devastating consequences for growing families. Researchers have now confirmed what many feared was true: A pregnant woman infected with Zika is at risk of giving birth to a child with microcephaly. This heartbreaking, lifelong condition results in newborns with abnormally small heads. These children will need increased access to health care and developmental services, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. There is no known cure for this disease or even standard treatment for this condition.

It is crucial that physicians have the knowledge and tools essential to diagnose and care for pregnant women who may be infected with Zika. It is crucial that moms with Zika and children with microcephaly have access to the services they need. It is crucial that we

take steps now to ensure that our health care system and all levels of government are prepared for the imminent spread of the Zika virus.

We are here today to continue to stress the urgent need to ensure that our country is as prepared as possible to mitigate the spread of Zika and respond to outbreaks of this virus.

The administration submitted a request for nearly $2 billion in emergency funds to provide immediate support. This is about research. This is about a vaccine. This is about therapeutics and diagnostics. This is about a medical health crisis that primarily—but not only—affects women and children. That is why the women Democrats of the Senate have gathered on the floor today to speak out, to speak out and say this is a crisis that must be funded. This is a crisis that must be responded to.

Simply because it mainly affects women and children right now—and we have no idea what other effects it will have—is no reason to shirk our duties in the Congress and not fund this. Our foremost duty is to protect the health and safety of Americans. Zika is a rapidly evolving disease with severe public health implications. I ask my colleagues to support this effort. We cannot afford to delay action.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to take the floor as the vice chair of the Appropriations Committee and urge that we adopt an urgent supplemental request to deal with the Zika threat.

This is real. It has been 2 months since the administration sent to Congress an emergency supplemental. We can't wait any longer. The mosquitoes are here. They are actually here. They are here in the United States of America.

I have said—first with wit and now with deep concern—that you can't build a wall to keep the mosquitoes out. The mosquitoes aren't going to pay for this. We need to act, and we need to act now.

This is a compelling public health crisis, and we can do something about it. We take an oath to defend all Americans against enemies foreign and domestic. This is about to be a self-inflicted wound on our own people because of our failure to act.

With no reliable, tested public health interventions on mosquito control—we have to take action to do this. Why? Because as of April 20, there have been close to 900 cases confirmed in the United States of America. We already know they are in three States. The CDC knows it is going to come to at least 30 States in our own country, and it will have incredible consequences, particularly to women.

Over the years, I have heard many eloquent, poignant, and even wrenching speeches about protecting the unborn. They have been deeply moving. We have always tried to find common ground on this. But if you are really for defending the unborn, you have to pass this supplemental.

There are women all over the United States—particularly in these three vulnerable States—there are women in Puerto Rico who are wondering, if they are already pregnant, what their situation is. There are young women and not-so-young women who are concerned about getting pregnant and at the same time being bitten by a mosquito, and there are sparse resources to do mosquito control.

We want to build fences to keep out illegal aliens. OK. We want to bomb the hell out of ISIS and terrorists. We should because we are worried that they are coming at us. But in many of those instances, those are problems that have been difficult to solve. This is not difficult to solve; this is about mosquito control.

I am very concerned that we are just sitting around and that when all is said and done, more is getting said than gets done. We are talking about an emergency supplemental.

The Appropriations Committee has a very clear set of criteria for what is an emergency. First, it has to be urgent. Well, the mosquito season is here. It has to be unforeseen. This was unforeseen and it is temporary. It is mosquito season. It is a confined season. We can do something about it, and we must do something about it. It will have a disproportionate impact on pregnant women and the unborn. There will be children born with the most horrendous, heartbreaking birth defects.

I am of the generation that was the polio generation. My mother wouldn't let my sisters and me go swimming until after June 20 because, somehow or another, in our faith, it was St. John's Day and we thought the water would be warmer. Maybe the saint blessed the water. God bless the saints. God bless people like Dr. Salk, and God bless America that funded the Salk vaccine. I remember children in iron lungs to be kept alive, children in braces who then walked with very difficult canes. Those who survive bear this the rest of their lives.

Look at what we are facing here, and we know it. This is not unknown, nor is it unmanageable. It will be a national disgrace if we don't act.

In my own home State, I have a Republican Governor, Governor Larry Hogan. Guess what. Governor Hogan is acting. This isn't about Democrats and Republicans. Governor Hogan acted. He declared April 24 to 30 Zika Awareness Week. He ordered his health department to coordinate educational events with local health departments. They also spent $130,000 of State money to develop 10,000 transmission kits to begin to deal with this. My Republican Governor has taken action.

Also, in Anne Arundel County—the county that is the home of the State capital, again headed up by a Republican county executive—they received 850 kits. They are going to have townhall meetings to talk with the agricultural officials about prevention and mosquito control. We have a Republican Governor and a Republican county executive who are acting.

Then there is Howard County, where the health department is planning to distribute 450 kits to obstetric and gynecological practices to protect pregnant women. Again, a Republican county executive working with his administration is taking action, spending local money when this is a national problem.

I am saying this because my own Governor and the county executives are acting.

In Baltimore City, which has a Democratic mayor—she listened to the warnings coming from the World Health Organization, the CDC, and the Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore and is taking action. Baltimore is now spraying, taking mosquito control action, and so on. They are spending over $500,000 of local money, of which we don't have a lot.

So, hello, Maryland is acting. We need to act. And I say this because we are spending local money to deal with a national and international problem. So please, let's now—whatever differences we have on other bills, please let's take up this urgent supplemental.

Madam President, I yield the floor, as I see the majority leader is here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. today, the Senate agree to the motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the cloture vote on amendment No. 3801, the motion to reconsider the cloture vote on amendment No. 3801, and the Senate then vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801, upon reconsideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I have two topics I want to talk about today—actually, three—but I want to begin with the Zika virus.

A few weeks ago I went back to Florida on a Friday and I sat down and met with officials from the Department of Health from Florida. I met with leaders from Puerto Rico in the health sector. I met with doctors who live in Miami-Dade County and also officials in Miami-Dade County. They are freaked out about the Zika thing. I don't know any other term to use. If they are freaked out, then I am very concerned about it as well. That is why I do support fully and immediately funding this situation, and I have asked our colleagues to do so as quickly as possible.

I want to speak briefly about the Florida experience with this. There are two things that are deeply concerning,

and then I will speak to some of the things we should be doing.

First, the summer months are upon us. Anyone who has been in Florida, in the summer particularly, knows summer has basically already started in Florida if you go outside. The spread of mosquitoes as a threat virtually everywhere in the State is just massive. It is just a way of life. This very deadly disease is something we are still learning about, by the way. A few weeks ago, they said: Well, Zika impacts only a small population of people—a very significant population of people. We are learning this disease impacts whoever it touches. First of all, you don't have to be symptomatic to spread it. In Florida alone, we have had at least two cases of transmission sexually transmitted.

By the way, it is just a matter of time before someone in Florida gets bit by a mosquito. I am telling you, it is just a matter of days, weeks, hours before you will open up a newspaper or turn on the news and it will say that someone in the continental United States was bitten by a mosquito and they contracted Zika. When that happens, then everyone is going to be freaked out, not just me and not just the people who work for the health department in Florida. This is going to happen. There are just way too many mosquitoes to avoid it.

The second thing is that Miami-Dade County, in particular, but a lot of Florida, is a transit point for all of Latin America. So, for example, one of the places most impacted by Zika is Brazil. Well, this summer the Olympics are being held in Brazil, and there will be hundreds of thousands of people who cross through Florida to get to Brazil and back, on top of the normal number of travelers. It is just a matter of time. It is not a question of if, it is a question of when.

So I look at this from a Senate perspective and say: We are going to fund this. We are going to spend money on Zika in Washington, DC, No. 1, because we should. It is the obligation of the Federal Government to keep our people safe, and this is an imminent and real threat to the public safety and security of our Nation and our people. So the money is going to be spent. The question is: Do we do it now, before this has become a crisis or do we wait for it to become a crisis? Maybe that crisis happens in August, when everyone is back home doing their campaign stuff or maybe it happens on Monday, when everyone is back home doing whatever they do on recess. Then everyone will get pulled back to deal with this immediately, and I want to know what Members will say to those who say: Hey, this Zika thing has been in the news for months. Now there is a case.

It can be in any State in the country—any State in the country. You may hear: Oh, it is only in certain States that are warm. That is not true. It can be in any State in the country. I want to know what people are going to say when they are asked: What did you do about it? Are you going to say: Well, I had real problems. I wanted to make sure about this and that.

This is a serious thing. People's lives are at stake here. And by the way, this is now spreading into all sorts of other threats. Guillain-Barre was mentioned earlier. We know about the birth defects that are very significant. Do my colleagues realize what the cost will be of dealing with all of that? Are people aware of what Guillain-Barre is? It is a debilitating, often fatal, disease. The cost of treating someone that has it is extraordinary.

What about where the money is going to be spent? Look, it is possible at the end of the day that $1.9 billion will not even be enough. We don't know. But we have to start.

No. 1, we don't have a commercially available plan to test for Zika. You can't just go to Quest Diagnostics and get a Zika test. It doesn't exist. In Florida, if you want to get a Zika test, you have to go through the State department of health.

No. 2, a lot of people aren't being tested because they are not a pregnant woman so they do not think they have to be tested. False. If you have traveled anywhere at this point—I don't care who you are, how old you are, male or female—where there are mosquitoes in significant amounts, you probably should be tested. If you have traveled abroad into these danger zones, you can transmit this disease. You can be carrying it and not see manifestations of it for a while.

There is no commercially available plan. They talk about mosquito control. They have only been trying that for thousands of years, and mosquitoes have outlasted everything. It is important. It has to be a part of it. But one of the two mosquito species that spreads Zika is resistant to pesticides. It has become resistant to the pesticide, and that is why new technologies need to be developed.

There are some innovative ways out there to cut down on the mosquito population. There is an innovative program now, trying to start a pilot program in the Keys. That should be a part of this conversation. Researchers are pretty confident they can find a vaccine for this kind of disease, given its pathology. Maybe not next week, but they can find a vaccine for it. The government has a role to play in basic research that allows the private sector to commercialize that and make that possible.

I understand we want accountability for how this money will be spent. I believe that. I do. I think the administration should come forward and say: Here is our plan. Here is where every penny is going to be spent, and here is how we are going to spend it. We should hold them accountable, and if there are ways to improve on that, we should. But I think there should be a sense of urgency when dealing with this issue.

I honestly believe—I don't believe; I know—it is just a matter of time before there is a mosquito-borne transmission. By the way, does it really matter how you got it, whether it was from a mosquito or it was sexually transmitted? You have Zika. It acts the very same way once you have it. It is just a matter of time before there is a mosquito-borne transmission in the continental United States.

I also have heard—not that anyone here has said it—but I have heard others say there are no cases of Zika transmitted from a mosquito yet in the United States. That is false. Puerto Rico is in the United States. Puerto Ricans are American citizens. By the way, they travel in huge numbers to and from the United States. Many are moving here. Many work here during the week and travel back on the weekends. This is a catastrophe right now in Puerto Rico, which is a United States territory, and its people are American citizens. They are facing a catastrophe right now on this issue.

So I hope there is real urgency about dealing with this. I understand this is not a political issue. There is no such thing as a Republican position on Zika or a Democrat position on this issue because these mosquitoes bite everyone. They are not going to ask you what your party affiliation is or who you plan to vote for in November. This is a real threat, and it is not just in the tropical States. They may feel it first, but so can any State that has any significant travel, which is basically all 50 States in the Union. In a country where people travel extensively across the country and around the world, we are going to face a Zika problem in this country this summer and fall.

My advice to my colleagues is that we are going to deal with this, so I hope we deal with it at the front end. Not only is that better for our people, but that will be better for my colleagues. Otherwise, we will have to explain why it is that we sat around for weeks and did nothing on something of this magnitude.

The second topic I want to—

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, will the Senator yield for just one moment before he goes into his second topic?

Mr. RUBIO. I will yield to the Senator from Washington.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I just want to thank the Senator from Florida for joining the women of the Senate here today to bring attention to such a critical issue and to extend our hands. We want to work with the Senator. We believe this is an emergency, and we want to deal with it quickly. We appreciate his comments and his support this morning.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I appreciate the advocacy of the Senator from Washington, and I do look forward to working with the Senator on this as well. Hopefully, we can get a result on this.

There is going to be a recess now, and that means for 10 days people will be going back to their home States. So I hope when we come back a week from Monday, we will hear that we have a plan that we are going to be able to vote on and vote on it quickly.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY AND FDA ADVISORY PANEL

Madam President, on a separate topic, I want to call attention to a remarkable group of advocates who are bound together, not by a common race or religion or political ideology but by the common hope of one day ridding the world of a rare disease named Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Duchenne is one of multiple different forms of muscular dystrophy. It affects mostly boys, almost exclusively, at the rate of 1 per 3,600 individuals. Its primary symptom is the steady deterioration of muscle mass beginning early in childhood. By the age of 12, most boys with Duchenne have lost the ability to walk and eventually become paralyzed from the neck down. I am sad to say there is currently no cure for Duchenne, and the average life expectancy is around 25 years.

I am personally the parent of four children, including two boys, and I can only imagine—perhaps I can't imagine; that is how difficult it is—what it must be like to have a child receive this diagnosis. Few are called to do more for their child and to show greater courage in the face of the adversity that MD poses than a parent helping their child battle Duchenne.

I was recently inspired and humbled a few weeks ago to meet a young man struggling against this disease. His name is Austin, and his dad Joe is a hero in more ways than one. Joe helps Austin combat Duchenne, and he does it alone, as a single father. By the way, he also serves as an Active-Duty member of the United States Air Force.

Austin is 12 years old, and I was immediately impressed when I met him. I knew how difficult it must have been for him to travel all the way to Washington from his home in Tampa. This is the embodiment of courage that people living with this disease show every day.

Joe shared with me a few of the struggles they face. He told me how Austin is unable to attend school full time because he needs hours of daily physical therapy to stimulate his muscles. He told me how Austin is quickly losing the ability to walk and how he now needs help getting in and out of his wheelchair and other daily tasks. He needs help with eating.

Joe told me he spends hundreds of dollars each month on over-the-counter drugs that are not covered by insurance, and he spends hours every Friday attending doctors' appointments.

Joe shared the dreams he once had when Austin was born—dreams of being that proud father in the bleachers at little league games or cheering loudly and waving a big foam finger. With Duchenne, he tells me he has even more reasons to proudly cheer Austin on, though the reasons are different. He cheers when Austin is able to get out of bed without help or to walk to the restroom. These are moments of great pride for Joe, when he sees how resilient Austin is in the face of this disease.

Joe and Austin traveled to Washington as part of a coordinated effort to witness and participate in FDA action related to Duchenne. As advancements in medical science continue, targeted therapies to treat Duchenne are being developed and tested, and each one—even the ones that fail—is providing us greater insight into the way the disease operates and how it might ultimately be defeated.

The last couple of weeks in particular have brought about a display of extraordinary strength from Joe and Austin, and thousands of other parents, children, family, and friends who engage in activism on behalf of those with Duchenne. This Monday, scores of advocates from around the country attended a hearing of the FDA advisory committee, which welcomed them and spent almost an entire day listening to their testimony. What this committee was listening to was the result of a clinical study on a small group. Admittedly, this is a small group of people who have this disease, so any clinical trial will have a small number of people. It is not the same as you would have for another more common disease. So this FDA advisory panel was meeting to decide whether they were going to allow this testing to expand and this drug to be more available.

The panel should have reviewed this in the context of a law that was passed in 2012 called the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act; call it FDASIA for short. This act gave the FDA the authority to consider the perspectives of patients when evaluating whether to approve a drug. In essence, it gave the FDA the authority to listen to people who are taking the drug and decide whether it works or not—not just to look at the clinical study.

This also provides real flexibility when evaluating drugs for life-threatening illnesses, such as Duchenne. It included multiple provisions to address the challenges of the rare disease patient community, which is by definition small—meaning clinical trials have a more difficult time finding enough participants to meet the FDA's usual requirements. Usually, when it is a drug for cancer or something like that, you have tens of thousands of people you can do a trial for. When it is a rare disease, you have a harder time finding enough people to test it on the way you would for a normal drug. And on top of that—on top of the perspective of a lesser number of people—it is also a disease that is fatal. In the end, all of these cases with Duchenne end the same way, with death, in a very predictable pattern.

They had a chance to meet this week and review this in the committee. In the words of someone who was there, who has a lot of experience in interacting with government agencies and bureaucracies, the word they used was ''jarring.'' They said it was jarring. This is from someone who has a lot of experience interacting with government agencies and bureaucracies. They said it was jarring how it went.

I want to paint the picture of what that place looked like on Monday. There was an entire community of parents whose kids have Duchenne, who are taking this experimental drug, who are seeing their kids improve. They are seeing it. They know these kids better than any scientist, any doctor, or any panelist at the FDA, and they see these kids are doing better. They see this. They are begging the FDA panel: Please allow us to continue to give these kids medicine. And, by the way, make it available to other kids because, No. 1, there has not been a single documented case of harm; no one using this experimental medicine has been harmed by it. No. 2, we, the parents, are telling you it works because we see it in our kids. And, No. 3, if you take it away, we are desperate; there is nothing left. They are going to die. It is very predictable.

The committee ignored them. The committee ruled against them, and it did so because they basically applied the same standard to this drug as they did to a normal one: Oh, you didn't have enough people in the clinical trial. No, there aren't enough people to do a clinical trial with. It is a rare disease. The result is they had this ruling, and I think the vote was 7 to 3.

What is interesting is that one of the board members was quoted as saying: Based on all I heard, the drug definitely works, but the question was framed differently. What that means is the way the FDA posed the question to this committee was not just whether the drug worked, but the question was the process: Did this clinical trial have enough people? Was it conducted the normal way—the way other drug tests are conducted? Of course not, because it is not treating a normal condition. It is one with a very small population.

The committee spent almost the entire time focused on how the clinical study was designed and not on whether it works. By the way, had the FDA followed FDASIA, the law passed a few years ago, and taken that into account—the small patient population and likewise—they might have reached a different result. Instead, what is happening now is these patients and families are on the verge of losing not just access to the drug but to other families as well.

Put yourself in the position of one of these patients. Your son has Duchenne, your son is taking this experimental drug, and you see how he is improving—because you do not improve with Duchenne. It is not one of these things where you get better, worse, better, worse. You get worse and then worse and then worse. It is a steady, predictable decline. So imagine your child is

one of those impacted by this disease. You know what the outcome is. It is a predictable, guaranteed outcome. They are taking an experimental drug, and you know it is working because they are not declining. In fact, in many cases they are improving. You are begging the FDA: Please, allow us to continue to give our children this drug. They say: No, we reject it because the clinical trial was not conducted the way it is for normal drugs. Then you would understand the desperation of these parents.

There is one last chance. The senior leadership of the FDA has the ability to override this decision and allow this to move forward. I personally hope that is what they will do. In the end, the only thing to lose here is to do nothing.

The sad story here would be for these parents, who are already seeing the benefits, to lose access to this drug that they know is having an impact on their children. No one has been able to prove there is any threat that this drug poses to these children. This has been documented. CBS has done a report. Other entities have reported on it.

FDA senior leadership has the chance to overrule this committee, which didn't knock it down for purposes of safety or anything of that nature. They just said the clinical trials didn't meet their standard—and say these kids are going to die anyway if we don't do something.

Here is a drug that is showing improvement, and families who are using it are begging them to allow them to use it. Thousands of people do not fly in from around the country or watch online for something that isn't working. If this weren't working, these parents would not be so adamant about it. They see it is working. They know people it is working for. They are desperate to keep it or to reach it. Listen to them. They know what they are talking about. They know. They are the primary caregivers for their children, and they know improvement when they see it.

I hope the FDA will consider moving in a different direction. These parents deserve better.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

(The remarks of Mr. TILLIS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2885 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. TILLIS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

PENSION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to talk about an issue that affects not only retirees in Ohio, but retirees all around the country.

Let me start by saying that if hundreds of thousands of retirees were getting the Social Security benefits they had worked for cut by as much as 70 percent, there would be a national uproar. People would consider it totally unacceptable. It would be the top news story every night. People would say: These retirees played by the rules; they did everything right. Yet they are seeing these big cuts. How could this happen?

Yet that is exactly what is happening to about 400,000 members of the Central States Pension Fund who are facing cuts of up to 70 percent as soon as July 1 of this year. Again, these are people who worked hard all their lives, put money into the pension system assuming it would be there, made their financial plans based on that, and now they are suddenly finding massive cuts—some 20 percent, some 40 percent, some as high as 70 percent. It is time for the Senate to address this potential crisis and to come up with a fair solution.

The Central States Pension Fund consists mostly of union truck drivers. They have seen its pension fund severely decline. That is why we are in this situation. The pension suffered big investment declines during the great recession, as did other pension funds. One difference is that they missed the market rebound because they had a large population of new retirees, and they had to withdraw large sums from their pension for those payouts.

One of the largest pension funds in America is in trouble. It is projected to go bankrupt in about a decade. That bankruptcy could be so large that it would have a very negative impact on the larger Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation that insures the fund. We don't want that to happen because that could, of course, leave hundreds of thousands of retirees with severely reduced or no pensions.

Something has to be done. Math is math. I understand that and, by the way, Central States retirees understand that. They know there is a problem. But the way Congress and the President have dealt with this is totally unacceptable. The House of Representatives worked on a proposal. It was crafted in the House, not in the Senate. It allowed the pension to possibly avert bankruptcy—and I say ''possibly'' because, as I will talk about later, even this proposal doesn't mean they are going to avert bankruptcy. But they did so by cutting the benefits of current retirees substantially, severely in some cases, again by as much as 70 percent.

They then took this proposal called the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act, or MPRA, and buried it inside a $1 trillion spending bill, which, frankly, nobody read. It was one of those last-minute bills, an end-of-the-year omnibus spending package, as they call it, and they sent it to the U.S. Senate. Members of the Senate were told: This is an up-or-down vote. There were no hearings in the Senate. There was no transparent process.

I remember when this happened about a year and a half ago, we were told that if the Senate didn't quickly pass these unprecedented reforms, with no hearings and no opportunities for amendments on the floor of the Senate, the spending bill would fail.

This is Washington at its worst: Bury something in a spending bill that has nothing to do with a spending bill—in this case, a pension cut—and then basically try to blackmail lawmakers to vote for it, saying: If you don't vote for this, the whole bill goes down.

I voted against it, as did other Members here in the Senate, but it passed. Of course, President Obama quickly signed it into law. Suddenly, these retirees were sent notices saying they have this big cut in their pension.

I agree that the status quo is not acceptable. I think over time it would lead to pension bankruptcy, and something has to be done. Difficult decisions are necessary. But the MPRA was an unfair remedy because it did not go through a fair and open and transparent process. Also, it didn't give the workers or retirees a sufficient voice in their own futures. They did not have a voice in crafting the reforms because of the way it was structured.

We probably have 47,000, 48,000 Ohioans affected by this. After months of meetings with Ohio workers, retirees, and stakeholders, including the administration, I introduced what is called the Pension Accountability Act. Basically, it gives workers and retirees a voice in this process. Right now, MPRA does allow there to be a vote by workers and retirees, but for these large plans, the vote is nonbinding. So there is a vote, but it doesn't count. Even if the participants vote 100 percent against the reforms, it wouldn't stop the cuts from going forward. That is crazy. That is certainly not democratic.

Additionally, the vote is designed unfairly. Here is how it works: If a retiree or a worker chooses not to take out a ballot and vote, it is automatically counted as a ''yes'' vote for the plan. Imagine how that would work in U.S. Presidential elections or other democratic processes. But that is not how this works. If you submit a ballot, it should be counted. If you don't submit a ballot, it shouldn't be counted.

So the Pension Accountability Act fixes these two problems: First, it makes the retiree and the worker vote binding. This will give workers and retirees a seat at the table, and a majority vote would be required for any pension cuts to go forward. Second, it makes the vote fair by counting the ballots as they should be counted, not returning the ballots as an automatic ''yes'' vote.

These commonsense reforms give the workers and the retirees more leverage. It gives them a fair say in the process because their vote is going to be heeded to implement changes. They are going to have a seat at the table to find the right balance.

Again, we know these pensions are in trouble, and some changes are necessary to prevent bankruptcy, which could leave some families with nothing. So let the process play out. If the

businesses, unions, workers, and retirees can craft a solution to win a majority vote, more power to them. But let's give everyone a seat at the table, and let these retirees have a vote.

The goal should not be to stop all pension reforms. If Central States continues on its road to bankruptcy, then, everybody loses. But the goal should be to give those affected a say in how these reforms are designed. It brings accountability. It opens the lines of communication on both sides of the bargaining table to come up with a fair solution.

There are some other proposals. I think the Pension Accountability Act has a much more realistic chance of enactment because I do not believe a massive tax increase is viable. It is the only reform proposal with bipartisan support. In fact, between my bill and the House companion legislation, we have nine Democrats and nine Republicans.

In the meantime, for the reasons I have discussed, the Department of the Treasury should not accept Central States' application. They should reject this proposal to cut benefits up to 70 percent for some of the retirees, as we have talked about. By the way, even if all the application's positive market assumptions play out, there is still a 50-percent chance the pension goes bankrupt anyway. This doesn't exactly inspire confidence in this plan. I think they should go back to the drawing board.

By the way, I am openminded to other solutions that would provide funding from inside the multiemployer pension system. There are different ideas out there, and we should talk about them.

Let me finish with a story about a guy I got to know through this process. His name was Butch Lewis, from Westchester, OH. Butch was a star baseball player in high school. He was drafted out of high school by the Pittsburgh Pirates. But instead of going on to a career in baseball, he heard the call of duty and he volunteered to join the U.S. Army and to serve in Vietnam. He became an Army Ranger. He was seriously injured while rescuing fellow soldiers. He was sent home with a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

When he came home, Butch reunited with his high school sweetheart Rita. He started a family, and he started working, despite his injuries. He spent 40 years as a truckdriver. The lack of shock absorbers in those old trucks hurt his knees a lot. His knees had been injured in Vietnam in battle. Ultimately, it required 37 surgeries. But he kept working and never complained. He sacrificed for his family and for their pension—to the point of foregoing pay raises, vacations, and other benefits in order to guarantee that he had a sufficient pension for retirement. They planned on it, like you would or anybody would.

Finally retired, a year ago Butch was surprised when he received a letter in the mail saying his pension would be cut by 40 percent—the pension that he was depending on. So after all those years of work and sacrifice, his pension would be deeply slashed. Butch felt betrayed, and I think that is understandable. He organized with his fellow retirees an effort to try to defend those pensions, and that is how I came to know him. He came to Washington, DC, to meet with me here. I also met with him in Ohio. I listened to his story. I listened to his wife Rita, who is very articulate, and we addressed different ways to try to save his pension. He is one of the reasons we came up with this legislation.

This past New Year's Eve, feeling the stress, Butch became ill, and he died of a massive heart take. He was 64 years old. His wife Rita is left to pick up the pieces. She has now lost her husband. Her own dad is battling Stage IV cancer. She is looking at a 40-percent cut to her survivor's benefit. She is preparing to sell the house that she and her husband Butch saved a lifetime for. She is wondering what her future is going to be. She is a very strong woman. She worked tirelessly to save for these pensions. Now she is fighting to make sure all the hard work her husband put in was not in vain.

This is who we are fighting for. Think about Butch Lewis when we think about what we should do. Think about Rita and 400,000 other members of the Central States Pension Fund. These are people who played by the rules. They worked hard, and yet, in their retirement years, they face possible financial ruin through no fault of their own.

This is why we need to pass the Pension Accountability Act. We have attempted to offer it as amendments in previous legislation here over the last couple of months. We are going to continue to do that. We are not going to give up. I would hope the Senate and the House would see that by giving people a voice, it gives them leverage, and we can come up with a better and a more fair solution for everybody.

I yield back my time.

I yield to the Senator from North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from North Carolina.

GENOCIDE AND ATROCITIES PREVENTION ACT

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, April is Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month. As we remember all those who have lost their lives in the wave of terrorist violence sweeping the world, I call on my Senate colleagues to join the effort to make real the words ''never again'' by cosponsoring S. 2551, the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act.

Islamic extremists are waging religious war so severe that the Pope of the Catholic Church and the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church came together, stating:

> Whole families, villages and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated. Their churches are being barbarously ravaged and looted, their sacred objects profaned, their monuments destroyed. It is with pain that we call to mind the situation in Syria, Iraq and other countries of the Middle East, and the massive exodus of Christians from the land in which our faith was first disseminated and in which they have lived together with other religious communities since the time of the Apostles. We call upon the international community to act urgently in order to prevent the further expulsion of Christians from the Middle East. In raising our voice in defense of persecuted Christians, we wish to express our compassion for the suffering experienced by the faithful of other religious traditions who have also become victims of civil war, chaos, and terrorist violence.

On February 4, a nearly unanimous European Parliament passed a resolution declaring that ISIS ''is committing genocide against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities.'' Sadly, the United States, in keeping with the President's desire to lead from behind, only recently decided to call it genocide in the face of the religious cleansing taking place in the heart of the Middle East. ISIS vows that they will break our crosses and enslave our women—they are speaking of Christians—and they will place a black flag at the top of St. Peter's Basilica. At the other end of the Middle East, we have Iran. Iran is launching test missiles with the words ''Death to Israel'' on the tips of the ballistic missiles, in Hebrew.

We would do well to remember the words of an Israeli Prime Minister who said: ''When someone tells you he wants to kill you, believe him.'' If you think it is a problem that is over there, think again. Terrorism reaches our shores. It has devastated some of the great cities of the world like London, Paris, Brussels, Madrid, and Bali. As a result of conflict, there are now a record 60 million displaced persons—men, women, and children. That is more than at the height of the displacement of World War II.

Responding to the dire needs of those fleeing violence has driven a 600-percent increase in global humanitarian aid over the past 10 years, from $3.5 billion in 2004 to $20 billion in 2015. I have actually seen the human cost in refugee camps along the Turkish-Syrian border. I was there a couple of weeks ago, less than 30 miles away from the Syrian border in Turkey. These were Muslims fleeing ISIS and a bloodthirsty dictator who unleashed chemical weapons on his own citizens.

In the 1980s, then-Ambassador to the United Nations Jeanne Kirkpatrick took up the cause of preventing genocide. With the memory of Chairman Mao's killing of 100 million still fresh in her mind, her attention was turned to Africa, where she saw the first stirrings of the genocide on the continent, and then to Cambodia, where Pol Pot murdered over one-third of his nation. She urged President Reagan to sign the convention on genocide, and President Reagan did just that.

President Reagan said:

We gather today to bear witness to the past and learn from its awful example, and to make sure that we're not condemned to relive its crimes. . . . the genocide convention [is a] howl of anguish and an effort to prevent and punish future acts of genocide.

I believe Congress has an important leadership role to play here. We can help ensure that America has the tools to combat genocide and atrocities and combat violent conflict. That is why I joined Senator CARDIN in introducing the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act.

As does the Senator from North Carolina, I also have a special reason for supporting this legislation that has the potential to fuse diplomacy, intelligence, and foreign aid, and in turn, prioritize government action to prevent future atrocities by working together.

It is important to me because my State, as I said earlier today, is at the tip of the sphere. When diplomacy fails, it is the 82nd Airborne and Special Forces from Fort Bragg or the U.S. Marines from Camp Lejeune who are going to go resolve the conflict. We want to avoid those conflicts. We owe it to them to do better by putting partisanship aside and by taking up proactive steps to avoid sending our servicemembers into harm's way to confront a conflict that may be able to be prevented without firing a single shot.

Silence is the greatest enemy of freedom. Silence led to the devastation of Jews in Europe. But from the ashes of the Holocaust came the State of Israel and the vow ''never again.'' The first President Bush reminded us: ''The words 'never again' do not refer to the past; they refer to the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon with great regret, having to raise the issue of the pending nomination of the Secretary of the Army. Mr. Eric Fanning has been nominated to be the Secretary of the Army. We have held hearings in the Armed Services Committee, and his name has been on the calendar for confirmation. My friend from Kansas, who is on the floor with me—and he is my dear friend of many years, despite the branch in which he chose to serve in the military—has been objecting to the confirmation of Mr. Eric Fanning as the Secretary of the Army, which is his right.

Mr. Fanning had a distinguished career. He served as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense and White House Liaison. He served as Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy and Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Navy. The Senate confirmed him, and he served as Under Secretary of the Air Force, including 6 months as Acting Secretary of the Air Force. He served as Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Defense, Dr. Ash Carter. Later, he served as Acting Under Secretary and Acting Secretary of the Army. In 2016, he served as the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

He comes from a military family. He has two uncles who graduated from West Point and were career Army officers. He has another uncle who is a career Air Force officer. He has a cousin who flew helicopters in the Marine Corps and another cousin who was an Army Ranger.

He has senior executive leadership experience in all three military departments and has pursued efficiencies and transformation in every part of the Department of Defense. His most recent experience as Acting Under Secretary and Secretary of the Army has given him a solid understanding of the challenges currently facing the Army and the need to sustain a ready Army that will, as he said at his confirmation hearing, deter enemies, assure allies, build partner capacity, and be ready to respond when the Nation calls.

One of the obligations—in some respects—that we as Senators have is the role of advice and consent, and that is an important role. As Senators, we also understand that elections have consequences, and therefore—although it is not written down anywhere—when a President is selected by the American people, then that President should be given the benefit of the doubt as to the person or persons the President wants on his or her team. I believe it is then our job to make the decision on whether to confirm or deny confirmation based on our view of the qualifications but with the presumption that we would confirm someone rather than the presumption that we wouldn't confirm someone. When the American people choose their leader—the President of the United States—then it seems to me it is our obligation, unless there is a reason not to do so, to ensure that the President has a team around him he has selected.

I am stating the obvious, and Mr. Fanning is clearly qualified. He has performed well in the hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee. My friend from Kansas has objected to Mr. Fanning being confirmed by the Senate, and I will let him describe his reasons for objecting to the nomination, but as I understand it, the Senator from Kansas does not want the detainees from Guantanamo transferred to the State of Kansas.

I have assured my dear friend from Kansas that the Armed Services Committee will not approve the transfer of detainees to the United States of America unless there is a plan that will assure the American people the circumstances surrounding that transfer, if it should ever take place, will be appropriate. The administration, after 7½ years that I have been dealing with them, has no plan. I can assure the Senator from Kansas that the Defense authorization bill, which I assume will be made into law, will again prohibit the transfer of detainees from Guantanamo to the United States of America until there is a plan that is approved by the Congress of the United States. That is our obligation and our role. Now, add to that that Mr. Fanning has no role to play. He has no role to play in this decisionmaking as to whether we transfer detainees from Guantanamo to the United States of America.

When we consider nominations, we should be considering the role, mission, and responsibilities of that nominee, and, frankly, I say to my dear friend from Kansas, he has no role to play in the whole scenario I described.

I urge my friend, in the strongest possible way I can, to work together with me, as we have over the last 7½ years on this issue of Guantanamo, and give the benefit of the Senator's expertise as we bring the Defense authorization bill to the floor during the last week in May, which is when it is scheduled, and talk about Guantanamo. I am totally confident and can assure the Senator from Kansas that the overwhelming majority of the Armed Services Committee and I am sure a majority in the Senate—I am totally confident that the Defense authorization bill will have a prohibition on the transfer of detainees to the United States of America unless there is a plan that is approved by the Congress of the United States.

Finally, I understand that the Senator from Kansas is very concerned about this issue and has been for a long time. No one understands better than he. He was a former member of the U.S. Marine Corps and is aware of the obligations to preserve the safety and security of this Nation.

All I can say is that the U.S. Army needs this man, Mr. Eric Fanning's leadership. It is not fair to the men and women of the U.S. Army to be without the leadership of a Secretary of the Army. Mr. Fanning is eminently qualified to assume the role of Secretary of the Army.

I urge my friend and colleague to not object to the unanimous consent request I am about to propound.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 477, the nomination of Eric Fanning to be Secretary of the Army; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. I want to make certain that my colleagues understand my position on this matter. My hold on Eric Fanning's nomination is not in relation to his capabilities, expertise, or character, and it is certainly not intended to bring undue stress to our U.S. Army. Rather, my hold on the nominee is to protect the security of

the United States and especially the people of Kansas.

I will be more than happy to vote for Mr. Fanning once the White House addresses my concerns regarding the President's efforts to move Guantanamo Bay terrorist detainees to the mainland, with Fort Leavenworth, KS, the intellectual center of the Army, very high on the list.

I have been clear, honest, and flexible with the White House. I am simply asking that they communicate to me what all those who have reviewed Fort Leavenworth already know; that Fort Leavenworth is not a suitable replacement for the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay. The White House has not reciprocated.

I have prepared lengthier remarks on my position in this matter. At this time, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 5 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, the senior Senator from Arizona, our distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee and my friend, has made a very impassioned plea for me to remove my hold on Eric Fanning to be Secretary of the U.S. Army. I want to be very clear that as a veteran and marine, I support the nominee for this post.

Kansas is the proud home to two Army posts, Fort Leavenworth, the intellectual center of the Army where the commandant staff school is located, and Fort Riley, home of the Big Red One—two proud posts with very rich histories.

I want the Army to have a highly qualified Secretary just as much as the distinguished Senator from Arizona, but it is due to my deep respect and concern for the men and women in uniform at Fort Leavenworth, and those who live and work in the region, that I am compelled to issue my hold on the President's nominee in the first place.

As I have publicly stated from the beginning, and personally to Mr. Fanning, former Army Secretary John McHugh, and Defense Secretary Ash Carter, my quarrel is not with the nominee but with the President.

President Obama continues to insist that he will close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility before he leaves office, transferring the remaining detainees to the U.S. mainland, with Fort Leavenworth under serious consideration. Quite frankly, this is a legacy item for the President. After much study and review, I can name countless reasons why this plan is wrong and it is also illegal. The President's own Cabinet has acknowledged this, and the Secretary of Defense and the Attorney General have publicly stated that current law prohibits the transfer of Guantanamo Bay detainees to the mainland. Yet the President is undeterred. He continues to insist it will be done, even if he has to resort to Executive power in defiance of the law and the will of the Congress. As a result, I have been left with very little choice other than to do what I can as an individual Senator to block the transfer of detainees to Fort Leavenworth.

I understand and share the concerns of the distinguished Senator, but if there is any anger, concerns, or frustrations, it should be directed at a White House that intends to ignore laws written and introduced by the Senator from Arizona himself. We should be speaking today, not about my attempts to protect the people of my State and Fort Leavenworth, we should be speaking about a White House that ignores the National Defense Authorization Act and every appropriations bill passed in this Chamber since 2009. We should be angry at a White House that wants to bring this terrorist threat to our shores without so much as an intelligence assessment as to the risk and benefits of such an action to our citizens at home or to our men and women in uniform. An intelligence assessment regarding these concerns does not exist.

The administration is responsible for refusing to come forward with a real plan to relocate prisoners, instead of a weak and veiled attempt to honor a campaign promise, which is the only way to characterize the actions to date.

Just days ago, I received the most classified report from the Department of Defense on moving the detainees from Gitmo. This report—far from clearing up any reports—made it even more apparent to me that it is virtually impossible to safely relocate terrorists at Fort Leavenworth.

The assessment is there. All I am asking is for the White House to assure me that Fort Leavenworth is not a viable alternative. Cities and towns across America are holding their collective breath while we await the White House's judgment as to where to house these detainees.

For those of us in the crosshairs, we are left with very few options to fight a President who is willing to break the law. With this hold, I have used one of the tools—perhaps the only tool other than a filibuster—afforded to me as a U.S. Senator, and I will continue to do everything in my power to fulfill the obligations of the security of the United States. It is what Kansans expect and have demanded of me.

If the White House calls and assures me that terrorists held at Guantanamo will not come to the Fort Leavenworth, I will gradually release this hold immediately. As a matter of fact, we just had a conversation with the White House this morning in the hopes that this could be worked out, but the White House simply would not give me that assurance.

Make no mistake, I remain adamantly opposed to placing detainees anywhere on the mainland. The distinguished Senator from Arizona knows that, and I think he shares those views. However, if the plans and studies from the administration rule out Fort Leavenworth as an option, all they have to do is tell me.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request by the Senator from Arizona?

Mr. ROBERTS. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, Mr. Fanning has nothing to do with the issue. We are shooting a hostage that has nothing to do with the decisionmaking process. If we inaugurate a practice here of holding nominees over an issue that is not related to those nominees, we are abusing our power and authority as U.S. Senators.

Secondly, the Senator from Kansas knows he cannot have the President call him. If he did that, he would then have to call 99 other Senators who would then hold up nominees because they have not been assured that detainees will not be relocated to their States according to any plan that the President may come up with.

What we are doing is telling a nominee who is totally and eminently qualified for the job that that person cannot fulfill those responsibilities and take on that very important leadership post because of an unrelated issue that has nothing to do with Mr. Fanning. That is not the appropriate use of senatorial privilege. What if we set this precedent and every Senator—100 Senators—adopts the practice of saying: I don't want the President to pursue a certain course of action, therefore I will hold his or her nominees hostage until they take a certain course of action. That is not the role of advice and consent. That is a distortion of advice and consent.

Let me say, I will be coming back to the floor on Mr. Fanning's nomination. It is not fair to him. He is an American citizen. He has served for years in the service of his country, at least since 2009 that I can see. He shouldn't be held hostage to a policy decision that—the full Senate will act to prevent that action.

I tell my colleague that the full Senate, as we have the last several years, will prohibit the transfer of detainees from Guantanamo Bay until the President of the United States comes forward with a plan that is approved by the Senate. So if a plan came forward that contained movement of the detainees to Fort Leavenworth, as the Senator from Kansas is worried about, then the Senate would say no. We would say no.

So, unfortunately, we have seen the Senator from Kansas take a nominee who is fully qualified in every aspect—he passed through the Senate Armed Services Committee by voice vote—and hold him hostage to an action that the nominee has no ability to take, has no ability to determine, nor is it in his area of responsibility as Secretary of

the Army to determine a policy on Guantanamo.

So if we are going to set a precedent here, I say to my friend from Kansas, that if we don't like a certain policy or anticipated action by the President of the United States in some area, we will therefore hold up a nominee for an office which they are not in any way related to—that is not the way the Senate should behave.

Mr. ROBERTS. Will my friend from Arizona yield?

Mr. MCCAIN. Sure. I will be glad to yield to my friend.

Mr. ROBERTS. Well, if this is a bad precedent and all that the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee has said it is with regard to my actions, I will remind him that there has been a precedent before this time. The year was 2009, and this issue came up. Obviously, it was a campaign promise by the President. There was a lot of concern, a lot of frustration, a lot of anger. I asked myself at that particular time what on Earth I could do to stop this effort to move detainees to Fort Leavenworth. Again, I would stress that it is the intellectual center of the Army. The commander staff school is there—think Pershing, think Eisenhower, think MacArthur, think Petraeus. Bad fit. Sixteen thousand people at Leavenworth have signed a petition saying no to the detainees.

Back then, in 2009, John McHugh—a wonderful Congressman, a great friend to me, and a great Secretary of the Army—was being nominated. I took the very same action, I would tell the distinguished Senator from Arizona, and put a hold on John.

I called him up. I said: John, I have some bad news and some good news.

He said: Well, give me the bad news.

I said: Somebody here in the Senate has put a hold on you.

He said: Who on Earth would do that?

I said: It is me.

He was a little stunned—I think a lot—and would probably make the same statement and speech the Senator from Arizona has given.

I said: Not to worry. All that has to happen is for the administration to give me assurance—it could be vocal; I don't expect him to write it down—that the detainees will not be moved to Fort Leavenworth.

John went to work to try to carry that message to the administration. I am not saying that Eric Fanning should do that, but John McHugh did. And it wasn't very long after that that the legal counsel from the White House—and I won't get into names here—called me and assured me that would be the case. I immediately lifted the hold.

So there is a precedent in 2009, and it worked.

Again, I really regret—my hold on Eric Fanning's nomination is not in relation to his capabilities, his expertise, his character, and certainly not intended to bring undue stress to the U.S. Army. I understand that. But when we are faced with a situation like this, and the situation could be further explained by a call that I just received prior to the distinguished Senator coming to the floor—the White House knows this—we had a very frank conversation. The conversation pretty well ended up: I can't give you that assurance, but we won't surprise you; i.e., if we have an Executive order and we are moving detainees into Fort Leavenworth, we will certainly tell you.

So I can't release this hold, as I did in 2009. I don't think the statute of limitations is here with regard to the previous assurance I got from the White House. If there is, maybe it is because that is—when the legal counsel left, all of a sudden we were back to where we are.

So the ball is in the court of the White House. All they have to do is give me another call and indicate that things will be fine. I am not telling them what language to use or anything else.

I might add that there are two other Senators who are very concerned about this—Senator TIM SCOTT of South Carolina and the distinguished Senator from Colorado, CORY GARDNER.

I thank the Senator for yielding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, just quickly, facts are stubborn things, I say to my friend from Kansas. The reason there hasn't been movement of the detainees is because the action of the Senate Armed Services Committee in the authorization bill prohibited such a thing from happening. It has nothing to do with any hold or no hold that the Senator from Kansas has. Let's be very clear about that. And whether Eric Fanning is confirmed or not, it does not change the situation one iota—not one iota.

I have assured the Senator from Kansas that the Senate Armed Services Committee—I know enough about my own committee to know that they will be passing again, as we have for the last several years, a prohibition on the movement of detainees until there is a plan. And in 2009 or whenever it was, I am sure they had no plan at that time because they came to see me and I told them to come up with a plan.

So the Senator's actions have nothing to do with whether or not the President closes Guantanamo and transfers them, and the Senator's action right now has nothing to do with whether or not the President of the United States will decide to close Guantanamo by Executive order and move them to Leavenworth. There is nothing he is doing by withholding this nomination that would in any way inhibit the President from acting. The only thing that will inhibit the President from acting is the aye vote of Senator from Kansas on the Defense authorization bill which will be on the floor at the end of May and which will have a prohibition for the transfer of those detainees.

So I would hope my dear friend from Kansas would understand that what we need to do is get a defense authorization to the floor, get it in conference with the House, and get it to the President's desk. That is the best way he can keep any movement of detainees to Kansas and to Fort Leavenworth. And at the same time, the President of the United States, despite your hold on Mr. Fanning, may act by Executive order. Nothing you are doing by prohibiting Mr. Fanning from being confirmed to a post he is well qualified for—to lead the U.S. Army—will have any effect whatsoever on an Executive order by the President of the United States.

Mr. ROBERTS. Will the Senator yield again for one last comment?

Mr. MCCAIN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, every Senator listening to this—every person listening to this—should understand, with the summation the Senator has just given, what an outstanding chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee he has been and what a stalwart he has been for our men and women in uniform. I cannot think of a chairman—and there have been a lot of very great chairmen in the Senate Armed Services Committee, but none so well qualified as the Senator from Arizona. His remarks are right on point with regard to his point of view. His remarks sing, if you will, in behalf of our national defense. He is a great friend. He is a personal friend. I respect him more than he knows, and I appreciate him. I think he mentioned Eric Fanning to be Secretary of the Navy. That might be an alternative. But at any rate, I want to thank him for his remarks.

But if this has no bearing on anything, why did the White House call me just before we came down here trying to work it out? And saying that in 2009—OK, they did let me know that Fort Leavenworth was not being considered. As I say again, there is no statute of limitations, I don't think, except just ''Oh well, by the way, we are going to change our mind'' and a couple of little campaign assurances by the President saying ''Well, we can always use an Executive order''—not to mention his Press Secretary. So if there is nothing to bear here—this doesn't have any relationship to the issue at hand—why did the White House call and say ''Well, we will make a decision down the road, but we won't surprise you''?

I shouldn't even be talking about this with regard to the communications this morning. So I just disagree with my good friend. I thank him for his leadership, and I thank him for his position. Were I in his position, I probably would be saying the same thing.

Mr. MCCAIN. May I just say, Mr. President, that I hope my dear friend from Kansas—we are about to go into a week-long recess—would do as he always does, and that is contemplate and

communicate, as he does with the people of Kansas, who have honored him for so much time here in the Congress of the United States. Maybe hopefully we could work this out with the certain knowledge and my assurance that I am 100 percent confident that the Senate Armed Services Committee will report a bill that will become law that prohibits the transfer of the detainees from Guantanamo to anywhere in the United States of America until there is a plan that is approved by Congress, and I want to give him that confidence.

His passion that he has displayed here is ample evidence for why the people of Kansas hold him with such affection and respect. He is fighting for what he believes is in the best interests of the people whom he represents so well and honorably.

I hope he will have the opportunity, as we go into recess next week, to talk with his constituents and think about this and think about my assurance that we will not—we will not—approve of a transfer of detainees from Guantanamo Bay unless it is in compliance with the law that we will pass.

I thank my colleague.

I know the Senator from Tennessee is waiting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, within a few minutes we will be voting on whether to cut off debate on the Energy and Water appropriations bill and move to finish the bill. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will vote yes.

This is a bill the Senator from California and I have worked on carefully with Members on both sides of the aisle. More than 80 Senators have made contributions to the bill. We considered 18 amendments on the floor. This is a bill which is about half national defense and about half essential services. These include dredging harbors and building locks and dams. These include our 17 National Laboratories and keeping us first in the world in supercomputing. It is within the Budget Control Act, and it is the part of the budget that is flat. In other words, it is a part of the budget that is reasonably under control, not the part that is not.

It is also the first time since 2009 that this Energy and Water appropriations bill has had the opportunity to go across the floor in the regular order. It is the earliest appropriations bill that has been considered by the Senate since 1974. Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID picked this bill because they thought Senator FEINSTEIN and I could work with Members of the Senate to establish a model for how to deal with the remainder of the appropriations process, and we hope that proves to be true.

We have run into one issue, and that is an amendment by the Senator from Arkansas regarding Iran. That is a provocative amendment—I understand that—on both sides of the aisle, and the President cares about it as well. But I have worked hard to get Senators a right to offer germane amendments. Some Senators have chosen to withdraw their amendments in order to keep the bill moving along, but Senator COTTON has a right to offer his amendment on the bill, and I support him in doing that. He has been eminently reasonable. He has offered to modify it. He has offered to do it at another time. He has offered to vote it at 60 votes or to vote it by voice vote. So far, we have not had any agreement.

If we do not succeed, I am going to keep working with Senator FEINSTEIN, the Democratic and Republican leaders, and with Senator COTTON in the hopes that when we come back next Monday, we will have a suitable solution and we will vote still again on finishing the Energy and Water appropriations bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Over the last year and 5 months the White House has threatened 87 vetoes. That is about one every week and a half. If we shut down the Senate and stopped our work every time the President threatened a veto, we would be here about 3 or 4 hours every Monday afternoon.

When we say to the President: Your budget is dead on arrival, he sends us his budget anyway.

The way to handle a veto threat is the way we did it with the national defense act, which is to say: All right, Mr. President, if you want to veto it, you may. We sent it to him, and he did. It came back, and the offending provision was taken out. A better way to do it might be that the President says: I will veto the education bill. We worked with him, and we sent him a version that he could sign.

My plea with my friends on the Democratic side, as well as on the Republican side, is let's not let the White House lead us around by the nose and tell us we can't consider a bill just because there is a veto threat. We should consider the bill. We are a coequal branch of government. We should do what we think we ought to do—defeat it or pass it. Then, if the President chooses to veto it, that is his constitutional prerogative, and most of the time, if we know that is going to happen, the offending provision comes out.

I ask for a ''yes'' vote. I hope that it succeeds. If it doesn't, we will be having the same exact vote a week from next Monday when we come back, and I will do my best to help that succeed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the cloture vote on amendment No. 3801 is agreed to and the motion to reconsider is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3801 to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Lamar Alexander, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, Roy Blunt, Orrin G. Hatch, John Hoeven, John Thune, Thad Cochran, Roger F. Wicker, Mark Kirk, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 3801, offered by the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. ALEXANDER, as amended, to H.R. 2028, shall be brought to a close, upon reconsideration?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

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 Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Ernst	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heitkamp	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Kirk	Sullivan
Corker	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Wicker
Donnelly	Moran	
Enzi	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Heller	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Reid
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sasse
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Lee	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Fischer	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Cruz	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 43.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, upon reconsideration, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3801 to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Tim Scott, Marco Rubio, Michael B. Enzi, Daniel Coats, Cory Gardner, Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, Mike Rounds, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, Thad Cochran, Lamar Alexander, Johnny Isakson, David Vitter, Patrick J. Toomey, Rand Paul.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENTENCING REFORM AND CORRECTIONS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are a lot of divisions on Capitol Hill, and the press spends a lot of time reporting differences between Democrats and Republicans in the House and the Senate. I think that is one of the reasons the press conference I just left is noteworthy, because at this press conference, we had equal numbers of Democratic Senators and Republican Senators talking about a bill that we hope to move forward on the floor of the Senate. The bill relates to criminal justice reform.

I am pleased to cosponsor this legislation with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. We are proud to have the support as well of Senator LEAHY and Senator MIKE LEE of Utah, who was one of the original authors of this bill 3 years ago when we both introduced it. We also have the support of the Republican whip, JOHN CORNYN of Texas; SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island; and many others who have joined this effort.

What is it about this bill that could bring people together who are so different—liberals, conservatives, Democrats, Republicans? It is a common belief that we bring to this that at this moment in history, we need to take an honest look at the incarceration policy in America.

The United States of America has 5 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of the world's prisoners. Over the last 35 years, we have increased the number of Federal prisoners by anywhere from 800 percent to 900 percent. We are building Federal prisons as fast as you can imagine, and they are dramatically overcrowded.

It raises the obvious question: Are we safer? If we spend $30,000 a year to incarcerate a person, take them off the streets and away from their family, are we safer because of it? In some cases, we clearly are. Our first obligation is public safety. If someone is a threatening, deadly, violent criminal, they ought to be taken off the streets as long as they are a menace or a danger to society. But the largest increase in the Federal prison population during the period I just described is for nonviolent offenders, people who have sold drugs in America.

The problem is made worse because we decided 25 or 30 years ago to create mandatory minimum sentences. What it meant was that when the judge sentenced someone, there was an absolute floor they couldn't go below regardless of the circumstances. Needless to say, that resulted in the miscarriage of justice in many cases.

Sadly, it isn't just a matter of longer sentences. We have seen some disparities and injustice that we have to be very honest about, as painful as it is to describe them. For instance, the majority of illegal drug users and drug dealers in America are White. Three-quarters of all the people incarcerated for drug offenses are African American and Latino, and the large majority of those who are being sentenced under mandatory minimum sentences are African American and Latino.

Let's be very honest about this. In my State of Illinois, I have to be because in the city of Chicago and other communities, we are going through a very candid and painful discussion about the issues of race and justice. We have to be honest. We are incarcerating minorities in this country at dramatically higher percentages than we should. The reason I say that goes back to the original point: The majority of illegal drug users and sellers in America are White; three-quarters of those in prison are not.

As a result of mandatory minimums, the families of nonviolent offenders are separated for years on end, and a disproportionate number of them are people of color. This is destroying communities, damaging and destroying families, and, sadly, eroding faith in our criminal justice system.

In 2010 I worked with Senator JEFF SESSIONS of Alabama. He is a very conservative Republican but one of my colleagues and friends on the Senate Judiciary Committee. We passed the Fair Sentencing Act. You see, we had a disparity in sentencing so that those who were found guilty of selling and using crack cocaine were sentenced at 100 times the standard of powder cocaine. There was a reason for it, but it turned out not to be valid. Yet for years this was the standard. We were filling our prisons primarily with African Americans on crack offenses, and if they were repeat offenders—three times and you are out, three strikes and you are out—they could be sentenced for long periods of time.

Senator SESSIONS and I decided to change it. We reduced the disparity between crack and powder, and we have seen a dramatic downturn not only in those serving times for crack cocaine offenses and selling them but also the arrests that are being made today.

This bill we just announced in a press conference—the latest version and I think a good version—is another step forward. It will give judges more discretion in sentencing below the mandatory minimum on an individual case-by-case basis.

A young man whom I have come to know is Alton Mills. Alton is from Chicago, IL. In the year 1994 at the age of 24, Alton Mills was given a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole for a low-level, nonviolent drug offense. This man had never served 1 day in prison in his life, and at age 24 he received a life acceptance. I appealed to President Obama to use his Executive authority to give Alton Mills another chance. Just before Christmas last year, the President commuted his sentence, and Alton Mills was released after 22 years in Federal prison.

He was there today in a meeting we had with his mom. She never gave up on him. She was the one who appealed to me initially to take a look at her son's case. His attorney, a dynamic African-American woman named MiAngel Cody, really closed the deal as she described this case in detail and how unfortunate it was that a 24-year-old man would receive a life sentence for low-level, nonviolent drug offenses.

He is not alone. There are hundreds more just like him serving mandatory life sentences for third-strike sentences. The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, which Senator GRASSLEY and I have introduced, would eliminate this mandatory life sentence. This change alone would change the sentencing for many who are currently serving in Federal prisons.

The bill was reported out of the Judiciary Committee in its original form by a vote of 15 to 5—a good, strong vote. We have picked up an additional number of Republican sponsors since we have made some other changes in the bill. I thank Senator LEE for joining me in initially introducing this bill.

There are so many people who are counting on this legislation, not just those families who have someone serving time in prison but many people across the board—Black, White, and

Brown—who want to see us restore faith in the system of criminal justice.

We had an amazing endorsement of our bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter of endorsement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, Virginia, April 26, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER REID: On behalf of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), the largest prosecutor organization representing 2500 elected and appointed District Attorneys across the United States as well as 30,000 assistant district attorneys, I write in support of S. 2123, the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015. As a result of months of changes and good faith negotiations, our organization feels the latest version of the bill strikes the appropriate balance between targeting the highest level drug traffickers plaguing our communities, while simultaneously decreasing crime rates and addressing the burgeoning prison population.

America's federal, state, local and tribal prosecutors have as their primary responsibility the administration of justice. Everyday, prosecutors have to make tough judgment calls. Sometimes, that judgment call involves locking up individuals for a long period of time for a heinous crime that damaged a community. More often, we work hard to provide second chances and concerted efforts are made to rehabilitate an individual with the goal of reducing the chance that he or she will reoffend back into the system.

As we have seen from the cost curve published by the National Academy of Sciences, the current prison population is simply unsustainable and continues to have a greater and greater impact on broader funding and programming at the Department of Justice. Budget aside, communities across this country have shifted to embrace rehabilitation and the opinion that certain individuals in our federal prison system are serving sentences that are too long compared to the crime they committed. This legislation aims to strike the appropriate balance of time served and the relevant crime by modifying the three strikes rule for drug felonies, with a third strike now carrying a 25-year penalty as opposed to life, and second strike carrying a 15-year sentence instead of 20 years. Appropriately so, the bill expands the three strikes rule to apply to serious violent felonies, ensuring that we use prison for those we are afraid of, not those whom we are mad at based on their behavior.

One previous concern our members highlighted was the retroactive nature of many provisions in the original bill. The new version takes into account that concern by limiting the retroactivity where applicable if an individual's record contains any serious violent felony. We feel this filters out the truly dangerous individuals who should stay out of the community, while allowing lower level offenders a chance for redemption.

Our members also realize that as we see the same offenders reenter the criminal justice system time and time again, we must be creative and come up with innovative programs to reduce recidivism, including job training skills, addiction counseling and other productive activities. According to a report primarily authored by the National Center for State Courts, ''properly designed and operated recidivism-reduction programs can significantly reduce offender recidivism. Such programs are more effective, and more cost-effective, than incarceration in reducing crime rates.''

As part of the broader legislation, the Corrections Act requires the development of a risk assessment tool that will categorize inmates based on their risk of recidivism and subsequently determine which types of programming are most tailored to that individual's needs and risks. This is an important step in targeting at risk populations and providing the necessary resources to rehabilitate those individuals with the eventual goal of returning to our communities as productive citizens. At the same time, appropriate parameters are set for who is eligible to earn good time credit for completion of the recidivism reduction programming in order to keep the most dangerous and high-risk individuals from being eligible for early release to community supervision and off the streets.

We are especially appreciative of the provision in the legislation requiring an annual report by the Attorney General outlining how savings accrued from modifications to federal sentencing will be reinvested into efforts by federal, state and local prosecutors and law enforcement to go after drug traffickers and gangs, as well as provide the necessary training and tools needed to carry out investigations, keep officers safe, and ensure successful programming and initiatives are duplicated across communities in the form of best practices. Unfortunately, as the Bureau of Prison's (BOP) budget has continued to rise, funding for state and local law enforcement grants has been slashed to the bone negatively impacting innovative work in the field including diversion programs, updating of information sharing systems, and hot spot policing. This language is an acknowledgement that vital funding streams to prosecutors and law enforcement must be restored to protect the communities we serve.

The members of NDAA are acutely aware that our federal partners need to have the ability to allocate resources to state prosecutors to help combat human trafficking, domestic violence, the scourge of prescription drug addiction, and so many other ills that plague our communities. Absent meaningful sentencing reform, where the truly dangerous are locked up for an appropriate period of time and those with addiction or mental health issues have the chance for treatment and rehabilitation, those needed resources will not exist.

We applaud the bipartisan leadership of the Senators and staff who have spent considerable time working on this compromise legislation. Their tireless efforts have included open and transparent communication with our organization and members, which has not gone unnoticed. We look forward to working with both of you and other Senators and staff in the weeks ahead to move this bipartisan legislation forward.

Respectfully,

WILLIAM FITZPATRICK,
President, National District Attorneys Association.

Mr. DURBIN. The National District Attorneys Association, which is the largest group of criminal prosecutors in America, has endorsed our criminal justice reform bill. We have brought together an incredible coalition. I am proud to have not only the civil rights community, but we also have others from the conservative side, such as Michael Mukasey, former Attorney General. Everyone knows him to be a tough prosecutor. He endorses our bill. Others have come forward. They understand that it is time to step back and take an honest look at where we are today.

This criminal justice reform bill will bring some sanity to our corrections system, and it will save us money. Roughly one-fourth of the Department of Justice appropriations now goes into prisons. By the year 2030, it will be 30 percent. As Senator LEE said, we are spending more money on prisons than we are spending in the Department of Justice on the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration combined.

What if we could reduce that prison population in a responsible, sensible way that doesn't endanger public safety but gives us resources that could be used by the Department of Justice for law enforcement, for dealing with the heroin epidemic across America and making our neighborhoods truly safe? What if we could take part of that and invest it in the lives of young people before they turn to gangs, before they turn to drugs, and before they turn to guns? That could literally change the face of a great city such as Chicago and the great Nation we live in.

This is a historic bill—not just because Democrats and Republicans have come to support it; it is historic because we are tackling one of the toughest issues of our time. We are doing it in a thoughtful, careful, bipartisan, and respectful manner. I happen to believe that is what the Senate should be all about.

I look forward to encouraging my colleagues who have not signed on as cosponsors to do so as quickly as possible.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today as the cochair of the Rare Disease Congressional Caucus in recognition of patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy and the loved ones who care for them.

Duchenne is a devastating, rare disease that primarily affects boys and young men. There is no cure. It is 100 percent fatal. There are no approved disease-modifying treatments at this time, but we want to give them hope. In 1999, there were no human clinical trials for Duchenne. Today, there are 22 observational trials currently underway. Life expectancy rates have increased by about 10 years in just the past decade. The FDA has more tools in its toolbox than ever to accelerate

approvals of safe and effective Duchenne therapies, but we would like more therapies to be approved in the future.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is the most common fatal genetic disorder diagnosed in childhood, affecting approximately 1 in every 3,500 male children. The disease results in the gradual loss of muscle strength, usually beginning before age 5. The progressive muscle weakness leads to serious medical problems, particularly issues related to the hearts and lungs. By age 14, over 80 percent of these boys are using wheelchairs.

My work on Duchenne muscular dystrophy began when I was elected to the Senate. It was an issue my dear friend and former Minnesota Senator, Paul Wellstone, championed. Paul was instrumental in getting the Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance Research and Education Act—or as it is known, the MD-CARE Act—signed into law back in 2001.

The bill dramatically increased investment at the National Institutes of Health for muscular dystrophy research and included funding for the creation of six centers of excellence. In recognition of his work, all of the centers share Senator Paul Wellstone's name. The bill also supported public health policies designed to improve quality of life and boost life expectancy of children and adults diagnosed with muscular dystrophy.

Since passage of the MD-CARE Act, $500 million has been leveraged for muscular dystrophy research and education programs, half of which is Duchenne-specific. I then led the reauthorization of the MD-CARE Act in 2008, and it passed the Senate by unanimous consent. In 2014, Senator ROGER WICKER and I led the MD-CARE Amendments of 2014, which built upon the progress by ensuring that efforts are focused on the most critical needs of doctors, patients, and researchers. These are important accomplishments, but more needs to be done.

The Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act of 2012 gave the FDA increased flexibility to grant accelerated approval for rare disease treatments that have proven to be beneficial. The bill also directed the FDA to use patient-focused drug development tools during the drug approval process. The idea is simple: Patient experience should be a factor when the FDA considers a drug for approval. This gives the FDA the opportunity to hear directly from patients, their families, and caregivers about the symptoms that matter most to them, the impact the disease has on patients' daily lives, and their experiences with treatments.

To build upon that progress, Senator WICKER and I introduced the Patient-Focused Impact Assessment Act. The bill would help advocates understand how the FDA uses patient-focused drug development tools and how it engages patients, including those with rare diseases, such as Duchenne, as it reviews drugs and therapies. Last month this bipartisan bill unanimously passed the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, bringing us one step closer to ensuring strong patient engagement throughout the FDA review process.

At an FDA meeting on Monday, there was one example of patient involvement in the drug approval process. It was a meeting that broke records. According to advocates, it was the largest gathering of Duchenne families in history. More than 900 members of their community were there. In fact, turnout was so large the FDA changed the meeting location to accommodate everyone.

Many stories were shared during the daylong meeting—stories of hope, stories of progress. Even seemingly small improvements—such as the ability to open a bottle of water on their own or lift their arm a little higher—make a huge difference in the quality of these boys' lives. These small victories have a ripple effect across a lifetime.

Monday's historic event shows the strength of the Duchenne community, the passion of the families, and the hope that treatments are on the horizon. This particular treatment was not approved that day, but we continue to hold hope that change will be on the horizon.

The fight against muscular dystrophy will not be won overnight, but we have already seen incredible progress in the last few years. I am confident that by working together—by bringing families to the table with policymakers and health care experts—we can accomplish some truly remarkable things.

One of the reasons Senator WICKER and I fought so hard to have the FDA officials listen directly to the families is that when you know your child has a disease that is 100 percent fatal, you might take different risks. You might see different improvements in a different way than a medical professional who does not have this experience. We hope going forward this kind of experience and testimony and information will make for better decisions by the FDA.

We need to continue to ensure the FDA has the tools and flexibility it needs to increase the number of safe, effective, and affordable treatments that are available for people with rare diseases. I also thank Senator HATCH, who has done a lot of work with me on the rare disease issue, and we will continue to push for cures for people who have so little hope.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS FIRST ACT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, this morning at 11 a.m., a big event happened in Washington, DC, on the third floor of this building when all members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Republican and Democrat alike, introduced what we call the Veterans First Act—a comprehensive overhaul of the Veterans' Administration to bring about accountability in services to our veterans by the Veterans' Administration. Every member of the committee, Republican and Democrat alike, came to that press conference.

I want to start by thanking Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut, who is my ranking member on the committee, for his efforts and his work over the last 10 months to help make this a reality, and each and every member of the committee for the work they did. In the end, we adopted 148 provisions of the Senate to amend, reconstruct, and hold accountable the Veterans' Administration.

I don't know about the Presiding Officer, but every morning when I wake up in Washington, DC, and turn on the TV, whether it is CNN, FOX, or a local station, one of the lead stories is about a tragedy in the Veterans' Administration. This morning, in preparing for this press conference I didn't turn on the TV until after I read my notes. After I read my notes, I turned on the TV, and what, to my dismay, did I see? In Chicago, IL, at the Veterans' Administration hospital, they found cockroaches in the food of our veterans. What kind of accountability is that in the Veterans' Administration? For our veterans to be fed food with vermin in it is ridiculous and crazy.

We all know what happened in Arizona a few years ago when appointments were manipulated, so veterans missed their appointments, and three veterans died. We know what happened in Atlanta, where we had an outbreak of suicide by people who couldn't get to mental health services in time. We know what happened when cost overruns went awry in Denver, CO. When the costs of the hospital got out of line, the Veterans' Administration didn't know how to control it.

Every time we turn around, there is no accountability in the Veterans' Administration, so our committee decided it is our job to see to it that our veterans get what they deserve and what they fought for for us; that is, a Veterans' Administration that delivers on

the promise of good health care, good benefits, and the appreciation of a grateful country for the sacrifice each of them made.

To begin with, we want to make sure the Secretary of the VA can fire somebody and make it stick. A few months ago, the Merit Systems Protection Board overruled the firing of two Philadelphia employees of the Veterans' Administration and reinstated them with pay with no reason except they didn't like the way in which they were fired.

If we go around the country, we find out that the Veterans' Administration's best way to discipline somebody is to move them from one city to another, from one hospital to another, or from one location to another. Moving problems around doesn't solve problems. They just give the problem to somebody else. It is time that if somebody deserves to be fired for their lack of performance or their poor performance, we put our veterans first and make sure they are getting the attention they should get. If somebody is not willing to do their job or cannot do their job, then they are terminated.

We don't want to go through and take the rank-and-file, good employees of the Veterans' Administration and tell them ''We don't like you, we don't appreciate you, and we don't trust you,'' but we want to tell those who don't want to be held accountable, those who are not doing their job, that we are watching.

We are going to encourage whistleblowers to tell us where the problems are. We created an independent office in this act for whistleblower status within the VA, so the VA itself is soliciting input within its own organization to point out those who may not be doing a good job. We need the VA to have a culture of support for our veterans, not a corruption of our veterans. It is critical that we do that.

We took a lot of other issues that have been big problems in the United States of America for our veterans and we addressed them.

Opioids. We have a major section on opioids to try to get medicines to our veterans that counteract the addiction of opioids and don't treat pain with opioids but instead treat it with the appropriate type of medicine.

We did a great job in terms of caregivers. I don't know about the Presiding Officer, but I am a Vietnam-era guy. I remember Vietnam. I remember the sacrifice of our troops there and the 58,000 men whom we lost in Vietnam. A lot of our Vietnam veterans came home with multiple disabilities. In fact, 22,000 of them are living with disabilities today, but they have never been covered by caregivers. Our post-9/11 veterans have been covered by caregivers but not our Vietnam-era or Grenada veterans or our Panama veterans. This bill makes them eligible as well, so a family member—a loved one who is giving care at home to a veteran who fought and was injured for our country—can get the same type of stipend and benefit that someone who has fought in Iraq or Afghanistan gets. It is only fair to see to it that they get the same benefit and the same treatment.

It is also only fair to see to it that Secretary McDonald himself can be held accountable. Bob McDonald is a good Secretary. He has done a good job. He has tried his best, but he hasn't had the tools he needs. Well, we want to give him those tools. We want to give him the chance to have discipline. We want to give him the chance to find the people he needs to put in place. One of the provisions in this bill allows the Secretary to hire physicians, directors, and hospital administrators who are capable of doing the job and pay them what the market will bear. Why not have good people who can do the job rather than temporary people who don't want to do the job? Right now in the Veterans' Administration, fully a third of its leadership is temporary, not permanent. We need a permanent commitment to our veterans that they are going to get the services they deserve and the services they need.

I could go on and on about this legislation, but the important thing to understand is that we are finally putting our veterans first. We are telling the Veterans' Administration: We appreciate the good job you do, but we want to make sure it is 100 percent of the time, not just 85 or 90 or 95 percent of the time.

We want to make sure they are putting our veterans first. We want to make sure that somebody who makes a mental health call to a veterans hospital doesn't get a busy signal or a wrong number. We want to make sure that when somebody makes an appointment and then shows up, there is somebody there to meet them for that appointment. We want to make sure that the services veterans earned, fought for, and in many cases sacrificed for, are available to them.

I thank the members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I thank this Senate in advance for what I am sure it will do later this year: put our veterans first.

When we return from our break next week, I am going to do everything I can to get this bill before the Senate before Memorial Day, to see to it that we get it to the House of Representatives so we can conference. The House has passed their bill. They have passed a good bill, and we have passed a good bill. We need to find common ground to put those two together because one thing is for sure: What has happened in the VA for the last few years is inexcusable and indefensible, and I, for one, am not going to be a chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee who did not try to make it right. I am going to use every strength that I have, every power that I have, and every ability that I have to bring people together to say: We owe our veterans everything.

The Presiding Officer wouldn't have his job, I wouldn't have mine, and our families wouldn't live in peace and security today in this country had millions of Americans not volunteered to fight and risk their lives so that we could be free, so that I could speak freely on the floor of the Senate about what I believe and the Presiding Officer could speak freely about what he believes and we could go home and assemble and gather together. All of those are guaranteed by our Constitution—a document which is preserved and memorialized not by the paper it is written on but by the veterans who sacrificed and risked their lives to see to it that it was preserved.

I am very proud to be chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I am proud to have served with RICHARD BLUMENTHAL as ranking member and all the members of the committee whose contributions to this legislation have made it a great piece of legislation—one that we should pass. I hope we do so before Memorial Day, so on the day we honor those who have fought for us and sacrificed, we send them the signal: We have got your back and we are putting you first. We are putting America's veterans first.

I want to pause for a second at the end of my remarks and thank some people for all the efforts they have made over the past 10 months to make this a reality. As the Presiding Officer knows, legislation doesn't just happen. We Senators make a lot of speeches. We are full of a lot of hot air. But the hard work that goes on is done in the back rooms of the Capitol, in the committees, by the people who do the research to find the pay-fors, to make the decisions that have to be made to see to it that a piece of legislation works and is not just a hollow promise.

I thank Tom Bowman, my chief of staff on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, for the work he has done. I thank Amanda Meredith, Maureen O'Neill, Adam Reece, David Shearman, Gretchen Blum, Jillian Workman, Leslie Campbell, Lauren Gaydos, Tucker Zrebiec, Tommy Reynolds, and Chris Bennett. I thank the members of my staff: Jay Sulzmann, my chief of staff Joan Kirchner, Ryan Evans, and Amanda Maddox. I also thank everybody on RICHARD BLUMENTHAL's staff for all the contributions they made to make this happen.

Today we opened up a new day for the Veterans' Administration in America and a new day for America's veterans. We put America's veterans first today, and we are going to keep them first. They put us first when they sacrificed for us; it is time we did the same for them.

I urge each Member of the Senate during this break to get the information we send to your offices about the Veterans First Act, read and study it, and then come back and let's pass a bill that tells our veterans: We love you. We appreciate you. And never again will you have an appointment broken or not receive the services you need from the Veterans' Administration of the United States of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, today's announcement by the Bureau of Economic Analysis that our economy grew, once again, an anemic rate of 0.5 percent during the first quarter of the year is more than discouraging but not surprising. Whether it is burdensome regulations, whether it is a broken Tax Code, or whether it is a continued plunge into national debt, the Obama administration's policies have been and will continue to be a deadweight on our economy.

The President continues to make big promises and insists his policies are effective, but the facts speak for themselves. Under President Obama, the median household income has decreased during his presidency and remains 6.5 percent below its prerecession level. If this were an average post-1960s recovery, individuals would have nearly $2,700 more in their wallets. Instead, they have received a decrease of $3,000 per year in their income. This is unacceptable.

While the President continues to say the economy is improving, it is clearly not reaching its potential or anywhere close to its potential. At some point, you have to acknowledge the policies aren't working. Here we are 8 years from the beginning of the recession, and the president in the White House insists that his policies are working: Hang in there with us, folks. Things are going to get better.

Then these statistics come out that things are not only not getting better, but are getting worse. We are not only not moving closer to the average level of recovery after a major recession, but we are moving further and further away from it.

Our current annual growth rate in this recovery is less than 2 percent. In 2016, with this quarter's report, we are off to a very weak start. But if this were an average recovery, we would be seeing an annual growth rate of somewhere around 3½ to 4 percent.

I served previously in Congress in the Reagan years, and the growth rate during the Reagan recovery was 4.5 percent, which is well more than double what it is today. I have seen firsthand how pro-growth policies turn a dismal economic situation around, but I haven't seen it here in Washington under President Obama. Where I have seen it is in my home State of Indiana.

In 2005, under the policies of a Democratic administration, which clearly weren't working, Indiana faced a $200 million deficit, and our State had not balanced its budget for 7 years, even though the State constitution requires that we do that.

Under the leadership of former Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels and current Governor Mike Pence, Indiana has reduced spending, cut taxes, and paid off its debt. As a result, instead of a $200 million deficit, we have a $2 billion surplus today. We enjoy a triple-A credit rating from all the credit rating agencies, and we have been listed in index after index as the State to go live thanks to our low taxes and because we are business friendly, family friendly, and tax friendly.

The contrast between this body and the State that I represent is dramatic because of the differences in our policies. By the numbers and indexes, it is clear that this Federal economy under the policies of this administration is simply not making any progress. I think we see that playing out in the upcoming election for the next President. It has become a major campaign issue, and we hear both parties talking about it.

Over the past 2 years, in Indiana, private employment has grown by nearly 130,000 jobs, reflecting the results and success of Indiana's pro-growth policy. Employers are taking notice of our healthy business climate and coming into the State to establish new businesses. I think the resurgence of growth is proof that sound economic policy works.

I have seen how it works in Indiana, and I am simply not willing to accept the stagnant rate of growth here without trying to do something about it. I don't think anything is going to change since there is no indication from the White House or even from our colleagues across the aisle here that they are willing to at least debate this issue and put the policies that bring about economic growth into place.

In order to boost economic growth, we need to reverse the failed policies of this administration by overhauling our Tax Code, strip away unnecessary government regulations, give employers the certainty they need in order to grow their businesses and create jobs, follow the lead of States like Indiana, Ohio, and others that have turned their economies around and bring the prosperity to the people of those States.

Congress can take action to encourage our economy to grow, but we need a partner in the White House willing to cut the redtape, willing to enact pro-growth reforms and put in place a real plan to reduce the debt.

I hope I don't have to come down here to discuss another quarter of anemic rate of growth. The American people simply pay the bills, pay the mortgage, send the kids to college, and put aside money for the future. That is not happening, and it needs to change. Hopefully, we can take a lesson from what we have learned on these quarterly reports—that the policies in place are simply not doing the job.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. 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. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am glad to see that my good friend from Indiana was on the floor talking about an important issue that the administration certainly won't talk about. To be honest, not many Members of this body talk about it nearly enough. As my colleague from Indiana mentioned this morning, the U.S. Commerce Department came out with some big news. They said that the U.S. economy grew at 0.5 percent GDP growth the first quarter of 2016. That is one-half of 1 percent. That is a horrible number.

I am going to make a prediction. I don't think anybody in the media, if they are still up there, is going to talk about this issue. Nobody talks about this issue. In the old days, it didn't matter if there was a Republican or a Democratic administration. If the U.S. economy was growing at 0.5 percent GDP—which essentially means it is not growing but has instead stopped—then almost certainly the Secretary of the Treasury would come out and say: Don't worry, America. We have this; we have a plan.

We know that 0.5 percent GDP growth is horrible for everybody, especially working-class families. At the very least the Secretary of Commerce would have come out and said: We know you are hurting, America, but don't worry. We have a plan. In previous administrations, that is what would have happened, and it wouldn't matter if the President was a Democrat or a Republican.

But I don't think we heard a peep out of this administration this morning. We have not heard from the President, the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Commerce Secretary. Nobody came out and spoke, and don't count on it. I don't think they will be talking about this number. They even seem to be satisfied with this number—0.5 percent GDP growth. They certainly don't want the American people talking about it because this is not a good number.

This is a really important issue for our country. This is an important issue for every single American, and yet we have an administration that doesn't want to talk about this issue because it is a big problem for them. It is a big problem for all of us. We can't grow the U.S. economy.

Some of my colleagues have come down to the Senate floor often to talk about what they view as moral imperatives. I respect everybody in this body, but there is a lot of talk about moral imperatives and nobody talks about this issue as a moral imperative. In my

view, growing the economy and providing opportunities for Americans has to be the No. 1 moral imperative of this body and of the Federal Government. We should be talking about it, but we are not, and one of the reasons we are not talking about it is because there is no doubt that the Federal Government—the Obama administration—is failing the American people in this regard by any serious measure. This is not a debatable topic.

The Obama administration's record on economic growth has been one of the worst in U.S. history. Let's take a look at this chart. Is it any wonder why the President or Secretary of the Treasury didn't come out and talk about these numbers this morning? The numbers are abysmal, and they are their numbers. Remarkably, when the President does talk about the economy, he has taken to bragging about the U.S. economy because we are doing better than Europe. Look at the press. When the President talks about the economy, he talks about how we are doing better than Europe. After today's news, he won't even be able to brag about that because 0.5 percent GDP growth is not better than Europe. If the President is actually comparing his record to another country, he needs to remember that the only country that matters is America. That is the only measure he should be looking at—not Europe, not Japan, and not Brazil. He should be looking at our country.

How has he done historically relative to every other President—Democrat or Republican? If we take a look at this chart, we can see the answer. These are facts. We are not debating anything. These are just the numbers. Real GDP growth, as I mentioned, is 0.5 percent growth this quarter. But if you look at some history here, from 1790 to 2014, the average real GDP growth for the United States has averaged about 3.7 percent. That includes Democrats and Republicans over 200-plus years. That is what made us great. Historically, we have had almost 4 percent GDP growth. That is what made the United States great.

I keep talking about GDP growth, but in essence, gross domestic product is an indicator of the economic health of our economy and how it is growing. It is an indicator that measures the opportunities that exist in the United States.

Like I said, we had almost 4 percent growth throughout American history. The President's numbers in the last 7½ years: 1.36 percent GDP growth. Here we see it on the chart. This is Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush 41, Clinton, Bush 43, and President Obama.

The red line is important. That is 3 percent GDP growth. That is considered pretty good—not great but pretty good. Take a look. President Obama has never hit that. He has never actually hit that in one quarter, ever. By any measure, these numbers are abysmal.

So what are we looking at? The Obama era has been a lost decade of growth. Again, compared to any other period, even the Great Depression period, these numbers represent lost opportunity, stagnant wages, and middle-class families struggling. Yet the administration never talks about it.

If we can't grow our economy, who is hurt the most? It is the most vulnerable. It is the working poor. It is the elderly. It is the young people. It is our pages right here who want a positive future. These are the people who are hurt. Yet if we grow our economy—if we got to Reagan levels or Clinton levels or Johnson levels of 4, 4.5, 6—we could take care of so many of the challenges our country faces.

So what has happened is—and we know the media certainly helps the administration deal with this—we don't talk about it. The President might compare our economy to Europe. That is pretty weak. Instead, we define the problem down. Many people may have heard this term, ''the new normal.'' That is a term they are now using in Washington, ''the new normal.'' So what does that mean? It means we can't grow at 3 percent anymore. Look at the chart. We have never hit 3 percent, ever. So let's just define it now. We are not going to shoot for traditional levels of robust American growth like 4 percent. Again, the historic average is 3.7 percent, for 200 years, Democrats and Republicans. We are just going to say: Well, it is a new time in the history of our country—secular stagnation. This is the new normal.

If Americans believe this or accept this or our young people do, we are in big trouble.

So we talk about the new normal or we are silent, like what happened today. No one came out—not one person from the Obama administration explained how we are going to get out of this rut. They are silent because there is no way to sell 0.5 percent GDP growth—to anybody. The American people are smart, and they know they are being sold a clunker. The economy is a clunker right now, and it has been one for almost 8 years.

Again, it is important to understand just how bad this record is, in terms of U.S. history. Let me give a few more statistics. In 85 years, for which the Bureau of Economic Analysis has calculated the annual change in real GDP, there is only one 10-year stretch, and it is right here—the entire Obama administration—when the annual GDP growth never hit 3 percent. Even during the Great Depression, it was only a 4-year stretch. So 10 years, starting with the Bush-era recession. The President talks about the recession, but that was almost 8 years ago. We need to get over that and grow this economy.

During the last 10 years, real annual growth of GDP peaked in 2006 at 2.7 percent. It has never been that high again. In the 25 quarters since the recession ended, real GDP growth has totaled just 14.3 percent. So that is what we grew our economy by—the total growth of our economy. In comparison, other recoveries—again, Democrat, Republican—since 1960, that lasted much more than a year, real GDP growth for the whole economy grew on average of 27 percent. So we have 14 percent Obama, 27 percent over the comparable period for the average—Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan. If real GDP growth in the Obama years had grown at that average, our GDP would be $1.8 trillion higher. Think about that—$1.8 trillion, almost $2 trillion higher. Think about what families could do with that kind of money if we divided that by American families.

In the Reagan recovery, real GDP growth grew a total of 34 percent. The economy expanded by 34 percent. So, again, Obama, 14 percent; average, 27 percent; Reagan, 34 percent. He grew it at an average rate, and the economy grew at about 4.8 percent, so almost 5 percent GDP growth. Look at the comparison here. If the 8 years of President Obama grew at the rate that President Reagan's recovery took place, we would be seeing almost $3 trillion more in terms of the size of our economy, higher annual aftertax income of almost $5,000 per American, and of course millions and millions of more jobs.

The President talks about the unemployment rate going down, but what he doesn't talk about is the reason it is going down is because people are leaving the workforce. We have the highest rate since the mid-1970s of workforce participation. Why? Because we are not growing the economy.

I know I am throwing a lot of numbers out, but what this chart reveals is something much more important than numbers. This chart goes to what the American dream is all about; that is, progress. That is progress. When you are an American, you expect progress. You expect growth. You don't expect this. This is not progress. We are hearing it and we are seeing it.

The American dream was founded on progress. There is opportunity. You have the opportunity to take advantage and move up the ladder.

A recent poll came out and said 13 percent of Americans—13 percent—think their kids are going to have a better economic future than they had. That is the death of the American dream, and this chart explains why. The young people right here, through hard work—only 13 percent of Americans think you are going to have a better future than we had.

That is the essence of the American dream. We all used to think our kids would have a better future. Now 13 percent do. It shows that people are losing faith in the American dream because of these numbers.

It gets worse in terms of the unequal growth. I was talking about 1.36 percent is the average growth rate for the Obama administration. In actuality, about 20 percent of the population in

regions of the country—mostly on the east and west coasts—are doing pretty good. Twenty percent are growing at about 5 percent GDP growth. Eighty percent of America—the rest of the country—is not growing at all—zero growth.

I believe this is a surrender. I believe this body is not talking about it enough. The White House wants to ignore it. It is a surrender of America's greatness. It is a surrender of our future. It is a surrender of our kids' future.

We need to do something about it. If we stay at these levels of growth, issues like infrastructure, issues like military spending, issues like social spending, even social cohesion are going to be much harder to address, but if we grow—back to traditional levels of American growth—the future is going to be bright again like it has been for 200-plus years in the United States.

We don't have to continue down this path. We can make decisions in this body—the right decisions—in order to right this sinking ship of an economy, but the first step is to admit we have a problem. The first step is to recognize we have a big problem.

The President and his Cabinet will not do this. As a matter of fact, there was a recent New York Times article where the President was talking about how this is actually pretty good growth—again, dumbing down expectations, the new normal. Did they say anything today? No. But the American people know we have a huge problem. We see it reflected in polling and our politics with people losing work, stagnant wages, historic levels of failed businesses. More small businesses are failing now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we need to realize that what we are doing here is part of the problem. Look at this chart. We are overregulating every aspect of our economy. What we need to do is start focusing on ways that Washington can be a partner in opportunity, not the center of regulations that focus on small businesses.

Let me conclude by saying, although I have highlighted the challenges we have right now and the lack of focus by the administration, this is something all of us in this body—Democrats and Republicans—should be working on together. Nobody wants 1.36 percent GDP growth. Nobody wants 0.5 percent GDP growth. We need leadership now to tackle these challenges and to get America back on track. We have to grow this economy. We have to continue progress. We must do better for our children and restore the American dream, but first we need a White House that recognizes the problem. Unfortunately, today we saw that is not the case.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

OVERSEEING OUR FINANCIAL MARKETS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, 8 years ago, we suffered through the worst financial crisis in generations. Millions of people lost their homes, their jobs, and their savings. Although the economy has improved under President Obama's leadership, many of those families are still struggling to recover today.

Terrible subprime mortgages were at the heart of this crisis, but Wall Street invented other new financial devices, including exotic derivatives, that piled risks on top of risks in the financial market. The subprime mortgages were like hand grenades, but the derivatives packed them together and magnified the risks, turning them into giant bombs that blew up parts of the economy. The Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission concluded that derivatives ''contributed significantly'' to the crisis, ''amplifying'' losses many times over and exposing institutions and investors throughout the system.

Do you remember the billions and billions of taxpayer dollars that Congress shoveled into AIG as part of the bailout? That was to cover the massive losses from risky derivatives that went south.

In response to the crisis and the bailout, Congress dedicated an entire title of the Dodd-Frank Act to the regulation of derivatives. Congress tried to make the derivatives market more transparent so that both investors and regulators could have at least a fighting chance to identify the risks and to address them. Congress also tried to reduce the risk to taxpayers by requiring banks to raise more capital as they increased their derivatives exposure and by forcing banks to push out that derivatives exposure from their depository banks—the parts that actually hold checking and savings accounts—and to put them into another entity that doesn't have access to taxpayer-backed insurance.

Over the past few years, the Dodd-Frank approach to derivatives has started to unravel. At the end of 2014, the swaps pushout was repealed. How? Because lobbyists for Citibank literally wrote the amendment and had a friendly Congressman slip it into the end-of-the-year spending bill—a bill that had to pass or the government would shut down. With the help of other big banks, including personal phone calls from the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, Jamie Dimon, to his personal friends in Congress, the swaps repeal got rammed through Congress.

How big was the hole that this Wall Street amendment blew in Dodd-Frank? Well, Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS and I spent a year looking into it, and here's the takeaway: The FDIC now estimates that the repeal allows a few big banks to put taxpayers on the hook for risky swaps to the tune of nearly $10 trillion. And who is gobbling down most of this $10 trillion risk? Three huge banks—Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase, and Bank of America—three banks, nearly $10 trillion of risk.

These banks will happily suck down the profits when their high-stakes bets work out, and they will just as happily turn to the taxpayers to bail them out if there is a problem—all this because the Wall Street lobbyists persuaded Congress to do just one little favor for them.

Meanwhile, last year, the Commodities Futures Trading Commission finally issued a rule that it was required to write under Dodd-Frank. The rule was about margin, the amount of money that financial institutions have to put up when they enter into a derivative contract. Essentially, the CFTC rule was about making sure that financial institutions had enough money to pay off their derivative bets if they bet wrong. It is the kind of money that keeps the taxpayers from needing to bail them out.

The CFTC rule was exceedingly weak, far weaker than the one they had initially proposed. The changes in the rule came after months of intense lobbying from giant banks that were worried that a stronger margin rule might cut into their profits. As CFTC Commissioner Sharon Bowen wrote in her dissent to the rule:

> This action today seems to be a return to blindly trusting in large financial institutions' ability and willpower to manage their risks adequately. Are we really willing to make that bet again?

Well, I know that I am not, and that is why I think the recent Republican bill to weaken the CFTC is so dangerous. Rather than strengthening the agency and plugging the gaps in Dodd-Frank that have emerged in the last few years, the bill goes in the opposite direction, weakening or delaying other Dodd-Frank requirements and starving the agency of the resources it needs to oversee a $500 trillion derivatives market.

I applaud Senator STABENOW, the ranking Democratic member on the Agriculture Committee, for leading the unanimous Democratic opposition to the bill in Committee. Democrats should not be supporting a bill that weakens financial rules, period.

We need strong rules and strong Federal agencies to oversee our financial markets. We learned that lesson the hard way in 2008. While some lobbyists and their friends here in Washington may be trying to forget that lesson, I know that millions of American families remember it all too well, and they will be watching Congress to see who stands on their side and who stands on the side of the big banks.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield my time.

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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today as a Senator and, as the Presiding Officer is, a doctor. I want to talk about a disease called Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Earlier today Senator RUBIO was on the floor talking about the disease, and I know earlier today Senator WICKER was on the floor talking about the disease. It is a topic that is, as an orthopedic surgeon, very personal to me.

I was introduced to Duchenne more than 30 years ago and, as an orthopedic surgery resident, worked at a muscle disease clinic with young people with muscle disease. One of those muscle diseases is called Duchenne. It is a disease that affects young boys. I met patients and I met their families in the fight against this disease. The experience has left a lasting lifelong impression on me, and it is something I continue to work with today.

I think the reasons we have gone into medicine are to help people and to make a contribution. One of the reasons I chose orthopedic surgery was that I really enjoyed seeing the relief—the care that I gave could help people, causing relief of their symptoms, relief of their pain, relief of problems they were living with from day to day. It is extremely rewarding to be able to work with a patient and tell that patient the surgery you performed was successful, and they are going to get better. They are going to get back to normal.

As a doctor, I was able to see patients go on to graduate from college, get married, have children of their own. When I was overseas visiting our troops, I met a young man, a commander—a pretty big guy—and he told me I had taken care of his broken leg. I looked at him and didn't really recognize him. I said: When was that? And he said: I was only 8 at the time.

We take care of patients and, as we do, we see people through their lives, and it is encouraging to see them go on and strive and get stronger and bigger and more productive. But for patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, that kind of treatment doesn't exist. It doesn't exist today with all the breakthroughs and research.

When I saw patients in the muscle disease clinic who suffered from this condition, I knew the day that I saw them was going to be their best day from there going forward. Many of them had brothers. It is a disease that affects young men. It is a disease that may be coming in their family to children who had not yet been born. In some families there were several brothers in the line who had the disease. As one was diagnosed, then another younger brother was diagnosed a couple of years later with the same disease because this does tend to run in families.

As a doctor, one wants to see somebody get better and stronger every day. Parents want to see their own child going from crawling to walking to running, getting stronger and bigger every day, but patients and families who live with this disease every day know too well the unrelenting force of Duchenne muscular dystrophy. What it does is cause degeneration of muscles and weakness.

The vast majority of people with this disease are boys, and they are usually diagnosed between the ages of 3 and 5. Typically, parents start to notice their son isn't meeting all of the developmental milestones they might expect. He might be a late walker, or he may appear less coordinated than other children his age. Most parents aren't worried; they are just cautious. They may mention it to the pediatrician, and the doctor may run a test or two. Once the diagnosis of Duchenne muscular dystrophy is made, patients pretty quickly and parents, specifically, very quickly find out that their son doesn't just have a developmental delay; they learn their son is typically going to lose the ability to walk by the time he is a teenager, graduate to a wheelchair, which then can make that young man prone to conditions like scoliosis, a curvature of the spine often requiring surgery to correct it. As the muscles continue to deteriorate—as they always do with Duchenne—that young man will lose lung function, which puts him at a higher risk of infection, pneumonia. Eventually, he will have to use a machine to breathe, to clear his lungs. The muscle deterioration doesn't just occur to the skeletal muscles—the muscles of the arms and legs—but also can occur to the heart, which is itself a muscle.

When a young man with Duchenne muscular dystrophy catches a cold, it can be life threatening. Even when the patients get the best medical care—and so many of them do get the best medical care—they usually lose their fight against Duchenne muscular dystrophy by the time they are in their 20s. That is the devastating reality of this disease, and we cannot allow it to continue.

Because of my experience with these patients, I have been working for years to actually help raise money for awareness for muscle disease and treatment for the disease. I served as a local host in Wyoming for the Muscular Dystrophy Association's annual Labor Day telethon.

Every year, I was amazed at the dedication and the generosity of people around the country who would call in pledges to pledge centers at the 200 so-called ''love networks'' in Casper, WY. People would call in. We would always raise over $100,000. People were very committed to finding a cure for muscle disease and to sending young people with the disease to summer camp, where they found a level of freedom and friendship that they did not often find throughout the rest of the year. It was a great time for the young people with the disease. It gave their parents a rest as well.

I think many of us in this body remember Jerry Lewis hosting the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon, as it was called, for more than 40 years. He would always end the telethon by signing a song. The song was ''You'll Never Walk Alone.'' So I come to the floor today to make sure that these patients and these families know that today they are not alone. Congress is listening. We heard from Senator RUBIO earlier today and we heard from Senator WICKER. Those families and those patients know how critically important it is, and we know how critically important it is that we find a cure for this rare disease known as Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

In 2012, Congress passed the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act. One of the key parts of this law gives the FDA more flexibility to approve treatments that have the potential to help people with rare diseases. It also allows the FDA to do followup studies to confirm the clinical benefits of the treatment.

Well, we want to give people real hope. It is not good to give people false hope. We are interested in giving patients and giving families a fighting chance. I believe the FDA needs to use the tools that Congress has given them so patients can come across and get access to potentially lifesaving drugs. So a couple of weeks ago I signed a letter that was written by Senators Wicker and Klobuchar—a bipartisan letter. It called on the FDA to take full advantage of this accelerated approval authority.

So we also asked the FDA to ensure that the prospective of patients is fully considered in this review process, when it comes down to the regulations. More than 20 Senators signed this letter because we know how important this issue is to patients as well as to their families.

Last Friday the Wall Street Journal ran an editorial entitled: ''The FDA vs. Austin Leclaire.'' This article talked about a young man named Austin Leclaire, 17, who has Duchenne muscular dystrophy, and so does his younger brother Max. As we talked, I mentioned that this runs in families. Sometimes, there is the diagnosis of a son in a family in which there is a younger son who has not yet been diagnosed but likely will have the disease.

Well, back in 2011, Max was able to get an experimental drug to treat his disease. Now, Austin was not eligible to get the same drug. Remember, Austin is the older brother. So today Max is 14 and he is still able to walk. He can

still play sports, and he can still dress himself.

For most of us who have had healthy children, these are the things that people take for granted. So for a family where one of their sons has Duchenne, this kind of small victory can seem like a miracle. I can't even imagine how hard it must be when a mother has two or three children—two or three sons—with this disease, and especially when one of her children can get access to an experimental drug and the other cannot.

The family looks at it. One son is being helped, and the other is not being helped. They can see the difference in their sons. So how would any of us here in the Senate react if we were in that same situation? How much heartbreak should one family have to bear? Those are the challenges for families who live with muscle disease every day.

Well, the FDA, I believe, needs to work with patients like Austin and Max. We all know that this agency needs to make sure that treatments are safe and effective. That is not a question. We also know that people at the FDA are caring and careful professionals. The practice of medicine relies on hard science and on following data to understand and to treat illnesses.

As a doctor, I know that the practice of medicine requires an equal measure of compassion. I think the FDA needs to take into account the unique needs of this patient population. We talk about double-blind studies, where you give one patient the real treatment and one patient something else, a sugar pill, something else that is not really the real treatment, the real medication.

To really evaluate the impact of these medications, sometimes it involves doing muscle biopsies and putting people though painful tests. I think it is hard for a family living with a child with muscle disease to say: Well, we are going to participate in the experiment. We don't know. It is a 50–50 chance if our child is even going to get the real thing. But we still put them through all of these tests that can be painful, as they take muscle biopsies.

I think it is unrealistic to ask a family to make that decision. I think we need to make sure that the FDA—and the FDA needs to make sure, in their compassion—doesn't lose sight of these kids. These young people really don't have a moment to lose in terms of potential treatments. I think the FDA needs to hear the calls of patients and to give these young people, living with a devastating disease, a chance to beat Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

VOTE-BY-MAIL

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to warn of a gathering threat to American's most fundamental constitutional right; that is, the right to vote. Fifty-one years ago, President Johnson urged the Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act. In the face of implacable opposition from Southern States, President Johnson laid out the stakes. He said:

> Every American must have an equal right to vote. There is no excuse which can excuse the denial of that right. There is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to ensure that right.

Sadly, half a century after that law began to remove the most offensive obstacles to voting, Americans now face new barriers to exercising their fundamental right to vote. Across our land, there are stories of long lines, inexplicable purges of voter rolls, and new requirements that make it still harder for our people to vote. There is absolutely no excuse for accepting this sorry state of affairs.

There is no excuse for citizens in Arizona to wait 5 hours to cast their ballot. There is no excuse for citizens in Rhode Island to find two out of every three polling places have closed. There is no excuse whatsoever for poor communities and minority communities across America to see their polling places shuttered.

Seniors and disabled Americans should not have to wait in long lines or struggle to reach polling places in America. Working parents should not have to choose between going to work and going to vote. Voting should not be a test of endurance. It should not be a Kafkaesque experience in defeating bureaucracy and wading through redtape. Increasingly, too many voters show up at the polls on election day, only to find that their name—somehow, magically—has gone missing from the voter rolls or their ID does not meet some new, even more burdensome, even more restrictive requirement.

There is no excuse for our government to turn away citizens and to say their vote does not count because of a clerical error or an unjust technicality. These grossly unfair obstacles have sprouted like weeds across our country ever since the Supreme Court overturned large portions of the Voting Rights Act in 2013. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, just this year, 17 States have passed new laws or rules to make it harder for their citizens to vote.

Let me repeat that. Seventeen States in America, just this year, have passed new laws, new rules, and new hurdles for our people who want to vote. Thankfully, there is a solution. My home State of Oregon has led the country in making voting more accessible. In Oregon, every voter receives a ballot 2 or 3 weeks before election day. Ballots should be arriving in mailboxes across the State over the next few days. Every Oregonian has ample time to research candidates and issues.

Rather than waiting in long lines, Oregonians can mail their ballot back or drop it off at ballot collection sites, many of which are open 24/7. Nobody has to take time off from work just to exercise his or her constitutional right.

So let me repeat. In our State, we have made this work. Every voter gets a ballot 2 or 3 weeks before an election date. Now, vote-by-mail is not going to stop every State legislature in America from devising new ways to suppress voter turnout. Certainly, some State officials in our country have worked very hard to dream up new ways to limit the franchise.

But here is why the Oregon antidote is so important. If there is a problem, our State gives voters more time to fight back. When Americans have 2 or 3 weeks to vote, they will have more time to challenge registration problems. There is more time for citizens to defend their rights.

Oregon has been voting by mail since I was first elected to the Senate in 1996, and we went to all vote-by-mail in 2000. Since then, we have had consistently higher voter turnout rates than other parts of the country. We have consistently had voter turnout rates that are among the highest in the Nation.

Oregon voting rates are especially high among young people and in midterm elections. As an added benefit—this should appeal to all Senators—studies have shown that it saves money, to boot. So you have a system that voters like, gives them more time to reflect, is more efficient, and saves money, to boot. That is a pretty appealing trifecta, it seems to me, for democracy. So my proposition today is that the rest of the country ought to follow Oregon's lead, and all Americans, from one end of the country to another, ought to have the chance to vote by mail.

To me, this just is common sense. In fact, over the years, there were questions about who benefited from vote-by-mail? In fact, Oregonians put it on the ballot, because they said that everybody benefits from it. There was support all across the political spectrum. So today, I rolled out a new proposal for a national vote-by-mail. It is built on the Oregon system. The plan is simple. Every voter in a Federal election will receive a ballot in the mail.

The Federal Government, through the Postal Service, would assist States with the cost of mailing ballots to registered voters. States can keep their current polling practices if they wish. But those States that choose a full vote-by-mail system are going to see their election costs drop and drop significantly. My hope is that this proposal ignites a new campaign across the country to make it easier, not harder, for Americans to vote.

Vote-by-mail is a first step in fighting back against those who would disenfranchise their fellow citizens to gain a political edge.

For instance, in my view it also ought to be easier for Americans to register to vote. Again, my home State leads the way. Since January, every eligible voter is automatically registered to vote, eliminating extra trips to the

motor vehicles department or the county clerk's office. In my view our Governor, Gov. Kate Brown, deserves enormous credit for leading the effort to turn this particular idea, this particular reform, into law.

I know many of my colleagues and many voters are cynical about the chances of passing real reforms in this partisan day and age. My view is, voting rights are too important to abandon the field to special interests who would manipulate our government. That is why I mentioned that in Oregon there was some initial debate with respect to who might benefit, who might get a little bit of a partisan edge on the other side, and Oregon voters said: Nothing doing. We all think this is in our interests, making it easier to vote, making it easier to correct an error, and cheaper than the alternatives.

This afternoon I urge my colleagues and voters to take advantage of this opportunity to promote real reform, reform where we have hard evidence that shows it actually works, to make sure every citizen in America who wants to vote has that opportunity. Oregon once again paves the way to making sure there are real solutions to an enormous challenge.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

SENTENCING REFORM AND CORRECTIONS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, after many months of discussion and debate, today we announced a bipartisan piece of legislation to reform our criminal justice system.

I have been in the Senate long enough to realize that even the best ideas that don't have bipartisan support go nowhere. The good news is, this is an issue that enjoys broad bipartisan support and actually represents the marriage of two distinct parts. The more I think about it, the more it represents a continuum in terms of the way we punish people who violate our criminal laws and how we treat them when they are in prison and how we prepare them—or not—for a life of reentry into civil society.

Even in the polarized political environment that our country represents today, it is an example of an opportunity to demonstrate that when enough people identify a problem and work together, we can actually come up with viable solutions.

In a previous life, I served 13 years as a State district court judge and then as attorney general. I have had an opportunity to witness some of the strengths and weaknesses of our justice system firsthand. Though we made some significant progress in reducing crime across the country—by the way, that ought to be the litmus test, the crime rate. If the crime rate is going down, to me, it indicates we are doing something right. If the crime rate goes up, that is pretty much a litmus test that we are doing something wrong.

The truth is, our criminal justice system has been plagued with inefficiencies, overcrowding, and failures that are ultimately detrimental to public safety. We spend too much of our criminal justice resources locking up low-level, nonviolent offenders and not enough targeting the most dangerous and violent criminals. The good news is, a number of States, including Texas, have seen the need and have implemented statewide criminal justice reforms with positive results.

As I said earlier, the longer I am here, the more things occur to me about how we do business, but the idea that somehow we can initiate reforms at the national level for 320 million people and then cram them down on a big and diverse country like the United States is pretty ludicrous.

Actually, the Federal Government is rarely competent to do that sort of thing. We saw this with the health care reforms, which have resulted in prices actually going up and most people dissatisfied with the health care reforms.

If we just tried things out at the local level, and if they were successful, then scale them up, I think we would have a much better chance for success. That is exactly what has happened in the criminal justice area.

I know most people think about Texas as a State tough on crime, and that is true, but in the middle of the first decade of this millennium, we saw the need to deal with overcrowding. We saw high recidivism or repeat offenders, and we were facing a major budget shortfall. In other words, we tried to keep building prisons to build our way out of the problem.

Instead of just spending more money to build more prisons and hoping the problems would go away, the major problem we overlooked before was—which we finally realized—that people in prison at some point will mostly get out of prison. The question is, Do they go back into prison after committing other crimes or can we help those who are willing to accept the help, turn their lives around, and become productive members of society?

We opted for a different approach. We traded in our construction plans for plans to help lower-risk offenders turn their lives around and become productive members of society. As I said, that is because most offenders will one day get out of prison.

Today Texas has improved and increased programs designed to help men and women behind bars take responsibility for their crimes and then prepare to reenter society as productive, law-abiding members of the community. I am not naive enough to say this is something we are going to be able to do for 100 percent of the people behind bars. That is just not true. I wish the world was the kind of place where once people made mistakes and ended up behind bars, they could transform their lives universally and then enter productive society. It is not true, but there are many who want to who need our help and can benefit from some of these programs.

This includes training that could impact a prisoner's life, somebody with a drug problem, somebody with a mental illness, or somebody who has been drinking, exacerbating their problems. Those sorts of issues can benefit from treatment and from rehabilitation.

Those who are educationally inadequately prepared to enter the workforce, we can help them through work programs and job training. Many of these programs have allowed local communities to get involved as well, by encouraging partnerships in Texas between prisons and faith-based organizations and people who believe in radical transformation of people's lives through their faith. They can focus on helping those prisoners who are willing and wanting to turn their lives around get the training and life skills they need in order to succeed.

I will never forget my visit just a few months back to the H.H. Coffield Unit maximum security prison in East Texas, where I saw firsthand how important some of these types of programs are. I went to one section of the prison and was introduced to the shop instructor. He told me some of the inmates in his shop class came to him unable to read a simple tape measure.

I think it is shocking. It was to me. I think it is shocking to most people that anybody can reach adulthood unable to do something so basic as to read a tape measure, but yet that was an example of the types of people who were in that prison.

It is a remarkable example of how much opportunity there is through education to actually help: drug-alcohol treatment, mental health treatment, and to prepare people to reenter civil society.

I am pleased Texas—in addition to our well-earned reputation for being tough on crime—is now known as being smart on crime and a good example what we could do nationally.

We are not the only State. Other States have done things, too, but the results in Texas are remarkable. Between 2007 and 2012, our overall rate of incarceration fell by 9.4 percent. The crime rate dropped and—as I have said—that is the gold standard. It is not the rate of incarceration. It is not how many people are in prison. It is what is happening to the crime rate. Our crime rate dropped and, not insignificantly, we saved more than $2 billion of the taxpayer money. We were able to physically close three prison facilities. That is the first time that has ever happened in our State.

We are not the only ones. For example, Georgia reduced its crime rate by more than 10 percent with similar programs. South Carolina and Ohio reduced their crime rate by 14 percent. North Carolina and Texas have both reduced their crime rates by more than 20 percent.

These reforms make our communities safer, which again is the first objective of criminal justice reform, it is the second objective of criminal justice reform, and it is the third objective of criminal justice reform. Does it make our community safer? The answer, from the evidence, is yes.

I think there is no question but that we should consider some of these reforms at the Federal level. Let's take State successes and scale them up so the rest of the country can benefit where they are not otherwise already doing this and where we can do this in the Federal prison system and not just in the State system.

That is where the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act comes in. This bill includes legislation that I introduced last year that takes this Texas model and builds on it to help restore an important part of our criminal justice system that is too often forgotten; that is, rehabilitation.

When I went to law school more years ago than I wish to admit, we were told that the purpose of criminal law was punishment and deterrence, to deter others from committing similar acts. The third was we were told it was rehabilitation. We were going to help people change their lives if they made a mistake. Instead, over time our prisons have become warehouses where we just warehouse people and don't do enough to try to rehabilitate people, those who are willing to take the opportunity to deal with their problems in a constructive sort of way and turn their lives around.

I have introduced legislation, along with Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island. As anybody who follows the Senate knows, we agree on very little, but we agree on this. We were both former attorneys general. He was a former U.S. attorney, and he has seen a similar experience in his State.

So we introduced this portion of the legislation to encourage programs that would help inmates learn valuable skills they can transfer back home to their communities and help them turn from a life of crime. It is important to note that not only does reduced recidivism impact an individual life—which is reason enough to do what we can to help—but it also helps that individual's family because the collateral damage from somebody making a mistake and ending up in prison does not stop with them. It stops with their families, including their children, and their whole community, but it also makes financial sense too.

The Justice Department spends around 30 percent of its budget detaining Federal inmates. By reinvesting more of this money in recidivism reduction programs instead of building more Federal prisons, we have an opportunity to save tax dollars and plow more of the money back where it can have the best impact. Inmates can be rehabilitated, neighborhoods can be made safer, and tax dollars can be better put to use.

We have also made other changes in the legislation that represent the give-and-take that usually happens in the Senate. Legislating is a consensus-building process, and that is a good thing. Initially, when the corrections act was introduced, there was a separate piece of legislation called the Smarter Sentencing Act, which focused on, as the name would suggest, sentencing with a goal to reduce some of the mandatory minimum sentences which were a part of the 1990s effort to get tougher on crime. This is where we have actually benefited a lot from the input from those who initially were unpersuaded about the merits of that part of the legislation.

For example, we have categorically taken out, removed, any benefit of the Smarter Sentencing Act provisions for somebody who has committed a serious crime, as defined by Federal law. So somebody who is a violent offender, somebody who has committed a serious crime, cannot benefit from the Smarter Sentencing Act.

There is an area where I am afraid there is some misunderstanding by some folks, and some people are actively spreading disinformation, suggesting that as a result of the Smarter Sentencing Act provisions, there is a get-out-of-jail-free card; that we are automatically going to come in and cut prison sentences for people to get out on the street. That is just not true. They need to take another look at the legislation.

Under some circumstances, and only if you are a low-level, nonviolent offender, you can ask the court—the court in which you were actually convicted and before the judge who actually dispensed the sentence and before the prosecutor who actually put you in prison—for a reduction retroactively of long-term mandatory minimum sentences. For example, under some circumstances, back in the days of three strikes and you are out, you could get a life sentence for three relatively minor offenses. Now, where appropriate, the judge could say: Well, we are going to reduce that to 25 years. That is still a long time, particularly if you are talking about three relatively minor offenses. There is one other example where a 20-year mandatory minimum sentence could be reduced to 15 years. So if you haven't served 15 years, you are certainly not going to get out of prison.

But the whole point is that this is a negotiated piece of legislation for which we tried to garner as much support as we could, and I am pleased to announce today that we have five new cosponsors of this legislation. I believe there are now 37 Senators on a bipartisan basis who support this legislation as cosponsors.

Earlier this week, we got a very important endorsement from an organization for which I have tremendous respect. This is the largest organization of prosecutors in America. It is the National District Attorneys Association. They represent about 1,500 district attorneys and 30,000 assistant district attorneys across the country. They have endorsed this legislation.

Yesterday, at the Republican lunch and conference, we had people such as former Attorney General Michael Mukasey, who served 20 years on the Federal bench in New York, talk about how he thought this was a well-balanced and worthwhile piece of legislation.

The bottom line is that we need to make sure that violent offenders and hardened criminals stay in prison and away from our communities. I am talking about the people who will not take advantage of the opportunity to turn their lives around, the people who must be separated from society because they have made a decision to pursue a life of crime.

At the same time, while we have focused on the hardened criminals and the most violent, we have to address our expanding prison system that too often perpetuates a life of crime. When I was a younger lawyer, I was told that often our prison system is an organization of higher education in crime because, of course, that is who is there—people who have committed crimes. And people who have committed rather low-level, nonviolent offenses, particularly when they are housed with people who have chosen a more violent life of crime, can suffer terrible detrimental impacts.

The idea is to focus on the hardened criminals, the violent criminals, and take a look at the low-level, nonviolent offenders and see if some will take advantage of the opportunity to turn their lives around. Local communities in conservative States—red States such as Texas, Georgia, and North Carolina—have already proven it is possible to do both. After months of discussion, I am confident we can bring this success to the rest of the country with this legislation.

Like every piece of legislation, though, we know there is an arduous path forward. While this bill was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, it still needs to come to the floor of the Senate, where all 100 Senators will have an opportunity to help improve that product. And then there is the House of Representatives. Earlier today, Senator GRASSLEY, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I met with Congressman BOB GOODLATTE, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, about our ideas together and how we can move this legislation forward. And I know the President is anxious to sign a criminal justice reform bill. This could actually be a good bipartisan accomplishment of the 114th Congress.

I appreciate the bipartisan effort on all sides to work constructively toward a bill that can win broad bipartisan support. For those who don't like parts of the bill, bring your ideas to us. That is the way this process is supposed to work. Let's make it better. Let's build bipartisan support and consensus.

Let me just say in closing that I particularly want to thank the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Chairman GRASSLEY, for his stewardship of this legislation through the process. As an experienced Member of the Senate, somebody who has been at this a while, he knows better than most how to shepherd legislation—particularly potentially controversial legislation—through this process. He has been masterful in bringing us this far.

I think we owe it to our constituents and to the country to take the lessons we have learned at the State and local level and bring those to benefit the rest of the country. Let's make our criminal justice system, as the name suggests, more just and at the same time more effective. And let's save taxpayers a buck or two in the process.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

CENTRAL STATES PENSION FUND

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, across the United States, hundreds of thousands of workers and retirees are scared. They are scared for the future, they are scared for their families, and they are scared for themselves. These workers and retirees did everything right. They played by the rules. They worked for years, if not decades, often in labor-intensive jobs, and they responsibly planned for the future by putting money into their pensions, only to have their retirement security ripped away.

This is a story happening across North Dakota and across America. Harsh and senseless proposed cuts to Central States Pension Fund—a multiemployer pension fund—could rip away the retirement of workers and retirees in the trucking, UPS package and delivery, and grocery supply industries. These cuts could impact more than 2,000 North Dakota families and 400,000 retirees across the country who could see their pensions slashed up to 60 percent. Many of these workers have been forced to retire because of decades of lifting packages over 100 pounds every day. These jobs took hard tolls on their bodies, but they were able to earn a living, support their families, and put food on the table each night. They knew that because they were saving for retirement through their pensions, they would be taken care of in later years, they would be able to enjoy their later years hunting and fishing with their grandchildren, and they would be able to enjoy their later years by taking care of their family and their loved ones. Unfortunately, that security is evaporating.

I recently met with Teamsters and union workers and retirees in Bismark and Fargo. Quite honestly, their stories were heartbreaking. They couldn't understand how, if they did everything right, their retirement could be taken away from them. They can't live in a country that just enables these workers and retirees to be left behind. They can't understand who was fighting for them.

They and we must stand up and say: This is wrong. We must stand up for hard work, and we must protect their pensions and make sure all North Dakotans have a secure retirement.

I want to tell just a few of their stories today. I will start with Dennis Gainsforth from Jamestown. He worked for UPS for 31 years. He needs surgery on one of his knees because of working decades as a night mechanic. Dennis is also helping financially take care of his son, who had a stroke, and his wife, who needs back surgery. Under the proposed cuts, his pension would be slashed by 50 percent. As a result, Dennis, who is 72 years old, is now back at work driving a public bus in Jamestown.

Tina Kramer from Mandan was a member of the Teamsters. She worked as a secretary for the local union for 25 years, throughout which time she earned a pension. Her husband was a member of the steelworkers union and worked for Bobcat for about 30 years as a forklift driver. He also earned a pension. Several years ago, both of them retired, and soon after, Tina's husband suddenly passed away. Tina lost her husband's pension and now has to rely solely on her pension. Under these proposed cuts, Tina's pension would be cut by almost 60 percent. Tina has just a little bit of savings, which she has already had to dip into every month to pay her bills and for groceries and to pay her property taxes. Under the proposed pension cuts, it could only get worse for Tina.

Bob Berg, from just north of Fargo, worked at UPS for over 30 years delivering packages, many of which could weigh up to 150 pounds. Because of the hard labor of his job, he had surgery on both knees, his hands, five hernia operations, and back problems, forcing him into early retirement. Now his medical bills are skyrocketing. He receives $2,200 a month under the pension plan, but with the cuts, he would receive just $1,150, which is a 50-percent reduction.

Mark Rothschiller from Mandan worked as a UPS driver for 28 years delivering packages to rural communities in North Dakota. Because of the intensity of his job, he had five back surgeries and two rotator cuff surgeries. After the last surgery, Mark's doctor told him to stop working or he might lose his ability to walk. He now walks with a cane. He relies on his pension—the pension that he earned—to help pay his medical bills. Under the proposed cuts, Mark's pension would be cut by more than 50 percent.

You hear these stories about men and women who worked hard all their lives and who did the right thing. They bargained for a pension because they knew the work they did was not work you could do your entire life, and they knew they wanted time in retirement to enjoy their golden years. Yet, today, the benefit they earned and that security is threatened.

I had a man approach me after one of the meetings where I asked people to tell me what the impacts were from the cuts, and many were able to give public testimonials. This man came up to me afterward, and I won't use his name because quite privately he wanted to tell me that he was going to lose his house, that he was going to lose all the security he had in the world, and that he was a grandfather helping to take care of his grandchildren because his daughter couldn't afford daycare.

These pension cuts don't affect just the worker, they affect the worker's family, they affect the extended family, and, quite honestly, they affect our communities. But more than that, they affect our general sense of security, our general sense that you ought to be able to rely on the goodness of your hard work and on the rewards of your hard work. Today, all of that is being threatened.

Some might say: Well, that is just the way it is. Pension funds are in trouble.

I want everyone to remember that many of these workers were basically prevented from managing their pension fund. In fact, the Federal Government took it away, took that pension fund away and gave it to private investment firms that squandered and wasted the principal. These workers wonder why in the world, in a country where we would bail out Wall Street bankers who made bad decisions, they never get listened to.

We cannot let this happen. I have been pressing Treasury Secretary Lew about this issue, and I recently met with Ken Feinberg, the Treasury official overseeing the reconstruction of this pension fund. We have to reinforce this point. We had a good conversation, and I hope the Treasury Department does the right thing by rejecting this devastating proposal and seeking a fairer option. We can and must find a solution that doesn't jeopardize retirement security or present long-term insolvency issues to the Central States Pension Fund.

This deal has threatened the livelihood of so many of my fellow North Dakotans, people who work hard for a living, the kind of people we brag about on floor of the Senate, whom we are here to represent—the hard-working, good Americas who build our country. Yet when this happens, they wonder who is listening to them. Who do we really represent here?

This deal has to be rejected. We have to create an opportunity that enables all North Dakotan and American families to have the secure retirement they have earned. Dennis, Tina, Bob, Mark, and so many other North Dakotans whom I have met deserve as much. They deserve the same kind of consideration and interest that we gave to AIG and all of the organizations we bailed out during the 2008 crisis at a time when we saw record bonuses for Wall Street executives. We wonder all the time why people are mad. We don't

need to look any further than this example to know that sometimes the priorities are just plain wrong.

I urge all of my colleagues to become aware of this problem, to become invested in this problem, and to work with us to solve this problem. The first and most significant and important step we can take is to urge the Department of Treasury to reject the current plan and take this back to the drawing board.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF CONGRESS

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, of the words the American people frequently use to describe Congress today—at least one of the words that is appropriate to repeat on the Senate floor—one of the most common and accurate is ''unaccountable.''

Year after year, hard-working men and women across this great country bristle under dysfunctional, costly, and burdensome laws made right here in Washington, DC, and day after day, many of them do what Americans have always done when faced with an out-of-touch government. They contact their elected lawmakers to voice their concerns about those laws and to push for change of those laws and the process by which they are made.

Ask anyone who has ever called, written, or emailed their Member of Congress what happens next. It is consistent. It is predictable. Blame is shifted; fingers are pointed; scapegoats of every variety imaginable are brought forth to defend those who are charged with making the laws from the consequences of their own handiwork. This is the very definition of unaccountability, and it pervades the culture of Washington, DC, because Congress has allowed it to infect our laws and our institutions—the very institutions by which those laws are made.

Many Americans assume that they are being lied to when their elected lawmakers blame someone else for the laws that are raising the cost of living, eating away at their paychecks, and generally making it harder for individual Americans and families to realize the American dream. But the truth is actually even more troubling than that. Most of the items on the Federal Government's interminable list of do's and don'ts governing nearly every activity of human life are not in fact written, debated, discussed, and passed by Congress; rather, they are imposed unilaterally by unelected bureaucrats in one of the executive branch's administrative agencies. This is true even for what are called major rules, which are regulations that cost the American people more than $100 million each year in compliance costs.

For instance, look at the Department of Energy, whose appropriations we are currently considering. In a single year, 2015, the costs of the regulations issued by the Department of Energy exceeded $15 billion—$15 billion. In 1 year, it cost the American people $15 billion to comply with the regulations issued by this single bureaucratic agency—by this single Federal Department, the U.S. Department of Energy.

Even if we were to agree with every cent of that very onerous regulatory burden, we should all be able to recognize the danger of allowing one group of people, consisting of individuals who never have had to stand for election, to squeeze $15 billion out of the pocketbooks of the American people. That is why I have submitted this amendment, No. 3856, which would restrict the Department of Energy from spending any funds to implement or enforce regulations whose compliance costs exceed $100 million, unless specifically approved by Congress.

Unfortunately, regrettably, tragically, this amendment was blocked from consideration by one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for reasons that appear to be completely unrelated to the merits of this amendment.

Nevertheless, I would like to take a moment to explain how my amendment works. This amendment would have provided immediate, much needed financial relief to the budgets of hard-working families and businesses all across the country. It would protect them from the costs of two major rules recently proposed by the Department of Energy—rules that impose new energy-efficiency standards on ceiling fans and commercial packaged boilers.

Just like the Department of Energy's ban on incandescent light bulbs, under these rules, Americans would no longer be able to buy ceiling fans or commercial boilers that do not adhere to the government's strict new standards. Proponents of the rules think this is a good thing. As former Energy Secretary Steven Chu said about the light bulb ban back in 2011, ''We are taking away a choice that continues to let people waste their own money.''

This government-knows-best approach to regulation is not only arrogant—it is not only off-puttingly paternalistic—it is detached from the economic realities of American life today. Most Americans may buy less energy-efficient ceiling fans than most Washington bureaucrats, not because they are less intelligent or less concerned about saving energy or less concerned about protecting the environment but because it is what they can afford. The additional costs of these energy-efficiency standards are not insignificant. In fact, it is estimated that these two rules would cost American families and businesses more than $3 billion.

Today, the Department of Energy has the power to impose these rules on the public, and there is very little Congress can do about it. But under my amendment, the two rules would not go into effect unless and until Congress voted to approve them—unless and until Congress affirmatively enacted them into law and allowed them to be signed into law by the President. This simple, commonsense reform is modeled on the REINS Act, a bill that requires congressional approval for all major rules issued by all executive agencies across the entire Federal Government.

Last July, the House of Representatives passed the REINS Act by a strong vote of 243 to 165, and it currently has 37 cosponsors in the Senate. Support for the legislation is growing because it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the moral and material problems of hiding the regulatory process in the nameless, faceless bureaucracy. Everyone here knows the regulatory burden in America has become untenable. Every single day, each of us hears from our constituents about how stifling government regulations have become.

The data tell the same story. Just today we saw that the first quarter of 2016 was the third in a row in which private domestic investment has shrunk. This is disappointing, but it is not surprising.

According to a recent study by the Mercatus Center, in 2012, ''the economy was $4 trillion smaller than it would have been in the absence of regulatory growth since 1980.'' That works out to about $13,000 of lost earnings for every man, woman, and child in America.

Some of my colleagues may think the costs of our regulatory system are defensible. I certainly don't. But I know there are different opinions out there, and that is exactly the point of the REINS Act. That is exactly the point of this amendment—this amendment which has been improperly blocked.

Under the broken status quo, Members of Congress can claim innocence—and they regularly do—when an executive agency imposes a costly and controversial regulations on the country. In fact, many Members of Congress not only claim innocence, but they claim almost victim status. They behave almost as if we were a victim, as if we were someone being acted upon. We don't even have to debate it. It just kicks into law by itself. It is self-executing. This may be convenient for those of us in Washington, but it is fundamentally and unacceptably unfair to the American people. We don't make the law this way in this country, but that is now how our system is set up. It is time that we change it.

If Congress is ever going to win back the trust of the American people, we must prove that we are in fact trustworthy—trustworthy to do what we are supposed to do and trustworthy to make law—because that is why we exist as a part of our government. The best way to do that is to make ourselves once again accountable for making the laws, passing the laws, and standing accountable for the laws of this country. This amendment would be a significant step toward making Congress accountable again.

I regret—I deeply regret—that it was blocked, but I look forward to advancing similar reforms in the future because the idea of making Congress accountable isn't just a good idea; it is burned deeply, indelibly within our constitutional system.

It is no accident that the very first clause of the first section of the first article of the Constitution says, ''All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.'' All legislative powers—that means all Federal law in this system is vested in a Congress of the United States. We are not supposed to delegate that to someone else.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

GENOCIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in many places around the world, April is a month where we celebrate rebirth and renewal. But April has too often been, in T. S. Eliot's words, ''the cruelest month,'' a month where some of the world's darkest moments have cast shadows over our humanity.

It was in April 1915 when the Ottoman government began rounding up and murdering leading Armenian politicians, businessmen, and intellectuals, a step that led to the extermination of more than 1 million Armenians.

It was April 1933 that the Nazis issued a decree paving a way for the ''final solution,'' the annihilation of 6 million Jews of Europe.

It was April 1975 that the Khmer Rouge entered Cambodia's capital city, launching a 4-year wave of violence, killing 2 million people.

In April 1992, the siege of Sarajevo began in Bosnia, the longest siege in modern history, where more than 10,000 people perished, including 1,500 children.

It was in April 1994 that the plane carrying the President of Rwanda crashed, triggering the beginning of a genocide that killed more than 800,000 people in 100 days. When we talk about what happened in Rwanda, it is easy to begin to think of genocide as a single, undifferentiated act of barbarism. In reality, it was made of many individual atrocities that took place over 100 days.

In April 2003, innocent civilians in Sudan's Darfur region were attacked, killing more than 400,000 and displacing 2.5 million in a conflict that continues to this day.

This past month, the State Department announced that the United States has determined that ISIS's action against the Yazidis, Shiite Muslims, and Christians in Iraq and Syria constitutes genocide. Specifically, Secretary Kerry noted that in 2014, ISIS trapped Yazidis, killed them, enslaved thousands of Yazidi women and girls, ''selling them at auction, raping them at will and destroying the communities for which they lived for countless generations.''

I rise here today, in April, not only to commemorate International Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month and pay respect to the innocents who were slaughtered but also to speak about what the United States can and must do to prevent atrocities and genocide.

The commitment to prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities has been a centerpiece of policy by consecutive administrations of the U.S. Government. The United States was the first country in the world to sign the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed in Paris on December 9, 1948, and President Ronald Reagan signed implementing legislation, allowing the United States to become a party to the convention on November 25, 1988.

In the 2006 ''National Security Strategy,'' President George W. Bush highlighted the ''moral imperative that states take against to prevent and punish genocide.''

I firmly believe that U.S. leadership can make a difference in preventing future genocides and mass atrocities. U.S. leadership can save lives by bringing the power and resources of the United States to bear on atrocity prevention, accountability, and justice.

On April 10, 2014, I introduced the Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act in this Chamber. Three days earlier, the world had marked the 20th anniversary of the genocide of Rwanda, one of the most horrific events in modern history, which unfolded as the world stood back and watched.

At that time, I noted:

> Unfortunately, we have not learned the lessons of the past. We must do better to not only see that sort of atrocities never again occur under our watch.

That statement was not only a reflection of my beliefs but a promise to keep the issue of atrocity prevention in front of the Senate and the American people.

So today, under the heavy cloud of atrocities occurring in Syria, South Sudan, and elsewhere, I come to address this body again. I am here today not to look backward about actions not taken. I am here today to stress that our job, our responsibility, is to make sure the United States has the tools—diplomatic, political, economic, and legal—to take effective action before atrocities occur. Essential to this is authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board and ensuring that the U.S. Government has structures in place and the mechanisms at hand to better prevent and respond to potential atrocities.

President Obama, when he established the Atrocities Prevention Board in 2012, said that ''preventing genocide [is] an 'achievable goal' but one that require[s] a degree of governmental organization that matches the kind of methodical organization that accomplish mass killings.''

Earlier this year, I introduced the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2016 to ensure that we do just that. I am joined in this effort by Senators TILLIS, MURPHY, MENENDEZ, SHAHEEN, BROWN, GILLIBRAND, BLUMENTHAL, COONS, MIKULSKI, MARKEY, MERKLEY, BOXER, CASEY, WARREN, WHITEHOUSE, MURKOWSKI, BURR, and BENNET. This bill authorizes the Board, which is a transparent, accountable, high-level, interagency board that includes representatives at the assistant secretary level or higher from departments and agencies across U.S. Government.

The board will meet monthly to oversee the development and implementation of atrocity prevention and response policy, and, additionally, address over the horizon potential atrocities through the use of a wide variety of tools so that we can take effective action to prevent atrocities from occurring.

This bill gives our Foreign Service officers the training they need to recognize patterns of escalation and early warning signs of potential atrocities and conflict. With this training, we will, over time, build atrocity prevention into the core skill set of our people on the ground. They will be equipped to see the warning signs, analyze the events, and engage early.

The bill also codifies the Complex Crises Fund, which has been a critical tool in our ability to quickly respond to an emerging crises overseas, including potential mass atrocities and conflict. We used the Complex Crises Fund in Tunisia during the Arab Spring and in Sri Lanka after its civil war. We have used it to respond quickly in Kenya and in other countries, where we helped save lives. Importantly, this bill builds greater transparency and accountability into the structure of the Atrocities Prevention Board. Civil society will have a say, and Congress will have a greater oversight role to make sure we are getting this done right.

This is a good bill. It does good things and places the United States on a solid moral ground. But the moral argument alone is not enough. We must also remember that America's security and that of our allies is affected when civilians are slaughtered. Our security is impacted when desperate refugees stream across borders. Our security is affected when perpetrators of extraordinary violence wreak havoc on regional stability, destroying communities, families, and livelihoods.

We have seen groups such as ISIS systematically targeting communities on the basis of their ethnicity or religious beliefs and practices. After 60 years, we still do not have a comprehensive framework to prevent and respond to mass atrocities in genocide.

Let this bill act as a framework and also as our call to action so that when

we use the phrase ''never again,'' we know that we are taking meaningful action to make that a reality.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for an additional 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF FREDDIE GRAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, the death of Freddie Gray was a national tragedy deserving of a national conversation. A year after the death of Freddie Gray, the glare of television cameras covering the ensuing unrest has faded in Baltimore but the hurt and the continuing effort to heal remain.

In the 12 months since Freddie Gray's death, Americans have had long overdue conversations about racially biased policing, poverty in cities across America, the lack of access to quality education, and the scarcity of safe and affordable housing. These conversations have been translated into meaningful actions by Baltimore City residents, community leaders, and lawmakers at every level. Faith groups, community organizations, the business community, and many other groups who love and understand the limitless potential of our city have stood up and articulated their vision on how to build a stronger Baltimore.

The death of Freddie Gray was yet another painful reminder of the problems we have in our criminal justice system. I am a strong supporter of the independence of our judicial branch of government and the grand jury system, but I think all of us understand the frustration when there were no criminal indictments brought in the Trayvon Martin case, the Michael Brown case, the Eric Garner case, and far too many examples across America.

I have been working for years to address problems in our criminal justice system. In the days following the death of Freddie Gray and the ensuing unrest, I called on the Justice Department to open Federal criminal and civil rights investigations into Freddie Gray's death. On April 21, 2015, I was joined by Representative JOHN CONYERS in reintroducing legislation, the End Racial Profiling Act, which I originally introduced before the tragic death of Trayvon Martin.

As Baltimore emerged from the unrest, I met with community leaders to discuss legislative responses to help heal Baltimore's physical wounds and how to address many of the core problems that underpinned the unrest.

I met with a pharmacy owner whose store had been looted. I visited a senior center that was damaged. I spoke with residents in east and west Baltimore. I visited Freddie Gray's elementary school to hear from teachers and community leaders about what tools they required for the Federal Government to better meet the needs of students.

In the weeks following the unrest, I went back and forth from Baltimore City to the Senate and the White House, relaying the needs of Baltimoreans to my colleagues and to top Obama administration officials. I was joined by the Maryland congressional delegation, my colleague and friend Senator MIKULSKI—one of the great leaders on this issue—and members of our city delegation—Congressman CUMMINGS, Congressman RUPPERSBERGER, and Congressman SARBANES.

Congress and the Federal Government responded and continues to respond. I welcomed the announcement that the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division will open a Federal ''pattern or practice'' investigation of the Baltimore Police Department. This was just one way to help restore the eroded trust between communities and police. To further this effort, I introduced the BALTIMORE Act. The BALTIMORE Act is comprised of four titles.

Title I deals with law enforcement reform. The BALTIMORE Act places bans on racial profiling by State and local law enforcement, mandatory data collection and reporting, and available grants.

It requires local law enforcement officials receiving funds from the Byrne/JAG and COPS Hiring Programs to submit officer training information to the Department of Justice, including how their officers are trained in the use of force, countering racial and ethnic bias, deescalating conflicts, and constructive engagement with the public.

It requires the Department of Justice to report on a plan to assist State and local law enforcement agencies to improve training in the use of force, identifying racial and ethnic bias, and conflict resolution through the course of officers' careers.

The Department of Justice shall develop Field Training Program policies and examine ways to partner with national law enforcement organizations to promote consistent standards for high quality training and assessment. The Department shall also provide a report that contains best practices, model policies, and training toolkits. The Department of Justice will derive action plans for helping law enforcement agencies upgrade their IT systems to submit arrest and officer-involved shooting data.

Lastly, Title I establishes a pilot program to assist local law enforcement in purchasing or leasing body-worn cameras, which requires privacy study.

We have a comprehensive section that deals with law enforcement.

Title II deals with voting rights and civil rights restoration. The BALTIMORE Act restores the right to vote for all citizens after a prison sentence is served, returning citizens the right to vote. It also restores eligibility to sit on Federal juries after a prison sentence has been served.

Title III deals with sentencing law reform, which many colleagues in this Chamber have been championing. It reclassifies specific low-level, nonviolent drug possession felonies as misdemeanors, eliminating the distinction between crack and powder cocaine for sentencing, and requires fair weight for food products.

Title IV deals with reentry and employment law reform. It is critically important that people have an opportunity once they come out of incarceration. I don't think there is a Member of this Chamber who hasn't had a second chance. This allows nonprofits to apply for Second Chance Act grants.

It authorizes $200 million annually for the Labor Department's Reentry Employment Opportunities Program. It is a sense of the Congress that the administration should ''ban the box'' for hiring of Federal contractors.

Baltimore's congressional delegation has been fighting to ensure Federal resources are made available to help the city residents prosper. In the days following the unrest, the Small Business Administration established disaster loan outreach centers in Baltimore to help local owners who have been impacted by the unrest.

The Justice Department has also provided assistance in the form of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants to help defray the cost of policing during the unrest and to help local law enforcement better safeguard communities from violent crime.

The Department of Education's Project SERV, or School Emergency Response to Violence, has given resources to Baltimore City Public Schools to help students recover from trauma associated with the unrest.

The Environmental Protection Agency pledged funding to help convert vacant lots into gardens that foster a sense of community and increase public and environmental health.

Other Obama administration initiatives such as My Brother's Keeper continue to give communities the tools they need to foster long-term positive change. These are only a small portion of the Federal Government's ongoing commitment to the people of Baltimore City.

I am proud of the Federal Government stepping up to help Baltimore so that Baltimore can reach its full potential. Baltimore is my home. Following the death of Freddie Gray was one of the most difficult days in the city's history. One year later, Baltimore is transforming with the help of ordinary citizens, the business community, and a slew of nonprofits making a measurable impact. I have always been honored to represent the people of Baltimore. As long as I still have that honor, I will continue to make sure the Federal Government is an active partner in empowering Baltimore City to reach its full potential.

In the year since the death of Freddie Gray, we have made progress in building a more just America by investing in Baltimore. Let us continue to build upon that progress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

REMEMBERING HARRY WU

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, on Tuesday, the world lost a courageous activist for international workers' rights, Harry Wu. Harry Wu spent 19 years in one of China's ''laogai'' prison labor camps. That word is pretty much unknown in English—L-A-O-G-A-I. It is a word that the Chinese made famous, at least in their part of the world, as the terribly brutal labor camps where they sent political prisoners.

Mr. Wu was imprisoned in 1960 at age 23 because he spoke out against Communist China's ally in 1960, the Soviet Union, after its invasion of Hungary. Over those 19 years, from 1960 to 1979, Mr. Wu was brutalized. He was sent to work on farms, mines, and prison camps. He was beaten and forced into concrete cases. As he has written and told us, he survived on food he foraged in rats' nests.

After his release, following Mao's death, Harry Wu dedicated the rest of his life to exposing the horrors that his homeland leaders inflicted on their own citizens. He risked his life to return to China under cover and gathered secret footage of the abuses in China's laogai, China's prison camps. He wouldn't let the world ignore Chinese atrocities. He wouldn't let us forget that opening our doors to China—demanded by U.S. corporations with few strings attached—came at a steep price. Through the footage he collected, he helped show the world that products like cheap wrenches and artificial flowers sold in the United States were made with forced labor. Think about what this was about. U.S. companies would shut down their production in Mansfield, my hometown, or maybe in Baton Rouge or Cleveland, and move their production to China and sell those products back to the United States. The U.S. companies that moved to China never addressed the moral issue of what that move did to our communities. They never addressed the moral issue of, in some cases, using Chinese forced labor to make their products. These companies could also sell their products a little bit cheaper in the United States, and as a result, these companies could reap much bigger profits. The moral question of U.S. trade relations with China has rarely been touched in this body. It is just inconvenient for us to think about. Well, Mr. Wu never let it be inconvenient.

As we approach the 15th anniversary of China's entry into the World Trade Organization this year and review China's nonmarket economy status, we should not forget the lessons of Harry Wu. Over the past decade, we have seen that prosperity in China does not lead to more political freedom.

I knew Harry Wu. He testified before the Congressional-Executive Commission on China when I was chairman. He had testified several times.

As recently as 2012, Mr. Wu warned Congress:

> The Laogai—
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> The forced labor camp—
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> system [is] deeply rooted into [China's] economic structure. . . . China's working class is different from that of the modern democratic countries. It includes not only ''workers'' in the ordinary sense, but also ''workers'' of the prison enterprises.

These would be slaves. He warned that ''prisoners in Laogai, more like state slaves than enterprise workers, provide the state with an endless source of cheap or payless labor force.''

This system is an egregious human rights abuse against hundreds of thousands of Chinese people. It hurts American workers who are then forced to compete.

This system they have set up is one of the reasons that people are really upset about what is happening in this country. Companies in my State of Ohio shut down production in Lima, Zanesville, and Chillicothe, then moved overseas to China in order to get a tax break, hired Chinese workers—some of them were slave laborers for some of the component manufacturing; some of them were just low-paid labor—to make these products in a totalitarian system and sell them back in the United States. American companies never talk about the moral dimension of that.

I wrote a book a dozen or so years ago called the ''Myths of Free Trade.'' I interviewed Harry Wu about this book. He told me: ''Capitalism must never be equated with democracy.'' Because our country believes in capitalism and democracy, we think they always go together. Well, they don't. According to Harry Wu:

> Capitalism must never be equated with democracy. . . . Don't believe it about China. My homeland is mired in thousands of years of rule by one bully at a time, whether you call him emperor or chairman. Don't be fooled by electronics or air conditioning.

Before his death, I think Mr. Wu would have said: Yes, the United States has been fooled. Maybe we choose to be fooled; maybe we choose to not know how the products that we hold in our hands are made—by an oppressive government using forced labor workers.

We have been on a continuous march toward more trade with China and demanded far little in return. We have turned a blind eye to China's labor practices for too long. When you hear Presidential candidates and others complaining about China, it is always about putting American workers out of work, which it should be, but the other part of that moral question is about how we are using slave laborers in China to undercut American workers. How could an American worker or company possibly compete with slave labor in China? Obviously we can't, but we leave that moral question because U.S. corporations don't want to acknowledge and want to turn a blind eye toward slave labor. It reminds me of something from a few years ago when an American drug company was making a blood thinner—much of the production of that blood thinner came from China—with contaminated ingredients, and a number of people in Toledo, OH, died. The drug company didn't know where these products came from. They knew they came from China, but they didn't know where their supply ingredients came from. Think about that. They should be liable for that—at least you would think they should—but they just didn't think about the moral question there.

A year and a half ago I gave a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, warning that before we sign any bilateral investment treaty with China, we need to demand that China comply with existing international obligations in domestic law. We have given China chance after chance, pushing for increased engagement, even though we know that China will play by its own rules. In the past year and a half, nothing has changed. We need to make clear the international obligations we expect China to meet on cyber security, human rights, forced labor, slaves making products that American children use, international trade, workers' rights, and other issues. We need to demand that China meet these standards now.

Increased engagement by the United States may have led to more agreements on paper, and that is fine, but in reality the only thing it has achieved is our ongoing tolerance of Chinese transgressions. It may be tolerance, it may be ignoring, it may be shrugging our shoulders, it may be burying our heads in the sand, but I don't think we want to think much about slave labor in China. I don't think when we buy these products at Walmart—specializing in Chinese products—that we want to think much about where these products were made. We often know they were made in China, but we don't really want to think about how those workers produced these products.

Harry Wu's passing is a reminder that this needs to end. His legacy includes the Laogai Museum here in Washington. I encourage my colleagues to visit the museum and pay their respects to Harry Wu. The best way they can pay their respects to Harry Wu is by changing our policies. The thousands upon thousands of other nameless prisoners who suffered in these Chinese prison camps should be honored equally. We can't forget this tragic legacy, and we can't forget the human rights abuses that continue to this day as they continue to make these same products in these same working conditions with these same slave laborers. It is shameful. It should not continue.

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. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

GREG KING

Mr. CARPER. Good afternoon, Mr. President. For more than a year now, as the Presiding Officer knows since he has had the good fortune—or bad fortune of drawing the short straw—of sitting there when I come to the Senate floor just about every month to highlight the extraordinary work that is being done by the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security—I am here to do that again today. The agency has so many talented folks, and they do incredibly important work, so there is no shortage of material.

As the Presiding Officer knows, the Department of Homeland Security is made up of 22 component agencies and employs over 200,000 people. These men and women work around the clock, and the work they do is designed to protect all of us—protect our families and protect our country. Last month we were reminded of just how crucial the work they do is when terrorists attacked a train station and airport check-in area in Brussels, Belgium, setting off bombs that killed 32 people and wounded hundreds more. Our thoughts and prayers have been and remain with the families, loved ones, and victims of these horrible attacks.

Just 6 days before these tragic attacks, I spoke on the floor about the difficult but critical work performed by the 59,000 employees of the Transportation Security Administration, affectionately known as TSA. These men and women work every day. They do so to ensure that all of us—Americans and tourists who visit—may travel around our country and around the world safe from harm.

The attack in Brussels shows us once again just how important these efforts—performed by the men and women at TSA—are to every single American and to our visitors. It also reminds us how important it is that TSA has the tools and resources needed to effectively carry out their mission.

To help ensure that the TSA is well equipped to protect the public, I worked with a number of our Senate colleagues last week—Democrats and Republicans alike—to include amendments to a bill reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration. Our amendments will help make airports and transit hubs across our country safer for travelers by doubling the number of teams—called VIPR teams—of Federal agents and bomb-sniffing dogs that patrol our airports and subways to deter and identify potential attackers.

These amendments will also make security improvements to public areas in airports and train stations and ensure that the men and women patrolling those areas can effectively respond to the types of active shooter incidents we have unfortunately seen more frequently in recent months.

These commonsense amendments are just one of the many ways we can support the men and women at TSA and throughout the Department of Homeland Security who work on the frontlines every day screening passengers, guarding our ports of entry, and patrolling our transit hubs.

One part of the support we need to extend to these brave public servants is world-class training and education. By expanding and improving training opportunities for our law enforcement personnel, we can make sure they have the knowledge and make sure they have the capability to respond to every situation that may arise. That is why one of the best tools in our homeland security arsenal is the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

As my staff knows, I don't like acronyms very much, but this is a pretty good one. It is called the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. It is located in Glynco, GA. It goes by the acronym F-L-E-T-C, and we affectionately call it FLETC. I am not crazy about acronyms, but that is a pretty good one. We call it FLETC.

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center is tasked with teaching the men and women we deploy to the frontlines how to best utilize the technologies and techniques needed to protect Americans here at home and around the world. They provide training to literally dozens of Federal agencies, State law enforcement personnel from across our country, and our international partners, who travel from all over the world to learn from the best right here in America. From active shooter trainings, to advanced forensic techniques, to methods to counter human trafficking, FLETC instructors provide training in nearly 100 courses. They host the training academies for a number of other agencies, including Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Recently, TSA announced that they would be establishing a new, permanent academy for transportation security officers at FLETC's main facility in Glynco, GA. Having their training centralized at FLETC will allow TSA to better ensure uniform training for all of their officers and better collaborate with other components of the Department of Homeland Security.

Providing world-class training and instruction to tens of thousands of law enforcement officers each year requires bringing together some of the most highly qualified professional instructors from across our country. The more than 1,000 men and women from across law enforcement who serve at FLETC utilize their personal experience in the field to create and to lead effective trainings that help law enforcement professionals keep us—Americans and our guests—safe and secure each day.

One of FLETC's world-class instructors is Greg King, pictured right here to my left. For nearly 10 years, Mr. King has been an instructor at FLETC, utilizing his own experience to train Federal officers deployed around the world.

Before coming to FLETC, Greg served his hometown of Cleveland, OH, working for the Cleveland Police Department for 28 years. If he is listening, I would just suggest that I have been thinking that Greg may have started when he was about 10. He looks pretty good for a guy who has been doing that for this long. He has a career spanning nearly three decades. Greg did everything from working undercover as a street crimes unit detective, to investigating financial crimes, murders, and crimes against children. For those 28 years, Greg has dedicated his life to protecting the community of Cleveland and giving back to the town in which he grew up.

Today, Greg serves as a senior instructor at FLETC, working as program coordinator for the Case Organization and Presentation Training Program, the Internet Investigations Training Program, and as assistant program coordinator for the Intelligence Analyst Training Program. Greg has a wealth of knowledge in these areas. His colleagues call him—this is a quote, their words, not mine—a real ''subject matter expert'' with the kind of expertise that can only come from real-world experience. Through the lesson plans and course materials he develops, Greg strives to impart the firsthand knowledge he gained on the force to his students so that when they leave his class, they are able to effectively build cases, conduct investigations, analyze information, and ultimately catch the bad guys.

At FLETC, Greg's colleagues also refer to him as an ''Energizer bunny.'' Some of my colleagues have referred to me in those same terms. I think it is a compliment—I hope so—and in his case, I am sure it is. His energy and his passion for his work inspire other instructors and keep his students engaged.

Given his dedication to his students and to the FLETC mission, Greg has earned the respect of his peers and FLETC leadership alike. It is no wonder, then, that Greg King was named FLETC instructor of the year for 2015. Think about that—instructor of the year for the entire school. It is clearly a well-deserved honor.

When Greg isn't training law enforcement professionals, he spends time with his family—his wife Shelley, their two daughters Lela and Shayla; and their son Rayshawn. I want to give my special thanks to Greg's wife Shelley and to their two daughters and their son for sharing him with us—with the people of Cleveland and now the people of the United States—for not just 28 years but 38 years in all. He has dedicated countless hours, I am told as

well, to his community and to his country in addition to that.

In his 10 years at FLETC, Greg King has helped train countless law enforcement officers, who have used the valuable lessons from his courses every single day to arrest criminals, to protect our fellow citizens, and to help keep Americans safe around the world.

FLETC has four core values that the agency and their employees attempt to abide by, and I am going to mention those today: No. 1, respect; No. 2, integrity—one of our former colleagues, Alan Simpson, the Senator from Wyoming, used to say about integrity: If you have it, nothing else matters. If you don't have it, nothing else matters. Integrity is the second value I want to mention for FLETC. So respect, integrity, service, and excellence.

I like to say that one of the things we need to focus on is to have excellence in everything we do as a country, here in the Senate and across the country. If it isn't perfect, make it better. And that is one of the core values for FLETC.

Respect, integrity, service, and excellence. I have mentioned that those values actually look a little bit like some of the values we embrace in the office from the State that I am privileged to represent. Greg has lived this one, using his own experience, to make the next generation of law enforcement officers and our country even better prepared to face the threats of tomorrow.

Greg is just one shining example of the critical work being done by more than 1,000 instructors at FLETC. These instructors make it their own mission to ensure that law enforcement personnel across our country are well prepared for whatever they might face on the job.

So to Greg, to all of the men and women at FLETC, and to everyone at the Department of Homeland Security, I thank you for your hard work day in and day out, I thank you for your service to the people of our country, and I urge you to keep up the good work.

Some of us travel on trains. Some of us travel on buses. Some of us travel on airplanes and helicopters, in our own cars, trucks, and vans. I do a combination of those, but I do a fair amount of travel in the air. I was a naval flight officer for many years. I am a retired Navy captain. I spent a lot of time in Navy airplanes. I love the Navy. I loved serving in the Navy. But now they don't let me—they let me ride in a commercial plane. Sometimes we get to fly in military planes, too, which is a kick. But when you fly commercial aviation, at the airport you generally go through a security check, and they want to make sure you are not carrying anything in your luggage or anything on your person that is inappropriate or illegal. And you have to be confronted by usually a series of TSA officers. I just want to remind us all that they are there to protect us. That is their job, to make sure the planes we get on, whether they are going 200, 300, 400 miles or 2,000 or 3,000 miles to go from one side of our country to the other side or one side of the world to the other side—the job of the TSA officers is to protect us. They have a very tough job, and there is actually a tension in the job that exists because of the work they do.

On the one hand, every day there are tens of thousands of travelers, maybe hundreds of thousands of travelers, pulsing through our airports, trying to get from a terminal, from a gate, onto a plane in time to catch their flights. In some cases, they have had to recheck their bags. They have had to go through maybe unloading their suitcases and showing that what they have in their suitcases is not inappropriate or illegal. There is a rush to get through to try to catch their flights. TSA is there. In some cases, they slow down that traffic, that flow, and they slow down that flow of traffic in order to make sure that what all of us passengers every day are carrying in our suitcases or briefcases or purses or on our bodies is not inappropriate and is not illegal. They do it to protect all of us. Sometimes the TSA folks get a little bit frazzled. I would say we would, too, if we had to do the work they do.

A lot of times, when I fly commercial and when I go through the check-in, after they check my ID or whatever, I take it upon myself to say to the TSA officers—I tell them who I am, that I am a senior Democrat on the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and I thank them for what they do. I say: We value your work and we appreciate it, and I just wanted you to know that. I can't tell you how many times a TSA officer has said to me: Nobody has ever thanked me before. Nobody has ever thanked me before.

Sometimes we can't pay people enough for the work they do, and they work hard for their money.

I would ask others, when you see somebody, especially TSA officers who go out of their way in spite of all of the hustle and bustle and pressure on them—they manage to still be polite, courteous, and helpful—thank them. It might be the first time. You may become the first person who has ever said ''thank you'' to them.

At the end of the day, one of the things that means a lot to me is whenever people thank me for my service to our country, whether it was in uniform or as Governor, Senator, or here today. So I urge you to do that. When I do that, it makes me feel better and it makes them feel better too.

Mr. President, I am looking around the Senate Chamber, looking for Democrats or Republicans who are rushing to get to the podium to say something. I don't see anybody rushing.

With that, 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. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMEMORATING THE BUILDING OF THE SSN 791 SUBMARINE ''USS DELAWARE''

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, just a short note. I think it is important, especially for those who are privileged to live in the First State—the first State to ratify the Constitution.

Delaware ratified the Constitution on December 7, 1787, before any other State did so. For 1 week, Delaware was the entire United States of America, and then we opened it up to Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Louisiana, and others. It turned out pretty well. It was a great week.

I think that because our State is remarkable in starting the whole country, we have a lot of ships—submarines or aircraft carriers—named after it. It has been decades since there has been any naval vessel named after the First State.

A couple of years ago, Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of the Vice President, and I joined Navy Secretary Ray Mabus to announce that work would begin in a few years from that point—work would begin building a fast attack nuclear submarine. It would be called the USS *Delaware*, and the number of the ship would be SSN 791.

This Saturday in Newport News, VA, Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of the Vice President, who is officially the sponsor of the submarine, will be there to join Secretary Ray Mabus. I will have the good fortune of joining them for the keeling, which is the first step in the construction of a brandnew vessel, the USS *Delaware*, SSN 791.

These submarines are not built in a day. This is a project that will take a couple of years, but a very good thing for our State and I hope for our country is about to begin; that is, the adventure of building a submarine that will help defend our country, help keep the sea lanes open, and better ensure that we remain a nation that is brave and free.

I mentioned earlier in my brief remarks that I spent some years of my life in the Navy—5 years in a hot war in Southeast Asia as a P–3 aircraft mission commander, and toward the end of those 5 years as a P–3 aircraft mission commander I was a naval flight officer. Then, for another 18 years, I was a P–3 aircraft mission commander in the Reserves, chasing Soviet subs all over the world.

We would train with American submarines, and we would track fast attack boats. It is a fast attack boat that will be built and named after Delaware. We would track ballistic missile submarines, American submarines. We would also track those from other

countries, especially those from the Soviet Union. It wasn't that hard to find them, to track them, to know the location of Soviet nuclear submarines that were on deployment. They weren't easy to find, to locate and track, but they were a whole lot easier than tracking our own. ''Run Silent, Run Deep,'' and that is exactly what our submarines did and still do. We have the best submarine force in the world. I am very proud of all of them, and they are delighted to be joined by SSN 791 in a couple of years, and we get to kick it off in 2 days in Newport News, VA.

I wish everybody a good recess. The pages are going to be in charge until we get back in about 8 or 9 days, and I am sure they will do a good job. Thank you so much.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF SINCLAIR OIL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a well-respected American company: the Sinclair Oil Corporation. This May marks 100 years since Harry Ford Sinclair founded the corporation after purchasing petroleum assets from 11 smaller companies. In its centennial year, Sinclair Oil continues to thrive as one of the oldest continuously operated brands in the petroleum business and the seventh largest fuel company in the United States. Today I wish to congratulate the company on its 100th anniversary.

Most people know Sinclair Oil for its iconic green Apatosaurus, but behind the character is a company fueled by two real American legends: Harry Ford Sinclair and Earl Holding.

Harry Ford Sinclair experienced his fair share of setbacks before becoming a successful businessman. In fact, Sinclair was just 25 years old when a speculative investment went south, and he lost his father's drugstore, but the bad investment turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the brash and brilliant young man, who was never cut out for the quiet, meticulous life of a druggist in the first place.

After losing his family's drugstore, Sinclair found work selling lumber for oil derricks. Soon, he was buying and selling small oil leases on the side, and his ''side'' business did well enough to attract investors. Sinclair's successes snowballed as he rolled small profits into bigger ventures, eventually leading to a payout in Oklahoma's Glenn Pool oil field that made him a millionaire by age 30. In 1916, he founded the Sinclair Oil and Refining Corporation. Three years later, the company had grown to four times its original size.

In the 1920s, Sinclair introduced America to the first modern service stations. These early retail gasoline outlets offered oil changes, minor mechanical repairs, and, for the first time, public restrooms that motorists could use while an attendant pumped gas into their vehicles. The convenient amenities of these service stations enabled the creation of a uniquely American experience: the long road trip.

Sinclair's success continued through tough times. During the Great Depression, the company bought up dying competitors, saving hundreds of American jobs. And during World War II, Sinclair supported the Allies with high-octane fuel, tankers, and more.

In 1948, Harry Ford Sinclair officially retired, but 28 years later, Earl Holding, another American business icon, acquired the company, leading Sinclair Oil into a new era of prosperity and growth. Earl had grown up with nothing during the Great Depression, but like Harry Sinclair, he turned a willingness to work into success. Before purchasing Sinclair Oil, Earl and his wife, Carol, built the Little America chain of hotels and gas stations. In fact, the Little America chain became Sinclair's biggest customer before the Holdings bought the oil company.

Earl was well known for his brilliance, but he was equally regarded for his steadiness and warmth. These personal qualities enabled him to make Harry Sinclair's empire somehow feel like a mom-and-pop business. No task at the company was beneath Earl, whether it was serving coffee or digging ditches. He even hosted annual conferences and parties so he could personally meet partners and employees from around the country.

Today Sinclair Oil continues to succeed under the leadership of CEO Ross Matthews. Family values hold the company together, while innovation drives it forward. As the company celebrates its centennial, the spirit created by Harry Sinclair and Earl Holding lives on, as does Dino, the familiar green dinosaur that is the beloved mascot of Sinclair Oil.

In closing, I would like to offer just a few words in memory of the company's late CEO, Earl Holding. I knew Earl personally and considered him a dear friend. He inspired his employees through genuine kindness and humble leadership. Earl was a master of commerce, but more importantly, he was a good and honorable man of uncompromising character and integrity. Although Earl left us only 3 years ago, his legacy is alive and well. Today I wish his beautiful wife and children the very best.

REMEMBERING WARD CORRELL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a good friend and a distinguished Kentuckian who has sadly passed away after a resoundingly successful life and career of many decades. Ward Correll, a native Kentuckian renowned across the Commonwealth, died on April 21 of this year. He was 88 years old.

My wife, Elaine, and I are deeply saddened by Ward's death. Ward rose from humble beginnings to great business success, and he also generously and charitably shared the fruits of his success with others in his hometown of Somerset and throughout Kentucky. Many have benefitted from his philanthropy, and he will be terribly missed.

Ward was a household name in Kentucky. A self-made man, he created a business empire, including an oil distributorship and many property, business, and financial holdings. He was a major stockholder in First Southern National Bank.

Ward believed strongly in giving back to the community that he loved so much. He was a financial benefactor to dozens of charities, churches, sports teams, and other organizations, including Somerset Christian School—which honors his family's contribution with a monument on the school campus—and the University of the Cumberlands, where the science complex is named in his and his late wife's honor. The Ward Correll Sports Complex, a popular destination in Somerset, is thanks to his efforts.

For all his success in life, Ward graduated high school with less than $3 in his pocket. He hitchhiked to Detroit, where he worked odd jobs. After serving his country in the U.S. Army in an intelligence unit during the Korean war, he returned home to Somerset and married his wife, Regina.

Ward and Regina's first business was selling bananas. From that, he built himself into the titan of business and philanthropy whom we mourn today.

Ward received the 2002 Kentuckian Award from the A.B. Chandler Foundation. He was named Outstanding Philanthropist by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Bluegrass Chapter in 2003. In that same year, he received the Business of the Year Award as an Entrepreneurial Success from the Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce. And he received the Somerset-Pulaski County Distinguished Community Service Award in 2014.

The people of Pulaski County were accustomed to seeing full-page ads in the local paper bought by Ward Correll, each one sharing some bit of wisdom or personal philosophy from Ward that he wished to pass on to others. He ended each ad with the signature line, ''Hooray, cheers! Ward Correll.''

I want to send my deepest condolences and prayers to Ward's family at their time of loss. Now is the time to wish one final hooray and cheers to the man who leaves behind a powerful legacy. Kentucky honors Ward Correll for his life and his lifetime of service, and we mourn his passing.

The Lexington Herald-Leader published an article detailing Ward Correll's life and career. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Lexington Herald-Leader, Apr. 23, 2016]

SOMERSET BUSINESSMAN WARD CORRELL, KNOWN FOR PHILANTHROPY, DEAD AT AGE 88

(By Bill Estep)

Somerset businessman Ward F. Correll, recognized for millions of dollars' worth of philanthropy in support of various causes, died Thursday at University of Kentucky Chandler Hospital. He was 88.

Correll had been hospitalized since suffering what police said were accidental gunshot wounds at his home early March 9.

Correll had business interests in a shopping center, an oil and gas distributorship and a life insurance company, and he was a founder of First Southern National Bank.

Correll had given millions to causes and projects including land for a water park and youth baseball field in Somerset; land and financial support for Somerset Christian School; money to renovate an auditorium at Somerset High School; and $1 million for a classroom building at the University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg. The building was named for Correll and his late wife, Regina.

He also made smaller donations, reportedly giving away $30 worth of gas from his stations to active-duty military personnel in 2009, for instance.

Observers said Correll's philanthropy had touched countless lives.

''It has built the community up from every aspect,'' said Carolyn Mounce, head of the Somerset-Pulaski County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, a Somerset Republican, said Correll's impact will last for generations.

''His generosity was as vast as his business ingenuity, and he routinely used both to inspire and encourage everyone around him,'' Rogers said. ''Ultimately, Ward loved his God, his family, his community and his country, and spent a lifetime faithfully serving each one with great passion and enthusiasm.''

Correll was born in Wayne County, one of 13 children, and grew up in Pulaski County in modest circumstances.

He told the story of leaving home after high school with $2.67 and hitchhiking to Detroit for work, returning home several months later with a bit more money in his pocket.

He eventually developed a shopping center in the 1960s on what was then a sparsely built stretch of U.S. 27 in Somerset, now crowded with hundreds of businesses.

Correll frequently bought full-page advertisements in the Commonwealth-Journal newspaper in Somerset to publish inspirational quotes.

Correll, a Korean War veteran, is survived by six children, nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, according to Lake Cumberland Funeral Home.

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOYS TOWN NEVADA IN THE 12TH ANNUAL JOURNEY OF HOPE GALA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to honor the 25th anniversary of Boys Town Nevada. Serving southern Nevada's most vulnerable children, Boys Town Nevada helps to support and educate children and families in need.

Boys Town opened its doors in Nevada in 1991. Since then, they have promoted valuable skills for boys and girl and their families in the Las Vegas area. The organization has developed family-based services in the home by aiding in the process of reunifying families. Boys Town strives to provide the necessary skills to create and maintain a stable household for all members of the family.

For more than a century, Boys Town has followed Father Edward Flanagan's mission to save children and heal families through the power of love, family, and faith. Because of their positive impact in Nevada, they have been able to improve the lives of nearly 15,000 children over the last two decades. Their dedication and their hard work resembles Nevada's values to sustain healthy relationships and minimize problems that affect the mental health of each family.

As part of the 12th annual Journey of Hope gala, I would like to honor Diana Bennet and Scott Menke for being the 2016 Hope Awards recipients. These philanthropy icons exemplify the generosity and commitment to dedicate their lives to impact the lives of children, families, and all Nevada communities.

I applaud executive director Denise Biden and her team for her strong leadership in one of the most important organizations for children in the State of Nevada. Her dedication though the past 15 years has positively impacted more than 3,000 children each year. This organization is an invaluable part of communities throughout the State, and I would like to extend my best wishes for continued success.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROJECT REAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to honor the 10th anniversary of Project Real. Project Real will formally celebrate over 10 years of teaching Nevada students the importance of the law and giving them the tools they need to prevent crime.

Since 2005, Project Real has met the challenge of teaching Nevada students from kindergarten through high school about the principles of democracy, law, and the responsibilities of citizenship. The organization is working to bring law and civic education back into Nevada's classrooms by providing programs that give students of all ages the opportunity to learn about our judicial system. Project Real takes pride in ensuring that students are positive contributors to the communities in which they reside.

Since its inception, the organization has also been a strong supporter of academic programs that allow children to gain a better understanding of our judicial system. Working closely with the State bar of Nevada, Project Real prepares Nevada's children to become involved, participating citizens who understand their responsibilities and rights. These programs not only encourage students to act with integrity, but also foster connections between students and legal professionals.

I applaud executive director Tom Kovach and his team for strong leadership in an important organization for children throughout the State. I am pleased that through your and other's selfless efforts, incalculable numbers of students and communities have been positively affected by Project Real. I would like to recognize Irwin Molasky and Sam Lionel, as well. It was because of their vision for children in Nevada to become responsible citizens that they founded Project Real. This organization is an invaluable part of communities throughout the State, and I would like to extend my best wishes for continued success.

REMEMBERING LAURA CHA-YU LIU

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I share the news that Judge Laura Cha-Yu Liu passed away last week. A longtime resident of Chicago, Judge Liu was only 49 years old. Although her time with us was far too short, her accomplishments were many. Judge Liu broke barriers. She was the first Chinese American woman to become judge in Illinois, the first Chinese American elected to public office in Cook County. And in 2014, Judge Liu became the first Asian American to serve on the Illinois appellate court.

Her story is the story of the American dream. Born in Carbondale, IL, her parents were immigrants fleeing a dire political situation and the terrors of war. They came to this country as foreign exchange students in the hopes of providing a better life for their children. Liu's first language was Mandarin, and she started school speaking very little English. She overcame the language barrier and graduated as her high school's valedictorian. In 1987, she received a bachelor's degree from Youngstown State University and a law degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1991.

As the daughter of immigrants, Judge Liu took extraordinary pride in her work on the Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice program, aimed at making the system more accessible to immigrants and non-English speakers. She helped draft requirements that courts provide qualified interpreters for parties and witnesses. Throughout her career, Judge Liu was a staunch defender of individuals' rights, especially the most vulnerable in our community. It wasn't uncommon for Judge Liu to delay court proceedings when people struggled to understand, saying: ''We're going to wait for an interpreter.'' And no one did more to ensure that language barriers would not stand in the way of justice for all at Daley Center.

Five years ago, Judge Liu was diagnosed with breast cancer, but that didn't slow her down. She continued working, running for election in 2012

and, 2 years later, winning her appointment to the appellate court. She never complained; she just kept going. During chemotherapy, she said, ''I put on my wig, put on my eyebrows, lots of blush, happy face, get out of bed and went to work.'' That is courage.

Judge Liu was the recipient of numerous honors and awards. Here are just a few: the Asian Pacific American Community Service Award; the Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago's Sandra Otaka Distinguished Judicial Service Award; Illinois' Judges Foundation's ''the Leader Who Shares Experience Leaves a Legacy of Success'' Award; Asian American Bar Association's 2014 Vanguard Award for her work to make ''the law and legal profession more accessible to and reflective of the community at large''; Illinois Secretary of State's Distinguished Leadership Award—and the honors go on and on. Judge Liu was also a member of the Illinois Judges Association, Chicago Bar Association, Illinois State Bar Association, Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, and Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago.

She was an extraordinarily accomplished professional, but Judge Liu's proudest accomplishment was being a mother to her 7-year-old daughter, Sophie, and a wife to the love of her life, Michael Kasper. Despite her busy schedule, she always put family first. She made time to teach Sophie Mandarin and the piano. She even took Sophie to Paris, in the midst of dealing with an aggressive chemotherapy regimen. But she simply said, ''I'll sleep it off on the plane.'' And she did. She also could frequently be found on the sidelines of Sophie's soccer matches cheering her on.

Judge Liu was a force of nature. She authored nearly 150 judicial opinions in her 2 years on the Illinois appellate court. In her final days, while working from home, Judge Liu filed her final opinion before she passed. What commitment and what an inspiration. To the very end, Judge Liu understood that these issues and her opinions affected people's lives, and cancer wasn't going to keep her from doing her job.

She once said, ''I wanted to fit in more than I wanted to be a trailblazer. I didn't want to be an Asian-American on the rise.'' Well, she didn't get that wish. In fact, she accomplished just the opposite. Her career was groundbreaking and she became a role model for countless Chinese American kids—and an inspiration to the rest of us—especially her friends and family. Judge Liu will be sorely missed.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AND VERMONT ENTREPRENEURS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, each year, the Small Business Administration sets aside the first week of May to acknowledge small businesses that are doing extraordinary work and recognizes them during Small Business Week. In March, the SBA announced the slate of 2016 Vermont small business award winners, which included three tremendous businesses from Lamoille County. The award winners included the Small Business Person of the Year, Tom Stearns of High Mowing Seeds; Woman-Owned Business of the Year, Debbie Burritt of Sweet Crunch Bakeshop & Catering; and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, Caleb Magoon, of Power Play Sports.

In Vermont, we place a high value on small businesses. They make up the backbone of our economy and the heart and soul of our communities. I am incredibly proud of the three Lamoille County businesses being recognized both because of their hard work and entrepreneurial spirit, but also because they represent a true cross section of the Vermont economy.

Vermonters share an inherent bond with our State's natural resources. Our State prides itself on our strong agricultural history and the renaissance we are seeing in diversified agriculture and value added food production. For many farmers, this connection starts with their soil and the seeds they plant in the ground. What started as a hobby for Tom Stearns 20 years ago has grown into a dynamic business that is one of the top organic seed companies in the country, now supplying those farmers and home gardeners across the country with the seeds that become the food we feed our families. Part of what sets Vermont businesses apart is their ability to innovate and help define or create new markets. High Mowing has done just this in the seed market—by ensuring that all of their 700 varieties of seeds are both organic and GMO-free—and are among the gold standard in the market. Now they are branching out to experiment with new varieties that will bring new specialty vegetables, herbs, and flowers to the market.

When imagining a startup business, it is common to think of someone working out of their garage. Debbie Burritt of Sweet Crunch Bakeshop & Catering is precisely one of those entrepreneurs. Debbie founded her business in 2001 in her home garage, and since then, her products have received great acclaim and attention. Sweet Crunch baked goods are made from scratch, with no preservatives. It comes as no surprise to this Vermonter that their maple cookies are one of their best selling products. In fact, Sweet Crunch's maple cookies were featured on the Food Network, and Sweet Crunch products can be found in locations across New England and, in fact, the country. I will take a moment of personal pride to note that Debbie's delicious products will be a featured part of the annual Taste of Vermont celebration happening in Washington in a few weeks.

The mountains and valleys that played such a significant role in determining the settlement of Vermont continue to be a significant force in the lives of Vermonters. These resources attract skiers, riders, bikers, paddlers, and many other adventurers to our State both to live and to visit. Naturally all of these outdoor enthusiasts need some place to be outfitted. Power Play Sports has been a staple of the local sporting goods scene for more than 20 years, but was recently purchased by Caleb Magoon. Caleb first worked at Power Play as a teenager and returned to manage the store after living in Boston for a number of years. He has demonstrated a great entrepreneurial vision, consolidating his other business under one roof and opening a new store in Waterbury, VT. This type of passion and growth are qualities we want to encourage in Vermont and deserve recognition.

I want to congratulate these three businesses and all the Vermont businesses who were recognized by the SBA for a job well done. I look forward to their future successes. At this time, I ask unanimous consent that the following article written by Kayla Friedrich of the Stowe Reporter recognizing Tom, Debbie, and Caleb for their awards be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Stowe Reporter]

STEARNS, BURRITT, MAGOON WIN BUSINESS AWARDS

(By Kayla Friedrich)

Tom Stearns, founder and owner of High Mowing Organic Seeds in Wolcott, has been named Vermont Small Business Person of the Year by the federal Small Business Administration.

In addition, two other Lamoille County businesses won major awards:

Debbie Burritt of Sweet Crunch Bakeshop & Catering Co. in Hyde Park, Woman-Owned Business of the Year.

Caleb Magoon of Power Play Sports in Morrisville and Waterbury Sports, Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

For more than 50 years, the federal agency has honored small businesses for their contributions in their communities and to the economy.

Stearns was recognized for expanding his company, increasing sales, hiring more employees and contributing to the local community.

High Mowing is a farm-based company that produces and distributes vegetable, flower and herb seeds throughout the U.S. and Canada. It began in 1996 with just 28 varieties, produced in Stearns' backyard and packaged in his shed.

First-year sales were $2,000, but what started as a hobby soon expanded beyond his backyard. By 2001, his business had grown to the point where Stearns began contracting with other local farms to grow his seeds, in addition to continuing to produce on High Mowing's 5 acres.

High Mowing was the first organic company to guarantee all its seeds are not genetically modified, and 20 years later, his company is one of the top organic seed companies in the U.S., with more than 60 employees.

''It is an honor to accept this award on behalf of all the work done by our team for the last 20 years since this hobby was born,'' Stearns said. ''It has been a joy to see it grow and to know that we are just getting started. I get to do what I love every day and the work is diverse, challenging and creative.

''There is nothing more rewarding than bringing an idea to life in a way that serves health in the world, and it means a lot to me to have the work of our team recognized in this way.''

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

In Morrisville, the next town over, a very different business also won an award from the Small Business Administration.

Caleb Magoon, 32, owner of PowerPlay Sports in Morrisville, was named 2015 young entrepreneur of the year.

The annual award is presented to business owners under 35 who have had success in sales, profits, increasing jobs, having innovative business methods and demonstrating entrepreneurial potential necessary for economic growth.

PowerPlay Sports was founded in 1995 by John Connell and Rob Maynard. After bouncing around several downtown locations, the store eventually landed at 35 Portland St.

Magoon began working at the store at 17. After graduating from Boston University, where he studied theater design, Magoon and a few friends established a theater company in Boston, produced shows, and won the Elliot Norton Awards for best production three years in a row.

However, as a native of Hyde Park, who grew up hiking, biking and skiing in the Green Mountains, his passion for sports led him back to Vermont in 2010. He managed PowerPlay for a year, then bought the business from Maynard.

Magoon said working in theater helped him learn how to run a business. He and his friends each worked on different aspects within their theater company, including advertising, producing and financing, and learned from each other.

''If you can do that, business is easy. We learned to be business people,'' Magoon said.

Last year, Magoon moved his embroidery and screen-printing business—which was in an adjacent building—into the same location as his sports gear. He also opened a new store, Waterbury Sports, with two business partners in Waterbury.

WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS

A Hyde Park business also received an award from the Small Business Administration.

Chef Debbie Burritt, owner and founder of Sweet Crunch Bakery and Catering Co., was selected as the Woman-Owned Business of the Year.

The bakeshop portion of the company provides desserts and wedding cakes to restaurants, resorts and the public. For catering, the company's goal is making every event unique and unforgettable.

Burritt has a staff to assist with all the details of event planning, and will customize menus to meet the individual needs of clients.

Burritt completed her culinary degree at Newbury College in Brookline, Mass., in 1987, and worked in Boston and Virginia before moving back to her native state, Vermont. After working at Stoweflake Resort and Trapp Family Lodge, both in Stowe, Burritt decided to venture out on her own in 2001.

RECOGNIZING BORDER AIR LTD.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, you don't have to look too far in Vermont to find any number of unique businesses. One such business is Border Air Ltd., led by its owner Cliff Coy. Cliff is the airport manager and unofficial ''aviation ambassador'' at the Franklin County State Airport in Swanton, VT. He also owns and runs Border Air Ltd., a maintenance and restoration company. He purchased Border Air Ltd. in 2007 from his father, George, who founded the company in 1989. Border Air specializes in restoring Soviet-era aircraft and is one of only five companies in the country with the qualifications to sell, maintain, and inspect them.

In addition to providing many services for the aviation enthusiasts who call Franklin County home, Border Air imports and exports planes to and from former Soviet nations, a practice that began after the senior Mr. Coy took a trip to Lithuania in 1989. George Coy heard of an Antonov An-2, the largest single-engine biplane ever built, which had just been restored and was listed for sale. In spite of a major malfunction while crossing the Black Sea with the An-2, the Coys were hooked on the idea of importing similar aircraft and selling them to American pilots.

Since then, over 300 planes have passed through Border Air's hangars, some purchased by customers as far as Chicago. Through their work with pilots and aviation enthusiasts across the world, the Coy family has brought business to Swanton and helps to keep citizens safe by inspecting planes once a year to ensure they are up to Federal Aviation Administration safety codes. Though safety is most important, Cliff Coy also aims to inspire a love of flying in children and adults across the country by bringing students from nearby Missiquoi Valley Union High School to the airport to watch air show practices or speaking with anyone interested in planes from flying to skydiving.

The Coys represent an entrepreneurial spirit that is at the heart of Vermont. In Cliff Coy, we see a true commitment to and leadership with the community.

I ask unanimous consent that the April 14, 2016, article from Seven Days entitled ''Border Air in Swanton Keeps Imported Planes Alive,'' which chronicles the Coys' history with Border Air Ltd., be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Seven Days, Apr. 14, 2016]

BORDER AIR IN SWANTON KEEPS IMPORTED PLANES ALIVE

(By Ken Picard)

A stiff snow squall swirls around the main building at Franklin County State Airport in Swanton as a large, twin-engine turboprop prepares to roll out of the hangar. Airport manager Cliff Coy watches silently as the King Air B200 revs its engines with a high-pitched whine and slowly inches its way onto the tarmac.

The plane's wingtips are upturned for improved aerodynamics and fuel efficiency. It's just a fringe benefit that the design also allows the plane to squeeze through the hangar door.

''That's a 58-foot wingspan going through a 60-foot opening,'' Coy notes with a bemused smile. Once the wings clear the sides, he flashes a quick thumbs-up to his mechanic, Dan Marcotte, who's directing the pilot from the tarmac.

Unlike busy commercial hubs, such as Burlington International Airport, Franklin County State Airport doesn't have its own air traffic control tower. Many planes that use this runway lack radios, lights or on-board electrical systems.

The 46-year-old Coy wears many hats at this small, state-owned airstrip that's just a hop from the Canadian border. Besides managing the airport, he's the owner of Border Air Ltd., which was founded by his father, George Coy. As an FBO, or fixed-base operator, Border Air performs various functions for the flying public: fueling, inspection, maintenance, flight training, and providing hangar and tie-down space for parking aircraft. Coy calls its headquarters ''a cross between a boat launch and a state park—and I'm the guy wearing the green shirt and the hat.''

Beyond Coy's official duties, he's the airport's unofficial ''aviation ambassador,'' which involves more than just greeting white-knuckled travelers when they land safely in inclement weather. Coy is Franklin County's go-to guy for anyone who's interested in learning more about airplanes, whether that means fixing them, flying them, building them or jumping out of them with parachutes.

And, with fuel prices at historic lows, interest in aviation is soaring. That's not readily apparent on the morning I visit: Aside from the departing turboprop, about the only thing moving on the airfield is a semierect orange wind sock. But, according to Coy, KFSO—the airport's Federal Aviation Administration abbreviation—is usually more active.

''This is the busiest airport in Vermont for general aviation,'' he says, referring to noncommercial and nonmilitary air traffic. ''Come out here in six weeks on a Saturday, and this place will be humming with airplanes.''

Those planes aren't just local flyers. In recent years, Coy has carved out a unique niche for himself in the wider world of aviation: He imports and exports planes to and from Russia and other former Soviet-bloc countries. One of only five companies in the country with the expertise to sell, service and inspect Soviet-era planes, Border Air also maintains, repairs and modifies them—an unusual specialty that Coy fell into almost by accident.

Coy got his degree in mechanical engineering from Vermont Technical College and studied computer science and physics at the University of New Mexico. Then, as he puts it, he faced an important life choice: ''Am I going to spend the rest of my life in front of a computer screen, under bad fluorescent lighting? Or am I going to solve problems out in the field and get dirty?''

Coy began answering that question in 1988. That year, his uncle Bob, who was working on a sister-city exchange program, offered Coy a chance to travel to the Soviet Union after an injury forced a student in the program to drop out at the last minute.

Coy jumped at the opportunity—and not merely to see the Soviet Union as it began to open up to the West. Coy's father, George, himself a pilot and flight mechanic, was keenly interested in a Russian-built aircraft called the Antonov An–2. The 1,000–horsepower, 12–passenger plane is the world's largest single-engine biplane ever built. As Coy recalls, his father ''became infatuated with it and absolutely had to have one.''

While that trip offered the chance to see an An–2 firsthand, the Coys wouldn't get their hands on one until 1989, when George Coy learned that a company in Lithuania had a freshly overhauled An–2 for sale. As the Soviet Union neared its collapse, the Eastern Bloc countries were becoming like the Wild West, Cliff Coy recalls, with everything being sold off at bargain-basement prices.

''So he strapped a pile of cash to a belt and flew out to Lithuania to go look at an airplane,'' says Cliff.

Since George didn't speak Lithuanian, and all the instrumentation was in Russian, the sellers taught him how to fly the plane. Convinced it was worth the investment, the Coys hired a Russian pilot and a farmer from Shelburne to help fly the An–2 back to Vermont.

Like many aviation adventures, Cliff Coy says, theirs began with a mechanical malfunction: The plane lost all of its oil above the clouds during a night crossing of the North Sea.* As he recalls, ''The Russian pilot knew very few words of English, and two of them were 'Very bad!' ''

The An–2 managed to run for another half hour without oil before landing safely. Despite the mishap, the trip stoked the Coys' interest in importing more Russian and Eastern European planes—such as two aerobatic trainer planes called Yakovlev Yak–52s that they'd seen in Lithuania. Sensing a business opportunity, the Coys began importing Russian and Eastern Bloc planes to the U.S. for American buyers.

Since 1989, Border Air has imported more than 300 such aircraft, including a Yak–55, which is currently under repair in the hangar in Swanton. With only about 250 Yak–52s still actively flying in the United States, Coy has loyal clients who fly to Swanton from as far west as Chicago to get their planes serviced.

What's the plane's appeal? For one thing, Coy points out, Yak–52s closely resemble World War II fighter planes. And, given the Soviets' efficient engineering, he adds, ''You're basically able to maintain it out in a farmer's field with a flathead screwdriver and a wrench. So they're incredibly rugged and inexpensive.''

The Coys pretty much stopped importing Russian aircraft in 2005, when the dollar-to-Euro exchange rate made them prohibitively expensive. The sale price of the Yak–52, for example, jumped from $120,000 to $380,000.

In 2007, Coy bought Border Air from his father. These days, much of his business has reversed direction—it involves moving planes and pilots from the U.S. to Russia instead of vice versa.

In the Soviet era, the only Russians who flew planes were military pilots; when the country opened up civil aviation, many Russians became interested in flying American aircraft. Until the Russian ruble crashed last year, Border Air was exporting about two containers of American-made planes to Russia every three months.

Recent changes overseas have brought a whole new crop of flyers to Swanton. In 2011, a wave of bad aviation accidents in Russia killed scores of people. Putting the blame on pilots who had obtained their licenses fraudulently, the Russian government closed flight schools across the country.

The virtual shutdown of civil aviation in Russia could have sent Coy's business into a tailspin. But then Russians began coming to the United States—including the flight school in Swanton—to obtain pilot's licenses. Apparently placing greater trust in American flight schools than in its own, the Russian government converts U.S. pilots' licenses into Russian ones, Coy says.

Just as Coy is explaining the process, two Russian men with crew cuts and black coats pass en route to a small trainer plane to begin their flight lessons. According to Coy, they're former Russian fighter pilots who are logging flight time and learning to fly in U.S. airspace. ''There's a bit of a mind shift when you go from flying something at 300 miles per hour to flying something at 60 miles per hour,'' he says.

Of course, not all of Coy's work involves Russians and Russian planes. As an FAA-licensed inspector, he ensures that the aircraft he encounters are flightworthy. By law, every aircraft, from a commercial Boeing 777 to the one-seat Ultralight hanging from the hangar rafters, must be inspected annually.

''I've seen things where you wonder how these people even made it here alive,'' Coy says. ''Unbelievably scary stuff.''

For example, he recalls encountering a pilot who reported that his plane was flying funny When Coy checked it out, he noticed that the bottom of the fuselage was blue—from the dye used to identify aircraft fuel. Coy instantly spotted the problem: The fuel line wasn't hooked up. When he went to adjust the propeller control, it broke off in his hand. Next, he discovered that the starboard engine wasn't bolted onto the frame and the landing gear wasn't installed correctly. The result: a 60-page report to the FAA.

Getting people passionate and up in the air is Coy's mission. And, notwithstanding the back issues of Cigar Aficionado in the airport waiting room, he says he meets a diverse cross-section of people who are aviation enthusiasts.

Granted, it's not a cheap hobby: The costs of purchasing and maintaining airplanes may seem daunting enough to dissuade anyone without a seven-figure trust fund. But, Coy points out, most people who fly these days rent their planes. (Coy himself doesn't own one.) And enthusiasts who decide to take the next step can buy a plane for as little as $15,000, on par with the price of a boat.

Coy does a lot of outreach to local schools, hoping to get the next generation interested in flying. Sometimes that means showing the kids his various ''museum pieces''—the historic aircraft parked in various hangars on the airfield. Or he'll invite students from nearby Missisquoi Valley Union High School to watch his mechanic, Marcotte, practice his air-show maneuvers during his lunch hour. (Burlingtonians know Marcotte as the pilot who flies acrobatic stunts over the waterfront before the annual July 3 fireworks show.)

''Look, if you have any interest in flying, we'll take you for a ride in an airplane,'' Coy says. ''That's what we do, because we want to get people interested in flying.''

Correction, April 14, 2016: An earlier version of this story misreported Coy's age—it is 46. The body of water over which Coy's plane experienced engine trouble was the North Sea, not the Black Sea. Additionally, aviation enthusiasts can buy a plane for $15,000, not the higher number originally reported.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I was unable to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the substitute to H.R. 2028, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, due to a funeral I attended for a neighbor in Newark, NJ. Had I been present in the Senate today, I would have voted against cloture.•

ZIKA VIRUS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to speak about the urgent need for Congress to approve emergency funds to fight the Zika virus.

The Zika virus is a rapidly growing public health threat, and the stakes for women are particularly high. The virus is carried by two species of mosquito. They are found in 40 States in this country.

There have been 388 travel-related cases in the United States—meaning an individual was infected during a trip to Latin America, South America, or the Caribbean, where the virus is widespread. There have not yet been any reported cases of local transmission in the continental United States, although more than 500 cases have been reported in Puerto Rico. It is a matter of when, not if, that happens—particularly as we approach the summer season when mosquitos are most active.

Scientists are still working to understand the effects of the Zika virus, but we do know that Zika causes severe, brain-related birth defects in babies when women are infected during pregnancy.

Microcephaly, one of the most serious effects of Zika, causes babies' heads to be much smaller than normal. In severe cases, you will also see seizures, developmental delays, intellectual disabilities, feeding problems, hearing loss, and vision problems.

The CDC continues to research the virus, and it could be several years before the full-range of health effects is known.

One of the most concerning gaps in our scientific knowledge is how the disease is transmitted from person to person. The most common way people contract the disease is through mosquito bites, but there have been documented cases of the virus being spread from men to women through sexual contact.

Zika symptoms are mild—fever, rash, and joint pain—meaning that many people may become infected and spread with disease without knowing they have it. Unless we act now, we could end up with a significant number of Zika carriers who don't know they are infected.

The administration has asked Congress for $1.9 billion in emergency funding to stop the spread of the Zika virus. I fully support this funding request. The Federal Government needs this money for a number of reasons, including controlling mosquito populations, researching the virus, educating the public, and developing a vaccine.

As the weather warms, Zika will spread faster, particularly in States with persistent mosquito issues. We simply can't ignore public health threats of this magnitude, hoping they will go away.

In closing, Congress cannot afford to delay. I strongly urge the Senate to approve the administration's sensible request to fight this growing public health threat.

NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this Saturday, April 30, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA, is coordinating the latest National Prescription Drug Take

Back Day. Take back days are nationwide efforts to remove old or unused prescription drugs from medicine cabinets so they don't fall into the wrong hands and lead to substance abuse and addiction. I am proud to have helped encourage take back days a few years ago by working with Senators KLOBUCHAR, CORNYN, and BROWN to pass the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, health care providers wrote almost a quarter of a billion opioid prescriptions in 2013, enough for every American adult to have his or her own bottle of pills. The accumulation of these medicines in our homes creates a public health risk, since they can be accidentally ingested, abused, stolen, and passed on to others. According to the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 6.5 million Americans abused controlled prescription drugs that year. According to that same study, a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

Obviously, the consequences of this prescription drug abuse can be dangerous and even deadly. Prescription drug abuse may lead to abuse of other drugs like heroin, which is cheaper and more readily available. In 2014, more than 47,000 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States, an alltime high. Incredibly, more than half of those deaths involved prescription opioids or heroin.

So raising public awareness about the dangers of abuse and reducing the availability of unused medications are important components of preventing prescription drug abuse and addiction. The take back day initiative is a great way to make progress on both fronts.

Beginning in September 2010, the DEA has coordinated these days twice a year, with fantastic results. At the most recent event last September, Americans turned in 350 tons of prescription drugs at more than 5,000 sites operated by the DEA and more than 3,800 of its State and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 10 previous take back events, DEA and its partners have taken in more than 2,750 tons of pills. It is not an exaggeration to say that take back events have probably saved lives.

Now, for some unexplained reason, the Obama administration decided to discontinue this program a few years ago, but in May 2015, I was a member of a bipartisan group of Senators that wrote to the Department of Justice, urging that it be reinstated. A few months later, DEA Acting Administrator Rosenberg did so. I am grateful for that decision.

In fact, I support expanding take back opportunities, by creating additional permanent, convenient disposal sites for the public. Expansion of the program along these lines is explicitly authorized in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, a bill I guided through the Judiciary Committee in February. It subsequently passed the Senate by a vote of 94–1.

So I urge everyone in Iowa and across the country to check your homes for unneeded or expired medicines. If you find any, please take part in this year's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday. Participating locations typically include neighborhood pharmacies and local fire and police departments. You can locate a specific collection site near you on the DEA's website. This is one small way we can each do our part to reduce the risk of drug abuse and addiction for our families and communities.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to raise awareness about Duchenne muscular dystrophy and the boys and young men who suffer from this devastating disease.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy was first brought to my attention 15 years ago, when I met Brian and Alice Denger of Biddeford, ME. The Dengers had two wonderful sons, Matthew and Patrick, who were both born with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Patrick, now 19, is a student at the University of New England. He recently received his driver's license and enjoys driving in Maine. His brother Matthew was a 20-year-old student at UNE when he died from the disease about 3 years ago. The Dengers also have a daughter, Rachel, with juvenile diabetes. They are a loving and courageous family whose strength and spirit directly inspired me to become involved in the fight for research funding to combat muscular dystrophy.

Brian Denger was the first to tell me of the terrible progression of this type of muscular dystrophy. Symptoms begin in early childhood, and boys quickly experience severe and rapidly progressing muscle degeneration, which often results in their losing the ability to walk. Tragically, most die prematurely as a result of muscle-related cardiac and respiratory problems.

In 2001, what really caught my attention was that the treatment options for boys with Duchenne muscular dystrophy were incredibly limited and aimed at managing symptoms in an attempt to optimize quality of life for the limited time that these children would have to share with us. Research had not yielded any meaningful way to extend the lifespan of children suffering from the disease. That is why I joined with the late Senator Paul Wellstone in introducing the MD CARE Act, to raise awareness and expand Federal support for research into this debilitating disease. It was signed into law and last reauthorized in 2014 and has resulted in dramatically improved and standardized clinical care for those with the disease. I have also fought diligently for increased funding for the Duchenne programs at the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Today there is some good news for the boys—and now—young men with Duchenne muscular dystrophy and their families. A number of therapeutic strategies are currently under development, and we have made dramatic progress to improve the quality and length of life for those who suffer from the disease. In fact, the average lifespan of Duchenne patients has increased by about a decade since the MD CARE Act became law.

Given our Nation's wealth of scientific expertise, however, we can and should do more for families like the Dengers. We are making progress, but this is no time to take our foot off the accelerator. The $2 billion increase in funding for NIH that was included in the fiscal year 2016 funding bill will pay dividends for patients and their families. I urge my colleagues to continue to work collaboratively to sustain this commitment to biomedical research, which holds tremendous promise for finding better treatments and, ultimately, a cure for devastating diseases like Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

REMEMBERING JOHN HEINZ

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, on April 4, we marked 25 years since Pennsylvania Senator John Heinz died in a plane crash. I am honored to serve in the Senate seat he held from 1977 to 1991.

Five years ago, I paid tribute to Senator Heinz for his public service as a Senator. Today, I am going to focus on his leadership on the Special Committee on Aging. Senator Heinz served as chairman of that committee from 1981 to 1987. Pennsylvania is one of the oldest States in the country, and through this position, Senator Heinz was a strong advocate for seniors. During his chairmanship, the Special Committee on Aging held 34 hearings in Washington, DC, and countless more around the Nation. The committee also produced over 60 reports and papers. Senator Heinz would often use what he learned through these investigations and reports to inform his work as a member of the Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over the Social Security and Medicare programs.

John Heinz once said, ''Working together, we can lay the groundwork for a society that respects age and the elderly and that truly realizes the benefits of the experience, wisdom, and judgement of older Americans.'' As chairman of the Aging Committee, his first responsibility was not to party or partisanship, but to older Americans whose interests the committee was created to support and protect. Frank McArdle, a member of Senator Heinz's staff once commented:

> What Heinz brought to many issues . . . was a sense of outrage. He could channel that anger toward public policy that would correct the injustices that hurt vulnerable populations. When he seized upon a situation

like that, he wouldn't let go. His outrage over what was happening to defenseless people gave him an energy and a commitment to see it through.

As chairman, Senator Heinz took on the powerful in defense of the powerless.

Senator Heinz was an honorable public servant for our Commonwealth and our Nation. He focused intensively on the challenges facing our seniors and worked tirelessly to find solutions to their problems. We continue to be inspired by his distinguished service on behalf of the older citizens of Pennsylvania.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

TRIBUTE TO DR. SHEILA CROWLEY

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I do not often recognize non-Vermonters on the floor of the Senate, but I rise today to applaud the numerous and significant achievements of Dr. Sheila Crowley. Dr. Crowley recently retired as president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, after decades of advocacy to make sure people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. It has truly been an honor to work closely with Sheila on issues related to affordable housing.

I am particularly proud of our efforts to create the national housing trust fund, the only Federal program designed to build new affordable rental housing specifically for extremely low-income individuals. In the early 2000s, Sheila provided invaluable assistance to my office as we drafted the first House version of the trust fund and shepherded the legislation through its first votes in the House Financial Services Committee.

For the next 15 years, Sheila built grassroots support across the country for the trust fund, to keep the pressure on Federal lawmakers. Despite numerous setbacks—and one serious housing market collapse—she tirelessly advocated for addressing the significant housing needs of people with limited economic resources. It is a fitting testament to her tenacity that just as she prepared to retire, the Federal Housing Finance Agency began capitalizing the trust fund for the first time. Later this year, States will receive the first new Federal affordable housing production funds in decades, and for that, Sheila Crowley deserves an enormous amount of credit.

Not surprisingly, Sheila received the 2009 John W. Macy award from the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the Housing Leadership Award from the National Low Income Housing Coalition for her work on the National Housing Trust Fund campaign. But I am guessing the award Sheila will cherish most will be when, in the not-too-distant future, tenants move into the first trust fund financed affordable housing.

I cannot overstate the importance of Sheila's work and her accomplishments. We are experiencing nothing less than an affordable housing crisis on the national level. In order to afford the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 102 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Throughout her tenure at the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Sheila was not just a resolute advocate; she was also a vital resource on housing policy to many members of Congress. She also worked closely with organizations focused on homeless services, family housing, AIDS housing, housing for people with disabilities, senior housing, and services for battered women and victims of rape.

And while her focus was national, Sheila often travelled to States to support local housing efforts, including in my State of Vermont. She was a frequent keynote speaker at Vermont conferences and a valued partner in developing local responses to our housing challenges. I know a great many Vermonters who worked closely with Sheila and hold her in the highest esteem.

I wish Dr. Sheila Crowley all the best in her well-deserved retirement, and I am confident her affordable housing efforts will continue to bear fruit for decades to come.•

NATIONAL SEERSUCKER DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize seersucker manufacturers and enthusiasts across the United States. I wish everyone a Happy National Seersucker Day. This uniquely American fashion has a storied history dating back to 1909. Louisiana is proud to have played an important part in introducing the country to seersucker apparel. The first seersucker suit was designed by Joseph Haspel at his Broad Street facility in New Orleans, LA.

This lightweight cotton fabric, known for its signature pucker, has been worn and enjoyed by Americans across the country during the hot summer months. Mr. Haspel said it best, ''hot is hot, no matter what you do for a living.'' In the 1990s, Seersucker Day was established by Members of this chamber to honor this unique American fashion. I proudly resumed this tradition in 2014 in the U.S. House of Representatives by designating Wednesday, June 11, as National Seersucker Day. I have continued this tradition in the U.S. Senate and wish to designate Thursday, June 9, as the third annual National Seersucker Day. I encourage everyone to wear seersucker on this day to commemorate this iconic American clothing.

TRIBUTE TO PETER HENRY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a distinguished member of my staff, my legislative director, Peter Henry. I am sad to say that Peter will be leaving my office, as well as Washington, DC, for a new chapter in his life. His last day is April 29, 2016. He and his beautiful wife Libby, his two-and-a-half-year-old daughter Winnie, and his daughter-to-be will soon move back to his hometown of Kansas City. Peter has taken a job working in the private sector, where I know he will excel and succeed as he has during his time with my office.

Peter was one of the first staff members I hired after I became Senator, but Peter's time in Washington began back in 2005 when he came to our Nation's capital straight out of college. Prior to joining my team, Peter made a name for himself as a sharp and capable Hill staffer, rising quickly through the ranks in three different Senators' offices before moving to the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works, where he had a lead role in surface transportation issues.

Given his breadth of experience and the deep respect he fostered with his colleagues, Peter no doubt had his choice of offices to work for, but he chose to work for me. For that, I am immensely grateful. Being a freshman Senator is not easy, and being staff to a freshman senator is certainly a challenge. Peter rose to the challenge. He put together the best legislative team I could have imagined. He handled stress under fire, taught us about complex Senate procedures, and adeptly helped me navigate the minefields that can be Washington politics. His intelligence, integrity, strong work ethic, sense of fair play, and his good nature will be sorely missed in my office.

Peter is also a patriot and made sure to set us on the right track to serve the great people of Alaska and the rest of the country. I can't thank Peter enough for all the work he has done for me and for the rest of my staff. He leaves a hole, but I am comforted to know that his future is bright and that he will continue to contribute to our great country by working hard at his new endeavor and, most importantly, raising a wonderful family.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO EVELYN CANTU

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Evelyn Cantu for her hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Evelyn is a native of Texas. She currently attends Casper College, where she is studying political science. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Evelyn for the dedication she has shown while working for

me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID JOST

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to David Jost for his hard work as an intern in my Riverton office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

David is a graduate of the University of Wyoming, where he received a B.A. in psychology, B.S. in sociology, and M.S. in neurophysiology. David has also received a master of natural resources from Virginia Tech. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank David for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO THE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS OF CJI

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the elementary students of Chester-Joplin-Inverness, CJI. These students took part in Chester's annual Harvest 4 Hunger Campaign. All together, they gathered 2136.5 pounds of nonperishable food.

CJI is a combination of three towns up on what we call the Highline in Montana. The towns are Chester, Joplin, and Inverness. These three town have come together to make one great school to serve the students of the area.

There are 108 elementary students at CJI, and they did such a wonderful thing for families in the area. Harvest 4 Hunger is a campaign operated by CHS to gather nonperishable food items and money donations to give to local charities to feed families in need.

Now I hear the students had a little motivation for bringing food in. The winning classes at the end of each week were rewarded with a pizza party. There is no better motivation than a pizza party. I read a lot quotes from the kids, and it sounds like they had a great time collecting the food, and they were happy to get the chance to help people in need. One student told their teacher Miss Manion, That is what Hawks do.

It makes me so proud to see young Montanans helping out their communities. These students did such a wonderful thing. Great job, and God bless.●

RECOGNIZING THE VETERANS GUEST HOUSE

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Veterans Guest House for its unwavering commitment and loyalty to providing our servicemembers, veterans, and their families lodging while they address their own health care needs at medical facilities throughout northern Nevada. The Veterans Guest House is one of a kind for our great State and is an invaluable resource to our military community.

The Veterans Guest House was founded over two decades ago when a mother and her children were found sleeping in their car while their veteran father was in the intensive care unit at the local VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System Medical Center. In the early 1990s, founders of the Veterans Guest House—Chuck Fulkerson, Dick Rhyno, Thomas Purkey, Minor Kelso, Robert Crowell, Esq., Wally Willson, Lois Crocker, David Parsons, Joseph Rooney, Charles Grundy, Jes Barbera, Don Anderson, Lew Carnahan, Ben Duncan, Jeani Hunt, Jim Martin, Manuel Muniz, Rick Sorenson, Ensio Tosolini, Joe Scamihorn, William Wood, Len Crocker, Kit McGrath, Richard Shuster, Elaine McNeill, Rand Tanner, Chester Henry, and Ted Buchwald—realized that many veterans and their families lacked a place to stay while family members received medical treatment, and in 1994, they created the Spouse House. By 1998, the facility grew to offer five beds for veterans and their families.

In 2002, the facility was officially named the Veterans Guest House, and on Veterans Day in 2004, with only private donations, the organization purchased and renovated a 3-story home across the street from the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System Medical Center. This facility now accommodates up to 17 guests. The Veterans Guest House provides both long-term and short-term lodging to veterans and their families for various situations, including veterans receiving outpatient care, families of veterans who are hospitalized, and veterans' immediate family members who are receiving medical treatment as an inpatient or outpatient. In the 22 years since its inception, the Veterans Guest House has served over 55,000 nights to veterans, veteran spouses, and veteran families.

There is no way to adequately thank the men and women that lay down their lives for our freedoms, but those at the Veterans Guest House have gone above and beyond to show their appreciation. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to chief executive officer Noreen Leary, the incredible staff, and the many dedicated individuals who volunteer at the Veterans Guest House, in addition to president Terry Tholl, vice President Monk Maim, secretary Lucy Miller, treasurer Carol Langford, and past and present members serving on the board of directors. These individuals helping our active military members, veterans, and their families at the Veterans Guest House stand as shining examples of the manner in which we should respect our men and women in uniform. The unwavering dedication of the Veterans Guest House to providing our brave men and women with a place to stay is commendable, and I am proud to honor it today.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation, but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. Equally as important, it is crucial that these servicemembers and their families have a place to stay while receiving quality care. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation. I am very pleased that veterans service organizations like the Veterans Guest House are committed to ensuring that the needs of our veterans are being met.

Today I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing the Veterans Guest House, an organization whose mission is noble and charitable. I am both humbled and honored to acknowledge this organization and its work to provide active military members, veterans, and thsikfamilies a safe place to stay, and I wish it the best of luck in all of its future endeavors.●

REMEMBERING THOMAS C. SWEENEY

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, the people of Kodiak, AK, will gather on Saturday, May 7, to celebrate the life of Thomas ''Tom'' Cornelius Sweeney. Tom passed away on March 29 at the age of 84.

Tom was born on February 9, 1932, in Helena, MT. He first came to Kodiak as a member of the U.S. Navy, then returned to work construction and married Nancy Ann Norman. Nancy's family owned the gift and photo shop, Norman's.

Tom first pursued a career in law enforcement, serving as a territorial policeman, detective, State trooper, and private investigator. That took Tom and Nancy to various cities in Alaska. Following the 1964 Good Friday earthquake and tsunami, they returned to Kodiak for good. Tom and Nancy helped Nancy's family restore Norman's following the disaster. Tom pursued his entrepreneurial interests in oil sales, automobile sales and service, and finally insurance brokerage before retiring in 1996—a well-rounded career.

He was equally committed to the Kodiak community, serving as president of the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce, the Kodiak Rotary Club, and Pioneers of Alaska Igloo #18, which Tom helped reactivate in 1983. His statewide leadership roles included service as state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and chairman of the Alaska Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Tom leaves behind his beloved wife of 60 years, Nancy, two sons, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and a large extended family. I join with the people of Kodiak in celebrating the life of this great Alaska pioneer.●

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF YORK COUNTY CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

● Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, today I rise to congratulate the York County Children's Advocacy Center on the celebration of their 10th anniversary.

The York County Children's Advocacy Center opened its doors in May of 2006 in York, PA. Since its opening, the center has stayed true to its mission ''to reduce the trauma of child abuse investigations, foster professional collaboration and cooperation, and provide education and advocacy regarding the prevention of child abuse within the community.''

Without a child advocacy center, if a child is brave enough to report abuse, that child is often required to retell and, thus, relive the abuse through multiple, repetitive interviews with child protective services, prosecutors, police, victim services, and medical and mental health providers. The interviews often occur in places that magnify the child's trauma—police stations, emergency rooms, or offices of lawyers and social workers.

The York Child Advocacy Center, by contrast, brings together law enforcement, trained interviewers, child protective services, medical providers, and mental health experts in a child-friendly, safe house, where an abused child feels secure and only has to undergo one interview and one physical exam.

As a result of the center's tireless efforts, over 3,000 children have received vital services. The York County Children's Advocacy Center has achieved many important milestones. Some of these milestones include earning full accreditation through the National Children's Alliance, expanding their forensic interviewing and forensic medical services, and being accepted as a United Way partner agency. Each of these milestones has allowed the York County Children's Advocacy Center to better serve the most vulnerable in our society, our children.

On behalf of the Senate, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the York County Children's Advocacy Center as they celebrate 10 years of dedicated service to York County's children and families.●

TRIBUTE TO EVA ENCINIAS-SANDOVAL

● Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, today I want to recognize a great New Mexican and a great American. Eva Encinias-Sandoval is a pioneer and a cultural icon in the world of flamenco in New Mexico.

New Mexico has a long and rich cultural history with flamenco as one of its dynamic traditions. Flamenco is a complex art form that originated in Spain and blends influences from different cultures. It mixes both discipline and spontaneity.

With sweeping, expressive arm movements and rhythmic stomping often accompanied by singing or music, flamenco is more than a form of dance. It incorporates guitar, percussion, and song as integral parts of the art form.

Eva Encinias-Sandoval's career in flamenco spans more than 40 years. Her professional expertise includes performance, teaching choreography, concert production, and direction.

Eva began dancing and teaching flamenco at a young age. Her mother, Clarita, was also a dancer, and Eva started her training at the age of 5.

At age 14, Eva began teaching students in her mother's studio, and in 1973, she formed her first flamenco dance company, Ritmo Flamenco. The following year, she enrolled in the University of New Mexico, though the dance department did not offer flamenco classes at the time.

Eva began teaching flamenco as a single course offering at UNM in 1976. Now, the program of study includes all levels of flamenco technique and specialized topics. As a result of Eva's dedication and passion, UNM is the only institution in the country that offers bachelor of arts and masters of fine arts degrees with a concentration in flamenco.

Eva later went on to establish the National Institute of Flamenco in 1982. NIF is a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of flamenco in the United States. With Eva's artistic vision and guidance, the organization has expanded to include several thriving programs, such as the Conservatory of Flamenco Arts, Festival Flamenco Internacional de Albuquerque, Alma Flamenca, and many others.

Eva's work has also helped bring renowned international flamenco artists from Spain and other parts of the world to study and teach in our State, adding a depth of knowledge and expertise to her students' experiences. She hopes that her students will become the better artists by learning alongside the best artists.

She was the first woman inducted into the Albuquerque Wall of Fame, has received three Bravo awards, and accolades from her colleagues and students.

Despite the importance of these awards and honors, they are not what distinguishes Eva most. Instead, it is the example she sets in always doing her best, always giving back, and always striving for excellence.

Eva has changed her community as a talented dancer and teacher who has inspired countless students. She is deeply committed to her community and pays equal attention to young, less experienced dancers as more advanced students.

Although the origins of flamenco are cloudy, the Encinias family is a true ''flamenco family.'' Eva's children, Marisol and Joaquin, are both dancers. Her passion and legacy will live on through them, as well as her students who can be found at NIF, UNM, and, now, Tierra Adentro, a local charter school that incorporates flamenco into its curriculum.

Our State is fortunate to have someone like Eva Encinias-Sandoval, who not only sees the beauty of art, but also the beauty of our culture. Flamenco will continue to grow in New Mexico thanks to her dedicated work and the love of dance she continues to share with the community.

By educating mostly New Mexican students, Eva views flamenco as an opportunity to teach our State's youth programs relevant to whom they are as a people. Flamenco is an art form that is as unique as the artists who study it.

Whether through an appreciation or dedication to the art form, Eva Encinias-Sandoval has brought flamenco into the lives of countless New Mexicans. Her love for the art has not gone unnoticed, and I commend her for all of her accomplishments and her service to our State.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:23 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1890. An act to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 699. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to update the privacy protections for electronic communications information that is stored by third-party service providers in order to protect consumer privacy interests while meeting law enforcement needs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4240. An act to require an independent review of the operation and administration of the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB) maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and subsets of the TSDB, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4498. An act to clarify the definition of general solicitation under Federal securities law.

H.R. 4923. An act to establish a process for the submission and consideration of petitions for temporary duty suspensions and reductions, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4240. An act to require an independent review of the operation and administration of the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB) maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and subsets of the TSDB, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4498. An act to clarify the definition of general solicitation under Federal securities law; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–5288. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions'' (FRL No. 9945–28–OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5289. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Environmental Protection Agency Acquisition Regulation (EPAAR); Institutional Oversight of Life Science Dual Use Research of Concern (iDURC)'' (FRL No. 9941–86–OARM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5290. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determinations of Attainment by the Attainment Date, Extensions of the Attainment Date, and Reclassification of Several Areas for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9945–17–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5291. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections'' (FRL No. 9945–78–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5292. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities; Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incineration Units'' (FRL No. 9945–71–Region 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5293. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Quality Plans; Georgia; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 9945–60–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5294. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Quality Assurance Requirements for Cleaning of Fluid Systems and Associated Components of Water-Cooled Nuclear Power Plants'' (NRC–2014–0158) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5295. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Laboratory Investigations of Soils and Rocks for Engineering Analysis and Design of Nuclear Power Plants'' (Regulatory Guide 1.138, Revision 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5296. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medical Assessment of Licensed Operators or Applicants for Operator Licenses at Nuclear Power Plants'' (Regulatory Guide 1.134, Revision 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5297. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Welder Qualification for Welding in Areas of Limited Accessibility in Fuel Reprocessing Plants and in Plutonium Processing and Fuel Fabrication Plants'' (NRC–2014–0069) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5298. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Preheat and Interpass Temperature Control for the Welding of Low-Alloy Steel for Use in Fuel Reprocessing Plants and in Plutonium Processing and Fuel Fabrication Plants'' (NRC–2014–0070) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5299. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Response Strategies for Potential Aircraft Threats'' (Regulatory Guide 1.124, Revision 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5300. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Compilation of Reporting Requirements for Persons Subject to NRC Regulations'' (NRC–2014–0144) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5301. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to U.S. support for Taiwan's participation as an observer at the 69th World Health Assembly and in the work of the World Health Organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5302. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Annual Financial and Actuarial Information Reporting'' (RIN1212–AB30) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5303. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5304. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Bucksport/Lake Murray Drag Boat Spring National, Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; Bucksport, SC'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0009)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5305. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Net Positive Suction Head for Emergency Core Cooling and Containment Heat Removal System Pumps'' (NRC–2015–0107) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 434. A bill to strengthen the accountability of individuals involved in misconduct affecting the integrity of background investigations, to update guidelines for security clearances, to prevent conflicts of interest relating to contractors providing background investigation fieldwork services and investigative support services, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–246).

S. 1620. A bill to reduce duplication of information technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–247).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 340. A resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Da'esh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 381. A resolution honoring the memory and legacy of Michael James

Riddering and condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016.

S. Res. 394. A resolution recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

S. Res. 418. A resolution recognizing Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sanchez, and Akanksha Hazari for their selflessness and dedication to their respective causes, and for other purposes.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 436. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 442. A resolution condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels and honoring the memory of the United States citizens murdered in those attacks, and offering thoughts and prayers for all the victims, condolences to their families, resolve to support the Belgian people, and the pledge to defend democracy and stand in solidarity with the country of Belgium and all our allies in the face of continuing terrorist attacks on freedom and liberty.

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2555. A bill to provide opportunities for broadband investment, and for other purposes.

By Mr. INHOFE, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 2824. A bill to designate the Federal building housing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Headquarters located at 99 New York Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C., as the ''Ariel Rios Federal Building''.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment:

S. 2845. A bill to extend the termination of sanctions with respect to Venezuela under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Nathan Seifert and ending with Joshua Burke, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 14, 2016.

*Swati A. Dandekar, of Iowa, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Swati A. Dandekar, do swear that the information provided in this statement is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate.

Date: 12/14/2015.

SWATI A. DANDEKAR.

Dandekar, Swati Arvind

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Form Item B6

Year 2015 (thru July 20, 2015)

Individual/Organization, Dollars, and Level (Local, State or National):

Sam Gray, $250, State Representative Elections; Kumar Barve, $1500, U.S. Congress (Maryland); Iowa Democratic Party, $200 (EST), State; Dubuque County Democratic Central Committee, $60, Local.

Year 2014

Iowa Democratic Party, $1,500 (EST), State; Linn Phoenix Club, $250 (EST), Local; Linn County Democratic Central Committee, $100 (EST), Local; Citizens for Gronstal, $250, State.

Year 2013

Iowa Senate Fund, $250, State; Daniel Lundby, $200, State; Susie Weinacht, $700, Local; First District Democrats, $130, Iowa US congress District #1; Mark Smith, $100, State; Liz Bennett, $250, State; Citizens for Gronstal, $250, State; Citizens for Jochum, $150, State; Linn Phoenix Club, $250 (EST), Local; Buchanan County Democratic Central Committee, $25, Local; Iowa Democratic Party, $1,500, State.

Year 2012

Rob Hogg, $25, State; Daniel Lundby, $100, State; Linn County Democratic Central Committee, $100 (EST), Local; Linn Phoenix Club, $250 (EST), Local; Iowa Democratic Party, $1,500 (EST), State.

Year 2011

Linn County Democratic Central Committee, $100 (EST), Local; Linn Phoenix Club,$250 (EST), Local; Iowa Democratic Party, $1,500 (EST), State.

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*Adam H. Sterling, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Slovak Republic.

Nominee: Adam H. Sterling.

Post: Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: None.

3. Children and Spouses: Elka Sterling, None; Bram Sterling, None.

4. Parents: Stanley Sterling, deceased; Gloria Sterling, deceased.

5. Grandparents: Albert Wolfson, deceased; Mollie Wolfson, deceased; Eddie Sterling, deceased; Janie Wolfson, deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Judith Gitel, $5/month, DCCC House Democrats Act Blue; Abbie & Mark Frank, None.

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*Kelly Keiderling-Franz, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Oriental Republic of Uruguay.

Nominee: Kelly Keiderling.

Post: Uruguay.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, donee:

1. Self: $0.

2. Spouse: David W. Franz: $0.

3. Children and Spouses (not married): Katherine K. Franz: $0; Alexander K. Franz: $0.

4. Parents: Wallace E. Keiderling—deceased; Maria del Rosario Keiderling: $0.

5. Grandparents: Katherine Keiderling—deceased; Harvey Keiderling—deceased; Domingo Soruco—deceased; Luisa Rios de Soruco—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Keith L. Keiderling: $0; Hedy Cyker: $0.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Casey J. Keiderling: $0; Jacques Naquet-Radiguet: $0.

*Stephen Michael Schwartz, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Nominee: Stephen Michael Schwartz.

Post: Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: $100, 07–13–13, Friends of Barbara Nuchereno.

2. Spouse: Kristy Doreen Cook: none.

3. Children and Spouses (Both children under 16 years of age): Hannah Hagere Schwartz: none, Jonas Randolph Schwartz: none.

4. Parents: Robert Norman Schwartz, none; Carole Lesses Schwartz—Deceased; Jean Suto Schwartz (Father's second wife), $125, 10–22–13, Friends of Barbara Nuchereno.

5. Grandparents: Edward Idal Schwartz—Deceased; Liza Dudnik Schwartz—Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Edward A. Schwartz (brother), none; Sharon F. Schwartz (sister-in-law), none; Lewis L. Schwartz (brother), $250, 08–29–12, Obama Victory Fund 2012; $250, 08–29–12, Obama for America; Patricia Pierson Schwartz (sister-in-law), $250, 08–29–12, Obama for America; $250, 10–23–13, Friends of Barbara Nuchereno.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Barbara Schwartz Nuchereno (sister), $150, 06–07–15, Brenda FreedmanFamily Court; $400, 09–25–14, Patrick Gallivan/NYS Senate; $205, 07–25–13, Guy Marlette/Amherst Town Cncil; $25, 05–01–13, Amherst Century Club; $150, 03–06–13, Debra Givens/NYS Supreme Court; $580, 07–25–12, Guy Marlette/Amherst Town Cncil; $325, 05–12–12, Amherst Republicans. Louis J. Nuchereno (brother-in-law): $250, 08–26–15, Danielle Restaino/Judge; $125, 05–29–15, Ed Rath/County Legislator; $1,000, 10–23–14, Ortt for NYS Senate; $15,260, 02–07–14, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $1,000, 10–22–13, Paul Wojtaszek/NYS Supr. Court; $1,000, 09–03–13, DeBlasio/NYC Mayor; $5,000, 09–11–13, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $15,000, 08–30–13, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $75, 07–26–13, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $10,000, 06–24–13, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $1,000, 06–24–13, Andrews/State Treasurer; $250, 04–29–13, Barbara Nuchereno/Judge; $250, 02–01–13, Mary Carney/Erie Cnty Family Crt; $250, 06–20–12, Andrews/State Treasurer; $2,500, 06–18–12, Mitt Romney/US President; $2,500, 06–18–12, Mitt Romney/US President.

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*Christine Ann Elder, of Kentucky, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Liberia.

Nominee: Christine A. Elder.

Post: Monrovia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, donee:

1. Self: Christine A. Elder: none, N/A, N/A.

2. Spouse (see below note): Paul R. Hughes, Jr.: $500, 3/30/11, Lofgren for Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 8/4/11, Friends of Roger Wicker; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 11/15/11, Lofgren for Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 5/29/12, Anna Eshoo for Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 3/7/13, Anna Eshoo for

Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $1,000, 4/4/13, Lofgren for Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $750, 1/15/14, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 10/31/14, Lofgren for Congress; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 3/23/15, Ready PAC; Paul R. Hughes, Jr., $500, 6/30/15, Lofgren for Congress.

3. Children and Spouses: Eleanor A. Hughes: none, N/A, N/A; Christopher P. Hughes: none, N/A, N/A.

4. Parents: Allen M. Elder: none, N/A, N/A; Diane L. Elder, none, N/A, N/A.

5. Grandparents: Verrill J. Cass (deceased): none, N/A, N/A; Dorothy A. Cass (deceased): none, N/A, N/A; William Elder (deceased): none, N/A, N/A; Selma Geyer (deceased): none, N/A, N/A.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Gregory A. Elder: none, N/A, N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A: none, N/A, N/A.

Note re item 2 above: My husband's political giving record is bipartisan. Republican contributions outside the covered period include: Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), Rep. Lamar Smith (R–TX), Rep. Jennifer Dunn (R–WA), Longhorn PAC, Senator Orrin Hatch (R–UT), Rep. Rick White (R–WA), Rep. Frank Wolf (R–VA), and Rep. Connie Morella (R–VA). After November 2010, when his then-employer Adobe hired a Republican head of DC office http://cloo.ol/Ju15uD my husband focused his contributions on Democrats.

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*Elizabeth Holzhall Richard, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Lebanese Republic.

Nominee: Elizabeth Holzhall Richard.

Post: Lebanon.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: (deceased).

3. Children and Spouses: N/A.

4. Parents: Vern F. Holzhall—None. Mary V. Holzhall—None.

5. Grandparents: (deceased).

6. Brothers and Spouses: Vern J. Holzhall/Marianne Holzhall—None. John J. Holzhall/Rosalba Sanchez Burgos—$25.00, 2012, Ron Paul.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Cheryl Sargent—None. Karen Rainier/Colin Rainier—None.

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*R. David Harden, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

*Foreign Service nomination of Victoria L. Mitchell.

*Foreign Service nomination of Antonio J. Arroyave.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Rian Harker Harris and ending with Jennifer Marie Schuett, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 15, 2016.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Melinda L. Crowley and ending with Julie Elizabeth Zinamon, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 15, 2016.

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Patrick A. Burke, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Marshal for the District of Columbia for the term of four years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. BURR (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2869. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve college savings under section 529 programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 2870. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to prevent retaliation in the military, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2871. A bill to establish the position of Choice Program Ombudsman within the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs to manage complaints regarding the provision of hospital care and medical services under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. KING):

S. 2872. A bill to require the Government Accountability Office to submit to Congress a report on neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) in the United States and its treatment under Medicaid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2873. A bill to require studies and reports examining the use of, and opportunities to use, technology-enabled collaborative learning and capacity building models to improve programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2874. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to protect the enrollment of incarcerated youth for medical assistance under the Medicaid program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2875. A bill to provide for the elimination or modification of Federal reporting requirements; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2876. A bill to require the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to issue a scientifically valid and State-supported recovery plan for the Mexican gray wolf; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2877. A bill to amend title 32, United States Code, to specify the availability of certain funds provided by the Department of Defense to States for drug interdiction and counter-drug activities; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2878. A bill to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to improve the ability of the United States to advance religious freedom globally through enhanced diplomacy, training, counterterrorism, and foreign assistance efforts, and through stronger and more flexible political responses to religious freedom violations and violent extremism worldwide, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2879. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide further tax incentives for dependent care assistance; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2880. A bill to prohibit, as an unfair and deceptive act or practice, commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2881. A bill to authorize the Department of Labor's voluntary protection program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2882. A bill to facilitate efficient State implementation of ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2883. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the requirement of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a report on the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide for the specialized treatment and rehabilitative needs of disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2884. A bill to address the liability of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to the lead contamination of the water supply of the City of Flint, Michigan; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. 2885. A bill to extend the runway at Pope Army Airfield; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2886. A bill to reauthorize the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act of 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 2887. A bill to require the Missile Defense Agency to conduct annual tests of the

ground-based midcourse defense element of the ballistic missile defense system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2888. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's review and publication of illness and conditions relating to veterans stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and their family members; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2889. A bill to amend the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2010 to authorize an Innovation Corps; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2890. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of Christa McAuliffe; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2891. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 525 North Broadway in Aurora, Illinois, as the ''Kenneth M. Christy Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DAINES, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2892. A bill to accelerate the use of wood in buildings, especially tall wood buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2893. A bill to reauthorize the sound recording and film preservation programs of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2894. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to provide for salary reductions for certain employees of a pension plan in critical or declining status that reduces participant benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2895. A bill to extend the civil statute of limitations for victims of Federal sex offenses; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2896. A bill to eliminate the sunset date for the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand eligibility for such program, and to extend certain operating hours for pharmacies and medical facilities of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2897. A bill to amend title 9, United States Code, with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2898. A bill to promote greater efficiency in contracting associated with the SBIR and STTR programs of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2899. A bill to remove Federal barriers to combating mosquito-borne transmission of the Zika virus and promote public health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. Res. 447. A resolution designating May 1, 2016, as ''National Purebred Dog Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MORAN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. DAINES, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 448. A resolution recognizing the roles and contributions of the teachers of the United States in building and enhancing the civic, cultural, and economic well-being of the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. PERDUE, and Mr. WICKER):

S. Res. 449. A resolution congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and leaders of charter schools across the United States for making ongoing contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 17th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 1 through May 7, 2016; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RISCH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 450. A resolution honoring May 1 through May 7, 2016, as ''National Small Business Week'' and celebrating the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KIRK, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Res. 451. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Travel and Tourism Week and honoring the valuable contributions of travel and tourism to the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. HELLER):

S. Res. 452. A resolution recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 453. A resolution designating April 30, 2016, as ''Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans''; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

S. Res. 454. A resolution recognizing the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response program on its 30th anniversary; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. REID, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 455. A resolution recognizing the cultural and historic significance of the Cinco de Mayo holiday; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 258

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 258, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 356

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 356, a bill to improve the provisions relating to the privacy of electronic communications.

S. 772

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 772, a bill to secure the Federal voting rights of persons when released from incarceration.

S. 940

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 940, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to study the feasibility of providing certain taxpayers with an optional, pre-prepared tax return, and for other purposes.

S. 1287

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1287, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the program for viral hepatitis surveillance, education, and testing in order to prevent deaths from chronic liver disease and liver cancer, and for other purposes.

S. 1491

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1491, a bill to provide sensible relief to community financial institutions, to protect consumers, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1631

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify certain provisions relating to multiemployer pensions, and for other purposes.

S. 1830

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1830, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1852

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1852, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure health insurance coverage continuity for former foster youth.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2123

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2123, a bill to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2123, supra.

S. 2175

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2175, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2289

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2289, a bill to modernize and improve the Family Unification Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2292

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2292, a bill to reform laws relating to small public housing agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 2454

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2454, a bill to limit the period of authorization of new budget authority provided in appropriation Acts, to require analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of existing programs for which continued new budget authority is proposed to be authorized by committees of Congress, and for other purposes.

S. 2478

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2478, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide for the purchase of paper United States savings bonds with tax refunds.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2557

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2557, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to repeal the suspension of eligibility for grants, loans, and work assistance for drug-related offenses.

S. 2566

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2566, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide sexual assault survivors with certain rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity.

S. 2659

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) 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. 2707

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) 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. 2736

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2736, a bill to improve access to durable medical equipment for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2740

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2740, a bill to prohibit the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to state sponsors of terrorism.

S. 2758

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2758, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove consideration of certain pain-related issues from calculations under the Medicare

hospital value-based purchasing program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2758, supra.

S. 2759

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2759, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a nonrefundable credit for working family caregivers.

S. 2772

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2772, a bill to eliminate the requirement that veterans pay a copayment to the Department of Veterans Affairs to receive opioid antagonists or education on the use of opioid antagonists.

S. 2787

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2787, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide the same level of Federal matching assistance for every State that chooses to expand Medicaid coverage to newly eligible individuals, regardless of when such expansion takes place.

S. 2794

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2794, a bill to establish a process for the submission and consideration of petitions for temporary duty suspensions and reductions, and for other purposes.

S. 2803

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2803, a bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to deposit certain funds into the general fund of the Treasury in accordance with provisions of Federal law with regard to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's Transitional Reinsurance Program.

S. 2825

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2825, a bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to require compliance with domestic source requirements for footwear furnished to enlisted members of the Armed Forces upon their initial entry into the Armed Forces.

S. 2830

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2830, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to provide for a school and child care lead testing grant program.

S. 2835

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 2835, a bill to amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to establish a program to provide grant assistance for the rehabilitation and repair of high hazard potential dams, and for other purposes.

S. 2840

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2840, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds for active shooter training, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2840, supra.

S. 2843

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2843, a bill to provide emergency supplemental appropriations to address the Zika crisis.

S. 2849

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2849, a bill to ensure the Government Accountability Office has adequate access to information.

S. 2850

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2850, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 33

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) 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. 340

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 340, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Da'esh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks.

S. RES. 373

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor 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.

S. RES. 432

At the request of Mr. KIRK, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 432, a resolution supporting respect for human rights and encouraging inclusive governance in Ethiopia.

S. RES. 436

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 436, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day.

S. RES. 442

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 442, a resolution condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels and honoring the memory of the United States citizens murdered in those attacks, and offering thoughts and prayers for all the victims, condolences to their families, resolve to support the Belgian people, and the pledge to defend democracy and stand in solidarity with the country of Belgium and all our allies in the face of continuing terrorist attacks on freedom and liberty.

AMENDMENT NO. 3862

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3862 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2028, a bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3873

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3873 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2028, a bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3873 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2028, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. 2885. A bill to extend the runway at Pope Army Airfield; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, when it comes to projecting America's power, I have said many times that North Carolina is the tip of the American spear. When our country calls, it is a safe bet that the first responders will be U.S. Marines from Camp Lejeune or our paratroopers of the 18th Airborne stationed at Fort Bragg.

The 18th Airborne is America's Global Response Force. When called, units of the 18th Airborne can be anywhere in the world within 48 hours. Because of this unique mission—unique to Fort Bragg and the 18th Airborne—Pope Army Airfield is the busiest tactical airfield in the Armed Forces.

Unfortunately, Pope is also home of the shortest runway in the Army. If the 18th Airborne is put on alert, C–5 and C–17 aircraft are needed to launch the force, and they cannot depart fully fueled with a full load of paratroopers and equipment off of the airfield. The current Pope Army Airfield runway provides only 8,500 feet for takeoff; however, to take off, the C–17 needs a minimum of 10,500 feet and the C–5 requires 11,500 feet.

The Air Force's air refueling fleet is already stressed. The C–17s and C–5s used to carry out the Global Response Force missions have to leave Pope Army Airfield with full equipment and paratroopers but only about 60 percent of their fuel capacity. This requires them to go either to Charleston, SC, or Gander, Newfoundland, to get refueled so they can continue their mission. One refueling stop for an airlift coming out of Pope at Gander, Newfoundland, costs $17,000 per hour. If 53 aircraft—roughly the number required to outload the heaviest brigade combat team—have to refuel at Gander, it costs about $2 million one-way because they can't be fully loaded when they take off from Pope Army Airfield. This refueling stop also adds 2.5 more hours to the time on the mission, and the mission objective is to be anywhere in the world in 48 hours.

Prior to the last round of BRAC, extending the Pope runway to accommodate fully loaded C–17 and C–5 aircraft was Air Mobility Command's No. 1 airfield project, and the U.S. Air Force said it was their No. 2 project. However, this has fallen off the Army's priority list, and I am not really sure why.

Extending the Pope runway to accommodate the airlift requirements of the Global Response Force and the 18th Airborne Corps is a national strategic priority. Therefore, I will be offering an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act during markup that requires the Army to report to the Senate their plans to extend the runway at Pope and whether it is the top priority for the Army. I think our paratroopers and crews need to know this. I know our taxpayers need to know this. And, more than anything, I want to make sure that when we deploy the proud men and women from the Green Ramp of Pope Army Airfield, we do it loaded and ready to go wherever they need to go in the United States or around the world.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2886. A bill to reauthorize the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act of 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Reauthorization of the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act of 2000, also referred to as FRIMA. This Act was established to support healthy fish populations while simultaneously allowing for continued water diversions for irrigation and other uses in the Pacific Northwest. I championed this program's last reauthorization in 2009, and I can say with certainty that the pressing need for FRIMA has not gone away.

Throughout the Pacific Northwest there is a critical need for projects that improve fish passage without compromising important water diversion needs for agriculture and other uses. The sustainable coexistence of continued water diversions and healthy fish populations can be achieved through a number of interventions, such as installation of fish screens, removal of fish passage barriers, and carrying out inventories to better understand needs and priorities. The technology and the knowledge needed to carry out these projects are at our finger tips; the means, however, is not.

That is why FRIMA is such an important program for the Pacific Northwest. The act, overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provides a Federal cost-share on the order of 65 percent to fund fish passage and fish screen projects at water diversion and irrigation sites in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and western Montana. This voluntary cost-shared program authorizes $25 million in Federal funds, to be equally shared among the 4 States, that can be leveraged to make these essential projects to improve fish passage and install fish screens come to fruition.

FRIMA has a history of demonstrated success in Oregon and throughout the Pacific Northwest. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 127 projects have been funded through FRIMA to date. These projects have reopened more than 1,130 miles of habitat to fish passage. In total, 56 fish passage barriers have been removed, 130 water diversion sites have been screened, and 18 fish passage evaluations have been completed. This program has led to multiple accomplishments for communities in the Pacific Northwest, but there are still tens of thousands of unscreened water diversions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and western Montana. There is still work to be done, and FRIMA could provide the means to continue to make a difference for sustainable fisheries and water management.

At its core, FRIMA is centered on the concept of collaboration. This is a program borne through bi-partisan and multi-sectoral support. FRIMA is embraced by water users, farmers, fisheries managers and conservation organizations alike. The economic and ecological integrity of our region depends on resilient fisheries and sustainable management of water resources, and FRIMA offers a means to concurrently make positive strides in sustainably managing both our water diversions and our treasured fishery resources.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2886

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE FISHERIES RESTORATION AND IRRIGATION MITIGATION ACT OF 2000.

Section 10(a) of the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 777 note; Public Law 106–502) is amended by striking ''2009 through 2015'' and inserting '' 2017 through 2024''.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2893. A bill to reauthorize the sound recording and film preservation programs of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I am introducing The Library of Congress Sound Recording and Film Preservation Programs Reauthorization Act of 2016. I am pleased to have Senator LEAHY as a cosponsor. This bill would reauthorize the sound recording and film preservation programs of the Library of Congress through fiscal year 2026. The current authorization sunsets in September 2016. In addition to reauthorizing the programs, the bill would increase the National Recording Preservation Foundation's number of board members and place a cap on Federal matching funds similar to what is currently required of the National Film Preservation Foundation.

Congress created the National Film Preservation Board in 1988 and the National Film Preservation Foundation in 1996 to help save historically significant American films for the benefit of the public. In 2000, Congress created the National Recording Preservation Board and the National Recording Preservation Foundation to help save

historically important American sound recordings.

The two boards advise the Librarian of Congress on national preservation planning policy, helping the Library develop and disseminate preservation and production standards for at-risk works. In addition, the Film Board selects films of importance to cinema and America's cultural and artistic history for the National Film Registry, while the Recording Board selects sound recordings which have been recognized for their cultural, artistic and/or historical significance to American society and the Nation's audio legacy for the National Recording Registry.

The two foundations are the private sector charitable affiliates of the Boards. They raise funds and distribute them to archives throughout the U.S. The Library's Federal match is used for small grants to archives, educational institutions, museums and local historical societies with small film and sound recording collections in need of preservation. A requirement of the grants is that recipients make these works available to researchers, educators and the general public.

These programs have allowed the Library of Congress, in collaboration with a wide range of industry organizations, no-profit libraries and archives, preservation organizations, artist guilds, educators and academics, to collect and preserve at-risk films and recordings all over the country.

My State of Iowa has benefitted directly from these programs. For example, the National Film Preservation Foundation has provided grants to preserve films held in Iowa institutions, including Coe College, Council Bluffs Public Library, Davenport Public Library, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, Iowa State University American Archives of the Factual Film, and the University of Iowa. In addition, a number of Iowa-related items are preserved in the Library of Congress Packard Campus audio-visual collection, including copies of Iowa Public Radio and Public Television items from the American Archive of Public Broadcasting.

Iowa constituents have contacted my office about their support for the reauthorization of these programs. For example, I heard from Ben Johnson, Support Service Librarian at the Council Bluffs Public Library, Jill Jack, Director of Library Services, College Archivist and Associate Professor at Coe College, Tanya Zanish-Belcher, Director of Special Collection & Archives at Wake Forest University, and David McCartney, University Archivist at the University of Iowa, about the value of these programs to local libraries and historical societies, and how their organizations were in the possession of materials that were able to be saved with the help of these programs.

According to Mr. Johnson, the Council Bluffs Public Library received a grant to preserve a 1930s silent film entitled Man Power, which had been created ''to boost the local economy by luring businesses to Council Bluffs. This historic film sat in our archives for over 80 years, unwatched and deteriorating over time. With the help of the [National Film Preservation Fund], we were able to preserve and digitize this wonderful time capsule of our local history. Thanks to the [National Film Preservation Foundation], this lost piece of history has been viewed hundreds of times and is now safe from decay and available for the public.'' Mr. Johnson wrote, ''Did you know Council Bluffs Iowa had the first electric Streetcar system in the country? As a result of this grant we were able to see, for the first time, real, moving images of Council Bluffs from back when it was a major rail hub. I have no doubt that without support from the [National Film Preservation Foundation], vital pieces of local history would be lost forever.''

Ms. Jack wrote, ''Coe College received grants to preserve two films that depict campus life in the 1930s and 1960s. Once these historically rich films were preserved more than 170 people attended a screening of the films. Thanks to that event, the college was able to raise funds from alumni to preserve a third campus film from 1972. The public funding from the [National Film Preservation Foundation] helped us not only share our history with the public but also generated financial support from the community. Since posting the films on our website students, faculty and the public have viewed the films using them in academic and public history research.''

According to a statement from Ms. Zanish-Belcher, who managed the National Film Preservation Foundation film grant when she was Head of the Special Collections Department at Iowa State University, ''[t]hanks to the National Film Preservation Foundation, NFPF, Iowa State University was able to preserve and make accessible an important group of films documenting the Rath Packing Company of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. As the Head of the Special Collections Department at Iowa State at the time, I oversaw the preservation of these fragile nitrate films from the 1930s. Without support from the NFPF, these important visual documents of Iowa History would have been lost. The NFPF continues to help regional archives throughout the country, helping to save more than 2,230 films and collections in all 50 states. While most film preservation efforts focus on the Hollywood product, the NFPF is the only agency devoted to helping organizations like Iowa State University preserve films in their collections that would otherwise deteriorate and go unseen. These films provide important historical documentation depicting local and regional business, groups, and organizations of interest to both Iowa constituents and U.S. citizens.''

According to a letter from Mr. McCartney, the University of Iowa received funds to preserve a number of films significant to Iowa history, including ''a set of student-produced dance films (1939) believed to be the oldest thesis films of their type in the nation. Another noteworthy project is Iowa State's Rath Packing Company Collection (ca. 1933), a group of depression era films documenting the largest meatpacking company in the country. The films show the Rath test kitchen, packing plant operations, and advertising efforts. Thanks to a [National Film Preservation Foundation] grant, this collection is now available for scholars and historians.''

I appreciate the fact that these Library of Congress programs have placed a special emphasis on assisting small and local projects that would otherwise have been lost or overlooked. Local libraries and historical societies have been helped by the National Film Preservation Foundation to rescue films that, according to Mr. Johnson, Ms. Jack and Mr. McCartney, ''aren't Hollywood features but regional films and newsreels that document our history and culture.'' According to Ms. Jack, ''we and other Iowa organizations have hundreds of other culturally and historically significant films that need preservation work to survive. These document the history of our state [of Iowa] from its earliest years to present time.'' So the biggest value that I see of these programs is that they boost smaller archives with few resources to protect their collections, and they provide smaller organizations with a path to learn about film preservation and successful production standards. These programs are an invaluable partner to these small and local organizations in their efforts to save America's moving picture and sound recording heritage.

It is important to foster an environment that encourages the preservation of our nation's cultural resources, and films and music are a big part of the American experience. As such, vulnerable motion pictures and sound recordings of historic and cultural significance should be protected from disintegration and decay. I understand that many of these works already have been lost and that others are deteriorating rapidly. I am a history buff, so I am inspired when I see works that depict our American heritage—and especially life in Iowa and rural America—saved for future generations. We need to safeguard these precious items so they are not lost and so that generations of Americans to come can appreciate and learn about their historical and creative roots in both film and sound recordings. Many of these works are unique and rare, so I am pleased to support the Library of Congress programs and their effort to assist organizations all across the 50 States to preserve these treasures for students, researchers and the general public.

I look forward to swift action on this bill so that it can be enacted before these programs sunset at the end of September.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill and letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2893

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 ''Library of Congress Sound Recording and Film Preservation Programs Reauthorization Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. SOUND RECORDING PRESERVATION PROGRAMS.

(a) NATIONAL RECORDING PRESERVATION BOARD.—Section 133 of the National Recording Preservation Act of 2000 (2 U.S.C. 1743) is amended by striking ''through fiscal year 2016'' and inserting ''through fiscal year 2026''.

(b) NATIONAL RECORDING PRESERVATION FOUNDATION.—

(1) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 152411(a) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking ''through fiscal year 2016 an amount not to exceed'' and inserting ''through fiscal year 2026 an amount not to exceed the lesser of $750,000 or''.

(2) NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—Section 152403(b)(2) of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''nine directors'' and inserting ''12 directors''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''six directors'' each place it appears and inserting ''8 directors''.

SEC. 3. FILM PRESERVATION PROGRAMS.

(a) NATIONAL FILM PRESERVATION BOARD.—Section 112 of the National Film Preservation Act of 1996 (2 U.S.C. 179v) is amended by striking ''through fiscal year 2016'' and inserting ''through fiscal year 2026''.

(b) NATIONAL FILM PRESERVATION FOUNDATION.—Section 151711(a)(1)(C) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking ''through 2016'' and inserting ''through 2026''.

NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY: I write to ask your support for reauthorization of the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF), the grant-giving public charity set up by Congress in 1996 to help save America's film heritage. I understand that the NFPF's reauthorization comes before the Senate this session.

In Iowa we benefit directly from the programs of the NFPF. The University of Iowa has received funds from the foundation to preserve several films significant to Iowa history. These include a set of student-produced dance films (1939) believed to be the oldest thesis films of their type in the nation. Another noteworthy project is Iowa State's Rath Packing Company Collection (ca. 1933), a group of depression-era films documenting the largest meatpacking company in the country. The films show the Rath test kitchen, packing plant operations, and advertising efforts. Thanks to an NFPF grant, this collection is now available for scholars and historians.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, Coe College, Davenport Public Library, and Council Bluffs Public Library also received grants to preserve films from the NFPF. We and other Iowa organizations have hundreds of other culturally and historically significant films that need preservation work to survive. These document the history of our state from its earliest years to present time.

Thanks to the National Film Preservation Foundation we have made important progress on saving this important material. To date the NFPF has helped rescue more than 2,600 films from all 50 states and these aren't Hollywood features but regional films and newsreels that document our history and culture.

The NFPF has been very effective since it started operations in 1997. I urge you to support their work. With additional funding the National Film Preservation Foundation can continue to work with organizations like the University of Iowa to save America's heritage. I would be happy to speak with your staff if you have any questions. Please phone, email or write if I can provide additional information.

Best wishes,

DAVID MCCARTNEY.

APRIL 21, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY: I write to ask your support for reauthorization of the National Film Preservation Foundation, the grant-giving public charity set up by Congress in 1996 to help save America's film heritage. I understand that the NFPF's reauthorization comes before the Senate this session.

In Iowa we have benefitted directly from the programs of the National Film Preservation Foundation. Coe College received grants to preserve two films that depict campus life in the 1930s and 1960s. Once these historically rich films were preserved more than 170 people attended a screening of the films. Thanks to that event, the college was able to raise funds from alumni to preserve a third campus film from 1972. The public funding from the NFPF helped us not only share our history with the public but also generated financial support from the community. Since posting the films on our website students, faculty and the public have viewed the films using them in academic and public history research.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, Davenport Public Library, Council Bluffs Public Library, and Iowa State University also received grants to preserve films from the NFPF. We and other Iowa organizations have hundreds of other culturally and historically significant films that need preservation work to survive. These document the history of our state from its earliest years to present time.

The NFPF has been very effective since it started operations in 1997. To date the NFPF has helped rescue more than 2,600 films from all 50 states and these aren't Hollywood features but regional films and newsreels that document our history and culture. I urge you to support their work. With additional funding the National Film Preservation Foundation can continue to work with organizations like the University of Iowa to save America's heritage.

Best wishes,

JILL JACK.

NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY: I write to ask your support for reauthorization of the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF), the grant-giving public charity set up by Congress in 1996 to help save America's film heritage. I understand that the NFPF's reauthorization comes before the Senate this session.

In 2012 Council Bluffs Public Library received a grant to preserve Man Power, a 1930 silent film created to boost the local economy by luring businesses to Council Bluffs. This historic film sat in our archives for over 80 years, unwatched and deteriorating over time. With the help of the NFPF, we were able to preserve and digitize this wonderful time capsule of our local history. Thanks to the NFPF, this lost piece of history has been viewed hundreds of times and is now safe from decay and available for the public.

Did you know Council Bluffs Iowa had the first electric Streetcar system in the country? As a result of this grant we were able to see, for the first time, real, moving images of Council Bluffs from back when it was a major rail hub. I have no doubt that without support from the NFPF, vital pieces of local history would be lost forever.

Thanks to the National Film Preservation Foundation, we and other local libraries and historical societies have been able to save important films that would otherwise be overlooked. To date the NFPF has helped rescue more than 2,600 films from all 50 states and these aren't Hollywood features but regional films and newsreels that document our history and culture.

The NFPF has been very effective since it started operations in 1997. They assist not only the largest film archives in the country, but also provide a path for smaller organizations to learn about film preservation and protect their collections. I urge you to support their work. With additional funding the National Film Preservation Foundation can continue to work with organizations like Council Bluffs Public Library to save America's heritage. Thank you for your time and please be in touch if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

BEN JOHNSON.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, two days ago, we recognized World IP Day, celebrating the profound contributions that artists and inventors make to our culture and beyond. The theme of this year's World IP Day was Digital Creativity: Culture Reimagined, and events around the world focused on how to promote and protect creative efforts in the digital age. As we look forward to new and innovative digital creations we must also be vigilant in preserving the past.

We must ensure that the films and recordings that played vital roles in shaping and recording the American experience are preserved for future generations. Those works, created by previous generations, tell us who we are, and who we were, as a society. To help ensure that these records of our history, our dreams, and our aspirations can be viewed and appreciated by future generations, I am joining with Senator GRASSLEY to introduce legislation reauthorizing the Library of Congress sound recording and film preservation programs.

Congress has long recognized the importance of cultural preservation, creating the National Film Preservation Program in 1988 and the National Sound Recording Preservation Program in 2000 within the Library of Congress. Both programs help preserve historical and cultural artifacts that would otherwise disappear or be destroyed through the passage of time. The Library of Congress uses the programs to advance important preservation efforts including recognizing films

and sound recordings on the National Film and National Recording Registries.

The programs also created the federally chartered National Film and National Recording Preservation Foundations. The foundations provide grants to a wide array of educational and nonprofit organizations to preserve films and sound recordings. To date, the National Film Preservation Foundation has given grants to organizations in all 50 States, including to Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home in Manchester, Vermont, which used the money to preserve home movies of Robert Todd Lincoln's descendants from the 1920s to the 1940s. Well over 2000 films, many of which can now be viewed online, have been preserved through the Foundation's grants. Among the preserved films is the earliest feature film shot in Vermont, ''A Vermont Romance'' from 1916.

By reauthorizing these important programs through 2027, this legislation will allow the Library of Congress and the Foundations to continue their important work in preserving America's fading treasures, as well as providing grants that will help libraries, museums, and archives preserve these works and make them available for study and research. I urge my colleagues to act swiftly to pass this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NORTHEAST HISTORIC FILM,
Bucksport, ME, April 20, 2016.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LEAHY: Founded in 1986, Northeast Historic Film has built the largest existing collection of moving images documenting the history and heritage of northern New England. And since the founding of the National Film Preservation Foundation, the NFPF has been the largest and most important source of funds for preserving these works.

The preserved films include A Vermont Romance (1916), the earliest feature film shot in Vermont; film documentation of the 1927 flood; textile mill owners and workers in Maine; the home movies of Charles Norman Shay, a Penobscot Indian elder who is a decorated veteran of the D-Day invasion; Provincetown, Massachusetts, in 1915; a 4–H club in 1946; a tuberculosis sanitarium in 1934, and over two dozen other examples of community life and activity in the region.

Communications with colleagues in archives around the country inform us of the crucial significance of National Film Preservation Foundation funding. Moving image repositories from coast to coast benefit from NFPF grants. The dedicated staff, which efficiently shepherds NFPF financial resources, has ensured that our nation's heritage will continue to be available for study and enjoyment.

We are grateful to you and NFPF's friends in Congress for help in the past—and for assistance with the upcoming reauthorization. Our film heritage depends on it.

Sincerely,
DAVID WEISS and KARAN SHELDON,
Founders, Northeast Historic Film.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2895. A bill to extend the civil statute of limitations for victims of Federal sex offenses; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Extending Justice for Sex Crime Victims Act, which is a bill to extend the time for child sexual abuse victims to seek justice against their perpetrators.

I would like to thank Senator CORNYN for working closely with me on this important issue.

Tragically, all over the country, victims of sexual abuse are coming forward to tell their stories of abuse and exploitation at the height of their innocence when they were children.

Several from California, for example, have contacted my office, and described with great courage their pain and anguish.

Each of these individual stories represents an untold amount of pain and suffering. When you look at the numbers, you cannot help but feel devastated.

Indeed, the numbers reveal that no one is too far removed from being affected by deplorable crimes committed against children.

Studies indicate that at least one in four girls and about one in five boys is sexually abused.

It has been estimated that 90 percent of child victims never go to the authorities concerning their abuse.

For many of these children, coming to grips with the trauma is extraordinarily difficult.

Several research studies have described in painstaking detail the long-term effects that affect the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development of abuse victims and sex trafficking victims.

Those who are victimized when they are children typically do not come forward with their abuse—if at all—until many years later, after the victims reach adulthood.

Simply put, the bill extends the civil statute of limitations in two ways for minor victims of Federal sex crimes—because these victims often need more time to realize the harm they have suffered and to seek redress.

First, the bill extends the statute of limitations until the age of 28—from age 21—for minor victims of particular offenses, such as sexual abuse and child pornography.

This brings the statute of limitations in line with a similar law that provides a civil remedy for victims of sex trafficking. The two laws are sections 2255 and 1595 of Title 18.

This provision was recently included, at my request, in the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act of 2016, which the Judiciary Committee approved unanimously weeks ago.

Second, for the laws that provide civil remedies for sex abuse and sex trafficking victims, the bill clarifies when the statute of limitations begins to run.

The bill would clarify that, for both laws providing civil remedies for these victims, the time for a victim to bring a claim against the perpetrator would not begin to run until after the victim actually discovers the injury or the violation.

This is significant because victims of sex crimes are sometimes abused even before they can remember the abuse—some as young as 3-years old.

The bill therefore clarifies that the time for a victim to sue her perpetrator does not begin to run when the violation occurs, but rather when the victim first discovers the injury or the violation.

This is also important because victims of child pornography—who are also sexually abused—may not even ''discover'' that their illegal, pornographic images are being distributed over the internet and elsewhere until later in life.

The bill therefore ensures that minor victims have an extended period to seek justice against their perpetrators after discovering their injury or violation.

Under current law, it is unclear from court opinions when victims must bring their claims, and Congress must make clear it has always intended these victims to have an opportunity to come forward and seek redress.

I want to thank Senator CORNYN again for working so closely with me on this issue.

I also want to acknowledge the support for this bill from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the National Center for Victims of Crime, and the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 447—DESIGNATING MAY 1, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL PUREBRED DOG DAY''

Mr. TILLIS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 447

Whereas the human-canine bond predates history and individuals have enjoyed the companionship and assistance of dogs since the dawn of civilization;

Whereas dog ownership has existed in all cultures, races, climates, and economic situations;

Whereas more than 350 dog breeds exist worldwide, and more than 180 breeds are recognized by the American Kennel Club;

Whereas purebred dogs and breeders of purebred dogs have played a crucial role in United States history, dating to colonial times, during which George Washington had a foxhound breeding program, which established the American Foxhound breed;

Whereas responsible breeders of purebred dogs dedicate their lives to improving the health and well-being of dogs and preserving unique breeds of dogs;

Whereas purebred dogs were created to work alongside humans, and provide inestimable service as—

(1) search and rescue dogs;

(2) service dogs;
(3) disease detection dogs;
(4) police dogs;
(5) conservation dogs;
(6) livestock guardians;
(7) therapy dogs; and
(8) companions and guardians of families, homes, and property;

Whereas purebred dogs provide unparalleled service to the disabled as guide and service dogs, and are the choice of leading service dog breeding programs because of the heritable intelligence, and desirable and predictable qualities, of purebred dogs;

Whereas purebred military working dogs serve alongside the men and women of the United States Armed Forces in combat and in peacetime;

Whereas breed instinct enables purebred dogs to readily serve as—
(1) avalanche dogs;
(2) trackers and trailers;
(3) herders;
(4) controllers of vermin;
(5) water rescuers;
(6) carting and sled dogs;
(7) retrievers;
(8) protectors;
(9) hunters; and
(10) bird dogs;

Whereas the first ''National Purebred Dog Day'' was established on May 1, 2015;

Whereas millions of individuals, through social media and other avenues, recognize May 1 each year as ''National Purebred Dog Day'' and desire, on May 1, to expressly recognize the contributions of the purebred dog; and

Whereas individuals value all dogs, regardless of the ancestry of the dogs, and especially cherish a purpose-bred dog and the predictability of each respective breed of purpose-bred dog: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 1, 2016, as ''National Purebred Dog Day'' in celebration of purebred dogs and the many service and companion benefits purebred dogs have and continue to provide to the United States; and

(2) honors the dedicated and responsible breeders who work to preserve and advance their breeds and responsible dog ownership throughout the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 448—RECOGNIZING THE ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE TEACHERS OF THE UNITED STATES IN BUILDING AND ENHANCING THE CIVIC, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MORAN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. DAINES, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 448

Whereas education and knowledge form the foundation of the current and future strength of the United States;

Whereas teachers and other education staff have earned and deserve the respect of their students and communities for the selfless dedication of the teachers and staff to community service and the futures of the children of the United States;

Whereas the purposes of National Teacher Appreciation Week, held from May 2, 2016, through May 6, 2016, are to raise public awareness of the unquantifiable contributions of teachers and to promote greater respect and understanding for the teaching profession; and

Whereas students, schools, communities, and a number of organizations representing educators are hosting teacher appreciation events in recognition of National Teacher Appreciation Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) thanks the teachers of the United States; and

(2) promotes the profession of teaching by encouraging students, parents, school administrators, and public officials to participate in teacher appreciation events during National Teacher Appreciation Week.

SENATE RESOLUTION 449—CONGRATULATING THE STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND LEADERS OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR MAKING ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTING THE IDEALS AND GOALS OF THE 17TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK, TO BE HELD MAY 1 THROUGH MAY 7, 2016

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. PERDUE, and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 449

Whereas charter schools are public schools that do not charge tuition and enroll any student who wants to attend, often through a random lottery when the demand for enrollment is outmatched by the supply of available charter school seats;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools deliver a high-quality public education and challenge all students to reach the students' potential for academic success;

Whereas public charter schools promote innovation and excellence in public education;

Whereas public charter schools throughout the United States provide millions of families with diverse and innovative educational options for children of the families;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools and charter management organizations are increasing student achievement and attendance rates at institutions of higher education;

Whereas public charter schools are authorized by a designated entity and—

(1) respond to the needs of communities, families, and students in the United States; and

(2) promote the principles of quality, accountability, choice, high-performance, and innovation;

Whereas, in exchange for flexibility and autonomy, public charter schools are held accountable by the authorizers of the charter schools for improving student achievement and for sound financial and operational management;

Whereas public charter schools are required to meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) in the same manner as traditional public schools;

Whereas public charter schools often set higher expectations for students, beyond the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), to ensure that the charter schools are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas 43 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws authorizing public charter schools;

Whereas, as of the 2015–2016 school year, more than 6,800 public charter schools served more than 2,900,000 children;

Whereas enrollment in public charter schools grew from 400,000 students in 2001 to 2,900,000 students in 2016, a sixfold increase in 15 years;

Whereas in the United States—

(1) in 160 school districts, more than 10 percent of public school students are enrolled in public charter schools; and

(2) in 14 school districts, at least 30 percent of public school students are enrolled in public charter schools;

Whereas public charter schools improve the achievement of students enrolled in the charter schools and collaborate with traditional public schools to improve public education for all students;

Whereas public charter schools—

(1) give parents the freedom to choose public schools;

(2) routinely measure parental satisfaction levels; and

(3) must prove the ongoing success of the charter schools to parents, policymakers, and the communities served by the charter schools or risk closure;

Whereas a 2015 report from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University found significant improvements for students at urban charter schools, and compared to peers of traditional public schools, each year those students completed the equivalent of 28 more days of learning in reading and 40 more days of learning in math;

Whereas parental demand for charter schools is high, and there was an estimated 9 percent growth in charter school enrollment between fall 2014 and fall 2105; and

Whereas the 17th annual National Charter Schools Week is scheduled to be celebrated the week of May 1 through May 7, 2016: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the students, families, teachers, leaders, and staff of public charter schools across the United States for—

(A) making ongoing contributions to public education;

(B) making impressive strides in closing the academic achievement gap in schools in the United States, particularly in schools with some of the most disadvantaged students in both rural and urban communities; and

(C) improving and strengthening the public school system throughout the United States;

(2) supports the ideals and goals of the 17th annual National Charter Schools Week, a week-long celebration to be held May 1 through May 7, 2016, in communities throughout the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities during National Charter Schools Week to demonstrate support for public charter schools.

SENATE RESOLUTION 450—HONORING MAY 1 THROUGH MAY 7, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK'' AND CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS IN EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RISCH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 450

Whereas ''National Small Business Week'' has been declared by every President since 1963;

Whereas there are more than 28,000,000 small businesses in the United States;

Whereas nearly 90 percent of United States employers have fewer than 20 employees;

Whereas small businesses in the United States—

(1) represent 99.7 percent of all businesses with employees;

(2) employ over 48 percent of employees in the private sector;

(3) constitute 98 percent of businesses that export goods; and

(4) account for more than 46 percent of private sector output;

Whereas, on July 30, 1953, Congress established the Small Business Administration to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small businesses—

(1) to preserve free and competitive enterprise;

(2) to ensure that a fair proportion of the total sales of Government property are made to small businesses; and

(3) to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the United States;

Whereas 63 percent of new jobs are created by small businesses; and

Whereas May 1 through May 7, 2016, will be celebrated as ''National Small Business Week'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors May 1 through May 7, 2016, as ''National Small Business Week'';

(2) celebrates the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States during National Small Business Week;

(3) recognizes the importance of—

(A) creating policies that promote an environment in which small businesses may succeed; and

(B) the Small Business Administration as a valuable resource for entrepreneurs in the United States; and

(4) supports efforts—

(A) to encourage consumers to use small businesses; and

(B) to increase awareness of the value of small businesses and the impact of small businesses on the economy of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 451—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK AND HONORING THE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KIRK, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 451

Whereas National Travel and Tourism Week was established in 1983 through the enactment of the Joint Resolution entitled ''Joint Resolution to designate the week beginning May 27, 1984, as 'National Tourism Week' '', approved November 29, 1983 (Public Law 98–178; 97 Stat. 1126), which recognized the value of travel and tourism;

Whereas National Travel and Tourism Week is celebrated across the United States from May 1 through May 7, 2016;

Whereas more than 400 travel destinations throughout the United States are holding events in honor of National Travel and Tourism Week;

Whereas 1 out of every 9 jobs in the United States depends on travel and tourism and the travel and tourism industry supports 15,100,000 jobs in the United States;

Whereas the travel and tourism industry employs individuals in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and all the territories of the United States;

Whereas international travel to the United States—

(1) is the single largest export industry in the United States; and

(2) generates a trade surplus balance of approximately $61,000,000,000;

Whereas the travel and tourism industry, Congress, and the President have worked to streamline the visa process and make the United States welcoming to visitors from other countries;

Whereas travel and tourism provide significant economic benefits to the United States by generating nearly $2,100,000,000,000 in annual economic output;

Whereas leisure travel allows individuals to experience the rich cultural heritage and educational opportunities of the United States and its communities; and

Whereas the immense value of travel and tourism cannot be overstated: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Travel and Tourism Week;

(2) commends the travel and tourism industry for its important contributions to the United States; and

(3) commends the employees of the travel and tourism industry for their important contributions to the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 452—RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. HELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 452

Whereas on average, an individual is sexually assaulted in the United States every 2 minutes, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network;

Whereas nearly 80,000 rapes were reported to law enforcement in 2013, according to the Department of Justice;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 1 in 5 women (or 18.3 percent) and 1 in 71 men (or 1.4 percent) surveyed in the United States in 2010 experienced a rape or attempted rape at some time in their lives;

Whereas sexual violence is also a burden for many individuals who serve the United States, and the Department of Defense estimates that approximately 19,000 members of the United States Armed Forces experienced unwanted sexual contact in fiscal year 2014;

Whereas children and young adults are at significant risk of sexual assault, up to 44 percent of sexual assault victims are under 18 years of age, and up to 80 percent of sexual assault victims are under 30 years of age;

Whereas sexual assault affects women, men, and children of all racial, social, religious, age, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups in the United States;

Whereas sexual violence may take many forms, including acquaintance, stranger, spousal, and gang rape, incest, child sexual abuse, commercial sex trafficking, sexual harassment, and stalking;

Whereas in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs of sexual assault, sexual assault has numerous adverse consequences, which can include post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide, according to the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence;

Whereas many sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement agencies, which enables many rapists to evade punishment for their crimes;

Whereas as many as ⅔ of sexual crimes are committed by individuals who are not strangers to the victims;

Whereas sexual assault survivors suffer emotional scars long after the physical scars of the survivors have healed;

Whereas advances in DNA technology have enabled law enforcement agencies to potentially identify and prosecute the perpetrators in tens of thousands of unsolved rape cases;

Whereas prosecution can lead to the incarceration of rapists and prevent those individuals from committing additional crimes;

Whereas national, State, territorial, and tribal coalitions, community-based rape crisis centers, and other organizations across the United States are committed to—

(1) increasing public awareness of sexual violence and the prevalence of sexual violence; and

(2) eliminating sexual violence through prevention and education;

Whereas important partnerships have been formed among criminal and juvenile justice agencies, health professionals, public health workers, educators, first responders, and victim service providers;

Whereas thousands of volunteers and staff at rape crisis centers, State coalitions against sexual assault, and nonprofit organizations across the United States play an important role in making crisis hotlines and other services available to survivors of sexual assault;

Whereas free, confidential help is available to all victims and survivors of sexual assault through—

(1) the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800-656-HOPE and online.rainn.org); and

(2) more than 1,000 sexual assault service providers across the United States;

Whereas the DoD Safe Helpline, Safe HelpRoom, and Safe Helpline mobile app each provide support and help to members of the Department of Defense community—

(1) by telephone at 877-995-5247; and

(2) online at SafeHelpline.org;

Whereas individual and collective efforts reflect the dream of the people of the United States—

(1) for individuals and organizations to actively work to prevent all forms of sexual violence; and

(2) for no sexual assault victim to be unserved or feel that there is no path to justice; and

Whereas April 2016 is recognized as ''National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month provides a special opportunity to educate the people of the United States about sexual violence and to encourage the prevention of sexual assault, improvement in the treatment of survivors of sexual assault, and the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual assault;

(B) it is appropriate to properly acknowledge survivors of sexual assault and to commend the volunteers and professionals who assist those survivors in their efforts to heal;

(C) national and community organizations and private sector supporters should be recognized and applauded for their work in promoting awareness about sexual assault, providing information and treatment to survivors of sexual assault, and increasing the number of successful prosecutions of perpetrators of sexual assault; and

(D) public safety, law enforcement, and health professionals should be recognized and applauded for their hard work and innovative strategies to ensure perpetrators of sexual assault are held accountable; and

(2) the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 453—DESIGNATING APRIL 30, 2016, AS ''DIA DE LOS NINOS: CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS''

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 453

Whereas each year, people in many countries throughout the world, and especially in the Western Hemisphere, celebrate Día de los Niños, or Day of the Children, on April 30th in recognition and celebration of the future of their country—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States, and the well-being of children remains one of the top priorities of the United States;

Whereas the people of the United States must nurture and invest in children to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the spirit of the United States;

Whereas in 2014, the Census Bureau estimated that approximately 17,900,000 of the nearly 55,400,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States are children under 18 years of age, representing ⅓ of the total Hispanic population residing in the United States and roughly ¼ of the total population of children in the United States;

Whereas Hispanic Americans, the youngest and largest racial or ethnic minority group in the United States, celebrate the tradition of honoring their children on Día de los Niños and wish to share this custom with all people of the United States;

Whereas as the United States becomes more culturally and ethnically diverse, the people of the United States must strive to create opportunities that provide dignity and upward mobility for all children;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and children are responsible for passing on family values, morality, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education is most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas the latest data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (referred to in this preamble as ''NAEP'') indicates that Latino students continue to score lower than the national average on reading assessments conducted at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels—an achievement gap that has persisted for decades;

Whereas the most recent data by NAEP demonstrates that 81 percent of Latino fourth graders in public schools are not proficient in reading;

Whereas Latino authors and Latino protagonists remain underrepresented in literature for children, and less than 3 percent of books for children are written by Latino authors, illustrated by Latino book creators, or feature significant Latino cultural content, even though ¼ of all public school children are Latino;

Whereas research has shown that culturally relevant literature can increase student engagement and reading comprehension, yet some Latino students may go their entire educational experience without seeing themselves portrayed positively in the books that they read and the stories that they hear;

Whereas increasing the number and proportion of multicultural authors in literature for children elevates the voices of the growing diverse communities in the United States and can serve as an effective strategy for closing the reading proficiency achievement gap;

Whereas addressing the widening disparities that still exist among children is of paramount importance to the economic prosperity of the United States;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm the significance of family, education, and community among the people of the United States;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their futures, articulate their aspirations, and find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members and encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the United States to declare April 30, 2016, as Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans, a day to bring together Latinos and communities across the United States to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society and invest in future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2016, as ''Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans''; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all people;

(B) are positive, uplifting, and help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about each other's cultures and share ideas;

(D) include all family members, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within families, which will enable children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to build relationships; and

(F) provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence and to find the inner strength, will, and fire of the human spirit to make their dreams come true.

SENATE RESOLUTION 454—RECOGNIZING THE TRANSPORTATION COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. CAPITO submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 454

Whereas the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response program (referred to in this preamble as ''TRANSCAER'') is a voluntary national outreach effort that focuses on assisting communities to prepare for and respond to a possible hazardous material transportation incident;

Whereas TRANSCAER was founded in 1986;

Whereas TRANSCAER members consist of—

(1) volunteer representatives from the chemical manufacturing, transportation, distribution, and emergency response industries;

(2) volunteer representatives from industry associations;

(3) volunteer personnel of those industries and industry associations; and

(4) government representatives;

Whereas TRANSCAER offers hundreds of training events each year;

Whereas TRANSCAER offered training to tens of thousands of responders between 1986 and 2016;

Whereas TRANSCAER is a unified industry initiative that promotes the safe transportation and handling of hazardous materials;

Whereas TRANSCAER aids community emergency response planning for hazardous material transportation incidents;

Whereas TRANSCAER builds strong relationships and trust with communities located along transportation routes, and those relationships and trust could help to ensure that an incident is handled safely, appropriately, and efficiently; and

Whereas TRANSCAER demonstrates the continuing commitment of chemical manufacturers and transporters to the safe transportation of hazardous materials: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response program (commonly referred to as ''TRANSCAER'') on its 30th anniversary.

SENATE RESOLUTION 455—RECOGNIZING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CINCO DE MAYO HOLIDAY

Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. REID, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs.

MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 455

Whereas May 5, or ''Cinco de Mayo'' in Spanish, is celebrated each year as a date of importance by Mexican and Mexican-American communities;

Whereas the Cinco de Mayo holiday commemorates May 5, 1862, the date on which Mexicans defeated the French at the Battle of Puebla, 1 of the many battles that the Mexican people won in their long and brave fight for independence, freedom, and democracy;

Whereas the victory of Mexico over France at the Battle of Puebla represented a historic triumph for the Mexican government during the Franco-Mexican war of 1861–1867 and bolstered the resistance movement;

Whereas the success of Mexico at the Battle of Puebla reinvigorated the spirits of the Mexican people and provided a renewed sense of unity and strength;

Whereas the French army, which had not experienced defeat against any of the finest troops of Europe in more than half a century, sustained a disastrous loss at the hands of an outnumbered and ill-equipped, but highly spirited and courageous, Mexican army;

Whereas the courageous spirit that Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza and his men displayed during that historic battle can never be forgotten;

Whereas in a larger sense, Cinco de Mayo symbolizes the right of a free people to self-determination, just as Benito Juarez, the president of Mexico during the Battle of Puebla, once said, ''El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz'', meaning ''respect for the rights of others is peace'';

Whereas the sacrifice of Mexican fighters was instrumental in keeping Mexico from falling under European domination while, in the United States, the Union Army battled Confederate forces in the Civil War;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo serves as a reminder—

(1) that the foundation of the United States was built by individuals from many countries and diverse cultures who were willing to fight and die for freedom; and

(2) of the close ties between the people of Mexico and the people of the United States;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo encourages the celebration of a legacy of strong leaders and a sense of vibrancy in communities; and

Whereas Cinco de Mayo serves as a reminder to provide more opportunities for future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic struggle of the people of Mexico for independence and freedom, which Cinco de Mayo commemorates; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe Cinco de Mayo with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3884. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. LEE, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. DAINES, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2123, to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3885. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1875, to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

SA 3886. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CORKER) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1635, to authorize the Department of State for fiscal year 2016, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3884. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. LEE, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. DAINES, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2123, to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 143, line 12, insert ''and for which the offender's release from any term of imprisonment was within 15 years of the commencement of the instant offense'' before the period.

On page 146, line 11, insert ''a term of imprisonment may be reduced only if the defendant has not been convicted of any serious violent felony and'' after ''offense,''.

On page 146, line 12, strike ''may''.

On page 146, beginning on line 15, strike '', reduce the term of imprisonment for the offense''.

On page 146, line 21, strike ''if such'' and insert ''finds''.

On page 147, line 7, insert '', including a review of any prior criminal conduct or any other relevant information from Federal, State, and local authorities'' after ''section''.

On page 147, strike lines 11 through 20, and insert the following:

(1) in subsection (f)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''or section 1010'' and inserting '', section 1010''; and

(ii) by inserting '', or section 70503 or 70506 of title 46'' after ''963)'';

(B) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) the defendant does not have—

''(A) more than 4 criminal history points, excluding any criminal history points resulting from a 1-point offense, as determined under the sentencing guidelines;

''(B) a prior 3-point offense, as determined under the sentencing guidelines; and

''(C) a prior 2-point violent offense, as determined under the sentencing guidelines;''; and

(C) after paragraph (5), by inserting the following:

''Information disclosed by a defendant under this subsection may not be used to enhance the sentence of the defendant unless the information relates to a violent offense.''; and

On page 148, strike lines 15 through 25 and insert the following:

''(h) DEFINITION OF VIOLENT OFFENSE.—As used in this section, the term 'violent offense' means a 'crime of violence', as defined in section 16, that is punishable by imprisonment.''.

On page 149, line 13, strike ''or section'' and insert '', section''.

On page 149, line 14, insert '', or section 70503 or 70506 of title 46,'' after ''963)''.

On page 150, strike lines 7 through 14 and insert the following:

''(3) the defendant was not an organizer, leader, manager, or supervisor of other participants in the offense, as determined under the sentencing guidelines;

On page 150, line 20, insert '', unless the defendant was a minor or minimal participant, as determined under the sentencing guidelines'' before the semicolon.

On page 151, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

''Information disclosed by a defendant under this subsection may not be used to enhance the sentence of the defendant unless the information relates to a violent offense.

On page 152, strike lines 10 through 20 and insert the following: ''United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking 'second or subsequent conviction under this subsection' and inserting 'violation of this subsection that occurs after a prior conviction under this subsection has become final'.''.

On page 153, line 8, insert ''a term of imprisonment may be reduced only if the instant violation was for a drug trafficking offense that did not involve a violation of clause (ii) or (iii) of section 924(c)(1)(A) of title 18, United States Code, the defendant has not otherwise been convicted of any serious violent felony, and'' after ''offense,''.

On page 153, line 9, strike ''may''.

On page 153, beginning on line 12, strike '', reduce the term of imprisonment for the offense''.

On page 153, line 18, strike ''if such'' and insert ''finds''.

On page 154, line 4, insert '', including a review of any prior criminal conduct or any other relevant information from Federal, State, and local authorities'' after ''section''.

Beginning on page 154, strike line 5 and all that follows through page 155, line 23.

On page 156, line 1, strike ''106'' and insert ''105''.

On page 157, line 1, strike ''107'' and insert ''106''.

On page 158, line 1, strike ''108'' and insert ''107''.

On page 162, line 3, strike ''109'' and insert ''108''.

On page 162, line 25, insert ''and organized by Federal district where applicable'' after ''paragraph (1)''.

On page 163, line 5, insert '', including referrals from investigative agencies of the Department of Justice,'' after ''prosecution''.

On page 166, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

SEC. 109. FENTANYL.

(a) CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT AMENDMENT.—Section 401(b) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 841(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8)(A) In the case of a violation of subsection (a), if the mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin also contains a detectable amount of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide or any analogue of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide, then a court shall—

''(i) not impose a term of probation; and

''(ii) in addition to the term of punishment for the violation of this section, impose a term of imprisonment not to exceed 5 years.

''(B) A term of imprisonment imposed on a person under subparagraph (A)(ii) may not run concurrently with any term of imprisonment imposed on the person under any other provision of law.

''(9)(A) In the case of a violation of subsection (a), if the mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide or any analogue of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide was represented to be or sold as heroin, then a court shall—

''(i) not impose a term of probation; and

''(ii) in addition to the term of punishment for the violation of this section, impose a term of imprisonment not to exceed 5 years.

''(B) A term of imprisonment imposed on a person under subparagraph (A)(ii) may not run concurrently with any term of imprisonment imposed on the person under any other provision of law.''.

(b) CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES IMPORT AND EXPORT ACT AMENDMENT.—Section 1010(b) of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 960(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8)(A) In the case of a violation of subsection (a), if the mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin also contains a detectable amount of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide or any analogue of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide, then a court shall—

''(i) not impose a term of probation; and

''(ii) in addition to the term of punishment for the violation of this section, impose a term of imprisonment not to exceed 5 years.

''(B) A term of imprisonment imposed on a person under subparagraph (A)(ii) may not run concurrently with any term of imprisonment imposed on the person under any other provision of law.

''(9)(A) In the case of a violation of subsection (a), if the mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide or any analogue of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl) -4-piperidinyl] propanamide was represented to be or sold as heroin, then a court shall—

''(i) not impose a term of probation; and

''(ii) in addition to the term of punishment for the violation of this section, impose a term of imprisonment not to exceed 5 years.

''(B) A term of imprisonment imposed on a person under subparagraph (A)(ii) may not run concurrently with any term of imprisonment imposed on the person under any other provision of law.''.

On page 170, beginning on line 1, strike ''Private entities that will, on a volunteer basis'' and insert ''Nonprofit or other private organizations, including faith-based and community-based organizations, that will''.

On page 178, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 179, line 10 and insert the following:

''(A) ELIGIBLE PRISONER.—The term 'eligible prisoner' means—

''(i) an individual who has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment pursuant to a conviction for a Federal criminal offense; or

''(ii) an individual within the custody of the Bureau of Prisons, including an individual in a Bureau of Prisons contracted facility.''.

On page 191, line 21, strike ''In'' and insert ''Notwithstanding the 10 percent limit described in paragraph (1) and in''.

On page 203, line 8, strike ''title'' and insert ''Act''.

On page 203, line 9, strike ''title'' and insert ''Act''.

On page 203, line 24, strike ''and''.

On page 204, line 5, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

On page 204, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

(iv) a description of how the reduced expenditures on Federal corrections and the budgetary savings resulting from this Act, and the amendments made by this Act, are currently being used and will be used to—

(I) increase investment in law enforcement and crime prevention to combat gangs of national significance and high-level drug traffickers through the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program and other task forces;

(II) hire, train, and equip law enforcement officers and prosecutors; and

(III) promote crime reduction programs using evidence-based practices and strategic planning to help reduce crime and criminal recidivism.

On page 226, line 17, insert ''and the Secretary of Labor'' after ''Affairs''.

On page 227, line 3, insert ''and the Secretary of Labor'' after ''Affairs''.

On page 227, line 8, insert ''and the Secretary of Labor'' after ''Affairs''.

On page 227, line 12, insert ''AND DOL'' after ''VA''.

On page 227, line 13, insert ''and the Department of Labor'' after ''Affairs''.

SA 3885. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1875, to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Afghanistan Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINED TERM.

In this Act, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(4) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate;

(5) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(6) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(7) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(8) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

TITLE I—EFFECTIVE AFGHANISTAN ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 101. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom, and since then the United States Armed Forces and the Afghan National Security Forces have made countless sacrifices in defending Afghanistan against the threat of terrorism and insurgency and by extension the United States and the wider world.

(2) Since 2001, the United States has worked with a broad coalition of nations that has helped to dramatically improve numerous development indicators within Afghanistan, including—

(A) a dramatic increase in the number of girls enrolled in primary education from an estimated 5,000 under the Taliban to 2,400,000 girls as of 2010;

(B) an increase in the percentage of individuals above the poverty line from 25.4 percent in 2002 to 35.8 percent in 2011;

(C) an increase in the percentage of individuals who now have access to an improved water source in rural areas from 22 percent in 2001 to 56 percent in 2012;

(D) a precipitous decline in maternal mortality from 1200/100,000 births in 1995 to 400/100,000 births in 2013; and

(E) an expansion of women's rights.

(3) Numerous research studies have shown that government corruption is a driver of conflict and particularly so in Afghanistan, where it has served as a powerful recruitment tool for the Taliban.

(4) Since the first democratic transfer of power in the history of Afghanistan in 2014, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah have led a National Unity Government that has identified key security and development challenges in order to make Afghanistan a full and productive member of the community of democratic nations.

(5) The National Unity Government has renewed specific focus on addressing corruption within the country as a driver of instability, including reopening a fraud case involving high level officials and the Kabul Bank that resulted in the disappearance of an estimated $1,000,000,000.

(6) In its report ''Realizing Self Reliance: Commitments to Reform and Renewed Partnership'', the Government of Afghanistan committed to the international community in London in December 2014, to address the ''main drivers of corruption in Afghanistan,'' including ''collusive procurement practices, weak rule of law and abuse of the legal system, and arbitrary regulations that build in incentives to pay bribes''. Government of Afghanistan commitments included—

(A) forming an independent anti-corruption commission with time-bound prosecutorial powers;

(B) implementing recommendations by the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee on a national action plan to reduce corruption;

(C) requiring all government officials to provide public declarations of their assets;

(D) meeting all Financial Action Task Force (FATF) requirements to further limit and investigate illicit fund flows;

(E) forming a national procurement board staffed by qualified professionals who will manage all large value contracts using internationally recognized standards and procedures; and

(F) delineating the roles, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of anti-corruption institutions such as the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption (HOO) and the Attorney General to restrict them to focus on their core function of enforcement instead of oversight.

(7) The December 2014 Government of Afghanistan report ''Realizing Self Reliance: Commitments to Reform and Renewed Partnership'', expressed a commitment to ''enhancing productivity, growth and revenues'' by—

(A) developing natural resources through public-private partnerships that bring in rents, taxes, and profits;

(B) removing obstacles to trade and transit and ending smuggling that diverts revenue away from the treasury;

(C) negotiating expanded market access in regional and global markets;

(D) gradually formalizing the informal economy and changing the compact between the state and citizens to one where citizens pay taxes for services they tangibly benefit from; and

(E) transferring government payments electronically to eliminate losses in transit.

(8) In 2012, international donors and the Government of Afghanistan agreed to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (''TMAF'') which committed to provide $4,000,000,000 in economic assistance per year from 2012-2015 and sustain assistance at or near the same levels of the past decade through 2017, while the Government of Afghanistan committed to meet benchmarks related to democracy and governance, public finance and revenue generation, and economic development.

(9) At the end of 2014, under the TMAF, the Government of Afghanistan had fallen short in meeting benchmarks related to: revenue collection, the enhancement of women's rights, corruption and the illicit economy, and the protection of human rights.

(10) In the Joint Declaration following the London Conference on Afghanistan of December 4, 2014, the international community and the new Government of Afghanistan agreed to refresh the existing TMAF and associated commitments at the 2015 Senior Officials Meeting based on the reform program and priorities as laid out by the Government of Afghanistan.

(11) Afghanistan faces great difficulties in making progress in countering illegal narcotics and remains the leading global illicit opium poppy producer.

(12) The illegal narcotics trade results in the transfer of illicit funds and encourages and also requires corrupt financial transactions, and, if minimized, could have beneficial impacts on trade and reduce overall levels of corruption.

(13) The international community has endorsed Afghanistan's longer-term development following the war and identified the criticality of the ''transformation decade'' from 2015-2024 outlined by the Government of Afghanistan and has acknowledged that the Government of Afghanistan will seek continued international assistance in order for it to become a stable, self-sustained partner in the community of democratic countries.

(14) As development assistance from the United States and broader international community gradually diminishes in the coming years, the accelerated development of the Afghan private sector and governing institutions becomes even more necessary to maintain the gains of the past decade and to enhance our mutual goals of Afghan security and stability.

(15) While Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have taken over lead combat responsibilities, they continue to operate in close coordination with, and with significant resources from the international community, under the Resolute Support Mission and in coordination with ongoing counter-terrorism operations. Development of civilian oversight institutions for the security sector has lagged. Such oversight will be important for ensuring that Afghan security forces are accountable and do not abuse their powers.

SEC. 102. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the National Unity Government of Afghanistan has made a substantial commitment to reform that should be supported but also subject to heightened scrutiny by the Afghan people and international donors given past failures and persistent challenges in the country;

(2) Afghanistan is at a critical inflection point, having gone through political and security transitions as the international community draws down its military forces. The international community should work closely with the new government in supporting development priorities for the rest of the transformation decade that translate into producing concrete development results for the Afghan people;

(3) sustainable accountability and reform of Afghan governing institutions will not come from the international community but from a commitment by the Government of Afghanistan and society reinforced by domestic watchdog groups and internal government accountability monitoring mechanisms;

(4) the United States Government should deepen its dialogue on anti-corruption efforts with the Government of Afghanistan to develop effective oversight mechanisms to ensure large donor contracts do not contribute to corruption;

(5) the United States should encourage Afghanistan's participation in the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative in which government and civil society collaborate to promote transparency, fight corruption, and use technologies to strengthen government;

(6) the United States should urge the Government of Afghanistan to build upon existing anti-money laundering and countering terrorism financing legislation by developing effective regulations and institutions to implement reforms;

(7) the United States should urge the Government of Afghanistan to broaden personal asset disclosures to include members of the covered officials' immediate families or households and develop effective mechanisms for verifying disclosed information;

(8) in the event of future egregious cases of corruption in Afghanistan, the President should impose visa bans and asset freezes on those responsible, especially in instances where United States assistance is stolen or misappropriated;

(9) the United States Government should cooperate with the Government of Afghanistan and with international donors to develop a series of strict accountability benchmarks based on the refreshed Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework and the Government of Afghanistan's own ''Realizing Self Reliance'' report commitments that will condition levels of assistance and the amount of on-budget assistance on anti-corruption performance acceptable to donors;

(10) the United States should support the Afghan Parliament to refine and strengthen the legal framework of anti-corruption and anti-money laundering laws to address beneficial ownership, countering bid-rigging and other contracting and procurement fraud, criminal investigations of financial transactions, complementary banks, personal asset or other financial declarations and disclosures as required by law or regulation, efforts to meet FATF requirements, and other areas to further inhibit the illicit flow of money;

(11) the commitment by the Government of Afghanistan to strengthen its nascent private sector should be supported and sustained using the full array of tools of the United States, including technical and legal assistance;

(12) United States assistance to the Afghan judicial system and other Afghan legal institutions that enable and empower private sector development by instilling greater investor confidence should be prioritized to ensure the protection of private property, the sanctity of contracts, and effective dispute resolution mechanisms for businesses and investors;

(13) the United States Government should identify opportunities for the United States to introduce trade facilitation as part of the economic relationship between the 2 countries;

(14) the Governments of the United States and Afghanistan should work together to identify more Afghan products and raw materials to be included on the United States Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) treatment list;

(15) the American University of Afghanistan is an emerging pillar in Afghanistan's education system and has provided a unique opportunity for higher education for Afghan youth, especially women; and

(16) the United States should encourage the Government of Afghanistan to implement with urgency electoral reforms in accordance with the ''Agreement between the Two Campaign Teams Regarding the Structure of the National Unity Government''.

SEC. 103. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE POLICY FOR AFGHANISTAN.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to conduct assistance programs that result in highly effective, impact driven development outcomes for the people of Afghanistan while maintaining the highest standards of accountability for United States taxpayers;

(2) that all United States Government agencies and entities working in Afghanistan coordinate, plan, and regularly review plans in a coherent, well-informed process to develop United States policy and assistance programming;

(3) to support the development of effective Government of Afghanistan oversight institutions and domestic watchdog civil society organizations;

(4) subject to significant evident progress made in meeting TMAF accountability and improved governance as it relates to development, to abide by resource commitments made as part of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework;

(5) to provide incentivized assistance to Afghanistan's governing institutions based upon verifiable and measurable development outcomes and on-budget assistance based upon demonstrated capacity improvements that are mutually agreed to by the Government of Afghanistan and Government of the United States;

(6) to support the development of democratic governing institutions in Afghanistan, promote the development of a growing private sector, and strengthen civil society in Afghanistan;

(7) to recognize that Afghanistan's sustainable development is grounded in growing the regional economy, and to support the efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan to build strong regional economic connectivity with the country's neighbors;

(8) to support, where appropriate, proven programs that promote private sector job creation in Afghanistan; and

(9) that assistance programs in direct support of Afghan women and girls remain a priority for the United States, including specific efforts to support women and girls education, meaningful engagement in political and reconciliation processes, training and recruitment of Afghan female police and security forces, advancement of women's legal rights, economic development, and efforts to increase the overall health and well-being of Afghan women and girls.

SEC. 104. EFFECTIVE AFGHANISTAN ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) STRATEGY TO COMBAT CORRUPTION IN AFGHANISTAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Government of Afghanistan, shall develop a comprehensive interagency strategy for United States assistance that is sustainable and is not counter-productive to combating corruption in Afghanistan.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The strategy developed under paragraph (1) should include the following elements:

(A) Multi-year goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes for targeted activities to strengthen selected Afghan official institutions and nongovernmental organizations to prevent, investigate, deter, and prosecute corruption.

(B) An operational plan incorporating all United States Government programming to implement the anti-corruption goals and objectives.

(C) A summary of United States efforts to coordinate with other international donors to ensure that anti-corruption advice or programming provided to the Government of Afghanistan is not contradictory.

(D) A focus on the development of governmental and nongovernmental Afghan capacity to ensure accountability and combat corruption.

(E) An evaluation of Afghan civil society anti-corruption capacities that includes

their ability to use technology to combat corruption.

(b) AFGHANISTAN ANTI-CORRUPTION FUND.—Subject to the availability of funds, the President is authorized to provide technical and financial assistance to official Government of Afghanistan anti-corruption and audit institutions and Afghan civil society watchdog groups in support of the anti-corruption priorities identified by the Government of Afghanistan and the United States Government. Subject to careful consideration by the United States Government of the legitimacy, efficacy, and direct impact and influence of such entities and individuals, offices, and organizations that are funded under this subsection could include—

(1) the Supreme Audit Office;

(2) the Attorney General;

(3) the Ministry of Justice;

(4) Inspectors General within key ministries;

(5) the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC);

(6) the major crimes task force, Technical Investigative Unit, and the Sensitive Investigative Unit;

(7) the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption;

(8) the Anti-Corruption Tribunal;

(9) the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan;

(10) the proposed procurement board; and

(11) civil society organizations engaged in oversight, anti-corruption advocacy, and support of good governance.

(c) PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PRESS FREEDOM, AND SECURITY SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, is authorized to provide support for efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to improve oversight and accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces, including the Afghan National Police, and Afghan local police, and strengthen Afghan civil society and investigative journalists to provide watchdog oversight of these institutions. Subject to due consideration of the legitimacy, efficacy, and direct impact and influence of such entities and individuals, these efforts could include—

(A) supporting the ANSF to strengthen the capacity, independence, and power of its internal Inspector General to collect and investigate all credible reports of abuse by armed forces;

(B) supporting the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministries of Defense and Interior to be better capable to investigate and, if appropriate, criminally prosecute police, military, intelligence, and militia personnel, regardless of rank, found responsible for human rights abuses and war crimes;

(C) considering establishing a special independent mechanism to investigate government officials and security force officers implicated in abuses;

(D) supporting the Ministry of Interior to establish a centralized register of all detainees held in police and National Directorate of Security custody, and ensure that it is accessible to independent monitors and is updated regularly and in a transparent manner;

(E) supporting implementation of the Access to Information Law and the 2009 Mass Media Law, particularly provisions of the latter that would disband the Media Violations Investigation Commission and replace it with a Mass Media Commission;

(F) supporting the Attorney General's Office to undertake prompt, impartial, and thorough investigations into all attacks on journalists and media organizations and bring prosecutions as appropriate; and

(G) supporting the further establishment of civil society organizations to provide essential ''watchdog'' oversight of the police and armed forces; as well as efforts to strengthen and improve coordination among civil society organizations, such as the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

SEC. 105. REPORTS.

(a) REPORTING ON CORRUPTION IN AFGHANISTAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2024, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report listing each individual who the President determines, based on credible evidence—

(1) is a Government of Afghanistan official, a senior associate, or close relative of such an official, who is responsible for, or complicit in, ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, acts of significant corruption, including the expropriation of private or public assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, bribery, or the facilitation or transfer of the proceeds of corruption to foreign jurisdictions; or

(2) has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, an activity described above.

(b) REPORT ON CIVILIAN-MILITARY ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes civilian-military assistance efforts in Afghanistan.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

(A) A description of lessons learned from conducting development programming in Afghanistan to include recommendations on how to improve coordination between United States development agencies and the United States Armed Forces.

(B) An assessment of the ability of the United States Agency for International Development to advance development goals within Afghanistan, operating alongside providers of United States military assistance.

(C) An assessment of whether funding under the Commander's Emergency Response Program achieved the program's counter-insurgency goals, including force protection, and whether this program had any long term development impact, including any negative unintended consequences.

SA 3886. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CORKER) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1635, to authorize the Department of State for fiscal year 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 16, strike lines 10 through 12 and insert the following: ''the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that—''.

On page 30, lines 9 and 10, strike ''in the event of a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran''.

On page 30, lines 20 and 21, strike ''entering into a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran'' and insert ''the date of the enactment of this Act''.

On page 30, line 23, insert ''the majority leader, the minority leader,'' after ''(1)''.

On page 31, line 1, insert ''the Speaker, the majority leader, the minority leader,'' after ''(2)''.

Beginning on page 32, lines 24 and 25, strike '', as appropriate'' and all that follows through ''the United States'' on page 33, line 1, and insert ''with other United States Government agencies, including the intelligence community, and, as appropriate, the United States''.

Strike section 122.

On page 47, lines 14 and 15, strike ''and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives'' and insert '', the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives''.

On page 90, line 24, insert ''and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives'' after ''congressional committees''.

On page 92, line 18, insert ''and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives'' after ''committees''.

On page 116, line 20, strike ''Secretary of State'' and insert ''Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under section 101(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6411(b))''.

Beginning on page 117, line 14, strike ''Secretary of State'' and all that follows through ''in consultation with'' on page 118, line 1, and insert the following: ''Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom shall carry out paragraph (1)—

(A) in coordination with the Director of the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center and other Federal officials, as appropriate; and

(B) in consultation with

On page 160, line 16, insert ''to the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives, and'' after ''the report''.

Strike sections 501 and 502 and insert:

SEC. 501. WORLDWIDE SECURITY PROTECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for worldwide security protection shall to the extent practiable, before any such funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated for—

(1) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at other facilities; and

(3) locations with high vulnerabilities.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION SUPPORT PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for immediate mitigation support pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for—

(1) the purchasing of additional security equipment, including additional defensive weaponry;

(2) the paying of expenses of additional security forces; and

(3) any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

SEC. 502. EMBASSY SECURITY, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for Worldwide Security Upgrades within ''embassy security, construction and maintenance'' shall to the extent

practicable, before any funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated in the prioritized order of—

(1) immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) other security upgrades to facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(3) all other immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b); and

(4) security upgrades to all other facilities or new construction for facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION PROJECTS PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for immediate threat mitigation projects pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for the construction of safeguards that provide immediate security benefits and any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

(c) ADDITIONAL LIMITATION.—No funds authorized to be appropriated shall be obligated for new embassy construction, other than for high threat, high risk facilities, unless the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) the Department has fully complied with the requirements of subsection (a);

(2) high threat, high risk facilities are being secured to the best of the United States Government's ability; and

(3) the Secretary will make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall report to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act on—

(1) funding for the priorities described in subsection (a);

(2) efforts to secure high threat, high risk facilities as well as high vulnerability locations facilities; and

(3) plans to make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

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 28, 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 28, 2016, at 9 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Mental Health in America: Where Are We Now?''

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 28, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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 28, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michael Jetvig, an intern in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of today's session of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar Nos. 519 through 545 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Mark A. Baird

IN THE ARMY

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Thomas F. Spencer

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Gregory S. Champagne

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Marshall B. Webb

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Daniel J. Swain

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. James J. Keefe

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Andrea D. Tullos

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bradley C. Saltzman

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Andrew E. Salas

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Craig D. Wills

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Tamhra L. Hutchins-Frye

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Gen. Curtis M. Scaparrotti

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. William J. Prendergast, IV

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grades indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. William P. Barriage
Brig. Gen. Peter A. Bosse
Brig. Gen. Troy D. Kok
Brig. Gen. William S. Lee

To be brigadier general

Col. Marilyn S. Chiafullo
Col. Alex B. Fink
Col. John B. Hashem
Col. Susan E. Henderson
Col. Andrew J. Juknelis
Col. Jeffrey W. Jurasek
Col. Deborah L. Kotulich
Col. John H. Phillips
Col. Stephen T. Sauter
Col. Stephen E. Strand

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Paul J. Verrastro

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Timothy J. White

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Kyle J. Cozad
Rear Adm. (lh) Lisa M. Franchetti
Rear Adm. (lh) Roy J. Kelley
Rear Adm. (lh) David M. Kriete
Rear Adm. (lh) Bruce H. Lindsey
Rear Adm. (lh) James T. Loeblein
Rear Adm. (lh) William R. Merz
Rear Adm. (lh) Dee L. Mewbourne
Rear Adm. (lh) Michael T. Moran
Rear Adm. (lh) Stuart B. Munsch
Rear Adm. (lh) John B. Nowell, Jr.
Rear Adm. (lh) Timothy G. Szymanski

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Gen. Vincent K. Brooks

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Heithold

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment as Director, Air National Guard, and for appointment to the grade indicated in the Reserve of the Air Force under title 10, U.S.C., sections 601 and 10506:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Leon S. Rice

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Gen. Lori J. Robinson

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Stephen M. Twitty

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. John G. Rossi

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. Robert B. Brown

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Kenneth D. Jones

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Arlan M. DeBlieck

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Rodney L. Faulk

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1219 AIR FORCE nomination of Martin T. Mitchell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1269 AIR FORCE nominations (23) beginning LAURA S. BARCHICK, and ending KEVIN J. WILKINSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1270 AIR FORCE nominations (28) beginning MICHELLE D. AASTROM, and ending CYNTHIA J. WEIDMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1271 AIR FORCE nominations (446) beginning LAIRD S. ABBOTT, and ending CHRISTOPHER J. ZUHLKE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1318 AIR FORCE nomination of Albert E. White, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1333 AIR FORCE nomination of Jonathan M. Letsinger, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1334 AIR FORCE nominations (42) beginning LLOYD TRAVIS A. ARNOLD, and ending KONSTANTINA ZUBER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1335 AIR FORCE nomination of Kristie L. Partin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1336 AIR FORCE nomination of Aimee D. Safford, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1337 AIR FORCE nomination of Tracey A. Gosser, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1338 AIR FORCE nomination of Todd R. Howell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

PN1220 ARMY nominations (3) beginning LARSS G. CELTNIEKS, and ending PAULETTE V. BURTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1221 ARMY nomination of Eric Danko, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1222 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEVEN N. CAROZZA, and ending NOAH C. CLOUD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1223 ARMY nomination of Ramit Ring, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1272 ARMY nomination of Geoffrey E. Anderson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1274 ARMY nomination of Bruce H. Robinson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1275 ARMY nominations (2) beginning MATTHEW B. BOOTH, and ending DONALD W. MOYER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1276 ARMY nomination of Robert L. Cronyn, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1277 ARMY nomination of Darrell W. Collins, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1299 ARMY nomination of Devon D. Nudelman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1300 ARMY nomination of Calvin C. Thomas, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1301 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEPHEN G. CRUYS, and ending GREGORY J. LONG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1302 ARMY nominations (2) beginning EDWARD S. BARNETT, and ending LYNN J.

WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1303 ARMY nominations (5) beginning TIMOTHY G. BONNER, and ending JAMES S. WELCH, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1304 ARMY nominations (7) beginning KRYSTAL D. BEAN, and ending JUSTIN R. SCHLANSER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1305 ARMY nominations (19) beginning GEORGE A. BARBEE, and ending D013078, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1306 ARMY nominations (80) beginning GABRIELLE M. ANDREANIFABRONI, and ending YOUNG J. YAUGER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1307 ARMY nominations (84) beginning TERRYL L. AITKEN, and ending D010908, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1319 ARMY nomination of Travis H. Owen, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1320 ARMY nominations (54) beginning JOSHUA T. ADE, and ending D012875, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1322 ARMY nomination of Timothy R. Teague, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1323 ARMY nomination of Eric E. Halstrom, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1324 ARMY nominations (4) beginning BRIAN D. BOBO, and ending ANTHONY D. FOURNIER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1325 ARMY nomination of Dennis N. Snelling, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 7, 2016.

PN1340 ARMY nomination of Kodjo S. Knoxlimbacker, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1341 ARMY nomination of Lori R. Schanhals, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1342 ARMY nomination of Drew R. Conover, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1343 ARMY nomination of Bradley D. Osterman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1344 ARMY nomination of Francisco J. Lopez, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1346 ARMY nominations (4) beginning TIMOTHY D. AIKEN, and ending JAMES R. WEAKLEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1347 ARMY nomination of George A. Rollins, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1348 ARMY nomination of McArthur Walker, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1349 ARMY nominations (4) beginning TIMOTHY D. COVINGTON, and ending ERIC A. KENNEDY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1379 ARMY nomination of Nilson Orozcooviedo, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 18, 2016.

PN1380 ARMY nomination of Pierre E. Saintfleur, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 18, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1126 MARINE CORPS nomination of John A. Yukica, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1129 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning MATRIX W. ELIAS, and ending NICHOLAS J. TAZZA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

PN1201 NAVY nomination of Brian D. Hennessy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 3, 2016.

PN1224 NAVY nomination of Donald C. King, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2016.

PN1279 NAVY nomination of Stephanie M. Simoni, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1280 NAVY nomination of Jennifer L. Shafer, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1281 NAVY nominations (3) beginning JUSTIN K. CONROY, and ending REBECCA L. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1282 NAVY nomination of Brice A. Goodwin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1283 NAVY nomination of Brian J. Hamer, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1284 NAVY nomination of Scott F. Gruwell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1285 NAVY nomination of Shannon D. Lorimer, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2016.

PN1308 NAVY nominations (11) beginning DANIELLE M. BARNES, and ending MARK R. THOMAS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1309 NAVY nomination of William A. Hlavin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1312 NAVY nomination of Phillip G. Cyr, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 5, 2016.

PN1350 NAVY nomination of Donald E. Speights, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

PN1366 NAVY nomination of Luis A. Bencomo, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 14, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

AFGHANISTAN ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 189, S. 1875.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1875) to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in italic.)

S. 1875

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 ''Afghanistan Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

TITLE I—EFFECTIVE AFGHANISTAN ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 101. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom, and since then the United States Armed Forces and the Afghan National Security Forces have made countless sacrifices in defending Afghanistan against the threat of terrorism and insurgency and by extension the United States and the wider world.

(2) Since 2001, the United States has worked with a broad coalition of nations that has helped to dramatically improve numerous development indicators within Afghanistan, including a dramatic increase in the number of girls enrolled in primary education from an estimated 5,000 under the Taliban to 2,400,000 girls as of 2010; an increase in the percentage of individuals above the poverty line from 25.4 percent in 2002 to 35.8 percent in 2011; an increase in the percentage of individuals who now have access to an improved water source in rural areas from 22 percent in 2001 to 56 percent in 2012; a precipitous decline in maternal mortality from 1200/100,000 births in 1995 to 400/100,000 births in 2013; and an expansion of women's rights;

(3) Numerous research studies have shown that government corruption is a driver of conflict and particularly so in Afghanistan, where it has served as a powerful recruitment tool for the Taliban.

(4) Since the first democratic transfer of power in the history of Afghanistan in 2014, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah have led a National Unity Government that has identified

key security and development challenges in order to make Afghanistan a full and productive member of the community of democratic nations.

(5) The National Unity Government has renewed specific focus on addressing corruption within the country as a driver of instability, including reopening a fraud case involving high level officials and the Kabul Bank that resulted in the disappearance of an estimated $1,000,000,000.

(6) In its report ''Realizing Self Reliance: Commitments to Reform and Renewed Partnership'', the Government of Afghanistan committed to the international community in London in December 2014, to address the ''main drivers of corruption in Afghanistan,'' including ''collusive procurement practices, weak rule of law and abuse of the legal system, and arbitrary regulations that build in incentives to pay bribes''. Government of Afghanistan commitments included—

(A) forming an independent anti-corruption commission with time-bound prosecutorial powers;

(B) implementing recommendations by the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee on a national action plan to reduce corruption;

(C) requiring all government officials to provide public declarations of their assets;

(D) meeting all Financial Action Task Force (FATF) requirements to further limit and investigate illicit fund flows;

(E) forming a national procurement board staffed by qualified professionals who will manage all large value contracts using internationally recognized standards and procedures; and

(F) delineating the roles, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of anti-corruption institutions such as the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption (HOO) and the Attorney General to restrict them to focus on their core function of enforcement instead of oversight.

(7) The December 2014 Government of Afghanistan report ''Realizing Self Reliance: Commitments to Reform and Renewed Partnership'', expressed a commitment to ''enhancing productivity, growth and revenues'' by—

(A) developing natural resources through public-private partnerships that bring in rents, taxes, and profits;

(B) removing obstacles to trade and transit and ending smuggling that diverts revenue away from the treasury;

(C) negotiating expanded market access in regional and global markets;

(D) gradually formalizing the informal economy and changing the compact between the state and citizens to one where citizens pay taxes for services they tangibly benefit from; and

(E) transferring government payments electronically to eliminate losses in transit.

(8) In 2012, international donors and the Government of Afghanistan agreed to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (''TMAF'') which committed to provide $4,000,000,000 in economic assistance per year from 2012-2015 and sustain assistance at or near the same levels of the past decade through 2017, while the Government of Afghanistan committed to meet benchmarks related to democracy and governance, public finance and revenue generation, and economic development.

(9) At the end of 2014, under the TMAF, the Government of Afghanistan had fallen short in meeting benchmarks related to: revenue collection, the enhancement of women's rights, corruption and the illicit economy, and the protection of human rights,

(10) In the Joint Declaration following the London Conference on Afghanistan of December 4, 2014, the international community and the new Government of Afghanistan agreed to refresh the existing TMAF and associated commitments at the 2015 Senior Officials Meeting based on the reform program and priorities as laid out by the Government of Afghanistan.

(11) Afghanistan faces great difficulties in making progress in countering illegal narcotics and remains the leading global illicit opium poppy producer.

(12) The illegal narcotics trade results in the transfer of illicit funds and encourages and also requires corrupt financial transactions, and, if minimized, could have beneficial impacts on trade and reduce overall levels of corruption.

(13) The international community has endorsed Afghanistan's longer-term development following the war and identified the criticality of the ''transformation decade'' from 2015-2024 outlined by the Government of Afghanistan and has acknowledged that the Government of Afghanistan will seek continued international assistance in order for it to become a stable, self-sustained partner in the community of democratic countries.

(14) As development assistance from the United States and broader international community gradually diminishes in the coming years, the accelerated development of the Afghan private sector and governing institutions becomes even more necessary to maintain the gains of the past decade and to enhance our mutual goals of Afghan security and stability.

(15) While Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have taken over lead combat responsibilities, they continue to operate in close coordination with, and with significant resources from the international community, under the Train, Advise and Assist (TAA) mission of Operation Inherent Resolve and in coordination with ongoing counter-terrorism operations. Development of civilian oversight institutions for the security sector has lagged. Such oversight will be important for ensuring that Afghan security forces are accountable and do not abuse their powers.

SEC. 102. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the National Unity Government of Afghanistan has made a substantial commitment to reform that should be supported but also subject to heightened scrutiny by the Afghan people and international donors given past failures and persistent challenges in the country;

(2) Afghanistan is at a critical inflection point, having gone through political and security transitions as the international community draws down its military forces. The international community should work closely with the new government in supporting development priorities for the rest of the transformation decade that translate into producing concrete development results for the Afghan people;

(3) sustainable accountability and reform of Afghan governing institutions will not come from the international community but from a commitment by the Government of Afghanistan and society reinforced by domestic watchdog groups and internal government accountability monitoring mechanisms;

(4) the United States Government should deepen its dialogue on anti-corruption efforts with the Government of Afghanistan to develop effective oversight mechanisms to ensure large donor contracts do not contribute to corruption;

(5) the United States should encourage Afghanistan's participation in the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative in which government and civil society collaborate to promote transparency, fight corruption, and use technologies to strengthen government;

(6) the United States should urge the Government of Afghanistan to build upon existing anti-money laundering and countering terrorism financing legislation by developing effective regulations and institutions to implement reforms;

(7) the United States should urge the Government of Afghanistan to broaden personal asset disclosures to include members of the covered officials' immediate families or households and develop effective mechanisms for verifying disclosed information;

(8) in the event of future egregious cases of corruption in Afghanistan, the President should impose visa bans and asset freezes on those responsible, especially in instances where United States assistance is stolen or misappropriated;

(9) the United States Government should cooperate with the Government of Afghanistan and with international donors to develop a series of strict accountability benchmarks based on the refreshed Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework and the Government of Afghanistan's own ''Realizing Self Reliance'' report commitments that will condition levels of assistance and the amount of on-budget assistance on anti-corruption performance acceptable to donors;

(10) the United States should support the Afghan Parliament to refine and strengthen the legal framework of anti-corruption and anti-money laundering laws to address beneficial ownership, countering bid-rigging and other contracting and procurement fraud, criminal investigations of financial transactions, complementary banks, personal asset or other financial declarations and disclosures as required by law or regulation, efforts to meet FATF requirements, and other areas to further inhibit the illicit flow of money;

(11) the commitment by the Government of Afghanistan to strengthen its nascent private sector should be supported and sustained using the full array of tools of the United States, including technical and legal assistance;

(12) United States assistance to the Afghan judicial system and other Afghan legal institutions that enable and empower private sector development by instilling greater investor confidence should be prioritized to ensure the protection of private property, the sanctity of contracts, and effective dispute resolution mechanisms for businesses and investors;

(13) the United States Government should identify opportunities for the United States to introduce trade facilitation as part of the economic relationship between the two countries;

(14) the Governments of the United States and Afghanistan should work together to identify more Afghan products and raw materials to be included on the United States Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) treatment list;

(15) the United States Government should establish a United States-Afghan Tax Commission to help spearhead a rapid and successful conclusion of a new Bilateral Tax Agreement similar to the Agreements with several of Afghanistan's neighbors, including Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, India, and Pakistan;

(16) the American University of Afghanistan is an emerging pillar in Afghanistan's education system and has provided a unique opportunity for higher education for Afghan youth, especially women; and

(17) the United States should encourage the Government of Afghanistan to implement with urgency electoral reforms in accordance with the ''Agreement between the

Two Campaign Teams Regarding the Structure of the National Unity Government''.

SEC. 103. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE POLICY FOR AFGHANISTAN.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to conduct assistance programs that result in highly effective, impact driven development outcomes for the people of Afghanistan while maintaining the highest standards of accountability for United States taxpayers;

(2) that all United States Government agencies and entities working in Afghanistan coordinate, plan, and regularly review plans in a coherent, well-informed process to develop United States policy and assistance programming;

(3) to support the development of effective Government of Afghanistan oversight institutions and domestic watchdog civil society organizations;

(4) subject to significant evident progress made in meeting TMAF accountability and improved governance as it relates to development, to abide by resource commitments made as part of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework;

(5) to provide incentivized assistance to Afghanistan's governing institutions based upon verifiable and measurable development outcomes and on-budget assistance based upon demonstrated capacity improvements that are mutually agreed to by the Governments of Afghanistan and the United States;

(6) to support the development of democratic governing institutions in Afghanistan, promote the development of a growing private sector, and strengthen civil society in Afghanistan;

(7) to recognize that Afghanistan's sustainable development is grounded in growing the regional economy, and to support the efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan to build strong regional economic connectivity with the country's [neighbors; and]

(8) [to support, where appropriate, proven programs that promote private sector job creation in Afghanistan.] *neighbors;*

(8) to support, where appropriate, proven programs that promote private sector job creation in Afghanistan; and

(9) that assistance programs in direct support of Afghan women and girls remain a priority for the United States, including specific efforts to support women and girls education, meaningful engagement in political and reconciliation processes, training and recruitment of Afghan female police and security forces, advancement of women's legal rights, economic development, and efforts to increase the overall health and well-being of Afghan women and girls.

SEC. 104. EFFECTIVE AFGHANISTAN ASSISTANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) STRATEGY TO COMBAT CORRUPTION IN AFGHANISTAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Government of Afghanistan, shall develop a comprehensive interagency strategy for United States assistance that is sustainable and is not counter-productive to combatting corruption in Afghanistan.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The strategy developed under paragraph (1) should include the following elements:

(A) Multi-year goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes for targeted activities to strengthen selected Afghan official institutions and nongovernmental organizations to prevent, investigate, deter, and prosecute corruption.

(B) An operational plan incorporating all United States Government programming to implement the anti-corruption goals and objectives.

(C) A summary of United States efforts to coordinate with other international donors to ensure that anti-corruption advice or programming provided to the Government of Afghanistan is not contradictory.

(D) A focus on the development of governmental and nongovernmental Afghan capacity to ensure accountability and combat corruption.

(E) An evaluation of Afghan civil society anti-corruption capacities that includes their ability to use technology to combat corruption.

(b) AFGHANISTAN ANTI-CORRUPTION FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of funds, the President is authorized to provide technical and financial assistance to official Government of Afghanistan anti-corruption and audit institutions and Afghan civil society watchdog groups in support of the anti-corruption priorities identified by the Government of Afghanistan and the United States Government. Subject to careful consideration by the United States Government of the legitimacy, efficacy, and direct impact and influence of such entities and individuals, offices, and organizations that are funded under this subsection could include—

(A) the Supreme Audit Office;

(B) the Attorney General;

(C) the Ministry of Justice;

(D) Inspectors General within key ministries;

(E) the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC);

(F) the major crimes task force, Technical Investigative Unit, and the Sensitive Investigative Unit;

(G) the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption;

(H) the Anti-Corruption Tribunal;

(I) the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan;

(J) the proposed procurement board; and

(K) civil society organizations engaged in oversight, anti-corruption advocacy, and support of good governance.

(c) PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PRESS FREEDOM, AND SECURITY SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary of State, in cooperation with the Secretary of Defense, should provide support for efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to improve oversight and accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces, including the Afghan National Police, and Afghan local police, and strengthen Afghan civil society and investigative journalists to provide watchdog oversight of these institutions. Subject to due consideration of the legitimacy, efficacy, and direct impact and influence of such entities and individuals, these efforts could include—

(A) supporting the ANSF to strengthen the capacity, independence, and power of its internal Inspector General to collect and investigate all credible reports of abuse by armed forces;

(B) supporting the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministries of Defense and Interior to be better capable to investigate and, if appropriate, criminally prosecute police, military, intelligence, and militia personnel, regardless of rank, found responsible for human rights abuses and war crimes;

(C) considering establishing a special independent mechanism to investigate government officials and security force officers implicated in abuses;

(D) supporting the Ministry of Interior to establish a centralized register of all detainees held in police and National Directorate of Security custody, and ensure that it is accessible to independent monitors and is updated regularly and in a transparent manner;

(E) supporting implementation of the Access to Information Law and the 2009 Mass Media Law, particularly provisions of the latter that would disband the Media Violations Investigation Commission and replace it with a Mass Media Commission;

(F) supporting the Attorney General's Office to undertake prompt, impartial, and thorough investigations into all attacks on journalists and media organizations and bring prosecutions as appropriate; and

(G) supporting the further establishment of civil society organizations to provide essential ''watchdog'' oversight of the police and armed forces; as well as efforts to strengthen and improve coordination among civil society organizations, such as the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

(d) DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFGHAN PRIVATE SECTOR.—

(1) REGIONAL ECONOMIC CONNECTIVITY FUND.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Regional Economic Connectivity Fund from which funds may be made available from existing appropriations to enhance regional economic connectivity between Afghanistan and the countries of South and Central Asia.

(B) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Regional Economic Connectivity Fund is to provide support for efforts to enhance Afghanistan's economic connectivity with its neighbors, thus improving the country's overall economic prospects and diminishing the need for international assistance in the future. The Regional Economic Connectivity Fund may be used to support programs in the following areas:

(i) Trade and transit fee normalization and electronic payment systems.

(ii) Capacity and skills development to improve collaboration among countries for border and customs.

(iii) Women-owned business networking.

(iv) Developing regional options on transit and customs to facilitate trade.

(v) Enhancing and implementing confidence building measures.

(vi) Encouraging regional energy and electricity development and sharing.

(vii) Market access and business conferences.

(viii) Intellectual and cultural exchanges to engage in regional problem solving.

(2) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—In addition to other transfer authorities available to the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or other United States Government agencies or departments, funds that are specifically allocated towards addressing the situation in Afghanistan may be transferred to programs in South and Central Asia that promote regional economic connectivity with substantial and direct benefits to Afghanistan.

SEC. 105. REPORTS.

(a) REPORTING ON CORRUPTION IN AFGHANISTAN.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2024, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report listing each individual who the President determines, based on credible evidence—

(1) is an Government of Afghanistan official, a senior associate, or close relative of such an official, who is responsible for, or complicit in, ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, acts of significant corruption, including the expropriation of private or public assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, bribery, or the facilitation or transfer of the proceeds of corruption to foreign jurisdictions; or

(2) has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, an activity described above.

(b) REPORT ON CIVILIAN-MILITARY ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on civilian-military assistance efforts in Afghanistan.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

(A) A description of lessons learned from conducting development programming in a conflict zone to include recommendations on how to improve coordination between United States development agencies and the United States Armed Forces.

(B) An assessment of the ability of the United States Agency for International Development to advance development goals within a conflict environment, operating alongside providers of United States military assistance.

(C) An assessment of whether funding under the Commander's Emergency Response Program achieved the program's stated goals and whether this program had any long term development impact, including any negative unintended consequences.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be withdrawn, the Menendez substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3885) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (S. 1875), as amended, was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL BISON LEGACY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 438, H.R. 2908.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2908) to adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2908) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

KIDS TO PARKS DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 435 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 435) designating May 21, 2016, as ''Kids to Parks Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 435) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 21, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 448, S. Res. 449, S. Res. 450, S. Res. 451, S. Res. 452, S. Res. 453, S. Res. 454, and S. Res. 455.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 452

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I submitted a bipartisan resolution recognizing that April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. Senators LEAHY, AYOTTE, CASEY, ERNST, and GILLIBRAND have joined as cosponsors of the resolution, and I thank them for their support.

Our purpose in introducing the resolution is to bring greater awareness to the problem of sexual assault and publicly acknowledge the survivors. According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, someone is sexually assaulted every two minutes, on average, in the United States. Sexual assault can take many forms, including rape, commercial sex trafficking, child sexual abuse, and stalking.

Rape, which is the second most violent crime in the United States—second only to murder, according to the FBI—can happen to anyone. According to the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, the consequences of rape can be profound for its victims, and may include post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, or even suicide.

In communities across the United States, Americans have commemorated the month of April with activities designed to support survivors of sexual violence in their efforts to heal. Before the month comes to a close, it is important that Congress also express its support for the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

I would also like to take a moment to mention several other bipartisan, anti-sexual assault measures that I have championed during the month of April, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting these initiatives too.

First, just last week, the Senate Judiciary Committee, of which I serve as chairman, cleared legislation that's designed to help sexual assault victims secure justice. I incorporated this language into the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act, a measure I introduced earlier this year at the urging of a young woman who survived a sexual assault and founded an organization, RISE, that's dedicated to helping other survivors.

The measure reported by our committee by voice vote on April 20th would amend the federal crime victims' statute to add a number of new rights specific to sexual assault survivors. If it's enacted, victims of federal crimes of sexual violence would have the right not to be prevented from, or charged for, receiving a medical forensic exam. They would have the right to have a sexual assault evidence collection kit preserved, without charge, until the statutory limitations period for prosecuting the crime has expired or ten years has elapsed. They would have the right to be informed of the results when their forensic evidence is analyzed. And they would have the right to written notice of policies governing their evidence kit's collection and preservation, as well as the right to notice if that evidence is about to be discarded.

The latest version of the Adam Walsh Reauthorization also would make Justice Department grants available to entities that notify sexual violence victims of any applicable rights under state law. Finally, this legislation would extend the statutory period in which child survivors of human trafficking and child sexual abuse offenses can file suit against the perpetrators. The bill has been endorsed not only by RISE but also by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence. Senators SCHUMER, HATCH, FEINSTEIN, LEAHY, SHAHEEN, COONS, DURBIN, and KLOBUCHAR have joined as cosponsors.

Also last week, I joined Senator GILLIBRAND in calling on President

Obama to take additional steps to investigate military sexual assault. We contacted the President to voice our concerns shortly after an organization known as Protect Our Defenders released a report questioning the accuracy of congressional testimony by a Pentagon official during a hearing on sexual assault in the military.

Last but not least, due to my concerns about campus sexual assault, I am an original cosponsor of the Campus Accountability and Safety Act. I joined Senators HELLER, MCCASKILL, GILLIBRAND, AYOTTE, and others in introducing this bill last year. It would make additional support services available to student survivors of campus rape, require training standards and uniform discipline procedures for campus officials, and add transparency requirements for the Nation's universities. Earlier this week, the cosponsors of this measure came together to publicly call for prompt action on this legislation.

Mr. President, I will close by urging my colleagues to support adoptoin of the resolution we have submitted today.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 365 only, with no other executive business in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Roberta S. Jacobson, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Mexican States.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on the nomination, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Jacobson nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

VENEZUELA DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 445, S. 2845.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2845) to extend the termination of sanctions with respect to Venezuela under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in italic.)

S. 2845

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 ''Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Extension Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO VENEZUELA.

Section 5(e) of the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–278; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''**[**December 31, 2021**]** *December 31, 2019*''.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2845), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2845

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 ''Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Extension Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO VENEZUELA.

Section 5(e) of the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–278; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS AUTHORIZATION AND EMBASSY SECURITY ACT, FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 123, S. 1635.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1635) to authorize the Department of State for fiscal year 2016, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Corker amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3886) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To remove language relating to Iran hostages compensation, to provide that the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom shall have primary responsibility for religious freedom training, and to make other technical amendments)

On page 16, strike lines 10 through 12 and insert the following: ''the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that—''.

On page 30, lines 9 and 10, strike ''in the event of a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran''.

On page 30, lines 20 and 21, strike ''entering into a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran'' and insert ''the date of the enactment of this Act''.

On page 30, line 23, insert ''the majority leader, the minority leader,'' after ''(1)''.

On page 31, line 1, insert ''the Speaker, the majority leader, the minority leader,'' after ''(2)''.

Beginning on page 32, lines 24 and 25, strike '', as appropriate'' and all that follows through ''the United States'' on page 33, line 1, and insert ''with other United States Government agencies, including the intelligence community, and, as appropriate, the United States''.

Strike section 122.

On page 47, lines 14 and 15, strike ''and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives'' and insert '', the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the

Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives''.

On page 90, line 24, insert ''and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives'' after ''congressional committees''.

On page 92, line 18, insert ''and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives'' after ''committees''.

On page 116, line 20, strike ''Secretary of State'' and insert ''Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under section 101(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6411(b))''.

Beginning on page 117, line 14, strike ''Secretary of State'' and all that follows through ''in consultation with'' on page 118, line 1, and insert the following: ''Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom shall carry out paragraph (1)—

(A) in coordination with the Director of the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center and other Federal officials, as appropriate; and

(B) in consultation with

On page 160, line 16, insert ''to the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives, and'' after ''the report''.

Strike sections 501 and 502 and insert:

SEC. 501 WORLDWIDE SECURITY PROTECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for worldwide security protection shall to the extent practicable, before any such funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated for—

(1) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at other facilities; and

(3) locations with high vulnerabilities.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION SUPPORT PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for immediate mitigation support pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for—

(1) the purchasing of additional security equipment, including additional defensive weaponry;

(2) the paying of expenses of additional security forces; and

(3) any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

SEC. 502. EMBASSY SECURITY, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for Worldwide Security Upgrades within ''embassy security, construction and maintenance'' shall to the extent practicable, before any funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated in the prioritized order of—

(1) immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) other security upgrades to facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(3) all other immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b); and

(4) security upgrades to all other facilities or new construction for facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION PROJECTS PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for immediate threat mitigation projects pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for the construction of safeguards that provide immediate security benefits and any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

(c) ADDITIONAL LIMITATION.—No funds authorized to be appropriated shall be obligated for new embassy construction, other than for high threat, high risk facilities, unless the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) the Department has fully complied with the requirements of subsection (a);

(2) high threat, high risk facilities are being secured to the best of the United States Government's ability; and

(3) the Secretary will make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall report to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act on—

(1) funding for the priorities described in subsection (a);

(2) efforts to secure high threat, high risk facilities as well as high vulnerability locations facilities; and

(3) plans to make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

The bill (S. 1635), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1635

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Department of State Operations Authorization and Embassy Security Act, Fiscal Year 2016''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUTHORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Subtitle A—Basic Authorities and Activities

Sec. 101. American spaces review.
Sec. 102. Identifying bilateral investment treaty opportunities.
Sec. 103. Reinstatement of Hong Kong report.
Sec. 104. Interagency hostage recovery coordinator.
Sec. 105. United States-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue review.
Sec. 106. Report on human rights violations in Burma.
Sec. 107. Combating anti-semitism.
Sec. 108. Biotechnology grants.
Sec. 109. Definition of ''use'' in passport and visa offenses.
Sec. 110. Science and technology fellowships.
Sec. 111. Name changes.
Sec. 112. Anti-piracy information sharing.
Sec. 113. Report reform.
Sec. 114. Sense of Congress on the United States alliance with Japan.
Sec. 115. Sense of Congress on the defense relationship between the United States and the Republic of India.
Sec. 116. Sense of Congress on the United States alliance with the Republic of Korea.
Sec. 117. Sense of Congress on the relationship between the United States and Taiwan.
Sec. 118. Report on political freedom in Venezuela.
Sec. 119. Strategy for the Middle East in the event of a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran.
Sec. 120. Department of State international cyberspace policy strategy.
Sec. 121. Waiver of fees for renewal of immigrant visa for adopted child in certain situations.
Sec. 122. Sense of Congress on anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement within the Palestinian Authority.
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SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of State.

(3) PEACEKEEPING CREDITS.—The term ''peacekeeping credits'' means the amounts by which United States assessed peacekeeping contributions exceed actual expenditures, apportioned to the United States, of peacekeeping operations by the United Nations during a United Nations peacekeeping fiscal year.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of State.

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUTHORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Subtitle A—Basic Authorities and Activities

SEC. 101. AMERICAN SPACES REVIEW.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) the full costs incurred by the Department to provide American Spaces, including—

(A) American Centers, American Corners, Binational Centers, Information Resource Centers, and Science Centers; and

(B) the total costs of all associated—

(i) employee salaries, including foreign service, American civilian, and locally employed staff;

(ii) programming expenses;

(iii) operating expenses;

(iv) contracting expenses; and

(v) security expenses;

(2) a breakdown of the total costs described in paragraph (1) by each space and type of space;

(3) the total fees collected for entry to, or the use of, American Spaces and related resources, including a breakdown by the type of fee for each space and type of space; and

(4) the total usage rates, including by type of service, for each space and type of space.

SEC. 102. IDENTIFYING BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATY OPPORTUNITIES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes a detailed description of—

(1) the status of all ongoing investment treaty negotiations, including a strategy and timetable for concluding each such negotiation;

(2) a strategy to expand the investment treaty agenda, including through—

(A) launching new investment treaty negotiations with foreign partners that are currently capable of entering into such negotiations; and

(B) building the capacity of foreign partners to enter into such negotiations, including by encouraging the adoption of best practices with respect to investment; and

(3) an estimate of any resources that will be needed, including anticipated staffing levels—

(A) to conclude all ongoing negotiations described in paragraph (1);

(B) to launch new investment treaty negotiations, as described in paragraph (2)(A); and

(C) to build the capacity of foreign partners, as described in paragraph (2)(B).

SEC. 103. REINSTATEMENT OF HONG KONG REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2020, the Secretary shall submit the report required under section 301 of the United States-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 (22 U.S.C. 5731) to the appropriate congressional committees.

(b) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.—The report submitted under subsection (a) should be unclassified and made publicly available, including through the Department's public website.

(c) TREATMENT OF HONG KONG UNDER UNITED STATES LAW.—

(1) SECRETARY OF STATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall certify to Congress whether Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is sufficiently autonomous to justify different treatment for its citizens from the treatment accorded to other citizens of the People's Republic of China in any new laws, agreements, treaties, or arrangements entered into between the United States and Hong Kong after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) FACTOR FOR CONSIDERATION.—In making a certification under subparagraph (A), the

Secretary should consider the terms, obligations, and expectations expressed in the Joint Declaration with respect to Hong Kong.

(C) EXCEPTION.—A certification shall not be required under this subsection with respect to any new laws, agreements, treaties, or arrangements that support human rights, rule of law, or democracy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

(2) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may waive the application of paragraph (1) if the Secretary—

(A) determines that such a waiver is in the national interests of the United States; and

(B) on or before the date on which such waiver would take effect, submits a notice of, and justification for, the waiver to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 104. INTERAGENCY HOSTAGE RECOVERY COORDINATOR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall designate an existing Federal officer to coordinate efforts to secure the release of United States persons who are hostages of hostile groups or state sponsors of terrorism. For purposes of carrying out the duties described in paragraph (2), such officer shall have the title of ''Interagency Hostage Recovery Coordinator''.

(2) DUTIES.—The Coordinator shall have the following duties:

(A) Coordinate and direct all activities of the Federal Government relating to each hostage situation described in paragraph (1) to ensure efforts to secure the release of all hostages in the hostage situation are properly resourced and correct lines of authority are established and maintained.

(B) Establish and direct a fusion cell consisting of appropriate personnel of the Federal Government with purview over each hostage situation described in paragraph (1).

(C) Develop a strategy to keep family members of hostages described in paragraph (1) informed of the status of such hostages and inform such family members of updates, procedures, and policies that do not compromise the national security of the United States.

(b) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Interagency Hostage Recovery Coordinator shall be limited to hostage cases outside the United States.

(c) QUARTERLY REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On a quarterly basis, the Coordinator shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the members of Congress described in paragraph (2) a report that includes a summary of each hostage situation described in sub-section (a)(1) and efforts to secure the release of all hostages in such hostage situation.

(2) MEMBERS OF CONGRESS DESCRIBED.—The members of Congress described in this subparagraph are, with respect to a United States person hostage covered by a report under paragraph (1), the Senators representing the State, and the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner of the House of Representatives representing the district, where a hostage described in subjection (a)(1) resides.

(3) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report under this subsection may be submitted in classified or unclassified form.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing the Federal Government to negotiate with a state sponsor of terrorism or an organization that the Secretary has designated as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189) or any other hostage-takers.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HOSTILE GROUP.—The term ''hostile group'' means—

(A) a group that is designated as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189(a));

(B) a group that is engaged in armed conflict with the United States; or

(C) any other group that the President determines to be a hostile group for purposes of this paragraph.

(2) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—The term ''state sponsor of terrorism''—

(A) means a country the government of which the Secretary has determined, for purposes of section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979, section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act, or any other provision of law, to be a government that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism; and

(B) includes North Korea.

SEC. 105. UNITED STATES-CHINA STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC DIALOGUE REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, and in consultation with other departments and agencies, as appropriate, shall—

(1) conduct a review of the United States-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (referred to in this section as the ''Dialogue''); and

(2) submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that contains the findings of such review.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report described in subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a list of all commitments agreed to by the United States and China at each of the first 6 rounds of meetings;

(2) an assessment of the status of each commitment agreed to by the United States and China at each of the first 6 rounds of meetings, including a detailed description of—

(A) any actions that have been taken with respect to such commitments;

(B) any aspects of such commitments that remain unfulfilled; and

(C) any actions that remain necessary to fulfill any unfulfilled commitments described in subparagraph (B);

(3) an assessment of the effectiveness of the Dialogue in achieving and fulfilling significant commitments on United States priorities in the bilateral relationship, including—

(A) the security situation in the East and South China Seas, including a peaceful resolution of maritime disputes in the region;

(B) denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula;

(C) cybertheft of United States intellectual property;

(D) the treatment of political dissidents, media representatives, and ethnic and religious minorities;

(E) reciprocal treatment of United States journalists and academics in China, including issuance of visas;

(F) expanding investment and trade opportunities for United States businesses;

(G) repatriation of North Korean refugees from China to North Korea; and

(H) promoting and protecting rule of law and democratic institutions in Hong Kong; and

(4) recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of the Dialogue in achieving and fulfilling significant commitments on United States priorities described in paragraph (3), including consideration of the use of predetermined benchmarks for assessing whether the commitments achieved are significantly furthering such priorities.

SEC. 106. REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN BURMA.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that—

(1) describes in detail all known widespread or systematic civil or political rights violations, including violations that may constitute crimes against humanity against ethnic, racial, or religious minorities in Burma, including the Rohingya people; and

(2) provides recommendations for holding perpetrators of the violations described in paragraph (1) accountable for their actions.

SEC. 107. COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM.

Of the amount authorized to be appropriated for Diplomatic and Consular Programs, $500,000 shall be made available to the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, to be used in support of efforts by American and European Jewish and other civil society organizations, focusing on youth, to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of religious, ethnic, or racial intolerance in Europe.

SEC. 108. BIOTECHNOLOGY GRANTS.

Title I of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a et seq.), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 63. BIOTECHNOLOGY GRANTS AUTHORIZED.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State is authorized to support, through grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, outreach, and public diplomacy activities, activities promoting the benefits of agricultural biotechnology, biofuels, science-based regulatory systems, and the application of such technologies for trade and development.

''(b) LIMITATION.—The total amount of grants provided pursuant to subsection (a) shall not exceed $500,000 in any fiscal year.''.

SEC. 109. DEFINITION OF ''USE'' IN PASSPORT AND VISA OFFENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 75 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting before section 1541 the following:

''SEC. 1540. DEFINITION OF 'USE' AND 'USES'.

''In this chapter, the terms 'use' and 'uses' shall be given their plain meaning, which shall include use for identification purposes.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 75 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the item relating to section 1541 the following:

''1540. Definition of 'use' and 'uses'.''.

SEC. 110. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FELLOWSHIPS.

Section 504 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1979 (22 U.S.C. 2656d) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS RELATED TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to provide grants or enter into cooperative agreements for science and technology fellowship programs of the Department of State.

''(2) RECRUITMENT; STIPENDS.—Assistance authorized under paragraph (1) may be used—

''(A) to recruit fellows; and

''(B) to pay stipends, travel, and other appropriate expenses to fellows.

''(3) CLASSIFICATION OF STIPENDS.—Stipends paid under paragraph (2)(B) shall not be considered compensation for purposes of section 209 of title 18, United States Code.

''(4) LIMITATION.—The total amount of assistance provided under this subsection may not exceed $500,000 in any fiscal year.''.

SEC. 111. NAME CHANGES.

(a) PUBLIC LAW 87–195.—Section 607(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2357(d)) is amended by striking ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs'' and inserting ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment, and Science''.

(b) PUBLIC LAW 88–206.—Section 617(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7671p(a)) is amended by striking ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs'' and inserting ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment, and Science''.

(c) PUBLIC LAW 93–126.—Section 9(a) of the Department of State Appropriations Authorization Act of 1973 (22 U.S.C. 2655a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs'' and inserting ''Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science''; and

(2) by striking ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs'' and inserting ''Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment, and Science''.

(d) PUBLIC LAW 106–113.—Section 1112(a) of the Admiral James W. Nance and Meg Donovan Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2652c(a)) is amended by striking ''Verification and Compliance.'' and inserting ''Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance (referred to in this section as the 'Assistant Secretary').''.

SEC. 112. ANTI-PIRACY INFORMATION SHARING.

The Secretary is authorized to provide for the participation of the United States in the Information Sharing Centre located in Singapore, as established by the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia, done at Singapore November 11, 2004.

SEC. 113. REPORT REFORM.

(a) HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT.—Section 549 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2347h) is repealed.

(b) ROUGH DIAMONDS ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 12 of the Clean Diamond Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 3911) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 12. REPORTS.

''For each country that, during the preceding 12-month period, exported rough diamonds to the United States, the exportation of which was not controlled through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, and if the failure to do so has significantly increased the likelihood that those diamonds not so controlled are being imported into the United States, the President shall submit a semi-annual report to Congress that explains what actions have been taken by the United States or such country since the previous report to ensure that diamonds, the exportation of which was not controlled through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, are not being imported from that country into the United States. A country shall be included in the report required under this section until the country is controlling the importation and exportation of rough diamonds through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.''.

SEC. 114. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES ALLIANCE WITH JAPAN.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the alliance between the United States and Japan is a cornerstone of peace, security, and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world;

(2) Prime Minister Shiuzo Abe's visit to the United States in April 2015 and historic address to a Joint Session of Congress symbolized the strength and importance of ties between the United States and Japan;

(3) in 2015, which marks 70 years since the end of World War II, the United States and Japan continue to strengthen the alliance and work together to ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for the Asia-Pacific region and the world;

(4) the Governments and people of the United States and Japan share values, interests, and capabilities that have helped to build a strong rules-based international order, based on a commitment to rules, norms and institutions;

(5) the revised Guidelines for United States-Japan Defense Cooperation and Japan's policy of ''Proactive Contribution to Peace'' will reinforce deterrence, update the roles and missions of the United States and Japan, enable Japan to expand its contributions to regional and global security, and allow the United States Government and the Government of Japan to enhance cooperation on security issues in the region and beyond;

(6) the United States remain resolute in its commitments under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to respond to any armed attack in the territories under the administration of Japan;

(7) although the United States Government does not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, the United States Government acknowledges that they are under the administration of Japan and opposes any unilateral actions that would seek to undermine such administration;

(8) the United States Government reaffirms that the unilateral actions of a third party will not affect the United States acknowledgment of the administration of Japan over the Senkaku Islands;

(9) the United States Government and the Government of Japan continue to work together on common security interests, including to confront the threat posed by the nuclear and ballistic missile programs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(10) the United States Government and the Government of Japan remain committed to ensuring maritime security and respect for international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight; and

(11) the United States Government and the Government of Japan continue to oppose the use of coercion, intimidation, or force to change the status quo, including in the East and South China Seas.

SEC. 115. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The United States has an upgraded, strategic-plus relationship with India based on regional cooperation, space science cooperation, and defense cooperation.

(2) The defense relationship between the United States and the Republic of India is strengthened by the common commitment of both countries to democracy.

(3) The United States and the Republic of India share a common and long-standing commitment to civilian control of the military.

(4) The United States and the Republic of India have increasingly worked together on defense cooperation across a range of activities, exercises, initiatives, and research.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) continue to expand defense cooperation with the Republic of India;

(2) welcome the role of the Republic of India in providing security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond;

(3) work cooperatively with the Republic of India on matters relating to our common defense;

(4) vigorously support the implementation of the United States-India Defense Framework Agreement; and

(5) support the India Defense Trade and Technology Initiative.

SEC. 116. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES ALLIANCE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has served as an anchor for stability, security, and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula, in the Asia-Pacific region, and around the world;

(2) the United States and the Republic of Korea continue to strengthen and adapt the bilateral, regional, and global scope of the comprehensive strategic alliance between the 2 nations, to serve as a linchpin of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, recognizing the shared values of democracy, human rights, free and open markets, and the rule of law, as reaffirmed in the May 2013 ''Joint Declaration in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America'';

(3) the United States and the Republic of Korea continue to broaden and deepen the alliance by strengthening the combined defense posture on the Korean Peninsula, enhancing mutual security based on the Republic of Korea-United States Mutual Defense Treaty, and promoting cooperation for regional and global security in the 21st century;

(4) the United States and the Republic of Korea share deep concerns that the nuclear, cyber, and ballistic missiles programs of North Korea and its repeated provocations pose grave threats to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia and recognize that both nations are determined to achieve the peaceful denuclearization of North Korea and remain fully committed to continuing close cooperation on the full range of issues related to North Korea;

(5) the United States and the Republic of Korea are particularly concerned that the nuclear and ballistic missile programs of North Korea, including North Korean efforts to miniaturize their nuclear technology and improve the mobility of their ballistic missiles, have gathered significant momentum and are poised to expand in the coming years;

(6) the Republic of Korea has made progress in enhancing future warfighting and interoperability capabilities by taking steps toward procuring Patriot Advanced Capability missiles, F–35 Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft, and RQ–4 Global Hawk Surveillance Aircraft;

(7) the United States supports the vision of a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons, free from the fear of war, and peacefully reunited on the basis of democratic and free market principles, as articulated in President Park's address in Dresden, Germany; and

(8) the United States and the Republic of Korea share the future interests of both nations in securing peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

SEC. 117. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND TAIWAN.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the United States policy toward Taiwan is based upon the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8), which was enacted in 1979, and the Six Assurances given by President Ronald Reagan in 1982;

(2) provision of defensive weapons to Taiwan should continue as mandated in the Taiwan Relations Act; and

(3) enhanced trade relations with Taiwan should be pursued to mutually benefit the citizens of both countries.

SEC. 118. REPORT ON POLITICAL FREEDOM IN VENEZUELA.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) an assessment of the support provided by the United States to the people of Venezuela in their aspiration to live under conditions of peace and representative democracy (as defined by the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the Organization of American States, done at Lima September 11, 2001);

(2) an assessment of work carried out by the United States, in cooperation with the other member states of the Organization of American States and countries of the European Union, to ensure—

(A) the peaceful resolution of the current political situation in Venezuela; and

(B) the immediate cessation of violence against antigovernment protestors;

(3) a list of the government and security officials in Venezuela who—

(A) are responsible for, or complicit in, the use of force in relation to antigovernment protests and similar acts of violence; and

(B) have had their financial assets in the United States frozen or been placed on a visa ban by the United States; and

(4) an assessment of United States support for the development of democratic political processes and independent civil society in Venezuela.

SEC. 119. STRATEGY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE EVENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, other members of the National Security Council, and the heads of other appropriate departments and agencies of the United States Government, develop a strategy for the United States for the Middle East.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy shall include the following:

(1) Efforts to counter Iranian-sponsored terrorism in Middle East region.

(2) Efforts to reassure United States allies and partners in Middle East.

(3) Efforts to address the potential for a conventional or nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit the strategy developed under subsection (a) to—

(1) the majority leader, the minority leader, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the Speaker, the majority leader, the minority leader, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 120. DEPARTMENT OF STATE INTERNATIONAL CYBERSPACE POLICY STRATEGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall produce a comprehensive strategy, with a classified annex if necessary, relating to United States international policy with regard to cyberspace.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required in subsection (a) shall include:

(1) A review of actions and activities undertaken by the Secretary of State to date to support the goal of the President's International Strategy for Cyberspace, released in May 2011, to ''work internationally to promote an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable information and communications infrastructure that supports international trade and commerce, strengthens international security, and fosters free expression and innovation''.

(2) A plan of action to guide the Secretary's diplomacy with regard to nation-states, including conducting bilateral and multilateral activities to develop the norms of responsible international behavior in cyberspace, and status review of existing discussions in multilateral fora to obtain agreements on international norms in cyberspace.

(3) A review of the alternative concepts with regard to international norms in cyberspace offered by other prominent nation-state actors, including China, Russia, Brazil, and India.

(4) A detailed description of threats to United States national security in cyberspace from other nation-states, state-sponsored actors and private actors, to United States Federal and private sector infrastructure, United States intellectual property, and the privacy of United States citizens.

(5) A review of policy tools available to the President of United States to deter nation-states, state-sponsored actors, and private actors, including, but not limited to, those outlined in Executive Order 13694, released on April 1, 2015.

(6) A review of resources required by the Secretary, including the Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues, to conduct activities to build responsible norms of international cyber behavior.

(c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with other United States Government agencies, including the intelligence community, and, as appropriate, the United States private sector, and United States nongovernmental organizations with recognized credentials and expertise in foreign policy, national security, and cybersecurity.

(d) RELEASE.—The Secretary shall publicly release the strategy required in subsection (a) and brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives upon its release, including on the classified annex, should the strategy include such an annex.

SEC. 121. WAIVER OF FEES FOR RENEWAL OF IMMIGRANT VISA FOR ADOPTED CHILD IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS.

Section 221(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(c)) is amended to read as follows:

''(c) PERIOD OF VALIDITY; RENEWAL OR REPLACEMENT.—

''(1) IMMIGRANT VISAS.—An immigrant visa shall be valid for such period, not exceeding 6 months, as shall be by regulations prescribed, except that any visa issued to a child lawfully adopted by a United States citizen and spouse while such citizen is serving abroad in the United States Armed Forces, or is employed abroad by the United States Government, or is temporarily abroad on business, shall be valid until such time, for a period not to exceed 3 years, as the adoptive citizen parent returns to the United States in due course of his service, employment, or business.

''(2) NONIMMIGRANT VISAS.—A nonimmigrant visa shall be valid for such periods as shall be prescribed by regulations. In prescribing the period of validity of a nonimmigrant visa in the case of nationals of any foreign country who are eligible for such visas, the Secretary of State shall, insofar as practicable, accord to such nationals the same treatment upon a reciprocal basis as such foreign country accords to nationals of the United States who are within a similar class, except that in the case of aliens who are nationals of a foreign country and who either are granted refugee status and firmly resettled in another foreign country or are granted permanent residence and residing in another foreign country, the Secretary of State may prescribe the period of validity of such a visa based upon the treatment granted by that other foreign country to alien refugees and permanent residents, respectively, in the United States.

''(3) VISA REPLACEMENT.—An immigrant visa may be replaced under the original number during the fiscal year in which the original visa was issued for an immigrant who establishes to the satisfaction of the consular officer that the immigrant—

''(A) was unable to use the original immigrant visa during the period of its validity because of reasons beyond his control and for which he was not responsible;

''(B) is found by a consular officer to be eligible for an immigrant visa; and

''(C) pays again the statutory fees for an application and an immigrant visa.

''(4) FEE WAIVER.—If an immigrant visa was issued, on or after March 27, 2013, for a child who has been lawfully adopted, or who is coming to the United States to be adopted, by a United States citizen, any statutory immigrant visa fees relating to a renewal or replacement of such visa may be waived or, if already paid, may be refunded upon request, subject to such criteria as the Secretary of State may prescribe, if—

''(A) the immigrant child was unable to use the original immigrant visa during the period of its validity as a direct result of extraordinary circumstances, including the denial of an exit permit; and

''(B) if such inability was attributable to factors beyond the control of the adopting parent or parents and of the immigrant.''.

SEC. 122. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ANTI-ISRAEL AND ANTI-SEMITIC INCITEMENT WITHIN THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that the 1995 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, commonly referred to as Oslo II, specifically details that Israel and the Palestinian Authority shall ''abstain from incitement, including hostile propaganda, against each other and, without derogating from the principle of freedom of expression, shall take legal measures to prevent such incitement by any organizations, groups or individuals within their jurisdiction''.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) expresses support and admiration for individuals and organizations working to encourage cooperation between Israeli Jews and Palestinians, including—

(A) Professor Mohammed Dajani Daoudi, who took students from al-Quds University in Jerusalem to visit Auschwitz in March 2014 only to return to death threats by fellow Palestinians and expulsion from his teacher's union;

(B) the Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information, the only joint Israeli-Palestinian public policy think-tank,

(C) United Hatzalah, a nonprofit, fully volunteer Emergency Medical Services organization that, mobilizing volunteers who are religious or secular Jews, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians, provides EMS services to all people in Israel regardless of race, religion, or national origin; and

(D) Breaking the Impasse, an apolitical initiative of Palestinian and Israeli business and civil society leaders who advocate for a two-state solution and an urgent diplomatic solution to the conflict;

(2) reiterates strong condemnation of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement in the Palestinian Authority as antithetical to the stated desire to achieve a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace settlement; and

(3) urges President Abbas and Palestinian Authority officials to discontinue all official incitement that runs contrary to the determination to put an end to decades of confrontation.

SEC. 123. SUPPORT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND INVIOLABILITY OF POST-SOVIET COUNTRIES IN LIGHT OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AND INTERFERENCE.

It is the sense of Congress that Congress—

(1) supports the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and inviolability of post-Soviet countries within their internationally recognized borders;

(2) expresses deep concern over increasingly aggressive actions by the Russian Federation;

(3) is committed to providing sufficient funding for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs of the Department of State to address subversive and destabilizing activities by the Russian Federation within post-Soviet countries;

(4) supports robust engagement between the United States and post-Soviet countries through—

(A) the promotion of strengthened people-to-people ties, including through educational and cultural exchange programs;

(B) anticorruption assistance;

(C) public diplomacy;

(D) economic diplomacy; and

(E) other democratic reform efforts;

(5) encourages the President to further enhance nondefense cooperation and diplomatic engagement with post-Soviet countries;

(6) condemns the subversive and destabilizing activities undertaken by the Russian Federation within post-Soviet countries;

(7) encourages enhanced cooperation between the United States and the European Union to promote greater Euro-Atlantic integration, including through—

(A) the enlargement of the European Union; and

(B) the Open Door policy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

(8) urges continued cooperation between the United States and the European Union to maintain sanctions against the Russian Federation until the Government of Russia has—

(A) fully implemented all provisions of the Minsk agreements, done at Minsk September 5, 2014 and February 12, 2015; and

(B) demonstrated respect for the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine;

(9) calls on the member states of the European Union to extend the current sanctions regime against the Russian Federation; and

(10) urges the consideration of additional sanctions if the Russian Federation continue to engage in subversive and destabilizing activities within post-Soviet countries.

SEC. 124. RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA REPORT.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Russian Federation is waging a propaganda war against the United States and our allies; and

(2) a successful strategy must be implemented to counter the threat posed by Russian propaganda.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually for the following 3 years, the Secretary, in consultation with appropriate Federal officials, shall submit an unclassified report, with a classified annex, to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives that contains a detailed analysis of—

(1) the recent use of propaganda by the Government of Russia, including—

(A) the forms of propaganda used, including types of media and programming;

(B) the principal countries and regions targeted by Russian propaganda; and

(C) the impact of Russian propaganda on such targets;

(2) the response by United States allies, particularly European allies, to counter the threat of Russian propaganda;

(3) the response by the United States to the threat of Russian propaganda;

(4) the extent of the effectiveness of programs currently in use to counter Russian propaganda;

(5) a strategy for improving the effectiveness of such programs;

(6) any additional authority needed to counter the threat of Russian propaganda; and

(7) the additional funding needed to successfully implement the strategy referred to in paragraph (5).

SEC. 125. APPROVAL OF EXPORT LICENCES AND LETTERS OF REQUEST TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATIONS.—

(A) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the specified congressional committees a detailed list of all export license applications, including requests for marketing licenses, for the sale of defense articles and defense services to Ukraine.

(B) CONTENTS.—The list submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) the date on which the application or request was first submitted;

(ii) the current status of each application or request; and

(iii) the estimated timeline for adjudication of such applications or requests.

(C) PRIORITY.—The Secretary should give priority to processing the applications and requests included on the list submitted under subparagraph (A).

(2) LETTERS OF REQUEST.—The Secretary shall submit to the specified congressional committees a detailed list of all pending Letters of Request for Foreign Military Sales to Ukraine, including—

(A) the date on which each such letter was first submitted;

(B) the current status of each such letter; and

(C) the estimated timeline for the adjudication of each such letter.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter until the date set forth in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall submit a report to the specified congressional committees that describes the status of the applications, requests for marketing licenses, and Letters of Request described in subsection (a).

(2) TERMINATION DATE.—The date set forth in this paragraph is the earlier of—

(A) the date on which the President certifies to Congress that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Government of Ukraine has been restored; or

(B) the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) SPECIFIED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''specified congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(3) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(4) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

Subtitle B—Additional Matters

SEC. 131. ATROCITIES PREVENTION BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President is authorized to establish, within the Executive Office of the President, an Interagency Atrocities Prevention Board (referred to in this section as the ''Board'').

(b) DUTIES.—The Board is authorized—

(1) to coordinate an interagency approach to preventing mass atrocities;

(2) to propose policies to integrate the early warning systems of national security agencies, including intelligence agencies, with respect to incidents of mass atrocities and to coordinate the policy response to such incidents;

(3) to identify relevant Federal agencies, which shall track and report on Federal funding spent on atrocity prevention efforts;

(4) to oversee the development and implementation of comprehensive atrocities prevention and response strategies;

(5) to identify available resources and policy options necessary to prevent the emergence or escalation of mass atrocities;

(6) to identify and propose policies to close gaps in expertise, readiness, and planning for atrocities prevention and early action across Federal agencies, including training for employees at relevant Federal agencies;

(7) to engage relevant civil society and nongovernmental organization stakeholders in regular consultations to solicit current information on countries of concern; and

(8) to conduct an atrocity-specific expert review of policy and programming of all countries at risk for mass atrocities.

(c) LEADERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be headed by a Senior Director, who—

(A) shall be appointed by the President; and

(B) shall report to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Senior Director is authorized to have primary responsibility for—

(A) recommending and, if adopted, promoting United States Government policies on preventing mass atrocities; and

(B) carrying out the duties described in subsection (b).

(d) COMPOSITION.—The Board shall be composed of—

(1) representatives from—

(A) the Department of State;

(B) the United States Agency for International Development;

(C) the Department of Defense;

(D) the Department of Justice;

(E) the Department of the Treasury;

(F) the Department of Homeland Security;

(G) the Central Intelligence Agency;

(H) the Office of the Director of National Intelligence;

(I) the United States Mission to the United Nations; and

(J) the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and

(2) such other individuals as the President may appoint.

(e) COORDINATION.—The Board is authorized to coordinate with relevant officials and government agencies responsible for foreign policy with respect to particular regions and countries to help provide a cohesive, whole

of government response and policy direction to emerging and ongoing atrocities.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a classified report, with an unclassified annex, which shall include—

(1) an update on the interagency review mandated by Presidential Study Directive 10 that includes—

(A) an evaluation of current mechanisms and capacities for government-wide detection, early warning, information-sharing, contingency planning, and coordination of efforts to prevent and respond to situations of genocide, mass atrocities, and other mass violence, including such mass gender- and ethnicity-based violence;

(B) an assessment of the funding spent by relevant Federal agencies on atrocity prevention activities;

(C) current annual global assessments of sources of conflict and instability;

(D) recommendations to further strengthen United States capabilities to improve the mechanisms described in subparagraph (A); and

(E) evaluations of the various approaches to enhancing capabilities and improving the mechanisms described in subparagraph (A);

(2) recommendations to ensure burden sharing by—

(A) improving international cooperation and coordination to enhance multilateral mechanisms for preventing genocide and atrocities, including improving the role of regional and international organizations in conflict prevention, mitigation, and response; and

(B) strengthening regional organizations; and

(3) the implementation status of the recommendations contained in the interagency review described in paragraph (1).

(g) MATERIALS AND BRIEFINGS.—The Senior Director and the members of the Board shall brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives at least annually.

(h) SUNSET.—This section shall cease to be effective on June 30, 2017.

SEC. 132. UNITED STATES ENGAGEMENT IN THE INDO-PACIFIC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a comprehensive assessment to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the United States engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including with partners across the Indo-Pacific region.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The assessment submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a review of current and emerging United States diplomatic, national security, and economic interests and trends in the Indo-Pacific region;

(2) a review of resources devoted to United States diplomatic, economic, trade, development, and cultural engagement and plans in the Indo-Pacific region during the 10-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this Act;

(3) options for the realignment of United States engagement in the Indo-Pacific region to respond to new opportunities and challenges, including linking United States strategy more broadly across the Indo-Pacific region; and

(4) the views of noted policy leaders and regional experts, including leaders and experts in the Indo-Pacific region, on the opportunities and challenges to United States engagement across the Indo-Pacific region.

(c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary, as appropriate, shall consult with—

(1) other United States Government agencies; and

(2) independent, nongovernmental organizations with recognized credentials and expertise in foreign policy, national security, and international economic affairs that have access to policy experts throughout the United States and from the Indo-Pacific region.

SEC. 133. JOINT ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION AND TO FOSTER INCLUSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to enter into a bilateral joint action plan with the European Union to combat prejudice and discrimination and to foster inclusion (referred to in this section as the ''Joint Action Plan'').

(b) CONTENTS OF JOINT ACTION PLAN.—The Joint Action Plan shall—

(1) address anti-Semitism;

(2) address prejudice against, and the discriminatory treatment of, racial, ethnic, and religious minorities;

(3) promote equality of opportunity for access to quality education and economic opportunities; and

(4) promote equal treatment by the justice system.

(c) COOPERATION.—In developing the Joint Action Plan, the Secretary shall—

(1) leverage interagency policy expertise in the United States and Europe;

(2) develop partnerships among civil society and private sector stakeholders; and

(3) draw upon the extensive work done by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to address anti-Semitism.

(d) INITIATIVES.—The Joint Action Plan may include initiatives for promoting equality of opportunity and methods of eliminating prejudice and discrimination based on religion, race, or ethnicity, including—

(1) training programs;

(2) regional initiatives to promote equality of opportunity through the strengthening of democratic institutions;

(3) public-private partnerships with enterprises and nongovernmental organizations;

(4) exchanges of technical experts;

(5) scholarships and fellowships; and

(6) political empowerment and leadership initiatives.

(e) DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall task an existing Deputy Assistant Secretary with the responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the Joint Action Plan with his or her European Union counterpart.

(f) LEGAL EFFECTS.—Any Joint Action Plan adopted under this section—

(1) shall not be legally binding; and

(2) shall create no rights or obligations under international or United States law.

(g) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize—

(1) the Secretary to enter into a legally binding agreement or Joint Action Plan with the European Union; or

(2) any additional appropriations for the purposes and initiatives described in this section.

(h) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a progress report on the development of the Joint Action Plan to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 134. REPORT ON DEVELOPING COUNTRY DEBT SUSTAINABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Treasury, shall submit a report containing an assessment of the current external debt environment for developing countries and identifying particular near-term risks to debt sustainability to—

(1) the appropriate congressional committees;

(2) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(3) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall assess—

(1) the impact of new lending relationships, including the role of new creditors;

(2) the adequacy of current multilateral surveillance mechanisms in guarding against debt distress in developing countries;

(3) the ability of developing countries to borrow on global capital markets; and

(4) the interaction between debt sustainability objectives of the developing world and the development-oriented investment agenda of the G–20, including the impact of—

(A) current debt sustainability objectives on investment in developing countries; and

(B) investment objectives proposed by the G–20 on the ability to meet the goals of—

(i) the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative; and

(ii) the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative.

SEC. 135. UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE GLOBALLY.

(a) GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and biennially thereafter for 6 years, the Secretary of State shall develop or update a United States global strategy to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. The strategy shall be transmitted to the appropriate congressional committees and made publicly available on the Internet.

(b) INITIAL STRATEGY.—For the purposes of this section, the ''United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally'', issued in August 2012, shall be deemed to fulfill the initial requirement of subsection (a).

(c) COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION.—In developing the strategy under subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with—

(1) the heads of relevant Federal agencies;

(2) the Senior Policy Operating Group on Trafficking in Persons; and

(3) representatives of civil society and multilateral organizations with demonstrated experience in addressing violence against women and girls or promoting gender equality internationally.

(d) PRIORITY COUNTRY SELECTION.—To further the objectives of the strategy described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall identify no less than 4 eligible low-income and lower-middle income countries with significant levels of violence against women and girls, including within displaced communities, that have the governmental or nongovernmental organizational capacity to manage and implement gender-based violence prevention and response program activities and should, when possible, be geographically, ethnically, and culturally diverse from one another.

(e) COUNTRY PLANS.—In each country identified under subsection (d) the Secretary shall develop comprehensive, multisectoral, and holistic individual country plans designed to address and respond to violence against women and girls that include—

(1) an assessment and description of the current or potential capacity of the government of each identified country and civil society organizations in each such identified country to address and respond to violence against women and girls;

(2) an identification of coordination mechanisms with Federal agencies that—

(A) have existing programs relevant to the strategy;

(B) will be involved in new program activities; and

(C) are engaged in broader United States strategies around development;

(3) a description of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms established for each identified country, and their intended use in assessing overall progress in prevention and response;

(4) a projection of the general levels of resources needed to achieve the stated objectives in each identified country, including an accounting of—

(A) activities and funding already expended by the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, other Federal agencies, donor country governments, and multilateral institutions; and

(B) leveraged private sector resources; and

(5) strategies, as appropriate, designed to accommodate the needs of stateless, disabled, internally displaced, refugee, or religious or ethnic minority women and girls.

(f) REPORT ON PRIORITY COUNTRY SELECTION AND COUNTRY PLANS.—Not more than 90 days after selection of the priority countries required under subsection (d), and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report detailing the priority country selection process, the development of specific country plans, and include an overview of all programming and specific activities being undertaken, the budget resources requested, and the specific activities to be supported by each Executive agency under the strategy if such resources are provided.

(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize any additional appropriations for the purposes and initiatives of this section.

SEC. 136. INTERNATIONAL CORRUPTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than June 1 of each year, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (referred to in this section as the ''USAID Administrator''), the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of appropriate intelligence agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a Country Report on Corruption Practices, with a classified annex, which shall include information about countries for which a corruption analysis was conducted under subsection (b).

(b) CORRUPTION ANALYSIS ELEMENTS.—The corruption analysis conducted under this subsection should include, among other elements—

(1) an analysis of individuals and associations that comprise corruption networks in the country, including, as applicable—

(A) government officials;

(B) private sector actors;

(C) criminals; and

(D) members of illegal armed groups;

(2) the identification of the state functions that have been captured by corrupt networks in the country, including, as applicable functions of—

(A) the judicial branch;

(B) the taxing authority;

(C) the central bank; and

(D) specific military or police units;

(3) the identification of—

(A) the key economic activities, whether licit or illicit, which are dominated by members of the corrupt network; and

(B) other revenue streams that enrich such members; and

(4) the identification of enablers of corrupt practices, within the country and outside the country.

(c) PUBLICATION AND BRIEFINGS.—The Secretary shall—

(1) publish the Country Report on Corruption and Accountability submitted under subsection (a) on the website of the Department; and

(2) brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives on the information contained in the report published under paragraph (1).

SEC. 137. QUADRENNIAL DIPLOMACY AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—

(1) QUADRENNIAL REVIEWS REQUIRED.—Under the direction of the President, the Secretary of State shall every 4 years, during a year following a year evenly divisible by 4, conduct a review of United States diplomacy and development (to be known as a ''quadrennial diplomacy and development review'').

(2) SCOPE OF REVIEWS.—Each quadrennial diplomacy and development review shall be a comprehensive examination of the national diplomacy and development policy and strategic framework of the United States for the next 4-year period until a subsequent review is due under paragraph (1). The review shall include—

(A) recommendations regarding the long-term diplomacy and development policy and strategic framework of the United States;

(B) priorities of the United States for diplomacy and development; and

(C) guidance on the related programs, assets, capabilities, budget, policies, and authorities of the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting each quadrennial diplomacy and development review, after consultation with Department of State and United States Agency for International Development officials, the Secretary of State should consult with—

(A) the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, including the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Director of National Intelligence;

(B) any other Federal agency that provides foreign assistance, including at a minimum the Export-Import Bank of the United States and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation;

(C) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and, as appropriate, other members of Congress; and

(D) other relevant governmental and nongovernmental entities, including private sector representatives, academics, and other policy experts.

(b) CONTENTS OF REVIEW.—Each quadrennial diplomacy and development review shall—

(1) delineate, as appropriate, the national diplomacy and development policy and strategic framework of the United States, consistent with appropriate national, Department of State, and United States Agency for International Development strategies, strategic plans, and relevant presidential directives, including the national security strategy prescribed pursuant to section 108 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 404a);

(2) outline and prioritize the full range of critical national diplomacy and development areas, capabilities, and resources, including those implemented across agencies, and address the full range of challenges confronting the United States in this regard;

(3) describe the interagency cooperation, and preparedness of relevant Federal assets, and the infrastructure, budget plan, and other elements of the diplomacy and development policies and programs of the United States required to execute successfully the full range of mission priorities outlined under paragraph (2);

(4) describe the roles of international organizations and multilateral institutions in advancing United States diplomatic and development objectives, including the mechanisms for coordinating and harmonizing development policies and programs with partner countries and among donors;

(5) identify the budget plan required to provide sufficient resources to successfully execute the full range of mission priorities outlined under paragraph (2);

(6) include an assessment of the organizational alignment of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development with the national diplomacy and development policy and strategic framework referred to in paragraph (1) and the diplomacy and development mission priorities outlined under paragraph (2);

(7) review and assess the effectiveness of the management mechanisms of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development for executing the strategic priorities outlined in the quadrennial diplomacy and development review, including the extent to which such effectiveness has been enhanced since the previous report; and

(8) the relationship between the requirements of the quadrennial diplomacy and development review and the acquisition strategy and expenditure plan within the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development.

(c) FOREIGN AFFAIRS POLICY BOARD REVIEW.—The Secretary of State should apprise the Foreign Affairs Policy Board on an ongoing basis of the work undertaken in the conduct of the quadrennial diplomacy and development review.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize any additional appropriations for the purposes and initiatives under this section.

SEC. 138. DISAPPEARED PERSONS IN MEXICO, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, AND EL SALVADOR.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The United States—

(A) values governance, security, and the rule of law in Mexico and Central America; and

(B) has reemphasized its commitment to this region following the humanitarian crisis of unaccompanied children from these countries across the international border between the United States and Mexico in 2014.

(2) Individuals migrating from Central America to the United States face great peril during their journey. Many go missing along the way and are often never heard from again.

(b) REPORT OF DISAPPEARED PERSONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary, in close consultation with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that includes—

(1) the number of cases of enforced disappearances in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador;

(2) an assessment of causes for the disappearances described in paragraph (1);

(3) the primary individuals and groups responsible for such disappearances; and

(4) the official government response in those countries to account for such disappeared persons.

SEC. 139. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BAHRAIN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit an unclassified report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the implementation by the Government of Bahrain of the recommendations contained in the 2011 Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (referred to in this section as the ''Bahrain Report'').

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of the specific steps taken by the Government of Bahrain to implement each of the 26 recommendations contained in the Bahrain Report;

(2) an assessment of whether the Government of Bahrain has ''fully complied with'', ''partially implemented'', or ''not meaningfully implemented'' each recommendation referred to in paragraph (1); and

(3) an assessment of the impact of the findings in the Bahrain Report for the United States security posture in the Arab Gulf and the area of responsibility of the United States Central Command.

SEC. 140. REPORT ON UNITED STATES HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI AND WHETHER RECENT ELECTIONS IN HAITI MEET INTERNATIONAL ELECTION STANDARDS.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 5(a) of the Assessing Progress in Haiti Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2017'' and inserting ''December 31, 2022''.

(b) REPORT.—Section 5(b) of the Assessing Progress in Haiti Act of 2014 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (12), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (13), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(14) a determination of whether recent Haitian elections are free, fair and responsive to the people of Haiti; and

''(15) a description of any attempts to disqualify candidates for political officers in Haiti for political reasons.''.

SEC. 141. SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPOSITION OF ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS AGAINST THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (in this section referred to as the ''DPRK'') tested nuclear weapons on 3 separate occasions, in October 2006, in May 2009, and in February 2013.

(2) Nuclear experts have reported that the DPRK may currently have as many as 20 nuclear warheads and has the potential to possess as many as 100 warheads within the next 5 years.

(3) According to the 2014 Department of Defense report, ''Military and Security Developments Involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea'' (in this subsection referred to as the ''2014 DoD report''), the DPRK has proliferated nuclear technology to Libya via the proliferation network of Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan.

(4) According to the 2014 DoD report, ''North Korea also provided Syria with nuclear reactor technology until 2007.''.

(5) On September 6, 2007, as part of ''Operation Orchard'', the Israeli Air Force destroyed the suspected nuclear facility in Syria.

(6) According to the 2014 DoD report, ''North Korea has exported conventional and ballistic missile-related equipment, components, materials, and technical assistance to countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.''.

(7) On November 29, 1987, DPRK agents planted explosive devices onboard Korean Air flight 858, which killed all 115 passengers and crew on board.

(8) On March 26, 2010, the DPRK fired upon and sank the South Korean warship Cheonan, killing 46 of her crew.

(9) On November 23, 2010, the DPRK shelled South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island, killing 4 South Korean citizens.

(10) On February 7, 2014, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on human rights in DPRK (in this subsection referred to as the ''Commission of Inquiry'') released a report detailing the atrocious human rights record of the DPRK.

(11) Dr. Michael Kirby, Chair of the Commission of Inquiry, stated on March 17, 2014, ''The Commission of Inquiry has found systematic, widespread, and grave human rights violations occurring in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It has also found a disturbing array of crimes against humanity. These crimes are committed against inmates of political and other prison camps; against starving populations; against religious believers; against persons who try to flee the country—including those forcibly repatriated by China.''.

(12) Dr. Michael Kirby also stated, ''These crimes arise from policies established at the highest level of the State. They have been committed, and continue to take place in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, because the policies, institutions, and patterns of impunity that lie at their heart remain in place. The gravity, scale, duration, and nature of the unspeakable atrocities committed in the country reveal a totalitarian State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.''.

(13) The Commission of Inquiry also notes, ''Since 1950, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has engaged in the systematic abduction, denial of repatriation, and subsequent enforced disappearance of persons from other countries on a large scale and as a matter of State policy. Well over 200,000 persons, including children, who were brought from other countries to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea may have become victims of enforced disappearance,'' and states that the DPRK has failed to account or address this injustice in any way.

(14) According to reports and analysis from organizations such as the International Network for the Human Rights of North Korean Overseas Labor, the Korea Policy Research Center, NK Watch, the Asian Institute for Policy Studies, the Center for International and Strategic Studies, and the George W. Bush Institute, there may currently be as many as 100,000 North Korean overseas laborers in various nations around the world.

(15) Such forced North Korean laborers are often subjected to harsh working conditions under the direct supervision of DPRK officials, and their salaries contribute to anywhere from $150,000,000 to $230,000,000 a year to the DPRK state coffers.

(16) According to the Director of National Intelligence's 2015 Worldwide Threat Assessment, ''North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs pose a serious threat to the United States and to the security environment in East Asia.''.

(17) The Worldwide Threat Assessment states, ''North Korea has also expanded the size and sophistication of its ballistic missile forces, ranging from close-range ballistic missiles to ICBMs, while continuing to conduct test launches. In 2014, North Korea launched an unprecedented number of ballistic missiles.''.

(18) On December 19, 2015, the Federal Bureau of Investigation declared that the DPRK was responsible for a cyberattack on Sony Pictures conducted on November 24, 2014.

(19) From 1988 to 2008, the DPRK was designated by the United States Government as a state sponsor of terrorism.

(20) The DPRK is currently in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013).

(21) The DPRK repeatedly violated agreements with the United States and the other so-called Six-Party Talks partners (the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Russian Federation, and the People's Republic of China) designed to halt its nuclear weapons program, while receiving significant concessions, including fuel, oil, and food aid.

(22) The Six-Party Talks have not been held since December 2008.

(23) On May 9, 2015, the DPRK claimed that it has test-fired a ballistic missile from a submarine.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the DPRK represents a serious threat to the national security of the United States and United States allies in East Asia and to international peace and stability, and grossly violates the human rights of its own people;

(2) the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury should impose additional sanctions against the DPRK, including targeting its financial assets around the world, specific designations relating to human rights abuses, and a redesignation of the DPRK as a state sponsor of terror; and

(3) the President should not resume the negotiations with the DPRK, either bilaterally or as part of the Six-Party Talks, without strict preconditions, including that the DPRK—

(A) adhere to its denuclearization commitments outlined in the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks;

(B) commit to halting its ballistic missile programs and its proliferation activities;

(C) cease military provocations; and

(D) measurably and significantly improve its human rights record.

TITLE II—ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Subtitle A—Organizational Matters

SEC. 201. RIGHTSIZING ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after receiving rightsizing recommendations pursuant to a review conducted by the Office of Management, Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation relating to overseas staffing levels at United States overseas posts, the relevant chief of mission, in coordination with the relevant regional bureau, shall submit a response to the Office of Management, Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation that describes—

(1) any rightsizing recommendations that are accepted by such chief of mission and regional bureau;

(2) a detailed schedule for implementation of any such recommendations;

(3) any recommendations that are rejected; and

(4) a detailed justification providing the basis for the rejection of any such recommendations.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—On the date on which the President's annual budget request is submitted to Congress, the Secretary shall submit an annual report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the status of all rightsizing recommendations and responses described in subsection (a) from the preceding 5 years, including—

(1) a list of all such rightsizing recommendations made, including whether each such recommendation was accepted or rejected by the relevant chief of mission and regional bureau;

(2) for each accepted recommendation, a detailed description of the current status of its implementation according to the schedule provided pursuant to subsection (a)(2), including an explanation for any departure from, or changes to, such schedule; and

(3) for any rejected recommendations, the justification provided pursuant to subsection (a)(4).

(c) REPORT ON REGIONAL BUREAU STAFFING.—In conjunction with each report required under subsection (b), the Secretary shall submit a supplemental report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) an enumeration of the domestic staff positions in each regional bureau of the Department;

(2) a detailed explanation of the extent to which the staffing of each regional bureau reflects the overseas requirements of the United States within each such region;

(3) a detailed plan, including an implementation schedule, for how the Department will seek to rectify any significant imbalances in staffing among regional bureaus or between any regional bureau and the overseas requirements of the United States within such region if the Secretary determines that such staffing does not reflect—

(A) the foreign policy priorities of the United States; or

(B) the effective conduct of the foreign affairs of the United States; and

(4) a detailed description of the implementation status of any plan provided pursuant to paragraph (3), including an explanation for any departure from, or changes to, the implementation schedule provided with such plan.

SEC. 202. INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in conjunction with the Under Secretary of Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, shall establish—

(1) foreign economic policy priorities for each regional bureau, including for individual countries, as appropriate; and

(2) policies and guidance for integrating such foreign economic policy priorities throughout the Department.

(b) DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—Within each regional bureau of the Department, the Secretary shall task an existing Deputy Assistant Secretary with appropriate training and background in economic and commercial affairs with the responsibility for economic matters and interests within the responsibilities of such regional bureau, including the integration of the foreign economic policy priorities established pursuant to subsection (a).

(c) COORDINATION.—The Deputy Assistant Secretary given the responsibility for economic matters and interests pursuant to subsection (b) within each bureau shall—

(1) at the direction of the relevant Assistant Secretary, review and report to the Assistant Secretary of such bureau on all economic matters and interests; and

(2) serve as liaison with the Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment.

SEC. 203. REVIEW OF BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS AND BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS JURISDICTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct a review of the jurisdictional responsibility of the Bureau of African Affairs and that of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs relating to the North African countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya; and

(2) submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(A) the findings of the review conducted under paragraph (1); and

(B) recommendations on whether jurisdictional responsibility among the bureaus referred to in paragraph (1) should be adjusted.

(b) REVIEW.—The review conducted under subsection (a)(1) shall—

(1) identify regional strategic priorities;

(2) assess regional dynamics between the North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa regions, including the degree to which the priorities identified pursuant to paragraph (1)—

(A) are distinct between each such region; or

(B) have similar application across such regions;

(3) identify current priorities and effectiveness of United States Government regional engagement in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, including through security assistance, economic assistance, humanitarian assistance, and trade;

(4) assess the degree to which such engagement is—

(A) inefficient, duplicative, or uncoordinated between the North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa regions; or

(B) otherwise harmed or limited as a result of the current division of jurisdictional responsibilities;

(5) assess the overall coherence and effectiveness of the current division of jurisdictional responsibilities in Africa between the Bureau of African Affairs and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, including with regard to coordination with other United States departments or agencies; and

(6) assess any opportunities and costs of transferring jurisdictional responsibility of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya from the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to the Bureau of African Affairs.

SEC. 204. SPECIAL ENVOYS, REPRESENTATIVES, ADVISORS, AND COORDINATORS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on special envoys, representatives, advisors, and coordinators of the Department, which shall include—

(1) a tabulation of the current names, ranks, positions, and responsibilities of all special envoy, representative, advisor, and coordinator positions at the Department, with a separate accounting of all such positions at the level of Assistant Secretary (or equivalent) or above; and

(2) for each position identified pursuant to paragraph (1)—

(A) the date on which the position was created;

(B) the mechanism by which the position was created, including the authority under which the position was created;

(C) the positions authorized under section 1(d) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(d));

(D) a description of whether, and the extent to which, the responsibilities assigned to the position duplicate the responsibilities of other current officials within the Department, including other special envoys, representatives, and advisors;

(E) which current official within the Department would be assigned the responsibilities of the position in the absence of the position;

(F) to which current official within the Department the position directly reports;

(G) the total number of staff assigned to support the position; and

(H) with the exception of those created by statute, a detailed explanation of the necessity of the position to the effective conduct of the foreign affairs of the United States.

SEC. 205. CONFLICT PREVENTION, MITIGATION AND RESOLUTION, AND THE INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN.

Section 704 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4024) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) The Secretary, in conjunction with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall ensure that all appropriate personnel, responsible for, or deploying to, countries or regions considered to be at risk of, undergoing, or emerging from violent conflict, including special envoys, members of mediation or negotiation teams, relevant members of the civil service or foreign service, and contractors, obtain training, as appropriate, in the following areas, each of which shall include a focus on women and ensuring women's meaningful inclusion and participation:

''(1) Conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolution.

''(2) Protecting civilians from violence, exploitation, and trafficking in persons.

''(3) International human rights law and international humanitarian law.''.

SEC. 206. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM SECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall regularly consult with the Director of the National Security Agency and any other departments or agencies the Secretary determines to be appropriate regarding the security of United States Government and nongovernment information technology systems and networks owned, operated, managed, or utilized by the Department, including any such systems or networks facilitating the use of sensitive or classified information.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In performing the consultations required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall make all such systems and networks available to the Director of the National Security Agency and any other such departments or agencies to carry out such tests and procedures as are necessary to ensure adequate policies and protections are in place to prevent penetrations or compromises of such systems and networks, including by malicious intrusions by any unauthorized individual or state actor or other entity.

(c) SECURITY BREACH REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the National Security Agency and any other departments or agencies the Secretary determines to be appropriate, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives that describes in detail—

(1) all known or suspected penetrations or compromises of the systems or networks described in subsection (a) facilitating the use of classified information; and

(2) all known or suspected significant penetrations or compromises of any other such systems and networks that occurred since the submission of the prior report.

(d) CONTENT.—Each report submitted under subsection (c) shall include—

(1) a description of the relevant information technology system or network penetrated or compromised;

(2) an assessment of the date and time such penetration or compromise occurred;

(3) an assessment of the duration for which such system or network was penetrated or compromised, including whether such penetration or compromise is ongoing;

(4) an assessment of the amount and sensitivity of information accessed and available to have been accessed by such penetration or compromise, including any such information contained on systems and networks owned, operated, managed, or utilized by any other department or agency of the United States Government;

(5) an assessment of whether such system or network was penetrated by a malicious intrusion, including an assessment of—

(A) the known or suspected perpetrators, including state actors; and

(B) the methods used to conduct such penetration or compromise; and

(6) a description of the actions the Department has taken, or plans to take, to prevent future, similar penetrations or compromises of such systems and networks.

SEC. 207. ANALYSIS OF EMBASSY COST SHARING.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees and to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives that assesses the cost-effectiveness and performance of the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services system (referred to in this section as the ''ICASS system''), including by assessing—

(1) the general performance of the ICASS system in providing cost-effective, timely, efficient, appropriate, and reliable services that meet the needs of all departments and agencies served;

(2) the extent to which additional cost savings and greater performance can be achieved under the current ICASS system and rules;

(3) the standards applied in the selection of the ICASS provider and the extent to which such standards are consistently applied; and

(4) potential reforms to the ICASS system, including—

(A) the selection of more than 1 service provider under certain circumstances;

(B) options for all departments or agencies to opt out of ICASS entirely or to opt out of individual services, including by debundling service packages;

(C) increasing the reliance on locally employed staff or outsourcing to local firms, as appropriate; and

(D) other modifications to the current ICASS system and rules that would incentivize greater effectiveness and cost efficiency.

SEC. 208. PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP TO PREVENT INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTION.

Section 433(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 241(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—

''(1) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—The Secretary of State shall convene and chair an interagency working group to prevent international parental child abduction, which shall be composed of presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed, officials from—

''(A) the Department of State;

''(B) the Department of Homeland Security, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(C) the Department of Justice, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

''(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Secretary of State shall convene an advisory committee to the interagency working group established pursuant to paragraph (1), for the duration of the working group's existence, which shall be composed of not less than 3 left-behind parents, serving for 2-year terms, who—

''(A) shall be selected by the Secretary; and

''(B) shall periodically consult with the interagency working group on all activities of the interagency working group, as appropriate.''.

SEC. 209. IMPROVING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(1) conduct regular research and evaluation of public diplomacy programs and activities of the Department, including through the routine use of audience research, digital analytics, and impact evaluations, to plan and execute such programs and activities; and

(2) make the findings of the research and evaluations conducted under paragraph (1) available to Congress.

(b) DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall appoint a Director of Research and Evaluation in the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

(2) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENT.—The appointment of a Director of Research and Evaluation pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not result in an increase in the overall full-time equivalent positions within the Department.

(3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director of Research and Evaluation shall—

(A) coordinate and oversee the research and evaluation of public diplomacy programs of the Department—

(i) to improve public diplomacy strategies and tactics; and

(ii) to ensure that programs are increasing the knowledge, understanding, and trust of the United States by relevant target audiences;

(B) report to the Director of Policy and Planning;

(C) routinely organize and oversee audience research, digital analytics and impact evaluations across all public diplomacy bureaus and offices of the Department;

(D) support embassy public affairs sections;

(E) share appropriate public diplomacy research and evaluation information within the Department and with other Federal departments and agencies;

(F) regularly design and coordinate standardized research questions, methodologies, and procedures to ensure that public diplomacy activities across all public diplomacy bureaus and offices are designed to meet appropriate foreign policy objectives; and

(G) report quarterly to the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, through the Commission's Subcommittee on Research and Evaluation established pursuant to subsection (e), regarding the research and evaluation of all public diplomacy bureaus and offices of the Department.

(4) GUIDANCE AND TRAINING.—Not later than 180 days after his or her appointment pursuant to paragraph (1), the Director of Research and Evaluation shall create guidance and training for all public diplomacy officers regarding the reading and interpretation of public diplomacy program evaluation findings to ensure that such findings and lessons learned are implemented in the planning and evaluation of all public diplomacy programs and activities throughout the Department.

(c) PRIORITIZING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of Policy, Planning, and Resources shall ensure that research and evaluation, as coordinated and overseen by the Director of Research and Evaluation, supports strategic planning and resource allocation across all public diplomacy bureaus and offices of the Department.

(2) ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.—Amounts allocated for the purposes of research and evaluation of public diplomacy programs and activities pursuant to subsection (a) shall be made available to be disbursed at the direction of the Director of Research and Evaluation among the research and evaluation staff across all public diplomacy bureaus and offices of the Department.

(3) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Department should allocate, for the purposes of research and evaluation of public diplomacy activities and programs pursuant to subsection (a)—

(A) 3 to 5 percent of program funds made available under the heading ''EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS''; and

(B) 3 to 5 percent of program funds allocated for public diplomacy programs under the heading ''DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR PROGRAMS''.

(d) LIMITED EXEMPTION.—The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) shall not apply to collections of information directed at foreign individuals conducted by, or on behalf of, the Department for the purpose of audience research and impact evaluations, in accordance with the requirements under this section and in connection with the Department's activities conducted pursuant to the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act (22 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.) or the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2451 et seq.).

(e) ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.—

(1) SUBCOMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—The Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy shall establish a Subcommittee for Research and Evaluation to monitor and advise on the research and evaluation activities of the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

(2) REPORT.—The Subcommittee for Research and Evaluation established pursuant to paragraph (1) shall submit an annual report to Congress in conjunction with the Commission on Public Diplomacy's Comprehensive Annual Report on the performance of the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors in carrying out research and evaluations of their respective public diplomacy programming.

(3) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 1334 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6553) is amended by striking ''October 1, 2015'' and inserting ''October 1, 2020''.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUDIENCE RESEARCH.—The term ''audience research'' means research conducted at the outset of public diplomacy program or campaign planning and design on specific audience segments to understand the attitudes, interests, knowledge and behaviors of such audience segments.

(2) DIGITAL ANALYTICS.—The term ''digital analytics'' means the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, accumulated in digital format, to indicate the outputs and outcomes of a public diplomacy program or campaign.

(3) IMPACT EVALUATION.—The term ''impact evaluation'' means an assessment of the changes in the audience targeted by a public diplomacy program or campaign that can be attributed to such program or campaign.

SEC. 210. ENHANCED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall strengthen the institutional capacity of the Bureau of African Affairs to oversee programs and engage in strategic planning and crisis management by—

(1) establishing an office within the Bureau of African Affairs that is separate and distinct from the regional affairs office specifically charged with overseeing strategy development and program implementation related to security assistance;

(2) planning to facilitate the long-term planning process; and

(3) developing a concrete plan to rightsize the Bureau of African Affairs not later than 180 days after the date enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the actions that have been taken to carry out subsection (a).

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the appropriation of additional amounts to carry out this section, and the Secretary shall use existing resources to carry out the provisions of this section.

Subtitle B—Personnel Matters

SEC. 211. REVIEW OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER COMPENSATION.

(a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall commission an independent assessment of Foreign Service Officer compensation to ensure that such compensation is achieving its purposes and the goals of the Department, including to recruit, retain, and maintain the world's premier diplomatic corps.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(A) the results of the independent assessment commissioned pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(B) the views of the Secretary regarding Foreign Service Officer compensation.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a list of all compensation received by Foreign Service Officers assigned domestically or overseas, including base salary and any other benefits, allowances, differentials, or other financial incentives;

(2) for each form of compensation described in paragraph (1)—

(A) an explanation of its stated purpose;

(B) a description of all relevant authorities, including statutory authority; and

(C) an assessment of the degree to which its historical and current use matches its stated purpose; and

(3) an assessment of the effectiveness of each form of compensation described in paragraph (1) in—

(A) achieving its stated purpose;

(B) achieving the recruiting and retention goals of the Department; and

(C) achieving the assignment placement needs of the Department.

SEC. 212. REPEAL OF RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE.

Section 305 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3945) is amended by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 213. COMPENSATORY TIME OFF FOR TRAVEL.

Section 5550b of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) The maximum amount of compensatory time off that may be earned under this section may not exceed 104 hours during any leave year (as defined in section 630.201(b) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations).''.

SEC. 214. CERTIFICATES OF DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCE.

Not later than 7 days after submitting the report required under section 304(a)(4) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3944(a)(4)) to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the President shall make the report available to the public, including by posting the on the website of the Department in a conspicuous manner and location.

SEC. 215. FOREIGN SERVICE ASSIGNMENT RESTRICTIONS.

(a) APPEAL OF ASSIGNMENT RESTRICTION.—The Secretary shall establish a right and process for employees to appeal any assignment restriction or preclusion.

(b) CERTIFICATION.—Upon full implementation of a right and process for employees to appeal an assignment restriction or preclusion, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) certifies that such appeals process has been fully implemented; and

(2) includes a detailed description of such process.

(c) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall—

(1) publish the right and process established pursuant to subsection (a) in the Foreign Affairs Manual; and

(2) include a reference to such publication in the report required under subsection (b).

(d) PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION.—Section 502(a)(2) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3982(a)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

''(2) In making assignments under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ensure that a member of the Service is not assigned to, or restricted from, a position at a post in a particular geographic area, or domestically in a position working on issues relating to a particular geographic area, exclusively on the basis of the race, ethnicity, or religion of that member.''.

SEC. 216. SECURITY CLEARANCE SUSPENSIONS.

(a) SUSPENSION.—Section 610 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4010) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

"SEC. 610. SEPARATION FOR CAUSE; SUSPENSION."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c)(1) In order to promote the efficiency of the Service, the Secretary may suspend a member of the Service without pay when—

''(A) the member's security clearance is suspended; or

''(B) there is reasonable cause to believe that the member has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed.

''(2) Any member of the Foreign Service for whom a suspension is proposed under this subsection shall be entitled to—

''(A) written notice stating the specific reasons for the proposed suspension;

''(B) a reasonable time to respond orally and in writing to the proposed suspension;

''(C) representation by an attorney or other representative; and

''(D) a final written decision, including the specific reasons for such decision, as soon as practicable.

''(3) Any member suspended under this subsection may file a grievance in accordance with the procedures applicable to grievances under chapter 11.

''(4) If a grievance is filed under paragraph (3)—

''(A) the review by the Foreign Service Grievance Board shall be limited to a determination of whether the provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) have been fulfilled; and

''(B) the Board may not exercise the authority provided under section 1106(8).

''(5) In this subsection:

''(A) The term 'reasonable time' means—

''(i) with respect to a member of the Foreign Service assigned to duty in the United States, 15 days after receiving notice of the proposed suspension; and

''(ii) with respect to a member of the Foreign Service assigned to duty outside the United States, 30 days after receiving notice of the proposed suspension.

''(B) The terms 'suspend' and 'suspension' mean placing a member of the Foreign Service in a temporary status without duties and pay.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 2 of such Act is amended by striking the item relating to section 610 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 610. Separation for cause; suspension.''.

SEC. 217. ECONOMIC STATECRAFT EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

The Secretary shall establish curriculum at the Foreign Services Institute to develop the practical foreign economic policy expertise and skill sets of Foreign Service officers, including by making available distance-learning courses in commercial, economic, and business affairs, including in—

(1) the global business environment;

(2) the economics of development;

(3) development and infrastructure finance;

(4) current trade and investment agreements negotiations;

(5) implementing existing multilateral and World Trade Organization agreements, and United States trade and investment agreements;

(6) best practices for customs and export procedures; and

(7) market analysis and global supply chain management.

SEC. 218. REPORT ON DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT, EMPLOYMENT, RETENTION, AND PROMOTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and quadrennially thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit a comprehensive report to Congress that—

(1) describes the efforts, consistent with existing law, including procedures, effects, and results of the Department since the period covered by the prior such report, to promote equal opportunity and inclusion for all American employees in direct hire and personal service contractors status, particularly employees of the Foreign Service, to include equal opportunity for all races, ethnicities, ages, genders, and service-disabled veterans, with a focus on traditionally underrepresented minority groups;

(2) includes a section on—

(A) the diversity of selection boards;

(B) the employment of minority and service-disabled veterans during the most recent 10-year period, including—

(i) the number hired through direct hires, internships, and fellowship programs;

(ii) the number promoted to senior positions, including FS–01, GS–15, Senior Executive Service, and Senior Foreign Service; and

(iii) attrition rates by grade, civil and foreign services, and the senior level ranks listed in clause (ii);

(C) mentorship and retention programs; and

(3) is organized in terms of real numbers and percentages at all levels.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall describe the efforts of the Department—

(1) to propagate fairness, impartiality, and inclusion in the work environment domestically and abroad;

(2) to eradicate harassment, intolerance, and discrimination;

(3) to refrain from engaging in unlawful discrimination in any phase of the employment process, including recruitment, hiring, evaluation, assignments, promotion, retention, and training;

(4) to eliminate illegal retaliation against employees for participating in a protected equal employment opportunity activity;

(5) to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified employees and applicants with disabilities;

(6) to resolve workplace conflicts, confrontations, and complaints in a prompt, impartial, constructive, and timely manner;

(7) to improve demographic data availability and analysis regarding recruitment, hiring, promotion, training, length in service, assignment restrictions, and pass-through programs;

(8) to recruit a diverse staff by—

(A) recruiting women, minorities, veterans, and undergraduate and graduate students;

(B) recruiting at historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, women's colleges, and colleges that typically serve majority minority populations;

(C) sponsoring and recruiting at job fairs in urban communities;

(D) placing job advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and job sites oriented toward women and people of color;

(E) providing opportunities through the Foreign Service Internship Program and other hiring initiatives; and

(F) recruiting mid- and senior-level professionals through programs such as—

(i) the International Career Advancement Program;

(ii) the Public Policy and International Affairs Fellowship Program;

(iii) the Institute for International Public Policy Fellowship Program;

(iv) Seminar XXI at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for International Studies; and

(v) other similar, highly respected, international leadership programs; and

(9) to provide opportunities through—

(A) the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Fellowship Program;

(B) the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program; and

(C) the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program.

(c) SCOPE OF INITIAL REPORT.—The first report submitted to Congress under this section shall include the information described in subsection (b) for the 3 fiscal years immediately preceding the fiscal year in which the report is submitted.

SEC. 219. EXPANSION OF THE CHARLES B. RANGEL INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM, THE THOMAS R. PICKERING FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, AND THE DONALD M. PAYNE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) ADDITIONAL FELLOWSHIPS AUTHORIZED.—Beginning in fiscal year 2016, the Secretary shall—

(1) increase by 10 the number of fellows selected for the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program;

(2) increase by 10 the number of fellows selected for the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program; and

(3) increase by 5 the number of fellows selected for the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program.

(b) PAYNE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM.—Undergraduate and graduate components of the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program are authorized to conduct outreach to attract outstanding students who represent diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds with an interest in pursuing a Foreign Service career.

SEC. 220. RETENTION OF MID- AND SENIOR-LEVEL PROFESSIONALS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary should provide attention and oversight to the employment, retention, and promotion of underrepresented groups to promote a diverse ethnic representation among mid- and senior-level career professionals through programs such as—

(1) the International Career Advancement Program;

(2) Seminar XXI at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for International Studies; and

(3) other highly respected international leadership programs.

(b) REVIEW OF PAST PROGRAMS.—The Secretary should review past programs designed to increase minority representation in international affairs positions, including—

(1) the USAID Undergraduate Cooperative and Graduate Economics Program;

(2) the Public Policy and International Affairs Fellowship Program; and

(3) the Institute for International Public Policy Fellowship Program.

SEC. 221. REVIEW OF JURISDICTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AND THE BUREAU OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS.

(a) REVIEW.—The Secretary of State shall conduct a review of the jurisdictional responsibilities of the Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP) and the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the findings of the review conducted under subsection (a), including recommendations on whether jurisdictional responsibility between the 2 offices should be adjusted.

SEC. 222. CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION OF COUNTRIES COMPLIANCE WITH MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TRAFFICKING.

Section 110 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days before the anticipated submission of each annual report under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary of State shall notify and brief the appropriate congressional committees concerning the countries that will be upgraded to a higher tier or downgraded to a lower tier in such report.''.

SEC. 223. INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM TRAINING PROGRAM.

Section 708 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4028) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(2) in subsection (d), as redesignated, by inserting ''REFUGEES'' before ''The Secretary of State'';

(3) in subsection (e), as redesignated, by inserting ''CHILD SOLDIERS'' before ''The Secretary of State''; and

(4) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under section 101(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6411(b)) shall develop a curriculum for Foreign Service Officers that includes training on—

''(A) the scope and strategic value of international religious freedom;

''(B) how violations of international religious freedom harm fundamental United States interests;

''(C) how the advancement of international religious freedom can advance such interests;

''(D) how United States international religious freedom policy should be carried out in practice by United States diplomats and other Foreign Service Officers; and

''(E) the relevance and relationship of international religious freedom to United States defense, diplomacy, development, and public affairs efforts to combat violent extremism.

''(2) ROLE OF OTHER OFFICIALS.—The Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom shall carry out paragraph (1)—

''(A) in coordination with the Director of the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center and other Federal officials, as appropriate; and

''(B) in consultation with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom established under section 201(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431(a)).

''(3) RESOURCES.—The Secretary of State shall ensure the availability of sufficient resources to develop and implement the curriculum required under this subsection.

''(b) RELIGIOUS FREEDOM TRAINING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Department of State Operations Authorization and Embassy Security Act, Fiscal Year 2016, the Director of the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center shall begin training on religious freedom, using the curriculum developed under subsection (a), for Foreign Service officers, including—

''(A) entry level officers;

''(B) officers prior to departure for posting outside the United States; and

''(C) incoming deputy chiefs of mission and ambassadors.

''(2) ELEMENTS.—The training required under paragraph (1) shall be substantively incorporated into—

''(A) the A–100 course attended by Foreign Service Officers;

''(B) the specific country courses required of Foreign Service Officers prior to a posting outside the United States, with training tailored to—

''(i) the particular religious demography of such country;

''(ii) religious freedom conditions in such country;

''(iii) religious engagement strategies; and

''(iv) United States strategies for advancing religious freedom.

''(C) the courses required of incoming deputy chiefs of mission and ambassadors.

''(c) INFORMATION SHARING.—The curriculum and training materials developed pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) shall be shared with the United States Armed Forces and all other Federal departments and agencies whose personnel serve as attachés, advisors, detailees, or otherwise in United States embassies globally to provide training on—

''(1) United States religious freedom policies;

''(2) religious traditions;

''(3) religious engagement strategies;

''(4) religious and cultural issues; and

''(5) efforts to combat terrorism and violent religious extremism.''.

TITLE III—INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Subtitle A—United States Contributions to International Organizations

SEC. 301. REPORTS CONCERNING THE UNITED NATIONS.

(a) REPORT ON ANTI-SEMITIC ACTIVITY AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS AGENCIES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes—

(1) all activities at the United Nations and its subagencies that can be construed to exhibit an anti-Semitic bias, including official statements, proposed resolutions, and United Nations investigations;

(2) the use of United Nations resources to promote anti-Semitic or anti-Israel rhetoric or propaganda, including publications, internet websites, and textbooks or other educational materials used to propagate political rhetoric regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and

(3) specific actions taken by the United States Government to address any of the activities described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

(b) REPORT ON ALL UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS.—Section 4(c) of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 (22 U.S.C. 287b(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (2), (3), (5), (6), and (7), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

''(1) CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A detailed description of all assessed and voluntary contributions, including in-kind contributions, of the United States to the United Nations and to each of its affiliated agencies and related bodies—

''(i) during the preceding fiscal year;

''(ii) estimated for the fiscal year in which the report is submitted; and

''(iii) requested in the budget of the President submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, for the following fiscal year.

''(B) CONTENT.—The description required under subparagraph (A) shall, for each fiscal year specified in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of that subparagraph, include—

''(i) the total amount or value of all contributions described in that subparagraph;

''(ii) the approximate percentage of all such contributions by the United States compared to all contributions to the United Nations and to each of its affiliated agencies and related bodies from any source; and

''(iii) for each such contribution described in subparagraph (A)—

''(I) the amount or value of the contribution;

''(II) whether the contribution was assessed by the United Nations or voluntary;

''(III) the purpose of the contribution;

''(IV) the department or agency of the United States Government responsible for the contribution; and

''(V) whether the United Nations or an affiliated agency or related body received the contribution and, if an affiliated agency or related body received the contribution, which such agency or body.

''(C) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 14 days after submitting a report required under this subsection to the designated congressional committees, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall post a text-based, searchable version of the description required by subparagraph (A) on a publicly available Internet website of that Office.''.

SEC. 302. ANNUAL REPORT ON FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 4(b) of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 (22 U.S.C. 287b(b)) is amended by striking ''in which the United States participates as a member'' and inserting '', including—

''(1) the amount of such contributions that were assessed by an international organization and the amount of such contributions that were voluntary; and

''(2) the ratio of United States contributions to total contributions received for—

''(A) the United Nations, specialized agencies of the United Nations, and other United Nations funds, programs, and organizations;

''(B) peacekeeping;

''(C) inter-American organizations;

''(D) regional organizations; and

''(E) other international organizations.''.

SEC. 303. REPORT ON PEACEKEEPING ARREARS, CREDITS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS.

Section 4(c) of the United Nations Participation Act (22 U.S.C. 287b(c)), as amended by section 301(b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(6) PEACEKEEPING CREDITS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A complete and full accounting of United States peacekeeping assessments and contributions for United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the following:

''(i) A tabulation of annual United Nations peacekeeping assessment rates, the peacekeeping contribution rate authorized by the United States, and the United States public law that authorized the contribution rate for the United Nations peacekeeping budget for each fiscal year beginning in fiscal year 1995 through the fiscal year following the date of the report.

''(ii) A tabulation of current United States accrued shortfalls and arrears in each respective ongoing or closed United Nations peacekeeping mission.

''(iii) A tabulation of all peacekeeping credits, including—

''(I) the total amount of peacekeeping credits determined by the United Nations to be available to the United States;

''(II) the total amount of peacekeeping credits determined by the United Nations to be unavailable to the United States;

''(III) the total amount of peacekeeping credits determined by the United Nations to be available to the United States from each open and closed peacekeeping mission;

''(IV) the total amount of peacekeeping credits determined by the United Nations to be unavailable to the United States from each open and closed peacekeeping mission;

''(V) the total amount of peacekeeping credits applied by the United Nations toward shortfalls from previous years that are apportioned to the United States;

''(VI) the total amount of peacekeeping credits applied by the United Nations toward offsetting future contributions of the United States; and

''(VII) the total amount of peacekeeping credits determined by the United Nations to be available to the United States that could be applied toward offsetting United States contributions in the following fiscal year.

''(iv) An explanation of any claim of unavailability by the United Nations of any peacekeeping credits described in clause (iii)(IV).

''(v) A description of any efforts by the United States to obtain reimbursement in accordance with the requirements of this Act, including Department of Defense materiel and services, and an explanation of any failure to obtain any such reimbursement.

''(B) PEACEKEEPING CREDITS DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term 'peacekeeping credits' means the amounts by which, during a United Nations peacekeeping fiscal year, the contributions of the United States to the United Nations for peacekeeping operations exceed the actual expenditures for peacekeeping operations by the United Nations that are apportioned to the United States.''.

SEC. 304. ASSESSMENT RATE TRANSPARENCY.

(a) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after each time the United Nations General Assembly modifies the assessment levels for peacekeeping operations, the Secretary shall submit a report, which may include a classified annex, to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall describe—

(A) the change, by amount and percentage, of the peacekeeping assessment charged to each member state; and

(B) how the economic and strategic interests of each of the permanent members of the Security Council is being served by each peacekeeping mission currently in force.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF PEACEKEEPING ASSESSMENT DATA.—The Secretary shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to urge the United Nations—

(1) to share the raw data used to calculate member state peacekeeping assessment rates; and

(2) to make available the formula for determining peacekeeping assessments.

Subtitle B—Accountability at International Organizations

SEC. 311. PREVENTING ABUSE IN PEACEKEEPING.

Not later than 15 days before the anticipated date of a vote (or, in the case of exigent circumstances, as far in advance of the vote as is practicable) on a resolution approving a new peacekeeping mission under the auspices of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or any other multilateral organization in which the United States participates, or to reauthorize an existing such mission, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on that mission that includes the following:

(1) A description of the specific measures taken and planned to be taken by the organization related to the mission—

(A) to prevent individuals who are employees or contractor personnel of the organization, or members of the forces serving in the mission from engaging in acts of trafficking in persons, exploitation of victims of trafficking, or sexual exploitation or abuse; and

(B) to hold accountable any such individuals who engage in any such acts while participating in the mission.

(2) An assessment of the effectiveness of each of the measures described in paragraph (1).

(3) An accounting and assessment of all cases in which the organization has taken action to investigate allegations that individuals described in paragraph (1)(A) have engaged in acts described in that paragraph, including a description of the status of all such cases as of the date of the report.

SEC. 312. INCLUSION OF PEACEKEEPING ABUSES IN COUNTRY REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.

Section 116(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (11)(C), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (12)(C)(ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(13) for each country that contributes personnel to United Nations peacekeeping missions, a description of—

''(A) any allegations of such personnel engaging in acts of trafficking in persons, exploitation of victims of trafficking, or sexual exploitation and abuse while participating in such a peacekeeping mission;

''(B) any repatriations of such personnel resulting from an allegation described in subparagraph (A);

''(C) any actions taken by such country with respect to personnel repatriated as a result of allegations described in subparagraph (A), including whether such personnel faced prosecution related to such allegations; and

''(D) the extent to which any actions taken as described in subparagraph (C) have been communicated by such country to the United Nations.''.

SEC. 313. EVALUATION OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) a comprehensive evaluation of current United Nations peacekeeping missions;

(2) a prioritization of the peacekeeping missions;

(3) plans for phasing out and ending any mission that—

(A) has substantially met its objectives and goals; or

(B) will not be able to meet its objectives and goals; and

(4) a plan for reviewing the status of open-ended mandates for—

(A) the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK);

(B) the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO); and

(C) the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).

(b) APPROVAL OF FUTURE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS.—The President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to ensure that no new United Nations peacekeeping mission is approved without a periodic mandate renewal.

(c) FUNDING LIMITATION.—The United States shall not provide funding for any United Nations peacekeeping mission beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act unless the mission has a periodic mandate renewal.

Subtitle C—Personnel Matters

SEC. 321. ENCOURAGING EMPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

Section 181 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (22 U.S.C. 276c–4) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 181. EMPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS BY CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

''Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Department of State Operations Authorization and Embassy Security Act, Fiscal Year 2016, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to Congress a report that provides—

''(1) for each international organization that had a geographic distribution formula in effect on January 1, 1991, an assessment of whether that organization—

''(A) is taking good faith steps to increase the staffing of United States citizens, including, as appropriate, as assessment of any additional steps the organization could be taking to increase such staffing; and

''(B) has met the requirements of its geographic distribution formula; and

''(2) an assessment of United States representation among professional and senior-level positions at the United Nations, including—

''(A) an assessment of the proportion of United States citizens employed at the United Nations Secretariat and at all United Nations specialized agencies, funds, and programs relative to the total employment at the United Nations Secretariat and at all such agencies, funds, and programs;

''(B) as assessment of compliance by the United Nations Secretariat and such agencies, funds, and programs with any applicable geographic distribution formula; and

''(C) a description of any steps taken or planned to be taken by the United States to increase the staffing of United States citizens at the United Nations Secretariat and such agencies, funds and programs.''.

SEC. 322. ENSURING APPROPRIATE UNITED NATIONS PERSONNEL SALARIES.

(a) COMPENSATION OF UNITED NATIONS PERSONNEL.—The President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations—

(1) to establish appropriate policies, procedures, and assumptions for—

(A) determining comparable positions between officials in the professional and higher categories of employment at the United Nations headquarters in New York, New York, and in the United States Federal civil service;

(B) calculating the margin between the compensation of such officials at the United Nations headquarters and the civil service; and

(C) determining the appropriate margin for adoption by the United Nations to govern compensation for such officials;

(2) to make all policies, procedures, and assumptions described in paragraph (1) available to the public; and

(3) to limit increases in the compensation of United Nations officials to ensure that such officials remain within the margin range established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/40/244, or any subsequent margin range adopted by the United Nations to govern compensation for United Nations officials.

(b) REPORT ON SALARY MARGINS.—The Secretary shall submit an annual report to the appropriate congressional committees, at the time of the submission of the budget of the President to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, that

(1) describes the policies, procedures, and assumptions established or used by the United Nations—

(A) to determine comparable positions between officials in the professional and higher categories of employment at the United Nations headquarters in New York, New York, and in the United States Federal civil service;

(B) to calculate the percentage difference, or margin, between the compensation of such officials at the United Nations headquarters and the civil service; and

(C) to determine the margin range established in United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/40/244, or any subsequent margin range adopted by the United Nations to govern compensation for United Nations officials;

(2) assesses, in accordance with the policies, procedures, and assumptions described in paragraph (1), the margin between net salaries of officials in the professional and higher categories of employment at the United Nations in New York and those of comparable positions in the United States Federal civil service;

(3) assesses any changes in the margin described in paragraph (2) from the previous year;

(4) assesses the extent to which any changes in that margin resulted from modifications to the policies, procedures, and assumptions described in paragraph (1); and

(5) provides the views of the Secretary on any changes in that margin and any such modifications.

TITLE IV—CONSULAR AUTHORITIES

SEC. 401. VISA INELIGIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTORS.

Section 212(a)(10)(C)(iii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(10)(C)(iii)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (I), by adding ''or'' at the end;

(2) in subclause (II), by striking ''; or'' at the end and inserting a period; and

(3) by striking subclause (III).

SEC. 402. PRESUMPTION OF IMMIGRANT INTENT FOR H AND L VISA CLASSIFICATIONS.

Section 214(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(other than a nonimmigrant described in subparagraph (L) or (V) of section 101(a)(15), and other than a nonimmigrant described in any provision of section 101(a)(15)(H)(i) except subclause (b1) of such section)'';

(2) by striking ''under section 101(a)(15).'' and inserting ''under the immigration laws.''; and

(3) by striking ''he'' each place such term appears and inserting ''the alien''.

SEC. 403. VISA INFORMATION SHARING.

Section 222(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1202(f)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''issuance or refusal'' and inserting ''issuance, refusal, or revocation''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''and on the basis of reciprocity'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''illicit weapons; or'' and inserting ''illicit weapons, or in determining the removability or eligibility for a visa, admission, or another immigration benefit of persons who would be inadmissible to, or removable from, the United States;'';

(C) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking ''for the purposes'' and inserting ''for 1 of the purposes''; and

(ii) by striking ''or to deny visas to persons who would be inadmissible to the United States.'' and inserting ''; or''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) with regard to any or all aliens in the database, specified data elements from each record, if the Secretary of State determines that it is in the national interest to provide such information to a foreign government.''.

TITLE V—EMBASSY SECURITY

Subtitle A—Allocation of Authorized Security Appropriations.

SEC. 501. WORLDWIDE SECURITY PROTECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for worldwide security protection shall to the extent practicable, before any such funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated for—

(1) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) immediate threat mitigation support in accordance with subsection (b) at other facilities; and

(3) locations with high vulnerabilities.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION SUPPORT PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for

immediate threat mitigation support pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for—

(1) the purchasing of additional security equipment, including additional defensive weaponry;

(2) the paying of expenses of additional security forces; and

(3) any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

SEC. 502. EMBASSY SECURITY, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available in fiscal year 2016 for Worldwide Security Upgrades within ''embassy security, construction and maintenance'' shall to the extent practicable, before any funds may be allocated to any other authorized purpose, be allocated in the prioritized order of—

(1) immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b) at facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(2) other security upgrades to facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531;

(3) all other immediate threat mitigation projects in accordance with subsection (b); and

(4) security upgrades to all other facilities or new construction for facilities determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531.

(b) IMMEDIATE THREAT MITIGATION PROJECTS PRIORITIZATION.—In allocating funding for immediate threat mitigation projects pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prioritize funding for the construction of safeguards that provide immediate security benefits and any other purposes necessary to mitigate immediate threats to United States personnel serving overseas.

(c) ADDITIONAL LIMITATION.—No funds authorized to be appropriated shall be obligated for new embassy construction, other than for high threat, high risk facilities, unless the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) the Department has fully complied with the requirements of subsection (a);

(2) high threat, high risk facilities are being secured to the best of the United States Government's ability; and

(3) the Secretary will make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall report to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act on—

(1) funding for the priorities described in subsection (a);

(2) efforts to secure high threat, high risk facilities as well as high vulnerability locations facilities; and

(3) plans to make funds available from the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account or other sources to address any changed security threats or new or emergent security needs, including new immediate threat mitigation projects.

Subtitle B—Contracting and Other Matters.

SEC. 511. LOCAL GUARD CONTRACTS ABROAD UNDER DIPLOMATIC SECURITY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 136(c)(3) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (22 U.S.C. 4864(c)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) in evaluating proposals for such contracts, award contracts to technically acceptable firms offering the lowest evaluated price, except that—

''(A) the Secretary may award contracts on the basis of best value (as determined by a cost-technical tradeoff analysis), especially for posts determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to section 531 of the Department of State Operations Authorization and Embassy Security Act, Fiscal Year 2016; and

''(B) proposals received from United States persons and qualified United States joint venture persons shall be evaluated by reducing the bid price by 10 percent;''.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that includes—

(1) an explanation of the implementation of section 136(c)(3) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, as amended by subsection (a); and

(2) for each instance in which a contract is awarded pursuant to subparagraph (A) of such section, a written justification and approval that describes the basis for such award and an explanation of the inability of the Secretary to satisfy the needs of the Department by awarding a contract to the technically acceptable firm offering the lowest evaluated price.

SEC. 512. DISCIPLINARY ACTION RESULTING FROM UNSATISFACTORY LEADERSHIP IN RELATION TO A SECURITY INCIDENT.

Section 304(c) of the Diplomatic Security Act (22 U.S.C. 4834 (c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively, and moving such subparagraphs, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(2) by striking ''Whenever'' in the first sentence immediately following the subsection heading and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever''; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following:

''(2) CERTAIN SECURITY INCIDENTS.—

''(A) UNSATISFACTORY LEADERSHIP.—Unsatisfactory leadership by a senior official with respect to a security incident involving loss of life, serious injury, or significant destruction of property at or related to a United States Government mission abroad may be grounds for disciplinary action.

''(B) DISCIPLINARY ACTION.—If a Board finds reasonable cause to believe that a senior official provided such unsatisfactory leadership, the Board may recommend disciplinary action subject to the procedures in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 513. MANAGEMENT AND STAFF ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF STATE.—Nothing in this Act or in any other provision of law may be construed to prevent the Secretary from using all authorities invested in the office of Secretary to take personnel action against any employee or official of the Department that the Secretary determines has breached the duty of that individual or has engaged in misconduct or unsatisfactorily performed the duties of employment of that individual, and such misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has significantly contributed to the serious injury, loss of life, or significant destruction of property, or a serious breach of security, even if such action is the subject of an Accountability Review Board's examination under section 304(a) of the Diplomatic Security Act (22 U.S.C. 4834(a)).

(b) ACCOUNTABILITY.—Section 304 of the Diplomatic Security Act (22 U.S.C. 4834) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by inserting ''or has engaged in misconduct or unsatisfactorily performed the duties of employment of that individual, and such misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has significantly contributed to the serious injury, loss of life, or significant destruction of property, or the serious breach of security that is the subject of the Board's examination as described in subsection (a),'' after ''breached the duty of that individual'';

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

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

''(d) MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY.—Whenever a Board determines that an individual has engaged in any conduct described in subsection (c), the Board shall evaluate the level and effectiveness of management and oversight conducted by employees or officials in the management chain of such individual.''.

SEC. 514. SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS FOR SOFT TARGETS.

Section 29 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2701) is amended, in the third sentence, by inserting ''physical security enhancements and'' after ''Such assistance may include''.

Subtitle C—Marine Corps Security Guard Program

SEC. 521. ADDITIONAL REPORTS ON EXPANSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF MARINE CORPS SECURITY GUARD PROGRAM.

Section 1269(a)(2) of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291; 10 U.S.C. 5983 note) is amended by inserting ''and not less frequently than once each year thereafter until the date that is three years after such date'' after ''of this Act''.

Subtitle D—Defending High Threat, High Risk Posts

SEC. 531. DESIGNATION AND REPORTING FOR HIGH THREAT, HIGH RISK POSTS.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense, shall submit, to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, a classified report, with an unclassified summary, evaluating Department facilities that the Secretary determines to be high threat, high risk in accordance with subsection (c).

(b) CONTENTS.—For each facility determined to be high threat, high risk pursuant to subsection (a), the report submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a narrative assessment describing the security threats and risks facing posts overseas and the overall threat level to United States personnel under chief of mission authority;

(2) the number of diplomatic security personnel, Marine Corps security guards, and other Department personnel dedicated to providing security for United States personnel, information, and facilities;

(3) an assessment of host nation willingness and capability to provide protection in the event of a security threat or incident, pursuant to the obligations of the United States under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, done at Vienna April 18, 1961;

(4) an assessment of the quality and experience level of the team of United States senior security personnel assigned to the facility, considering collectively the assignment

durations and lengths of government experience;

(5) the number of Foreign Service Officers who have received Foreign Affairs Counter Threat training;

(6) a summary of the requests made during the previous calendar year for additional resources, equipment, or personnel related to the security of the facility and the status of such requests;

(7) an assessment of the ability of United States personnel to respond to and survive a fire attack, including—

(A) whether the facility has adequate fire safety and security equipment for safe havens and safe areas; and

(B) whether the employees working at the facility have been adequately trained on the equipment available;

(8) if it is a new facility, a detailed description of the steps taken to provide security for the new facility, including whether a dedicated support cell was established in the Department to ensure proper and timely resourcing of security; and

(9) a listing of any high threat, high risk facilities where the facilities of the Department and other government agencies are not collocated, including—

(A) a rationale for the lack of collocation; and

(B) a description of what steps, if any, are being taken to mitigate potential security vulnerabilities associated with the lack of collocation.

(c) DETERMINATION OF HIGH THREAT, HIGH RISK FACILITY.—In determining which facilities of the Department constitute high threat, high risk facilities under this section, the Secretary shall take into account with respect to each facility whether there are—

(1) high to critical levels of political violence or terrorism;

(2) national or local governments with inadequate capacity or political will to provide appropriate protection; and

(3) in locations where there are high to critical levels of political violence or terrorism or where national or local governments lack the capacity or political will to provide appropriate protection—

(A) mission physical security platforms that fall well below the Department's established standards; or

(B) security personnel levels that are insufficient for the circumstances.

(d) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW AND REPORT.—The Inspector General for the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall annually—

(1) review the determinations of the Secretary with respect to high threat, high risk facilities, including the basis for making such determinations;

(2) review contingency planning for high threat, high risk facilities and evaluate the measures in place to respond to attacks on such facilities;

(3) review the risk mitigation measures in place at high threat, high risk facilities to determine how the Secretary evaluates risk and whether the measures put in place sufficiently address the relevant risks;

(4) review early warning systems in place at high threat, high risk facilities and evaluate the measures being taken to preempt and disrupt threats to such facilities; and

(5) provide to the appropriate congressional committees—

(A) an assessment of the determinations of the Secretary with respect to high threat, high risk facilities, including recommendations for additions or changes to the list of such facilities; and

(B) a report on the reviews and evaluations undertaken pursuant to paragraphs (1) through (4).

SEC. 532. DESIGNATION AND REPORTING FOR HIGH-RISK COUNTERINTELLIGENCE THREAT POSTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(F) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(H) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives

(2) PRIORITY 1 COUNTERINTELLIGENCE THREAT NATION.—The term ''Priority 1 Counterintelligence Threat Nation'' means a country designated as such by the October 2012 National Intelligence Priorities Framework (NIPF).

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in conjunction with appropriate officials in the intelligence community and the Secretary of Defense, shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that assesses the counterintelligence threat to United States diplomatic facilities in Priority 1 Counterintelligence Threat Nations.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an assessment of the use of locally employed staff and guard forces and a listing of diplomatic facilities in Priority 1 Counterintelligence Threat Nations without controlled access areas; and

(B) recommendations for mitigating any counterintelligence threats and for any necessary facility upgrades, including costs assessment of any recommended mitigation or upgrades.

SEC. 533. ENHANCED QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HIGH THREAT, HIGH RISK POSTS.

The Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 206 (22 U.S.C. 4824) the following new section:

''SEC. 207. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HIGH THREAT, HIGH RISK POSTS.

''The individual serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat, High Risk Posts shall have 1 or more of the following qualifications:

''(1) Service during the last 6 years at 1 or more posts designated as high threat, high risk by the Secretary of State at the time of service.

''(2) Previous service as the office director or deputy director of 1 or more of the following Department of State offices or successor entities carrying out substantively equivalent functions:

''(A) The Office of Mobile Security Deployments.

''(B) The Office of Special Programs and Coordination.

''(C) The Office of Overseas Protective Operations.

''(D) The Office of Physical Security Programs.

''(E) The Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis.

''(3) Previous service as the Regional Security Officer at two or more overseas posts.

''(4) Other government or private sector experience substantially equivalent to service in the positions listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).''.

SEC. 534. SECURITY ENVIRONMENT THREAT LIST BRIEFINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and upon each subsequent update of the Security Environment Threat List (SETL), the Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security shall provide classified briefings to the appropriate congressional committees on the Security Environment Threat List.

(b) CONTENT.—The briefings required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an overview of the Security Environment Threat List; and

(2) a summary assessment of the security posture of those facilities where the Security Environment Threat List assesses the threat environment to be most acute, including factors that informed such assessment.

SEC. 535. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF BENGHAZI ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that describes the progress of the Secretary in implementing the recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an assessment of the progress the Secretary has made in implementing each specific recommendation of the Accountability Review Board; and

(2) a description of any impediments to recommended reforms, such as budget constraints, bureaucratic obstacles within the Department or in the broader interagency community, or limitations under current law.

(c) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

SEC. 536. FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECURITY TRAINING CENTER.

(a) OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees all documents and materials related to its consideration and analysis concerning the Foreign Affairs Security Training Center at Fort Picket, Virginia, and any alternative facilities.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF STATE.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees all documents and materials related to the determination to construct a new Foreign Affairs Security Training Center at Fort Picket, Virginia, including any that are related to the development and adoption of all related training requirements, including any documents and materials related to the consideration and analysis of such facility performed by the Office of Management and Budget.

SEC. 537. LANGUAGE TRAINING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Diplomatic Security Act (22 U.S.C. 4851 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 416. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DIPLOMATIC SECURITY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO HIGH THREAT, HIGH RISK POSTS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Diplomatic security personnel assigned permanently to, or who are

serving in, long-term temporary duty status as designated by the Secretary of State at a high threat, high risk post should receive language training described in subsection (b) in order to prepare such personnel for duty requirements at such post.

''(b) LANGUAGE TRAINING DESCRIBED.—Language training referred to in subsection (a) should prepare personnel described in such subsection—

''(1) to speak the language at issue with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on subjects germane to security; and

''(2) to read within an adequate range of speed and with almost complete comprehension on subjects germane to security.

''(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than September 30, 2016, the Inspector General of the Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors shall—

''(1) review the language training conducted pursuant to this section; and

''(2) make the results of such review available to the Secretary of State and the appropriate congressional committees.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–399) is amended by inserting after the item relating the section 415 the following:

''Sec. 416. Language requirements for diplomatic security personnel assigned to high threat, high risk posts.''.

Subtitle E—Accountability Review Boards

SEC. 541. PROVISION OF COPIES OF ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 2 days after an Accountability Review Board provides its report to the Secretary of State in accordance with title III of the Omnibus Diplomatic and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (22 U.S.C. 4831 et seq.), the Secretary shall provide copies of the report to the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives, and to the appropriate congressional committees for retention and review by those committees.

SEC. 542. STAFFING.

Section 302(b)(2) of the Diplomatic Security Act (22 U.S.C. 4832(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''Such persons shall be drawn from bureaus or other agency subunits that are not impacted by the incident that is the subject of the Board's review.''.

TITLE VI—MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited at the ''Improving Department of State Oversight Act of 2015''.

SEC. 602. COMPETITIVE HIRING STATUS FOR FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any employee of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction who completes at least 12 months of service at any time prior to the date of the termination of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (October 5, 2013), and was not terminated for cause shall acquire competitive status for appointment to any position in the competitive service for which the employee possesses the required qualifications.

SEC. 603. ASSURANCE OF INDEPENDENCE OF IT SYSTEMS.

The Secretary, with the concurrence of the Inspector General of the Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors, shall certify to the appropriate congressional committees that the Department has made reasonable efforts to ensure the integrity and independence of the Office of the Inspector General Information Technology systems.

SEC. 604. PROTECTING THE INTEGRITY OF INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS.

Section 209(c)(5) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3929(c)(5)) is amended by inserting at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) REQUIRED REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS AND INSPECTOR GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Each bureau, post or other office (in this subparagraph, an 'entity') of the Department of State shall, within five business days, report to the Inspector General any allegations of—

''(I) waste, fraud, or abuse in a Department program or operation;

''(II) criminal or serious misconduct on the part of a Department employee at the FS–1, GS–15, GM–15 level or higher;

''(III) criminal misconduct on the part of any Department employee; and

''(IV) serious, noncriminal misconduct on the part of any individual who is authorized to carry a weapon, make arrests, or conduct searches, such as conduct that, if proved, would constitute perjury or material dishonesty, warrant suspension as discipline for a first offense, or result in loss of law enforcement authority.

''(ii) INSPECTOR GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Inspector General may, pursuant to existing authority, investigate matters covered by clause (i).

''(iii) LIMITATION ON INVESTIGATIONS OUTSIDE OF OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—No entity in the Department of State with concurrent jurisdiction over matters covered by clause (i), including the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, may initiate an investigation of such matter unless it has first reported the allegations to the Inspector General as required by clause (i), except as provided in clause (v) and (vi).

''(iv) COOPERATION.—If an entity in the Department of State initiates an investigation of a matter covered in clause (i) the entity must, except as provided in clause (v), fully cooperate with the Inspector General, including—

''(I) by providing to the Inspector General all data and records obtained in connection with its investigation upon request of the Inspector General;

''(II) by coordinating, at the request of the Inspector General, such entity's investigation with the Inspector General; and

''(III) by providing to the Inspector General requested support in aid of the Inspector General's oversight and investigative responsibilities.

''(v) EXCEPTIONS.—The Inspector General may prescribe general rules under which any requirement of clause (iii) or clause (iv) may be dispensed with.

''(vi) EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES.—Compliance with clauses (i), (iii), and (iv) of this subparagraph may be dispensed with by an entity of the Department of State if complying with them in an exigent circumstance would pose an imminent threat to human life, health or safety, or result in the irretrievable loss or destruction of critical evidence or witness testimony, in which case a report of the allegation shall be made not later than 48 hours after an entity begins an investigation under the authority of this clause and cooperation required under clause (iv) shall commence not later than 48 hours after the relevant exigent circumstance has ended.

''(vii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subparagraph may be interpreted to affect any duty or authority of the Inspector General under any provision of law, including the Inspector General's duties or authorities under the Inspector General Act.''.

SEC. 605. REPORT ON INSPECTOR GENERAL INSPECTION AND AUDITING OF FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS AND BUREAUS AND OPERATING UNITS DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on the requirement under section 209(a)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3929(a)(1)) that the Inspector General of the Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors inspect and audit, at least every 5 years, the administration of activities and operations of each Foreign Service post and each bureau and other operating unit of the Department.

(b) CONSIDERATION OF MULTI-TIER SYSTEM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall assess the advisability and feasibility of implementing a multi-tier system for inspecting Foreign Service posts featuring more (or less) frequent inspections and audits of posts based on risk, including security risk, as may be determined by the Inspector General.

(c) COMPOSITION.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include separate portions prepared by the Inspector General of the Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors, and the Comptroller General of the United States, respectively.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 2, 2016, THROUGH MONDAY, MAY 9, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, May 2, at 2 p.m., Thursday, May 5, at 11:30 a.m.; I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, May 5, it next convene at 3 p.m., Monday, May 9; 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; that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that following morning business, the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 2028, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided between the two managers or their designees; further, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801 occur at 5:30 p.m.; finally, that for the purposes of rule XXII, the filing deadline for all first-degree amendments to the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801 be at 3:30 p.m. and the second-degree filing deadline occur under rule XXII.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MAY 2, 2016, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:42 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 2, 2016, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

ANGELA L. KOKOSKO RIPLEY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS. (NEW POSITION)

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

LESLIE GREENE BOWMAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2022, VICE MARTHA WAGNER WEINBERG, TERM EXPIRED.

GEORGE SANCHEZ, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2022, VICE DOROTHY KOSINSKI, TERM EXPIRED.

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

GAIL H. MARCUS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 18, 2018, VICE JESSIE HILL ROBERSON, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

KENT YOSHIHO HIROZAWA, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING AUGUST 27, 2021. (REAPPOINTMENT)

THE JUDICIARY

PATRICIA D. BARKSDALE, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE JOHN E. STEELE, RETIRED.

TODD E. EDELMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, VICE RICHARD W. ROBERTS, RETIRED.

WILLIAM F. JUNG, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE ANNE C. CONWAY, RETIRED.

PHILIP R. LAMMENS, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE JOHN RICHARD SMOAK, RETIRED.

FLORENCE Y. PAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, VICE REGGIE B. WALTON, RETIRED.

REGINA M. RODRIGUEZ, OF COLORADO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO, VICE ROBERT E. BLACKBURN, RETIRED.

PATRICIA ANN TIMMONS–GOODSON, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA, VICE MALCOLM J. HOWARD, RETIRED.

ANNE RACHEL TRAUM, OF NEVADA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA, VICE ROBERT CLIVE JONES, RETIRED.

ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

KATHLEEN MARIE MARSHALL, OF NEVADA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 12, 2019, VICE ROSEMARY E. RODRIGUEZ, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL D. LUNDY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JEFFREY S. BUCHANAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE DEAN OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD, UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY, AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 4335:

To be brigadier general

COL. CINDY R. JEBB

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MICHELLE M. AGPALZA
MATTHEW H. ALEXANDER
NICOLE D. ALEXANDER
CHRISTOPHER J. ANDERSON
ERIC W. ANDERSON
REGINALD J. ANDERSON
CORY D. ARMSTEAD
ALEXANDER C. BABINGTON
CHRISTOPHER R. BAILEY
KATRESHA M. BAILEY
SCOTT A. BAILEY
JASON A. BALLARD
ROBERT J. BARTRUFF, JR.
DANIEL B. BATEMAN
DAVID J. BENJAMIN III
ADAM C. BERLEW
DUSTIN G. BISHOP
JONATHAN A. BODENHAMER
BRYAN M. BOGARDUS
ANTWAN D. BROWN
CARLA A. BROWN
FRANKLIN J. BUKOSKI
JAMES R. BURKES
JEFFREY M. BURNETT
MARK S. CAMPBELL
CHRISTOPHER L. CAMPHOR
DEBBIE Y. CASE
TIMOTHY J. CATALANO
CARYDANIEL CEGLEDI
CHRISTOPHER L. CENTER
ANTHONY F. CERELLA
MARCOS A. CERVANTES
INDERA Z. L. CHANDLER
THOMAS W. CHANDLER III
CHRISTOPHER G. CHAPMAN
GEORGE W. CHILDS III
VICTOR J. CINTRONVELEZ
NATASHA S. CLARKE
TORRANCE G. CLEVELAND
JASON A. COLE
JAMES I. COLLAZO
JOHN E. COOPER
MATTHEW D. COX
JAMES L. CROCKER
RONNIE C. CROSBY
MALENM CRUZSEGARRA
JOHN M. CULLEN, JR.
DAMIAN R. CUNNINGHAM
WADE R. CUNNINGHAM
MICHAEL J. CUPP
CRAIG A. DANIEL
GREGORY S. DARLING
KYLE D. DAVIDSON
JUSTIN L. DEARMOND
FABIENNE DENNERY
HOWARD R. DONALDSON
STEVEN M. DUBUC
NELSON E. DUCKSON
EMANUEL M. DUDLEY
CHARLES D. ECKSTROM
STACY M. ENYEART
JACQUELINE S. L. ESCOBAR
GILBERTO ESCOBEDO
JANA K. FAJARDO
PATRICK D. FARRELL
PHOEBE E. FLYNN
SCOTT A. FRANCIS
RICHARD D. FRANK
RYAN B. GALLION
CHRISTOPHER J. GARVIN
JOSHUA S. GINN
JOEL P. GLEASON
ALEXANDER J. GONZALES
JEREMY C. GOTTSHALL
THOMAS E. GOYETTE
JOHN E. GRAY, JR.
ADAM W. GREIN
WILLIAM J. GRIFFIN
ROSE A. GUERRERO
DAVID G. GUIDA
DION HALL
CHRISTOPHER P. HAMMAN
KEVIN M. HARRIS
MICHAEL J. HARRIS
TRAVIS HARRIS
THOMAS J. HEILMAN
CYNTHIA P. HENDERSON
TRACIE M. HENRYNEILL
JON A. HERMESCH
JOSE HERNANDEZ
UCHE T. HEYWARD
TIMOTHY R. HICKMAN
RACHAEL M. HOAGLAND
NORMAN B. HODGES IV
DEREK W. HOFFMAN
KENNETH A. HOISINGTON
CASEY J. HOLLER
PAUL C. HUBBARD
JOEL A. HUFT
MICHAEL F. IANNUCCILLI
ALANA R. JACKMAN
IRVIN W. JACKSON
THOMAS D. JAGIELSKI
ANDRE J. JOHNSON
PATRICE N. JOHNSON
SCOTT R. JOHNSON
BRIAN K. JONES
CENTRELL A. JONES
CHRISTOPHER S. JONES
LEAH N. JONES
MATTHEW S. JONES
RANDY F. JONES
RICARDO D. JONES
SAMUEL J. JUNGMAN
JEET H. KAJI
BRATCHA J. KELLUM
PATRICK L. KENDRICK
ALI A. KHANHERNANDEZ
GRACE H. KIM
PATRICK L. KNIGHT
JULIA M. KOBISKA
EVERETT LACROIX
DANIEL A. LANCASTER
JOHN W. LANKFORD, JR.
MARIWIN B. LARA
RENANTE L. LASALA
ANTHONY L. LEACH
MOSES J. LEE
RANDY P. LEFEBVRE
JOHN J. LIANG
KAREN F. LIEB
MICHAEL P. LILES
JAMES A. LINDH II
TASHA N. LOWERY
GAVIN O. LUHER
RANDALL A. LUMMER
REBEKAH S. LUST
ANDREW J. LYNCH
PAUL B. MADDEN
ALINA C. MARTINEZ
JUAN C. MARTINEZBERNARD
BYRON C. MATTHEWS
NATHAN G. MCDOUGLE
JAMES M. MCGEE
STEPHEN P. MCGOWAN
JOHN W. MCGRADY
KENNETH W. MCGRAW
MATTHEW J. MCGRAW
JOSEPH V. MESSINA
DWAYNE S. MILBURN
ADAM M. MILLER
JADE P. MILLER
RICHARD P. MILLOY
JOHN D. MITCHEL
THOMAS R. MONAGHAN, JR.
CHARLES L. MONTGOMERY
PHILLIP E. MOORE
JOHANNA L. MORA
DAVID B. MOSER
DONYEILL A. MOZER
SHAWN P. MUDER
AIMEE C. MYRICK
CHRISTOPHER M. NEAL
RYAN C. NESRSTA
ROBERT W. NEWSOM IV
JENNIFER L. NEWSOME
PETER D. NIENHAUS
MATTHEW P. NISCHWITZ
RYAN E. OCAMPO
JEREMIAH S. OCONNOR
DEANNE M. OJEDA
JAMES U. OKEKE
ANGEL R. ORTIZMEDINA
JOHN A. PADGETT
WILLIAM J. PARKER III
TERRELL D. PASLEY
THOMAS J. PATTERSON III
CHAD A. PEDIGO
PATRICIA A. PEELER
FRANCISCO PENA
GERALDO A. PERALTA
ROLANDO PEREZCRUZ
CURTIS S. PERKINS
WILLIAM C. PERKINS
THEODORE J. PETERS
TERRY A. PHILLIPS
JEREMIAH D. POPE
JEFFREY A. POQUETTE
ANTONIO V. A. PRESSLEY
RICHARD A. PRIER
GABRIEL W. PRYOR
EDGARDO A. PUENTE
ELIZABETH S. PURA
JENNIFER L. RADER
DOUGLAS N. RALPH
STEPHEN D. RAMELLA
JONATHAN P. RAMIREZ
DANIEL O. RAMOS
RACINE R. RANDOLPH
SHERDRICK S. RANKIN
MICHAEL S. RASCO
ALEXANDER P. RASMUSSEN
JOSE L. RAYAESCUTIA
WILLIAM A. REKER
TIMOTHY M. RENAHAN
MATTHEW O. REYNOLDS
THURMAN C. REYNOLDS
JOHN V. RIOS
LUIS R. RIVERA
LILLIAN A. ROBINSON
MICHAEL P. RODER
MCKEAL L. RODGERS
ANTHONY B. ROGERS
ARTURO ROQUE
ROBERT J. ROWE
JOHN M. RUTHS
JOHN V. SALLING
JUAN R. SANTIAGO, JR.
ROY M. SARAVIA
MICHELLE L. SCHAUMBURG
JASON W. SCHULTZ
WILLIAM S. SCHUYLER, JR.
CLARISSE SCOTT
JEFFREY J. SCOTT
SHAWN M. SEFFERNICK
TRAVIS L. SEPT
JAVIER SEPULVEDATORRES
JESSICA R. SEXTON
DERRICK N. SHAW
JEFF A. SHEARIN
KEVIN P. SHILLEY
ALPHONSO SIMMONS, JR.

QUINTINA V. SMILEY
DONALD D. SMITH
JEFFREY A. SMITH
KEVIN L. SMITH
CALINA M. SNYDER
EDGARDO SOSTRE
LAVERNE O. STANLEY
ROSHUN A. STEELE
GEORGE C. STEPHAN IV
KYLE L. STEVENS
KELLY M. STEWART
CECIL D. STINNIE
LAKICIA R. STOKES
JEFFREY R. STRAUSS
MARTIN L. STUFFLEBEAM
COURTNEY M. SUGAI
TERRENCE J. SULLIVAN
CHRISTINE M. TAKATS
JOSEPH E. TAYLOR
JENNIFER V. THIBEAULT
LYDIA Y. THORNTON
LOREN D. TODD
KEITH D. TOLER
PAUL A. TOMCIK
ISAAC M. TORRES
CARITA K. TOWNS
NOBLE TURNER, JR.
LEILANI M. TYDINGCO
JOHN F. VANN
THOMAS A. VELAZQUEZ II
BRADLEY S. WAITE
KEVIN J. WARD
MOLLY J. WEAVER
THOMAS J. WHIPPLE
BRIAN A. WHITE
OSHEA J. WHITE
GARY D. WHITTACRE
SONDRA L. WILKERSON
BARRY L. WILLIAMS
JAMAL T. WILLIAMS
LATORRIS E. WILLIAMS
TERRENCE D. WILLIAMS
COREY D. WOODS
CURTIS L. YANKIE
ANDRE M. C. YEE
CHRISTINE R. YOUNGQUIST
BROCK A. ZIMMERMAN
D010800
D012116
D012924
D012925
D012971

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JACOB I. ABRAMI
ERIC R. ADAMS
BENJAMIN K. AFEKU
JAY H. ANSON
CHARLES M. AZOTEA
TERENCE W. BACON
HOSSEIN D. BAHAGHIGHAT
ROBERT J. BAKER
PAUL W. BALDWIN
SEAN A. BARBARAS
MICHAEL A. BARKER
KURT M. BARNEY
CHRISTINA A. BEMBENEK
JASON R. BIERKORTTE
JASON D. BILLINGTON
CHRISTIAN C. BJORNSON
DAVID J. BLACK
JEREMY S. BOARDMAN
VINCENT J. BONCICH
THOMAS J. BOUCHILLON
ANDREW S. BROKHOFF
ERICKA M. BROOKS
JASON C. BROWN
JARED L. BUCHANAN
STEPHEN A. BULTMANN
JOSHUA M. BUNDT
RYAN H. BURKE
MICHAEL P. BURNS
RETT B. BURROUGHS
MICHAEL R. BUSH
ROGER M. CABINESS II
JAMES D. CAHILL
ANDREW J. CAMP
JAYSON R. CAMPBELL
EDWARD W. CARDINALE
VERONICA A. CARROLL
WILLIAM H. CARROLL
CHRISTOPHER R. CARSON
NATALIE K. CASEY
MICHAEL W. CERCHIO
LATRICE K. CLARK
NICHOLAS J. CLARK
MICHAEL D. CLAYTON
BRYAN M. CLEARY
JEREMY L. CLICK
ENARDO R. COLLAZOALICEA
BRIAN T. COLLINS
CASEY D. CONNORS
KRISTINA J. CORNWELL
CASEY D. COYLE
ANDREW D. CROY
RICHARD M. CRUZ, JR.
EDWARD D. CUEVAS
PATRICK J. CULPEPPER
TIMOTHY M. CULPEPPER
KEVIN F. CUMMISKEY
ANDREW D. DAMICO
JASON N. DAUGHERTY
HEIDI B. DEMAREST
TRAVIS P. DETTMER
PETER DIGIORGIO
WILLIAM A. DONALDSON
WILLIAM R. DUFFY
TIMOTHY J. DUGAN
NATHANIEL DURANT III
JOHN N. DVORAK
RUSSELL J. EDMISTON
ROBERT A. ERICKSON
KENNETH C. EVANS
JASON C. FARMER
WILLIAM A. FERRARO
JOHN D. FINCH
MICHAEL A. FINDLAY
JEFFREY D. FISH
MARK A. FISHER
HEATHER M. FISK
CHRISTOPHER P. FOLK
DAVID FORD, JR.
FLOYD C. FORREST
DANIEL L. FOX
SAMUEL T. FULLER
RANDALL M. GABLE
JASON J. GALUI
JOSEPH N. GARDNER
RICHARD C. GERMANN
RONNIE E. GERONIMO
TIMOTHY M. GIBBONS
JOSEPH I. GILBERT
ROBERT B. GILLESPIE
DAVID M. GOHLICH
JAMES T. GOLBY
LESLIE D. GORMAN
MATTHEW W. GRAHAM
WILLIAM B. GREEN
STEVEN J. GRIBSCHAW
KEVIN J. GROPPEL
STEVEN D. GUNTER
HEATHER N. GUNTHER
ROBERT A. HAMMACK
JENNIFER K. HAN
JOHN J. HANES
LEIF A. HANSEN
EDD D. HARRISON, JR.
JONPAUL J. HART
RICHARD E. HARTNEY III
JARED B. HARTY
RACHELLE T. HATHAWAY
CHRISTINA HAYES
PATRICK T. HEMMER
ROBERTO HERNANDEZ
WILLIAM M. HIGGINS
THOMAS W. HIGGINSON
NINA L. HILL
JENNIFER A. HINKLE
ANTONIO A. HINOJOSA
DEAN L. HINRICHSEN
BINH T. HO
DEVIN M. HOLLINGSWORTH
DAVID T. HORD
MICHAEL J. HOSLER
BENJAMIN W. K. HUNG
STEPHEN E. HUNT, JR.
YESENIA HUTCHER
RONALD IAMMARTINO, JR.
PAUL E. IRELAND
BRADLEY J. ISLER
JASON E. ISON
ERICA R. IVERSON
LASHAUNDA R. JACKSON
MICHAEL T. JACKSON
JEFFREY S. JAGER
JUNEL R. JEFFREY
BIJI T. JOHN
EUGENE L. JOLLY III
COURTNEY E. JONES
KEVIN T. JOYCE
BRIAN F. KAMMERER
JOSHUA D. KASER
SCOTT W. KEY
ANDREW R. KICK
NADINE M. C. KING
JILLIAN M. KLUG
KENNETH S. KONDO, JR.
JOSEPH T. KOSEK III
PHILLIP M. LACASSE
THOMAS LAFLASH
JOSEPH T. LATENDRESSE
PAUL B. LEMIEUX
MICHAEL P. LENART
EDWARD B. LERZ II
CONWAY LIN
SCOTT D. LINKER
CHYLON E. LONGMOSES
DAVID W. LOWE
PAUL L. MAHER
RYNELE M. MARDIS
BRADLEY J. MAROYKA
ALEXANDER MARRONE
VINCENT P. MARSCHEAN
STEPHEN M. MARSHALL
ARNULFO J. MARTINEZ
TOM O. MATCHIN III
LATASHA M. MATTHEWS
JASON A. MCANALLY
SEAN P. MCCAFFERTY
SEAN M. MCCLURE
MATTHEW M. MCCREARY
JOHN W. MCFARLIN, JR.
JAY G. MCGEE
CORY T. MCKOY
SCOTT D. MCLEARN
MEGAN A. MCSWAIN
JASON S. MEISEL
JOHN J. MELO
JENNIFER S. MENDEL
CHRISTOPHER L. MENG
PHILIP A. MESSER
MARK P. MICHELS
APRIL D. MILLER
JOSHUA T. MILLER
LAUREN J. S. MILLER
PATRICK J. MILLER
RICHARD S. MILLS II
KRISTOPHER S. MITCHELL
KELLY D. MONTGOMERY
RONANDO D. MOORE
DYLAN M. MORELLE
CHRISTOPHER F. MORRELL
JASON D. MOULTON
AIMEE J. MOWRY
DWAYNE A. MURRAY
JONATHAN C. NARVAES
PETER C. NELSON
RYAN L. NENABER
RICHARD A. NESSEL
LOUIS V. NETHERLAND
AARON M. NEWCOMER
RUSSELL G. NOWELS
RUSSELL F. NUNLEY
KEVIN P. OCONNELL
JOSEPH M. ODORIZZI
AMMILEE A. OLIVA
STEVEN J. OLSON
JOHN P. OPLADEN
ROGER B. ORDONEZ
DUSTIN R. ORNATOWSKI
RANDY T. OVERSTREET
THOMAS J. PAFF
MARCELO V. PAJO
MICHAEL A. PANARO III
JIN W. PARK
GABRIEL R. PARSLEY
WILLIAM W. PARSONS
KERI A. PASQUINI
RODRIC G. PAULETTO
ALEXIS A. PEAKE
HERIBERTO PEREZRIVERA
DAVID A. PHEASANT
CLINDON J. PHILLIPS
THOMAS D. PIKE
JAMES C. PILKAUSKAS
CHAD M. PILLAI
DALE L. PITTMAN
DANIEL J. POOLE
ELIZABETH M. POPIAK
ROSALBA POULOS
SUKHDEV S. PUREWAL
PHILLIP RADZIKOWSKI
SIEGFRIED T. RAMIL
GEORGE C. RANDOLPH, JR.
NATHAN T. REED
JAYNA B. REICHERT
JEREMY M. RIEHL
JOHN P. RINGQUIST
ADELISSE RIOJAS
RYAN M. ROBERTS
JOSE N. RODRIGUEZOCASIO
ADALBERTO RODRIGUEZOLIVERA
MICHAEL P. ROGOWSKI
ANDREA M. ROSALES
ROBERT RUBIANO
ROBERTO J. SANTIAGO
DONALD W. SAPP
NATHAN C. SAUL
ASSLAN SAYYAR
JOSEPH E. SCHAEFER
NATHAN G. SCHMIDT
CLIFTON D. SCHMITT
PETER L. SCHNEIDER
JEFFREY F. SCHROEDER
KEVIN A. SCOTT
IAN P. SEIN
BENJAMIN K. SELZER
ROBERT J. SHADOWENS
BENJAMIN J. SHAHA
CHRISTOPHER M. SIMCOE
CRAYTON E. SIMMONS
STEPHEN T. SKELLS
BENJAMIN M. SMITH
WILLIAM T. SMITH
JARED W. SNAWDER
RICHARD J. SONNENFELD
PATRICK L. SOULE
JOHN M. SOVA
JOEL C. SPINNEY
CHRISTOPHER M. STAUDER
JENNIFER D. STCLAIR
KEVIN L. STEELE
CHRISTOPHER N. STELLE
JOSHUA N. STEPHENSON
GEOFFROY E. STGALDEPONS
MICHAEL K. STINCHFIELD
ORRIN G. STITT
ANDREW S. STLAURENT
POVILAS J. STRAZDAS
OLIVER D. STREET
MARK C. STURGEON
DANIEL P. SUKMAN
JERMAINE L. SUTTON
ANDREW D. SWEDBERG
ANDREW D. SWEDLOW
KERT L. SWITZER
THOMAS B. TABAKA
BRENDAN S. TAYLOR
BENJAMIN R. THOMAS
THAD M. THOME
BRANDON S. THOMPSON
JOSEF THRASH III
DAVID J. TIER
MANDIE A. TIJERINA
MICHAEL W. TILTON
JOHN D. TINCHER
ROBERT S. TOMPKINS

AKEMI A. TORBERT
ROBERT L. TRENT
JASON G. TULLIUS
JOHN E. TURNER, JR.
COLEY D. TYLER
NALONIE J. TYRRELL
BRADLEY C. VELOTTA
RANDALL S. VERDE
TREVOR E. VOECKS
BRIAN M. WADE
NEIL R. WALKER
WAYNE B. WALL II
JONATHAN B. WARR
JASON W. WARREN
DENNIS J. WEAVER
HANS J. WEBER
CHRISTOPHER E. WELD
JASON E. WILLIAMS
JOSEPH B. WOOLSEY
STEPHEN F. WRIGHT
CHARLES R. ZIPPERER, JR.
D001312
D004904
D005748
D010396
D012123
D012483
D012692
D012735
G010002
G010041
G010065
G010080
G010400

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RICHARD R. AARON
JASON E. ALBRIGHT
DANIEL C. ALDER
MICHAEL F. ALEXANDER
CHRISTOPHER M. ALMAGUER
LEE E. AMBROSE
TYLER K. ANDERSEN
BRIAN C. ANGELL
CURTIS M. ARMSTRONG
MATTHEW R. ARROL
DANIEL S. ARTINO
SHANNON P. ASERON
MICHAEL C. ATHANASAKIS
JASON W. ATKINSON
MARC J. AUSTIN
JOHN R. BACON
DEREK R. BAIRD
HAILEYESUS BAIRU
CHRISTINE M. BAKER
REGAN M. BALDWIN
ALHAJI S. BANGURA
KEITH A. BARANOW
JAMES A. BARLOW
RYAN D. BARNETT
STEVEN S. BARTLEY
JAMES A. BEAULIEU
RALPH L. BECKI
JONATHAN S. BENDER
KEITH W. BENEDICT
TOBIAS A. BENNETT
RYAN M. BERDINER
JOSHUA P. BERRYHILL
JAY A. BESSEY
BRIAN E. BETTIS
KEVIN T. BLACK
PATRICK D. BLANKENSHIP
JONATHAN G. BLEAKLEY
PENNY M. BLOEDEL
KELLY O. C. BOIAN
LANE A. BOMAR
LORETO V. BORCE, JR.
RYAN P. BORTNYK
BRIAN J. BOSTON
STEPHEN E. BOURDON
WILLIAM H. BOWERS
JASON M. BRADLEY
THOMAS K. BRENTON
MATTHEW A. BRODERICK
DIOSABELLE T. BUACK
BOYCE R. BUCKNER
MICHAEL R. BUNDT
ANDREW E. BURGESS
RYAN T. BURKERT
JOHN J. BURRESCIA, JR.
MICHAEL J. BUSTOS
PHILIP A. BUSWELL
JASON L. BUURSMA
VAUGHAN M. BYRUM
ELIZABETHANNE M. CAIN
ADAM S. CAMARANO
BRIAN C. CAMPBELL
WILLIAM R. CANDA III
ADAM M. CANNON
DON L. CANTERNA, JR.
MELISSA M. CANTWELL
MATTHEW P. CAPOBIANCO
MICHAEL H. CAPPS
ARGOT CARBERRY
ERIC D. CARLSON
JASON C. CARTER
JACOB L. CECKA
THOMAS D. CHAPEAU
GEORGE A. CHIGI
CHRIS C. CHOI
DAVID A. CIESZYNSKI
STEVEN D. CLAY
MICHAEL P. COCHRAN
NATHANIEL F. CONKEY
CHRISTOPHER J. G. COOK
JOHN W. COPELAND
CHAD P. CORRIGAN
BENJAMIN C. CROOM
RAMON J. CRUZSANCHEZ
GREGORY E. CURRY II
CLAYTON D. CURTIS
DOUGLAS J. CURTIS
NICHOLAS K. DALL
ARNEL P. DAVID
IAN S. DAVIS
JOSHUA M. DAVIS
MARK A. DAVIS
CHRISTOPHER J. DAWSON
JASON W. DAY
ROGER T. DELAHUNT
CHRISTOPHER M. DEMPSEY
THURMAN S. DICKERSON III
CHRISTIAN N. DIETZ
ADAM B. DIGAUDIO
DANIEL C. DINICOLA
BRYAN J. DODD
EDWARD M. DOWNS, JR.
CLARA C. DRISCOLL
RICHARD E. DUNNING
ERIC N. DURRANT
JASON R. DYE
WILLIAM W. EARL
MICHAEL T. ELIASSEN
MATHEW D. ELLIOTT
MICHAEL J. ENGLIS
DAVID E. ESCOBAR
MICHAEL S. FARMER
BENJAMIN A. FIELDING
BRADFORD A. FISHER
JAMES D. FITZGERALD
PATRICK M. FLOOD
FRANKIE L. FLOWERS
WAYNE A. FOGEL
ROBERT L. FOSTER
DARREN B. FOWLER
JOHN T. FRANZ
BRYAN W. FRIZZELLE
THOMAS D. FROHNHOEFER
DAVID A. FULTON
MICHAEL R. FUNCHES
BRENDAN R. GALLAGHER
CASEY J. GALLIGAN
ANDREW A. GALLO
MICHAEL R. GARRY
JOSHUA M. GASPARD
MICHAEL E. GATES
RICHARD B. GEBHARDT
SHAWN H. GEIB
JONATHON M. GENGE
STEPHEN R. GIBBS
BRIAN D. GILBERT
JARROD J. H. GILLAM
ANTHONY W. GORE
LAWERENCE L. GRANT
ROBERT L. GREEN
WILLIAM J. GRIFFITH IV
JOHN R. B. GUNTER
DAVID W. GUNTHER
NATHAN A. GUTHRIE
RYAN A. GUTHRIE
MICHAEL B. HALE
MARK D. HALL
THOMAS J. HANIFEN
TIMOTHY J. HANLEY
JAMES C. HARBRIDGE
ADAM W. HARLESS
JOSEPH G. HAROSKY
JUSTIN D. HARPER
PAUL G. HARRELL
WILLIAM B. HARRINGTON
PAUL D. HARRISON
JONATHAN T. HARTSOCK
KEITH A. HASKIN
ANDREW M. HENNING
DAVID F. HENNING, JR.
KYLE D. HENSON
MICHAEL S. HEQUEMBOURG
JOHNATHAN W. HESTER
LAWRENCE A. M. HICKS
RICHARD S. HILDEN
TERRY N. HILDERBRAND, JR.
TERRY L. HILT
WESLEY H. HIRAOKA
DAVID J. HODGES
JOSEPH E. HOFFMAN
DAVID T. HOLSTEAD
CHRISTOPHER T. HORMEL
SCOTT W. HORRIGAN
JAMES C. HOWELL
SEAN K. HUBBARD
DAVID M. HUDSON
JUSTIN D. HUFNAGEL
BRIAN M. HUMMEL
MARCUS S. HUNTER
GALEN L. HUSS
THOMAS L. HUSSEY
JEFFREY W. IRVING
ERICA D. JACKSON
JONATHAN B. JACKSON
KEITH L. JACOBS
BENJAMIN D. JAHN
KEVIN L. JAMES
WILLIAM F. JENNINGS
DEREK E. JOHNSON
JESSE R. JOHNSON
STEPHEN M. JOHNSON
TIMOTHY C. JOHNSON
JONATHAN J. JOHNSTON
JAMON K. JUNIUS
STEVEN L. KANE
LOUIS M. KANGAS
AARON J. KAUFMAN
JANETTE L. KAUTZMAN
ALLEN L. KEHOE
ANTHONY A. KELLER
TIMOTHY P. KELLY
EDWARD E. KENNEDY
KEVIN R. KILBRIDE
THOMAS J. KILBRIDE
RUSTIE W. KIM
JASON A. KING
DONALD L. KINGSTON, JR.
JONATHAN E. KLINK
CHARLES M. KNOLL
RYAN F. KOVARIK
FRANK K. KRAMMER, JR.
STEVEN L. KREH
CALVIN A. KROEGER
WILLIAM A. KRON
MATTHEW M. KUHN
DANIEL J. LAFOUNTAIN
CHRISTOPHER C. LANE
MICHAEL LANZAFAMA
JAMIE R. LAVALLEY
DOUGLAS A. LAXSON
TRI D. LE
CEDRIC G. LEE
CHONG Y. LEE
MATTHEW D. R. LEE
MARK A. LEGASPI
LEVIAS L. LEWIS
SAMUEL E. LINN
JEREMY F. LINNEY
RYAN D. LONG
CLIFTON J. LOPEZ III
JAY T. LUCKRITZ
KEITH P. MADERE
COLIN P. MAHLE
PATRICK J. MALONE
LISA R. MANN
TIMOTHY B. MANTON
NED B. MARSH
JONATHAN R. MARTIN
DOUGLAS A. MASSIE
RODRIC M. MCCLAIN
MARK R. MCCLELLAN
JESS MCCONNELL
RODNEY D. MCCUTCHEON
ARTHUR L. MCGRUE III
ALISSA A. MCKAIG
IAN J. MCKENNA
ERIC D. MCKINNEY
GREGORY W. MCLEAN
JOHN H. MCNAMARA
TIMOTHY P. MEADORS
JORGE J. MENDOZA
GABRIEL M. MESA
MATTHEW C. MILETICH
JOEL MILLAN
JOHN P. MILLER III
MARY K. MILLER
RICHARD A. MILLER
ERIC S. MINOR
AARON J. MOCK
JAMES M. MODLIN, JR.
TRAVIS F. MOLLIERE
DARREN R. MONIOT
BRIAN J. MOORE
ERICK J. MORALES
PAUL W. MORESHEAD
BRAD A. MORGAN
JAYSON B. MORGAN
CHRISTOPHER J. MORRIS
SEAN M. MORROW
CHRISTOPHER T. MORTON
DUANE L. MOSIER
BRIAN G. MULHERN
PHILIP J. MUNDWEIL
MICHAEL D. NELSON
JACE R. NEUENSCHWANDER
ROBERT J. NEWBAUER
KENNETH E. NIELSEN II
JEFFREY D. NOLL
WILLIAM F. NORDAI
PETER J. NORRIS
ERIC W. NYLANDER
MARK J. OBRIEN
ERIK C. OKSENVAAG
BRANDON L. OLIVEIRA
ANDREW L. OLSON
EDGAR J. OTALORA
ELIAS D. OTOSHI
JUSTIN R. PABIS
NATHAN A. PALISCA
BRADLY S. PARKER
MATTHEW L. PARKER
BRANDON W. PARRISH
ERIC A. PARTHEMORE
JATHAN R. PAYNE
KEVIN M. PELLEY
ALEXIS PEREZCRUZ
ERIK S. PETERSON
HIEU T. PHAM
DUSTIN E. PHILLIPS
KENNETH J. PHILLIPS
NICHOLAS J. PLOETZ
STEPHEN D. POE
TODD F. POLK
JEFFREY D. PORTER
GREGORY J. POVENSKI
DAVID W. PRESTON
ERIC R. PRIBYLA
JAMES D. PRITCHETT
THOMAS T. PUTNAM
JAMES A. RAINES, JR.
ANDREA RANDLE
JASON S. RAUB

DANIEL L. RAUSCH
THEODORE P. REAM
GERALD J. REBESCHINI
JENNIFER D. REED
ARLO J. REESE
SEAN M. REESE
GLEN D. RENFREE
JEFFREY P. RHODES
CHRISTOPHER J. RICCI
CHRISTOPHER O. ROBERTS
STEVEN G. ROBINS
GUYTON L. ROBINSON
MICHAEL R. RODICK
WILLIE RODNEY
ROBERT R. RODOCK
SONNY T. ROSALES
JEFFREY R. ROSENBERG
ANNMARIE D. RUPPERT
STEVEN G. RUSH
ARAYA S. RUTNARAK
JOSEPH W. RUZICKA
KATHRYN P. SANBORN
MARC J. SANBORN
KEITH P. SANDOVAL
JOHANNIE SANMIGUEL
DAVID A. SARRETTE, JR.
CHARCILLEA A. SCHAEFER
MATTHEW J. SCHER
MARTIN D. SCHMIDT
EDWARD B. SCHOENHEIT
STEVEN J. SCHULDT
JAMES D. SCOTT
JOSEPH C. SCOTT
JAMES H. SCULLION
JOSHUA T. SEVERS
MATTHEW D. SHAW
JAMES D. SHEFFIELD
WILLIAM H. SHOEMATE II
DOUGLAS S. SIMMONS
MARNY SKINDRUD
LAURA J. SKINNER
DAVID K. SMITH
STEPHEN T. SMITH
STEPHEN P. SNYDER
HUGH E. SOLLOM
ROBERTO C. SOLORZANO
JEFFREY J. F. SOUTER
DARREN T. SPEARS
JONATHAN C. STAFFORD
ANDREW D. STAPLES
MICHAEL H. STARZ
SHAWN P. STEELE
DAVID J. STEWART
WINCHESTER A. STIENS
KEVIN P. STONEROOK
IVEN T. SUGAI
EDWARD T. SULLIVAN
MARSHALL S. SYBERT
NATHANAEL S. TAGG
JOSHUA A. TAYLOR
MICHAEL D. TEAGUE
RICHARD P. TETA
STEPHEN P. THIBODEAU
JOSEPH F. THOMAS
ANTHONY M. THOMPSON
JARED A. THOMPSON
MICHAEL B. THROCKMORTON
TRAVIS S. TILMAN
LAZANDER C. TOMLINSON
PATRICK R. TOOHEY
BRENDAN P. TOOLAN
JASON A. TOTH
RICHARD A. TOWNER
BRIAN J. TRITTEN
VICTOR E. TRUJILLO II
TIMOTHY A. TRYON
RICARDO A. TURNER
KYLE L. UPSHAW
JEREMY J. USSERY
DAVID A. UTHLAUT
MARCUS R. VARTAN
SETH W. VIEUX
CHRISTOPHER J. VITALE
TREVOR S. VOELKEL
MARK J. WADE
ANDREW J. WAGNER
RUSSELL O. WAGNER
MATTHEW A. WALKER
BRENNAN V. WALLACE
LEE S. WALLACE
STEVEN S. WALLACE
CHADRICK K. WALLEY
GREGORY A. WALLSTEN
SHERMAN C. WATSON
JASON R. WAYNE
MARTIN E. WEAVER
CHRISTOPHER P. WELLMAN
DANIEL E. WELSH
ROBERT J. WEST
AMY M. WHEELER
GRAHAM R. WHITE
REGINALD D. WHITE
NATHAN S. WHITFIELD
ANDREW J. WHITFORD
NATHAN A. WHITLOCK
ANDREW J. WILBRAHAM
AARON M. WILLIAMS
REGINALD E. WILLIAMS, JR.
DAVID R. WILSON
JARED P. WILSON
NATHANIEL B. WILSON
BARRY WINNEGAN
PAUL W. WITKOWSKI
CARL H. WOHLFEIL
MATTHEW S. WOLFE
RICHARD S. WOOLSHLAGER
RYAN K. WORKMAN
GLEN A. WRIGHT
TIMOTHY F. WRIGHT
PAUL M. WUENSCH
LUCAS J. YOHO
ALEXANDER L. YOUNG
SALVADOR M. ZUNIGA
D003125
D004327
D010376
D010394
D010456
D010545
D010570
D010575
D010805
D010826
D011529
D011535
D012181
D012498
D012722
D012779
D012798
D012836
D012873
D012895
D012923

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

CARL J. WOJTASZEK

THE FOLLOWING OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

G010339

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MICHAEL A. IZZO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

JOSHUA R. POUNDERS

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5721:

To be lieutenant commander

JOSEPH F. ABRUTZ III
ALDEN Y. ARGANTE
COLBY T. BACON
BERRY T. BROWN
SAMUEL BRYANT
JEREMY K. CARROLL
ANDREW G. CATOIRE
JEREMIAH M. CHASE
BRIAN J. DAVIS
CAMERON D. DENNIS
JAMES A. DIPASQUALE
TREY J. DITTBERNER
KEVIN J. FULLER
EDWARD J. GREWAY, JR.
THOMAS D. GROARK
BRENT J. HOLLOWAY
WILLIAM B. HOWARD
GUILLERMO H. HOWELL
JUAN J. HUIZAR
MATTHEW K. JACOBSON
KYLE W. KILLINGBECK
TONY T. G. LE
MYRON E. LIND
MICHAEL R. MALIN
DAXTON H. MOORE
GARRETT T. MOORE
DANIEL T. OLSON
MATTHEW D. OWENS
TIMOTHY W. ROE
JASON L. ROGERS
JORGE E. ROLDAN
PETER C. SCHUNK
JOHN H. SEEBODE
JEREMIAH S. SHUMWAY
NICHOLAS E. SWANDA
ABDOULAYE SYLLA
JAMES E. TROGDEN III
MICHAEL P. WOLCHKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

DAVID H. MCALISTER

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

EMILY M. SCOTT, OF WYOMING

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 28, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ROBERTA S. JACOBSON, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. MARK A. BAIRD

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. THOMAS F. SPENCER

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. GREGORY S. CHAMPAGNE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. MARSHALL B. WEBB

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. DANIEL J. SWAIN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES J. KEEFE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREA D. TULLOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRADLEY C. SALTZMAN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREW E. SALAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. CRAIG D. WILLS

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. TAMHRA L. HUTCHINS–FRYE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. CURTIS M. SCAPARROTTI

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM J. PRENDERGAST IV

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM P. BARRIAGE
BRIG. GEN. PETER A. BOSSE
BRIG. GEN. TROY D. KOK
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM S. LEE

To be brigadier general

COL. MARILYN S. CHIAFULLO
COL. ALEX B. FINK
COL. JOHN B. HASHEM
COL. SUSAN E. HENDERSON
COL. ANDREW J. JUKNELIS
COL. JEFFREY W. JURASEK
COL. DEBORAH L. KOTULICH
COL. JOHN H. PHILLIPS
COL. STEPHEN T. SAUTER
COL. STEPHEN E. STRAND

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) PAUL J. VERRASTRO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) TIMOTHY J. WHITE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) KYLE J. COZAD
REAR ADM. (LH) LISA M. FRANCHETTI
REAR ADM. (LH) ROY J. KELLEY
REAR ADM. (LH) DAVID M. KRIETE
REAR ADM. (LH) BRUCE H. LINDSEY
REAR ADM. (LH) JAMES T. LOEBLEIN
REAR ADM. (LH) WILLIAM R. MERZ
REAR ADM. (LH) DEE L. MEWBOURNE
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL T. MORAN
REAR ADM. (LH) STUART B. MUNSCH
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN B. NOWELL, JR.
REAR ADM. (LH) TIMOTHY G. SZYMANSKI

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. VINCENT K. BROOKS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. BRADLEY A. HEITHOLD

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD, AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 10506:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. LEON S. RICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. LORI J. ROBINSON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. STEPHEN M. TWITTY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOHN G. ROSSI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. ROBERT B. BROWN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. KENNETH D. JONES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ARLAN M. DEBLIECK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. RODNEY L. FAULK

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF MARTIN T. MITCHELL, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LAURA S. BARCHICK AND ENDING WITH KEVIN J. WILKINSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 17, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHELLE D. AASTROM AND ENDING WITH CYNTHIA J. WEIDMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 17, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LAIRD S. ABBOTT AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER J. ZUHLKE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 17, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF ALBERT E. WHITE, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JONATHAN M. LETSINGER, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LLOYD TRAVIS A. ARNOLD AND ENDING WITH KONSTANTINA ZUBER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 14, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF KRISTIE L. PARTIN, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF AIMEE D. SAFFORD, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF TRACEY A. GOSSER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF TODD R. HOWELL, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LARSS G. CELTNIEKS AND ENDING WITH PAULETTE V. BURTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 14, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ERIC DANKO, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEVEN N. CAROZZA AND ENDING WITH NOAH C. CLOUD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 14, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF RAMIT RING, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF GEOFFREY E. ANDERSON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRUCE H. ROBINSON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW B. BOOTH AND ENDING WITH DONALD W. MOYER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 17, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ROBERT L. CRONYN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DARRELL W. COLLINS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DEVON D. NUDELMAN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CALVIN C. THOMAS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEPHEN G. CRUYS AND ENDING WITH GREGORY J. LONG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH EDWARD S. BARNETT AND ENDING WITH LYNN J. WILSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TIMOTHY G. BONNER AND ENDING WITH JAMES S. WELCH, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KRYSTAL D. BEAN AND ENDING WITH JUSTIN R. SCHLANSER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GEORGE A. BARBEE AND ENDING WITH D013078, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GABRIELLE M. ANDREANIFABRONI AND ENDING WITH YOUNG J. YAUGER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TERRYL L. AITKEN AND ENDING WITH D010908, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF TRAVIS H. OWEN, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSHUA T. ADE AND ENDING WITH D012875, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 7, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF TIMOTHY R. TEAGUE, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ERIC E. HALSTROM, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRIAN D. BOBO AND ENDING WITH ANTHONY D. FOURNIER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 7, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DENNIS N. SNELLING, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF KODJO S. KNOXLIMBACKER, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF LORI R. SCHANHALS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DREW R. CONOVER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRADLEY D. OSTERMAN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF FRANCISCO J. LOPEZ, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TIMOTHY D. AIKEN AND ENDING WITH JAMES R. WEAKLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 14, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF GEORGE A. ROLLINS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MCARTHUR WALKER, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TIMOTHY D. COVINGTON AND ENDING WITH ERIC A. KENNEDY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 14, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF NILSON OROZCOOVIEDO, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF PIERRE E. SAINTFLEUR, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JOHN A. YUKICA, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATRIX W. ELIAS AND ENDING WITH NICHOLAS J. TAZZA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF BRIAN D. HENNESSY, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DONALD C. KING, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF STEPHANIE M. SIMONI, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF JENNIFER L. SHAFER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JUSTIN K. CONROY AND ENDING WITH REBECCA L. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 17, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF BRICE A. GOODWIN, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF BRIAN J. HAMER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF SCOTT F. GRUWELL, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF SHANNON D. LORIMER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DANIELLE M. BARNES AND ENDING WITH MARK R. THOMAS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 5, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF WILLIAM A. HLAVIN, TO BE COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF PHILLIP G. CYR, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DONALD E. SPEIGHTS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF LUIS A. BENCOMO, TO BE COMMANDER.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan measure to provide a five year authorization for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative provides federal, state, tribal, and local officials with one more tool to protect the Great Lakes.

Through it, we are helping in the fight to keep the Asian Carp out of the Great Lakes.

Through it, tons of contaminated sediments have been removed and will no longer pose a threat to the public or the environment. Waterways that were once closed to boaters, fishermen, and the public are being revitalized and reborn.

Through it, we are working to improve habitat for wildlife. This week in my district, the Army Corps and Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District will announce the completion of an Ecosystem Restoration Project funded with GLRI funds. The project ripped out 2,900 feet of concrete channel in the Menominee River, restoring natural riverbed and opening up over 37 miles and 125 acres of upstream wetlands for spawning by various fish species.

Through it, three formally designed areas of concerns—because they contain highly contaminated and toxic sediments—have been delisted in the region.

Investing in protecting the Great Lakes make both economic and environmental sense. This basin is a drinking water source for tens of millions. When much of our nation and the world is fighting over water and trying to figure out how to address shortages or diminishing water resources, we would be foolish not to protect this national treasure.

This investment also benefits the economy and job creation in the region and the nation. Look no further than Milwaukee where water related businesses, universities, and other stakeholders are working to take advantage of our region's proximity to the largest body of freshwater and a strong university research base, including the nation's only freshwater school of science to attract water related entrepreneurs and small businesses to the area.

The Milwaukee Water Council, a nonprofit organization with over 180 members, which links water technology companies, water entrepreneurs, academic researchers and water professionals is hard at work turning our region's advantages, including our city's location on Lake Michigan, into creating jobs and economic development that will benefit the city and region. We need to protect the Great Lakes.

I want to thank the leadership of the Committee for making this bill a priority. Chairman SHUSTER, Ranking Member DEFAZIO, your leadership is much appreciated. I also want to applaud my colleagues from the region, including Congresswoman KAPTUR, on both sides of the aisle who keenly understand why we need to support this legislation.

I support this bill and urge my colleagues to vote for it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEVE W. CRANDALL

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Steve W. Crandall, who passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends on November 24, 2015. Steve served in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War on the USS *Sperry*. After his service, Steve met his first wife Carol and they had two sons together, Steven and Shane. In 1976, Steve married his lifelong partner Cathy. Together, they raised Michael, Steven, and Scot.

Steve loved sports and being outdoors. Steve enjoyed fishing, hunting, boating and camping with his family. Steve played softball, bowled in leagues and won a couple golf tournaments through Raley's. Steve enjoyed volunteering his time coaching little league and always encouraged his boys in sports.

Through the years, Steve worked hard for his family. Steve worked for the Retail Clerks Union for over 20 years, was a co-owner of Aqua Magic, a carpet cleaning and restoration business and a garbage man with Recology until he was diagnosed with diabetes in 1999. Steve had many medical struggles through the rest of his years but he was always happy to see you and his positive personality was impossible to miss.

Steve's sanctuary was at the golf course. Thereafter, he worked at Green Tree Golf Club for approximately 12 years. Steve cherished his time there. Whether it was spending time with his friends, driving his beloved dog Sam around in the cart, teaching his sons and grandsons how to golf, or of course, working on the Course, he loved every day.

Steve always wanted to make you smile. We will miss his "slightly exaggerated" stories and his tall tales. We will miss the way he lit up a room when he walked in. We will miss his kind and generous heart.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents Glen and Iva Lee Crandall. Steve is survived by his loving wife Cathy, his sons Michael, Steve, Scot, Shane and their families. Sister Debbe Allen, four nieces and their families, as well as a dear "Papa" to nine Grandchildren.

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE ACT

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the United States House of Representatives for the passing of H.R. 223, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2015, which authorizes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative through Fiscal Year 2020 at $300 million per year. This initiative continues to perform vital work to combat the influx of invasive species, restore polluted habitats, and clean up areas where significant harm has been caused by human activity; also known as Areas of Concern. H.R. 223 is a commonsense, nonpartisan bill that creates jobs, restores communities, and boosts small businesses in the Great Lakes region.

Beginning in 2010, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has been working hard to protect and preserve the largest freshwater system in the world. I would like to thank my dear friend Mr. DAVID JOYCE for leading this legislation to provide long-term stability for the protection and restoration of our beautiful Great Lakes, which are home to over 1.5 million jobs and more than thirty-five hundred plants and animals.

This initiative has made a significant impact in the 8th District of Minnesota; specifically, the St. Louis River, which is one of the largest Areas of Concerns in the Great Lakes Basin. With the support of federal and state agencies involved, this Area of Concern is making incredible progress.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congress for passing this vital piece of legislation to provide long-term stability to our Great Lakes region and I commend the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for all of the important work it does.

CONGRATULATING THE AIRBUS TEAM IN MOBILE ON DELIVERY OF FIRST A321

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the determined men and women who work at the Airbus assembly facility in Mobile, Alabama, on the successful delivery of the first Alabama-built A321 to JetBlue.

I had the honor of attending the special delivery ceremony in Mobile on Monday, April 25th, to celebrate this momentous achievement and share our appreciation with those who made the aircraft a reality.

The ceremony was marked with a football theme. The marching band and cheerleaders from the University of South Alabama helped lead the crowd in cheers. The visiting dignitary

sitting next to me asked about the theme, and I informed him that we take great pride in football down in Alabama.

I then informed him that the same amount of pride we take in our football teams, along with a ton of hard work, is put into the construction of the A321 aircraft. The men and women who work for Airbus recognize how monumental this moment is for the Mobile community, the State of Alabama, and the entire United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident we will be building these aircraft in Mobile for many years to come, and I am so excited about the future of aviation in Southwest Alabama. So, on behalf of my constituents in Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to congratulate Airbus and all of their hardworking employees on this impressive achievement.

CELEBRATING LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT DR. JITSUHIRO YAMADA'S LEADERSHIP

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada, President of Lions Clubs International, the world's largest service organization, for his many years of outstanding service and dedication. Dr. Yamada was elected by his peers in June 2015 to facilitate the work of 1.4 million Lions Clubs International members in over 200 countries and territories. Working with over 46,000 clubs, Dr. Yamada promotes an international effort to aid the blind and visually impaired, champion youth initiatives, and strengthen local communities through hands-on service and humanitarian projects.

As a member of the Lakeville Lions Club in Indiana, I have seen the impact Lions Clubs can have on local communities. They work to promote the principles of responsible government and good citizenship by uniting individuals from all walks of life with a mission to foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world. As President of Lions Clubs International, Dr. Yamada is the very embodiment of those ideals.

The world truly owes a great deal of respect and gratitude to incredible individuals like Dr. Yamada who have dedicated their lives to working for the common good. His commitment to improving the state of our world inspires many, facilitating the service of dedicated and passionate individuals across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in celebration of Dr. Yamada's leadership and continued accomplishments. His work brings communities together, strengthening our collective resolve.

CONGRATULATING THE MAINE TROOP GREETERS ON WELCOMING HOME 1,500,000 AMERICAN HEROES

HON. BRUCE POLIQUIN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Maine Troop Greeters on recently welcoming home our 1,500,000th American hero.

I want to applaud and thank each one of these incredible individuals for their important, inspirational work to personally greet each American soldier—including hundreds of our canine heroes—when they return to U.S. soil through the Bangor International Airport, regardless of the time of day or night they arrive home.

Many of us remember the disgraceful treatment our brave servicemen received upon their arrival home from Vietnam. Thanks to the Maine Troop Greeter's incredible dedication, every military member now deployed overseas is welcomed back the way they deserve—with a friendly Maine face and heartfelt words expressing our Nation's great gratitude for their selfless service and joy for their safe homecoming.

I am privileged to be an honorary Maine Troop Greeter and to represent these incredible men and women in the United States Congress. I was also honored to invite Troop Greeter and American hero Norm Rossignol as my special guest at this year's State of the Union. America is the greatest country in the world because of patriots like these selfless individuals.

Again, I want to congratulate the amazing men and women of the Maine Troop Greeters on reaching this incredible 1.5 million troop milestone and I look forward to joining them again soon. God Bless America and God Bless the Maine Troop Greeters.

GERARDO BARAJAS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Gerardo Barajas for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Gerardo Barajas is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Gerardo Barajas is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Gerardo Barajas for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF MATTHEW GARY, SAMUEL BORICK, AND JULIA FONTANA AS HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS OF THE 2016 NATIONAL C-SPAN STUDENT CAM VIDEO CONTEST

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Matthew Gary, Samuel Borick, and Julia Fontana, who participated in the 2016 National C-Span Student Cam Video Contest. The five-minute entry entitled "2016: The Race to Protect the Environment" earned them an honorable mention.

The team created the documentary to emphasize why environmental policy should be at the forefront of 2016's political debates. The team met with qualified individuals such as environmental advocate Peter Iwanowicz, environmental policy expert Barry Rabe, and the Honorable ROBERT CASEY, Jr., a United States Senator from Pennsylvania. Through these interviews, they explored why environmental issues are neglected by politicians and why public officials and aspirants at the highest level should make them a priority.

As many of my colleagues know, I am a passionate advocate for the environment. I believe preserving our natural, recreational, and cultural resources is an environmental, as well as an economic, imperative. I am impressed by these young people and their contribution to the national dialogue. Like them, I believe we need to take steps to ensure our environment is in good hands for future generations.

It is an honor to recognize the achievement of Matthew Gary, Samuel Borick, and Julia Fontana. May they continue to strive for excellence in their education and be good stewards of our planet.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Wednesday, April 27, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on roll call votes 166 and 167, "nay" on roll call votes 168 and 169, "yea" on roll call vote 170, "nay" on roll call vote 171, and "yea" on roll call vote 172.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I was at the White House to discuss criminal justice reform and I was unable to return in time for roll call votes 170, 171, and 172. Had I been here, I would have voted Yes to 170, Ms. Waters Amendment; No to 171, Final Passage; and Yes to 172, on the Defend Trade Secrets Act.

COLLEEN OWENS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Colleen Owens for her award of Colorado's 2016 High School Principal of the Year. The Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE) and a committee of her peers from the Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals (CASSP) chose Principal Owens for this award.

For over five years Principal Owens has passionately worked to be a positive influence in the lives of students, teachers, parents and our community. She has sought to eliminate and improve upon many of the issues the school was facing, including a drastically decreasing enrollment of nearly 100 students per year. Her tireless efforts to help establish a firm sense of community to ''RamNation'' (as the school community is called) have helped to stabilize and reach new levels of engagement and achievement. She was also instrumental in bringing the one-of-a-kind Academy Program—which offers courses ranging from engineering, health, business, performing arts, global studies, and more—to help students prepare for college and other career opportunities.

Principal Owens's roots are deep within Green Mountain School. An alumna herself, she has served diverse roles at Green Mountain High School including student, teacher and assistant principal. In addition to supporting student success through the Academy model, Principal Owens promotes strong instruction and teacher development through Professional Learning Communities. Beyond her role in leading both students and staff, Owens has worked vigorously to strengthen the school's communication.

To say she is an accomplished administrator is an understatement. Principal Owens' dedication and enthusiasm for education is reflected in her exemplary contributions to the profession. I extend my deepest thanks to Principal Owens for her service to the students of Green Mountain High School. Thank you for your continuous dedication to education and to our local community.

IN RECOGNITION OF WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April 28 as Workers' Memorial Day, and to honor the men and women around the world who have suffered injuries or lost their lives in the workplace.

In Connecticut, the unions of the AFL–CIO are observing Workers' Memorial Day today with ceremonies on the steps of our State Capitol in Hartford and at the Workers Memorial in the Town of Groton's Washington Park.

Last Saturday was the 29th anniversary of one of the worst workplace disasters in Connecticut's history. On April 23, 1987, L'Ambiance Plaza, a 16-story building under construction in Bridgeport, collapsed. Twenty-eight construction workers lost their lives.

This disaster was preventable, and it was a wakeup call for Connecticut—and for our nation—that we can never afford to take workplace safety for granted. We've made some progress in the three decades since the L'Ambiance Plaza tragedy, but in the United States, 13 workers still die on the job during an average workday.

In Connecticut, 33 men and women died due to workplace accidents in 2014. That's more than two workers every month, just in my state, who don't return home to their loved ones at the end of a shift.

Nearly half of these men and women worked in the construction, transportation, and warehousing industries—industries that sustain thousands of Connecticut jobs. These workers are powering the economy of our state and of the nation, and we have a responsibility to keep them safe.

Today, on Workers' Memorial Day, we honor the memories and sacrifices of the thousands of men and women throughout the world who have been injured or lost their lives while doing their job.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF DIANNA MARIE HEGEDUIS ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER PASSING

HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dianna Marie Hegeduis for her service to the state of Nevada.

Dianna was a resident of Las Vegas for 35 years and passed away on May 6, 2011, just five years ago.

A 1992 graduate of UNLV, Dianna pursued a legal education at Brigham Young University before returning to Nevada to start her career.

In her professional life, Dianna served as the executive director and general counsel for the Nevada Board of Osteopathic Medicine, where she worked to help improve access to medical care for Nevada residents in rural areas.

She also served as the Chief Deputy Attorney for the State of Nevada under Attorney General Brian Sandoval, arguing and winning several key cases before the Nevada Supreme Court.

But it was in her spare time serving as a community volunteer where Dianna made the most lasting impact on those around her.

She mentored young attorneys and helped them with job placements.

She served as a volunteer judge for high school debate competitions.

She was active in assisting members of our senior citizen community with their everyday needs.

Dianna Marie Hegeduis was an exemplary Las Vegan and Nevadan, and it is my great honor to join with her friends and family today to memorialize her dedication to the Silver State.

CELEBRATING FORT LUPTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Fort Lupton Middle School for its recognition as an Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) National Demonstration school and an AVID School of Distinction, as well as for winning the coveted Game Plan for Success Award.

These merits are most deserved. Staying true to their motto, ''Every Student, Every Day, Achieves and Learns,'' the students, teachers, and administration of Fort Lupton have dedicated themselves to the pursuit of education and the pursuit of college and career readiness.

If you walk through Fort Lupton, you will see data from the latest benchmark exams displayed throughout the building, celebrating success and conveying the need to work hard and aim high. It is because of the school's commitment to hard work and data-driven teaching that they have earned the prestigious Game Plan for Success Award. To honor this achievement, U.S. Women's National Soccer Star Megan Rapinoe presented the school with the $5,000 prize and shared with the students tips for success in and out of the classroom.

Today, I also honor the principal of Fort Lupton Middle School, Candace Kensinger. Ms. Kensinger has shown incredible leadership and her passion for education is an inspiration for students and educators alike.

Mr. Speaker, I send my sincerest congratulations to the entire Fort Lupton Middle School community. Their academic success serves as an example throughout Colorado and the United States of America.

CHAZ VIGIL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Chaz Vigil for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Chaz Vigil is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Chaz Vigil is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Chaz Vigil for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

CELEBRATING PAY IT FORWARD DAY IN KENTUCKY

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Pay It Forward Day in Kentucky, as declared by Governor Matt Bevin to be recognized on April 28, 2016. I commend community, state and national leaders alike for promoting the spirit of goodwill and neighborly kindness through this nationwide effort.

Whereas, the aim of the Pay It Forward concept is to promote community spirit through acts of kindness;

Whereas, Pay It Forward Day is a worldwide effort being supported by people in more than 70 countries on six continents;

Whereas, Pay It Forward Day encourages people to do good deeds for others without asking for anything in return except for the recipients to pay it forward to others in need; and

Whereas, together we can make a difference by creating positive change in our community and world—one good deed at a time.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Kentucky delegation, along with my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to continue personal efforts to ''Pay It Forward'' with simple acts of kindness in their own congressional districts across the country.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA CUNNINGHAM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Barbara Cunningham of Shenandoah, Iowa, for her upcoming retirement from the NEA on August 31st, 2016. For 35 years, Barbara served our community, and state as an educator in the Shenandoah Community School District, and an additional six years on the NEA-Retired Board of Directors.

Barbara has dedicated her life to teaching and enriching the lives of young people, and began her journey as a teacher right after completing her education. Barbara found the Shenandoah Community School District was the best fit for her as a physical education (PE) instructor. The supplies and facilities were limited—Barbara describes the original gym as the size of a tractor trailer—yet Barbara made the best of it, as most of our teachers do, and focused on teaching her kids with what they had. Her positive attitude and dedication to her students left a lasting impact that cannot be measured.

For the last six years, Barbara has served on the NEA-Retired Board of Directors. She is a dedicated public servant who, even after retiring from teaching, continued to do more to help our youth and communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Barbara today as she approaches her retirement. Her expertise and hard work will be sorely missed by her colleagues and all those she has worked with over the years. I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Barbara for her nearly 40 years of dedicated service and in wishing her nothing but continued success in her retirement.

REMARKS IN HONOR OF THE SERVICE OF COLONEL DAVID HAMILTON

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the service of Colonel David Hamilton, of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our nation. Colonel Hamilton was born in Kingston, Jamaica and grew up in Holliston, Massachusetts. He began his career in the Army in 1984 after receiving a nomination to attend West Point from my great-uncle, the late Senator Edward Kennedy. Colonel Hamilton was commissioned as a Field Artilleryman upon graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1988.

Throughout his military career, his many assignments included serving as a Platoon Leader during Operation Desert Shield/Storm and then Company Fire Support Officer in the 82nd Airborne Division. As a Captain, Colonel Hamilton commanded two batteries and deployed his unit to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Guard. After battery command, he served as an Instructor at the School of Artillery in Puckapunyal, Australia.

Upon his return, Colonel Hamilton served in the 2nd of the Army's two Stryker brigades while at Fort Lewis before becoming the Mission Commander, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Detachment-San Francisco from 2004 to 2006. He then departed for Korea where he commanded a Field Artillery Paladin battalion in the Army's 2nd Infantry Division before deploying to Iraq to serve as an Analyst and Deputy Director in the Multi-National Corps-Iraq Commander's Initiatives Group at Camp Victory, Iraq from 2008 to 2009.

After concluding his deployment in Iraq, Colonel Hamilton was the Chief of the Training and Evaluation Division for the Brigade Modernization Command at Ft. Bliss, TX, before commanding the 212th Fires Brigade in the Army's 1st Armored Division from August 2011 to July 2013.

From July 1st, 2014 to April 29th, 2016 Colonel Hamilton served as the Chief of the Army House Liaison Division, fostering a strategic partnership with both the 113th and 114th Congress and working tirelessly to navigate the complex issues the Army faced during the last two legislative cycles.

With every deployment and every assignment, Colonel Hamilton brought unparalleled leadership and unquestioned commitment to the men and women serving beside him.

While he never sought recognition, he has earned numerous military awards for his accomplishments, including the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the NATO Medal, the Senior Parachutist Badge, the Ranger Tab, and British Jump Wings.

In light of his achievements, the Army has assigned him to serve next as an Assistant Division Commander in the historic 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize Colonel David Hamilton's successful and decorated career as he and his family proceed to their next chapter. We are a nation grateful for the military service of the men, women, and families who sacrifice in defense of our freedom. I wish Colonel Hamilton and his family the best.

CODY FLOORING AND TILE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Cody Flooring and Tile for receiving the Golden Rotary Ethics in Business Award.

The Ethics in Business Award was established by the Golden Rotary to honor for profit and non-profit businesses. The recipients of this award must maintain integrity, conviction and possess high ethical standards, demonstrated by treatment of customers, employees, community and the environment.

Cody Flooring and Tile is a staple of the Golden community and has built its brand on a foundation of exceptional service and loyal relationships with customers. Steve Barrow founded the company out of his garage in Golden in 1996. While Steve is still president and the business remains based in Golden, the company has transformed, creating jobs, moving into a beautiful headquarters and expanding business to six states. This year, Cody Flooring and Tile celebrates 20 successful years of business, and I have no doubt they will find success in the next 20 years.

To Steve and all the employees of Cody Flooring and Tile, congratulations on receiving the Golden Rotary Ethics in Business Award, and thank you for all you do for the Golden community.

COMMENDING DR. ANDREW W. GURMAN, FOR BEING ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Dr. Andrew W. Gurman on his inauguration as President of the American Medical Association on June 14th, 2016.

A native of New York, Dr. Gurman received his medical degree from the State University of New York Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, in 1980. He served his surgical internship in Bronx, New York, completing and following his passion for hand surgery at the Hospital for Joint Disease Orthopedic Institute in New York City.

In addition to his career as an orthopedic hand surgeon in Altoona, Pennsylvania, Dr. Gurman has served as the speaker and vice speaker of the AMA House of Delegates for

eight years, a member of the Pennsylvania delegation for 20 years, a congressional contact for PAMED, and member on the American Society for Surgery of the Hand's Council on Government Relations.

Fortunately for our community, Dr. Gurman's achievements are not limited to his medical involvement, as he has also served as a professional chair for the United Way campaign, and a member of the board of trustees of the Altoona Symphony Orchestra.

It is with great pleasure that I highlight Dr. Gurman's inauguration to the presidency of the American Medical Association and commend him for his capacity to serve the 9th Congressional District in so many ways. I have no doubt he will continue to make an impact on our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 171 on H.R. 4498, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

HONORING MR. BOB EPLING

HON. CARLOS CURBELO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Bob Epling as he retires from his post as Chairman and CEO of Community Bank, a bank created with the intentions of being owned and operated by the community. Mr. Epling, who held his post since 1977, has always pushed the limits of what it means to be a business owner, and has used his means to serve the community. He has been acknowledged countless times for his service to the South Florida community, including his most recent recognition for excellence in community service by the Dade County Farm Bureau.

Mr. Epling has always been firmly rooted in the South Florida community, evident through his role as President of the Florida Bankers Association and Orange Bowl Committee, as well as Chairman of the 1996 South Florida Olympic Soccer Organizing Committee. He also served as the Chairman of the Board of the International Hurricane Research Center for 20 years. In that role, Mr. Epling worked tirelessly to advance research for mitigating storm damage, which he witnessed firsthand when assisting with rebuilding efforts in Homestead after Hurricane Andrew.

It is an honor for me to recognize Mr. Bob Epling on the occasion of his retirement for all of his service to the community of South Florida for more than three decades.

FOOTHILLS ANIMAL SHELTER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud the Foothills Animal Shelter for receiving the Golden Rotary Ethics in Business Award.

The Ethics in Business Award was established by the Golden Rotary to honor for profit and non-profit businesses. The recipients of this award must maintain integrity, conviction and possess high ethical standards, demonstrated by treatment of customers, employees, community and the environment.

Since its creation in 1976, the Foothills Animal Shelter (then known as the Jefferson Animal Center) has dedicated itself to providing the best possible care for every animal that comes through its doors. The organization cares for more than 9,500 animals every year and never turns an orphaned animal away. With the completion of its 33,000 square foot facility in 2010, the organization significantly improved care by adding a new medical suite to offer more on-site, cost-effective care and increasing the number of spays and neuters.

Congratulations to the Foothills Animal Shelter for receiving this well-deserved honor by the Golden Rotary, and thank you to all the employees for their continued commitment to our community and the animals they serve.

TRIBUTE TO MR. MICHAEL S. WILSON, PRESIDENT, GD–OTS

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a gentleman who has dedicated his life to serving our nation—a true American leader and hero who hails from the state of Florida, Mr. Michael S. Wilson. Mike is retiring from General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems (GD–OTS) after forty-seven years of service to our warfighters and the defense industry. He currently serves as president of GD–OTS, a position he has held since 2001.

Mike has distinguished himself throughout his career, most notably by developing and fielding over 15 programs to our armed forces. The latest example of Mike's leadership is the fielding of the Ground Mobility Vehicle 1.1 program to the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

Mike led the highly successful merger of GD Armament and Technical Products (GDATP) and GD–OTS companies in 2013—resulting in present day GD–OTS. His efforts created significant synergy savings and efficiencies that directly benefitted GD–OTS customers and shareholders resulting in improved service to the customer. Under Mike's astute and hands-on leadership, GD–OTS revenue rose over 500 percent since acquisition in 2001. Mike created a persistent priority and focuses on safety across GD–OTS and accumulated an unparalleled safety record by any industry standards.

One of Mike's proudest career achievements can be framed by the performance of OTS during the urgent ramp-up required to meet surging demand of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF). Virtually overnight, Mike oversaw the ramp-up of all GD–OTS production lines to provide ammunition when it was needed the most.

During his career at GD, Mike led the effort to grow GD–OTS' organic production capabilities. With deft precision and timing, Mike skillfully invested in facility expansion and organic capabilities to achieve strategic vertical integration. This resulted in a dramatic expansion of core competencies and several new production franchises for GD–OTS.

Mr. Speaker, the Munitions Industrial Base, commercial industry, and each branch of our Armed Forces will miss Mike Wilson's leadership. As a nation, let us recognize his intrepid service and dedication to the mission of supporting our warfighters. And I ask that this body join me in honoring and congratulating Mr. Mike S. Wilson on a most honorable, truly energetic, and innovative career.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''INVESTING IN AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES ACT OF 2016''

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Investing in America's Small Businesses Act of 2016. This important legislation allows Community Development Financial Institutions, known as CDFIs, to extend affordable credit to more small businesses in underserved communities through microloans. These small loans, under $50,000, give businesses working capital, help them invest in new equipment or supplies, and have no pre-payment penalties.

I'm proud that the Investing in America's Small Business Act has gained the endorsements of the CDFI Coalition and the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions, the national voices for these community-based institutions.

The bill provides grants for CDFIs to establish loan-loss reserve funds for microloans, which will help CDFIs leverage private investment to expand small business lending in underserved communities.

Small businesses are critical engines of economic development and job creation. In underserved communities, however, small businesses with low-income and minority owners often have limited access to affordable credit they need to meet everyday demands or expand their operations. According to a study commissioned by the U.S. Small Business Administration in 2013, ''the major constraint limiting the growth, expansion, and wealth creation of small firms—especially women- and minority-owned businesses—is inadequate capital.''

Community Development Financial Institutions serve exactly these communities—with great success and economic benefit. In fact, a 2014 report by the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia found that despite serving predominately low-income markets, CDFI banks and credit unions had virtually the same level of performance as mainstream financial institutions. Despite this demonstrated

success, CDFIs often lack the capital to meet the needs of many promising small businesses.

Recently, private sector financial institutions have stepped in to assist CDFIs in their mission to provide affordable, responsible lending to underserved communities. This month, JP Morgan Chase announced a five-year, $125 million investment in CDFIs, building upon a pilot program which allowed 26 CDFIs to raise more than $226 million—seven times JPMorgan's initial grant—and make $100 million in loans, finance the preservation and development of over 2,000 units of affordable housing, and lend to over 130 small businesses.

These efforts are commendable, but private sector investments are not enough to address the significant need for small business credit in underserved communities. Research shows that minority-owned businesses typically encounter higher borrowing costs, receive smaller loans and see their loan applications rejected more often. CDFIs are well-placed to provide access to affordable credit through microloans to struggling small businesses and entrepreneurs in underserved communities.

Let's give small businesses in underserved areas the tools they need to create jobs and develop their communities. I am pleased to introduce this bill, and urge my colleagues to join in support.

WILLIAM VOVAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud William Vovan for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

William Vovan is a 12th grader at Northglenn High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by William Vovan is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to William Vovan for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, due to an electronic mishap, I voted incorrectly on H.R. 4498, the Helping Angels Lead Our Startups (HALOS). I had intended to vote yea on roll call vote 171 on passage of the HALOS Act.

HONORING THE CITY OF LEXINGTON ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT FOR EARNING A RELIABLE PUBLIC POWER PROVIDER PLATINUM DESIGNATION FROM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Lexington Electrical Department for earning a ''Platinum'' Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA). The ''Platinum'' RP3 designation establishes the Lexington Electrical Department, located in Lexington, North Carolina, as one of the most reliable and high-quality public power providers in the nation.

For the past seven years, the City of Lexington Electrical Department has been recognized by the APPA as an industry leader with a ''Gold'' level designation. However, with this ''Platinum'' designation, the Lexington Electrical Department joins an elite group of only 29 utility providers nationwide that have earned this impressive distinction. In order to be recognized as a ''Platinum'' provider, the provider must earn a score between 90 and 98 percent of the possible points across all scoring metrics used by the APPA. The City of Lexington accomplished this goal by excelling in the four RP3 disciplines established by the APPA: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement.

The Lexington Electrical Department has become a recognized leader not only in the state of North Carolina, but across the entire country. Their innovative workforce training programs should serve as an example of how to prepare employees to meet the ever-growing demands of the 21st century. They have also demonstrated an unwavering commitment to providing high-quality services to the people of Lexington by engaging in public-service projects like the proactive tree trimming project, resulting in a significantly reduced number of power outages during this year's winter storm season. The people of Lexington should be comforted to know their utility needs are being provided by one of the finest utility departments in the entire nation, and should be proud of the staff at the Lexington Electrical Department who worked so hard to earn this distinguished honor.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating the hardworking members of the City of Lexington Electrical Department for earning the American Public Power Association's ''Platinum'' Reliable Public Power Provider designation.

ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES CAUCUS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the one year anniversary of the Congressional Historically Black Colleges and Universities Caucus, established last April by Reps. ALMA ADAMS (D–NC) and BRADLEY BYRNE (R–AL).

For over 170 years, our Historically Black Colleges and Universities have been at the forefront of preparing our nation's youth for a bright path and successful future. HBCUs have profoundly changed the American economic and social climate. They have changed the face of this nation and have opened the door for generations of African-American students. There are over 300,000 diverse students across the United States attending HBCUs today. Those and the millions of HBCU alumni are a testament to the importance of these institutions to America.

In 2008, I co-founded and co-chaired the first bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus with Reps. JAMES CLYBURN (D–SC) and JOHN DUNCAN (R–TN). Expanding federal opportunities for HBCUs and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), expanding dialogue in Congress, and upholding the traditions of these institutions are shared goals of mine and of the members who currently lead the caucus. I am proud to represent Paul Quinn College, which has provided their students with the tools to be successful leaders for over 130 years.

For much of their history, HBCUs opened the door to educational opportunities and career possibilities otherwise inaccessible to African-Americans. Over the past 50 years we have seen a modernization of that mission. Each year thousands of academically disadvantaged students graduate high school behind many of their peers. Many of these college-bound students graduated at the top of their class, yet did not have access to the rigorous coursework that would prepare them for higher education.

HBCUs offer the personalized attention and support to foster success in these students. They are paving the way for future scientists, engineers and doctors who may have otherwise been lost in the system. It is this chain of support that makes our nation's HBCUs so invaluable to America and the thousands of students who meet their potential under their guidance.

I am pleased that we are able to continue this dialogue in a meaningful way and I urge more members to join the Congressional HBCU Caucus.

TAYLOR NORMAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Taylor Norman for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Taylor Norman is a 12th grader at Thornton High and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Taylor Norman is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Taylor Norman for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 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 $19,218,673,186,359.42. We've added $8,591,796,137,446.34 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.

IN TRIBUTE TO REVEREND TONGBER S. VANG

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to Reverend Tongber S. Vang who passed away on February 21, 2016 at the age of 51. Tongber S. Vang was born in Sanau, Laos and was the eldest of 7 children. Tongber Vang immigrated to the United States at the age of 12, after living in refugee camps of Thailand with his family for a number of years. He lived first in Little Rock, Arkansas and eventually moved to Milwaukee and lived with his grandmother, Mao Xiong. He graduated from Milwaukee's West Division High School and attended Milwaukee Area Technical College with the intention of following a career in dentistry.

Tongber met Pa at Hmong New Year Celebration; he knew immediately she was the woman he would marry. He was touched by Pa's Christian faith and she encouraged his growth with Christ that led him to the ministry. On July 4, 1986, Tongber and Pa were married, and immersed themselves in the ministry, teaching Sunday school for children at Northwest Baptist Church. After Pa graduated from high school in 1988, they both attended and graduated from Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Missouri. After graduation, Tongber and Pa moved to Louisville, KY where they both attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. They studied during the week but their weekends included a 6-hour commute to and from Lansing, MI to perform church outreach to the Hmong community and coordinate a children's Sunday school ministry.

Pastor Tongber moved his family back to Milwaukee in 1997 and accepted a position working for AmeriCorps, Vista Program at the Milwaukee Public Schools. He engaged Hmong parents and students at both South Division and Washington High Schools. In the fall of 1997, Pastor Tongber made the decision to accept the offer to pastor his home church, the Hmong First Baptist Church.

Pastor Tongber led his congregation with incredible grace, love, and passion for the word of God. However, his deepest passion was caring and praying with and over members of the church. He led a successful capital campaign which resulted in the construction of the current church building. The church was his second family; he believed with true conviction that if families were okay, the church would be okay, as would the community and the world. Pastor Tongber devoted countless hours to support church ministries and ensuring goals were met. In 2010, he led a mission trip to Nan, Thailand.

Pastor Tongber is survived by his beloved wife Pa, their three wonderful sons—Solomon, Josiah, and Joseph, a loving daughter-in-law—Joann, and a cheerful 13-month-old granddaughter Charity Siabzoo, and a yet-to-be-born granddaughter named Genessa Hnub Tshiab.

While Pastor Tongber's time on earth was short, guided fully by his faith in God, he served his family, church and his community selflessly. I was proud to call him a friend and was inspired by his good works. Mr. Speaker, this is why I rise to pay tribute to Tongber S. Vang, a true asset to the 4th Congressional District.

ORAN BAZEL JR.

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Oran Bazel Jr. for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Oran Bazel Jr. is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Oran Bazel Jr. is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Oran Bazel Jr. for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DR. RUTH ELLEN WASEM ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Ruth Ellen Wasem, a Specialist in Immigration Policy, will be retiring from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) at the end of this month. Dr. Wasem came to CRS in 1987 as an Analyst in Social Legislation, where she worked on teenage pregnancy, youth policy, homelessness, and immigration policy. She eventually moved full-time into immigration policy, where she became a recognized and leading expert in the field. Dr. Wasem is a graduate of the University of Michigan, where she received a Ph.D. and M.A. in History. She completed her undergraduate degree at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. Dr. Wasem was raised in Cadiz, Ohio.

Throughout her time at CRS, Dr. Wasem provided substantial legislative support to Members and Congressional staff who often turned to her for analysis, brainstorming, and consultation on various aspects of immigration and social welfare policy. Her work in these areas included assisting Congress with interpretations of current and proposed law, explaining agency operations, analyzing data, developing and analyzing legislative options, and comparing legislative proposals at various stages of the process. Dr. Wasem's work was used by Congress in hearings, legislative development, markups, and preconference negotiations.

Dr. Wasem's extensive knowledge in immigration policy and her keen ability to frame and analyze issues of paramount concern to Congress often made her a prominent point of contact for Congressional staff. Her encyclopedic knowledge of immigration law and policy was on display during the past decade when Congress attempted to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Dr. Wasem provided an innovative view of the major categories of immigration issues and the key elements involved in reforming the nation's immigration system.

Dr. Wasem wrote numerous analytic and concise reports for Congress—well over 300 during her tenure at CRS. Dr. Wasem also contributed to the House Ways and Means Committee's Green Book. Her contribution to the Green Book consisted of high-level statistical analysis on nonimmigrant eligibility for public benefits.

Dr. Wasem was routinely chosen to moderate the immigration panels of CRS' biennial Legislative Issues and Procedures seminar for new Members in Williamsburg, Virginia. She also testified before Congressional committees numerous times throughout her tenure at CRS providing testimony on issues ranging from asylum to unauthorized migration to immigration and social policy data.

One of Dr. Wasem's most important contributions to CRS' work for Congress has been her leadership of the analysts, lawyers and information professionals who support Congressional consideration of immigration-related policy issues. As CRS' Immigration Team Leader, Dr. Wasem has been a mentor to her team members, as well as to Congressional staff. She unfailingly displayed great generosity and selflessness in devoting her time and energy to the issues of the day.

The Congressional Research Service has given Dr. Wasem a number of outstanding commendations and special achievement awards for legislative analysis in the areas of immigration policy, Haitian relief, health care reform, homeland security, temporary foreign workers, and welfare reform.

Dr. Wasem recently spent a year as a Kluge Staff Fellow at the Library of Congress where

she researched legislative efforts to end national origins and race-based immigrant admissions to the United States, all of which culminated in the Immigration Act of 1965. During her time as a Kluge Fellow, Dr. Wasem was awarded the Abba P. Schwartz Research Fellowship, which is administered by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, to further her research in this area.

During her 29 years at CRS, and her 2 years of previous federal service, Dr. Wasem won the respect and admiration of her colleagues. Her steadfast dedication to serve Congress and her commitment to the highest standards of analytic, unbiased and timely response to Congressional requests for information and analysis have made a positive and lasting contribution to the Congressional policy discourse.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EARL ''MARTY'' MARTIN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Earl ''Marty'' Martin, as he is inaugurated today April 28, 2016, as the 13th President of Iowa's largest private university, Drake University in Des Moines.

Dr. Martin began his presidency on July 1, 2015. A fourth-generation attorney, Dr. Martin served for eight years in the U.S. Air Force as a legal officer, honing his leadership and analytic skills. Later, he joined the Texas Wesleyan School of Law faculty as a visiting professor and eventually became Associate Dean of the institution. Most recently, Dr. Martin served as Executive Vice President of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington.

His leadership philosophy is well-documented and so is his drive and focus to strengthen Drake University, its Drake neighborhood and emphasizing Drake University's standing as one of the nation's top 100 best values of private colleges.

Dr. Martin stated his greatest challenge as the new President, ''I am never going to be wise enough. Wisdom is that combination of knowing the facts are occurring and being able to assess the choices. I always want to get better.'' Under his leadership, Drake University is continuing to grow and flourish.

Mr. Speaker, as a graduate and proud alumnus of Drake University, I am honored to represent Dr. Martin and Drake University in the United States Congress. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Dr. Martin on his inauguration and wishing him nothing but continued success.

STAR ROSAS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Star Rosas for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Star Rosas is a 12th grader at Westminster High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Star Rosas is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Star Rosas for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

AMERICA'S HBCUs

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to celebrate and recognize the importance of educational opportunities that HBCU institutions create for thousands of young men and women from all walks of life.

As a member of the Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus which promotes and protects the interest of HBCUs by:

creating a national dialogue,

educating Members of Congress and their staffs about the issues impacting HBCUs,

drafting meaningful bipartisan legislation to address the needs of HBCUs, and

supporting students and graduates of HBCUs by increasing access and career opportunities.

As Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I am particularly concerned about the events of the last few weeks and months that highlight a national problem that involves the health and wellbeing of young African American boys and young men.

One important solution must be access to affordable quality education for every person in this nation.

I am proud to count Texas Southern University, as a constituent, a great HBCU—located in my home city of Houston.

I routinely partner with Texas Southern University to promote education opportunities and collaborate on community projects routinely.

I led the initiative to get Financial Aid Relief for the students and campus of Texas Southern University in the amount of $13 plus million dollars.

I continue to keep the university community informed about major issues impacting citizens of the city of Houston, state of Texas.

Issues like Health Care, Economic Development, Education, and Social Security are of great importance to TSU academic programs.

I initiated the digitization projects for former U.S. Members of Congress Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leland who both have permanent archives at Texas Southern University.

I helped establish the Barbara Jordan Medallion to be awarded each year at a ceremony held at Texas Southern University to an individual who advocates for the community.

I also assisted with the establishment of several scholarship Endowments at Texas Southern University.

I created a partnership with Comcast at TSU's School of Communication, which offers scholarships, internships and in-kind marketing.

I established the Center for Transportation, Training and Research in TSU's College of Science, Engineering, and Technology.

On September 14, 1927, the Houston Public School Board agreed to fund the development of two junior colleges: one for whites and one for African-Americans.

On September 14, 1927, the Houston Public School Board provided $2,800 in seed capital to form a Junior College for African American students.

The initial enrollment for the first summer was 300 students.

On June 1, 1951, the name of the school was changed from Texas State University for Negroes to Texas Southern University after students petitioned the state legislature to remove the phrase ''for Negroes.''

When the university opened its doors in September 1947, it had 2,300 students, two schools, one division and one college—the Law School, the Pharmacy School, the Vocational Division, and the College of Arts and Sciences.

In 1973, the 63rd Legislature designated Texas Southern University as a ''special purpose'' institution for urban programming, which added four more academic units:

the College of Education,

the School of Public Affairs,

the School of Communications and

the Weekend College.

Today, Texas Southern University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs in the following academic colleges and schools:

the College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences;

the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences;

the College of Science and Technology;

the College of Education;

the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs; the School of Communication;

the Thurgood Marshall School of Law;

the Jesse H. Jones School of Business;

the Thomas Freeman Honors College; and

the College of Continuing Education and the Graduate School.

Currently, Texas Southern University is staffed by approximately 1,000 faculty members and support personnel.

HBCU's have come a long way to be where they are today.

The most significant milestone for HBCU's was the 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. The Board of Education.

Howard University School of Law graduates successfully argued against the constitutionality of ''separate but equal,'' opening the door for greater access to resources for institutions dedicated to education was a critical step forward.

However, it was not until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that the federal government had the capacity and focus to enforce desegregation.

Two years ago in our nation's Capital—Washington DC—we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Rev. Martin Luther King's ''I have a Dream'' speech given at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

In that speech Dr. King spoke of a world where race would mean much less than the content of a person's character.

Martin Luther King said, ''The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.''

HBCUs do not just educate—they build character.

The Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus will create and explore legislation that will increase support for HBCUs, such as the Higher Education Act, America COMPETES, and Appropriations.

The Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus will also work to connect HBCUs to funding opportunities that ensure schools have the resources needed to educate and prepare students for the global workforce.

My focus is to support and continue my work with Texas Southern University and other HBCUs by:

finding growth opportunities for HBCU students and graduates;

working with private industry to connect students to jobs, internships, and scholarships; and

opening up doors to HBCU students interested in coming to Capitol Hill.

Each Congressional Black Caucus member works to expose HBCU students to global experiences to learn about other cultures.

My office worked to assist students in my district in going on a trip to China—for many it was their first travel outside of the state of Texas.

That one experience transformed their lives—by expanding their horizon from being local to global.

JACOB FRESON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jacob Freson for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Jacob Freson is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jacob Freson is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jacob Freson for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING SOUTHWESTERN ENERGY UPON RECEIVING THE EMPLOYERS EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to help recognize Southwestern Energy (SWN) for receiving the Employers Excellence Award for Energy Efficiencies and Environmental Improvements from the Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association. This prestigious award is meant to honor businesses in northeastern Pennsylvania that have shown a commitment to providing energy-efficient solutions and environmental conservation. By continuing to harness domestic energy sources in the most efficient manner possible, while also preserving the environment for future generations to enjoy, SWN has provided my constituents with a superior quality of life that permeates all aspects of the community.

With over 80 years of experience in identifying and extracting domestic natural gas sources, SWN has helped lead the effort toward energy independence. This leadership and success continues to be dependent upon the dedication to their employees and to the communities in which they operate. Northeastern Pennsylvania has benefited tremendously from Southwestern Energy's commitment to environmentally conscious means of extracting our state's natural resources. I had the opportunity to meet with community leaders at the Tunkhannock, PA facility to witness firsthand the regional investment and economic impact of Southwestern Energy's projects in my district.

Launching their Energy Conserving Water (ECH2O) program in 2012, SWN pledged that for each gallon of fresh water used in their operations, they would replenish or offset an equivalent amount through conservation and innovation. In 2015, Southwestern Energy made significant progress toward their goal of achieving water neutrality in Pennsylvania. With the completion of the Fall Brook Acid Mine Drainage Treatment and Restoration Project, SWN has improved the water quality in the Susquehanna River throughout my district.

Mr. Speaker, Southwestern Energy's contributions to energy security and natural resource conservation in my district and state have been profound. Upon receiving the Employers Excellence Award for Energy Efficiencies and Environmental Improvements from the Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association, Southwestern Energy has affirmed their place among leaders in our communities. I look forward to witnessing the continued involvement of SWN in my district and state, and am confident that their contributions to my constituents will have a lasting impact.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 172 on S. 1890, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

IN HONOR OF 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. ILLUMINATOR ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CATHEDRAL

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of St. Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Cathedral located in the district I represent in Manhattan, New York. It was the first Armenian church established in New York City.

After fleeing to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century following the Hamidian Massacres and Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians of New York City did not have their own church to worship in together. They held religious services in various churches, most of which were located in the neighborhood of the current cathedral. Purchasing a church was initially proposed in 1913. A successful fundraising effort allowed construction to begin for what was then known as the central cathedral of the Armenian Apostolic Church in 1915. The Cathedral officially opened its doors in 1916, but parishioners celebrated the Cathedral's centennial throughout 2015 at the same time as the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey in 1915.

For over a century, St. Illuminator's Cathedral has played a significant role in advocating for Armenians in the U.S. and around the world. Many Genocide survivors found their refuge in the United States, entering the country through Ellis Island. St. Illuminator came to serve as shelter to many of them once they arrived. Today, there remains a vibrant congregation, inspiring their community through faith and service.

I extend my congratulations to the pastor, Rev. Fr. Mesrob Lakissian who has led the church for 10 years, the Board of Trustees, and all members and friends of St. Illuminator, and wish them many more years of success and service to the Armenian American community.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the anniversary of St. Illuminator's Cathedral and its contributions to the Armenian American residents of Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn as well as the larger Armenian American community in the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) upon the occasion of its 50th Anniversary. By offering regional planning advice, technical consulting, and financial assistance, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has worked to empower communities through long-term livability and vitality. TCRPC has exemplified an unwavering commitment to resolving regional issues facing my constituents in 103 municipalities of Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry counties.

Founded in 1966 as a forum for information sharing, consensus building, and coordination among communities in central Pennsylvania, TCRPC has worked tirelessly to advance quality of life issues across the region. They continue to promote the area's long-term sustainability through resource protection and the adaption of existing infrastructure to meet today's most pressing economic and social issues.

TCRPC's Regional Growth Management Plan stimulates community development and revitalization by supporting programs that integrate transportation, land use, and economic development efforts as well as environmental practices that protect air, land, and water resources. The Regional Growth Management Plan has contributed to lower energy costs for individual households, increased energy efficiencies, fostered greater availability of transportation options, opened more parks and community spaces, improved individual health, and heightened access to local food supplies.

Mr. Speaker, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has remained committed to the vision that central Pennsylvania is stronger when we work together. After five decades of committed service, Pennsylvanians in my district and beyond owe a debt of gratitude for the selfless work provided by TCRPC. I wish to congratulate TCRPC on 50 years of meaningful community engagement, and look forward to witnessing firsthand the continued service provided by such a strategic and charitable organization.

HONORING THE CAREER OF SISTER DENISE A. ROCHE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and legacy of service of Sister Denise A. Roche, GNSH, Ph.D. upon the occasion of her retirement as President of D'Youville College.

A Buffalo native, Sister Denise is a graduate of Holy Angels Academy and D'Youville College. She went on to earn a master's degree in sociology from Boston University and a doctorate at the University of Massachusetts. Prior to being named President of D'Youville in 1979, she served as an instructor, acting chair, teaching assistant, assistant professor and associate dean at the college.

Sister Denise was named 14th President of D'Youville when she was just 36 years old, the youngest person ever to serve in that position. During her remarkable tenure lasting over 36 years, she has overseen 400 full-time employees and managed a $50 million operating budget. Sister Denise led the college to triple its enrollment from 1153 in 1980 to more than 3100 in 2014, created major new academic offerings that attracted a significant number of new students, and achieved fiscal stability.

Under her leadership, the college endowment grew from $1.2 million to $34 million. During her presidency $77 million was invested in the campus including a new library, three academic centers, gymnasium, apartment-style residence hall, athletic fields, and property and parking additions. These investments have improved on-campus life and helped stabilize the dynamic and diverse neighborhood in Buffalo's West Side surrounding the college.

Her strong belief in helping and encouraging all students has seen a multitude of success stories as former students come back to thank her for her faith in them and motivating them to succeed. She has supported "City As School," an alternative program for non-traditional high school students at D'Youville for more than a decade, resulting in young people reaching higher academic achievements and leading more productive lives.

To our community, Sister Denise is much more than president of the college. She is a consummate community leader whose advice and counsel is sought on a wide range of issues affecting the city of Buffalo. Her thoughtful and caring demeanor has endeared her to all whose lives she has touched.

Sister Denise has received many awards and accolades for her work at D'Youville and throughout Western New York, including Citizen of the Year by The Buffalo News in 1994, the Chancellor Charles P. Norton Medal from the University at Buffalo, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the WNY Hispanics and Friends Civic Association, and a Special Award presented to her by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. She is a member of the WNY Women's Hall of Fame, and both Canisius College and Niagara University have awarded her honorary degrees.

While a very grateful community extends deep appreciation for Sister Denise's extraordinary leadership at D'Youville College, her work is far from over as she was recently nominated by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo to serve as chair of the Niagara Frontier Transit Authority (NFTA). In this role, she will be responsible for the oversight of Erie and Niagara Counties' public transportation system, including the bus and rail systems, the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport and the Niagara Falls International Airport. As Chairwoman, Sister Denise will bring her decades of experience and expertise to the NFTA to continue serving the public.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor the life and distinguished career of this outstanding educator, leader and devoted Sister of the Grey Nuns, Sister Denise A. Roche. I ask that my colleagues join me in expressing our congratulations on an exemplary career and to commend her for her admirable work to enrich D'Youville College and the Western New York community and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

COMMENDING CAPTAIN WILLIAM KENNETH EARMAN ON HIS OUTSTANDING MILITARY SERVICE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Captain William Kenneth Earman on his outstanding and exemplary military service.

In 1942, Mr. Earman joined the Army Air Force Cadet Program in the immediate aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Like many Americans of the Greatest Generation, Mr. Earman put his life on hold to defend our country against the evils that threatened our convictions, ideals, and existence.

Upon graduating from bombardier school in Big Spring, Texas, as a Second Lieutenant, Mr. Earman was assigned to the Seventh Air Force, which introduced him to the Pacific Theatre. Mr. Earman flew over forty missions in the Central Pacific in a B–24 J bomber named "The Sunsetter." He and his crew received numerous commendations and awards for their valor, including four Air Medals and two Distinguished Flying Crosses.

After his time in combat had concluded, Mr. Earman was promoted to First Lieutenant and returned to Big Spring to instruct incoming Army Air Force cadets, a reflection of his exemplary performance and expertise as a bombardier and navigator. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Earman was promoted and served as Flight Commander of the Ready Reserve Airmen in Rockdale, Texas, where he would eventually be promoted to Captain.

In June of 1961, Captain Earman received an Honorable Discharge from the United States Air Force after nearly twenty years of meritorious service. This would mark the end of Captain Earman's long and distinguished military career.

On May 6th and 7th, Captain Earman will be participating with other World War II veterans in the twenty-ninth Dallas/Fort Worth Honor Flight to our nation's capital, accompanied by his son, William Kenneth Earman, Jr.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to recognize the service Captain Earman has given to this nation. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to rise with me today in appreciation of Captain Earman's remarkable service and sacrifice.

RECOGNIZING MI WINDOWS AND DOORS, LLC UPON RECEIVING THE MANUFACTURERS EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to help recognize MI Windows and Doors, LLC

(MIWD) upon receiving the Manufacturers Excellence Award for Community Involvement from the Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association. This prestigious award is intended to highlight the charitable commitment of companies in northeastern Pennsylvania that exemplify the balance between private enterprise and public engagement.

Backed by exemplary customer service and product quality, MI Windows and Doors is one of the nation's largest suppliers of vinyl and aluminum windows and doors. MIWD should be proud of their outreach efforts, and by taking personal responsibility in the communities where they manufacture, it's only natural that such success would follow. Through their company-connected non-profit, The MIWD Charitable Foundation, MIWD has been committed to donating both time and funding to numerous local organizations, emergency response teams, and families in need.

Building personal connections with members of the community has consistently been a hallmark of MIWD's outreach efforts. This past fall, MIWD hosted a Friends and Family Day at their Gratz, PA facility in which members of the community were able to spend time within the facility to gain a better understanding of the daily operations and company as a whole. Their support for our nation's veterans has been unwavering as well. By providing in-kind donations of windows for the mortgage-free homes built by Homes for our Troops, MIWD has helped provide severely-wounded, post 9/11 veterans and their families with safe and reliable shelter.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to recognize MI Windows and Doors, LLC as the recipient of the Manufacturers Excellence Award for Community Involvement from the Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association. With such pronounced principles and a dedication to community development that permeates all aspects of life in northeastern Pennsylvania, MIWD has come to embody the rewards that come from compassionate investments. I wish MI Windows and Doors, LLC all the best in their future endeavors, and am confident that they will continue to exemplify the positive relationship between a business and its community.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF JOHN FOX SULLIVAN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Fox Sullivan, who is retiring after four decades as the publisher of the National Journal.

Most in this chamber knows John as the powerful media executive who transformed the National Journal into one of Washington's most respected periodicals. I've had the pleasure of knowing John as my childhood friend from Carmel, California.

The Sullivan family moved next door to my family in Carmel during the 1950s. Thanks to our mothers' shared interest in politics, our two families quickly became friends. Johnny, as we called him back then, and I attended school together—from Carmel Sunset School to Carmel High School. After graduating, he left to attend Yale University and Columbia Business School.

Following a five-year career at Newsweek, John joined the still relatively young National Journal in 1975, where he would go on to serve as Publisher, President and CEO. Under his leadership, the National Journal would change the face of Washington journalism.

Shortly after John joined the National Journal, I reconnected with him at the Democratic National Convention in New York City in 1976. I was attending as a delegate and John noticed my name on the press roster. When my old high school friend found me in the Madison Square Garden crowd, I just happened to be sitting next to Jane Fonda. We shared a good laugh when he thought Jane and I were there together.

After reconnecting at the convention, John and I managed to stay in touch. He and his wife, Beverly, would come and visit in Carmel. It was a joy to catch up on family news and to discuss politics. My father often joined those discussions and I believe he became the first subscriber of the National Journal on the West Coast.

When I first came to Washington, the Sullivans returned that hospitality. Anyone who has ever had the fortune of dining with John and Beverly walked away with fond memories. Dinner parties in their beautiful home are known to be filled with charming people engaged in the most interesting conversations.

History will remember the role their Georgetown rowhouse played in the leadership bid of the first woman to become Speaker of the House. John and Beverly always made their home available to anyone to discuss politics. One evening, I brought Representatives George Miller and NANCY PELOSI and a few members of Congress who had not yet agreed to support her leadership campaign. Thanks to that dinner, commitments were made that solidified her leadership bid that eventually led to her Speakership.

Being a respected leader in one Washington wasn't enough for John. After moving to ''Little'' Washington, John was elected mayor of the historic Virginia town in 2010. He easily won reelection in 2014 with 28 of the 29 votes cast. Who in this chamber can boast about receiving 97 percent of the votes cast? That's how much people like and respect John.

From our youth spent in Carmel to our friendship here in Washington, I have always admired the way John and Beverly celebrated the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting on the day of John Fox Sullivan's much deserved retirement that we get to celebrate his life and all the good that has come from his service.

HONORING THE CAREER OF JOAN EASTLUND

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joan Eastlund on her retirement from Black Hawk College in Moline, Illinois. For 37 years, Joan has demonstrated a strong commitment to education and activism, influencing the lives of thousands of students throughout her career. In fact, Joan has served as a mentor and inspiration to several staff members in my office.

Joan began her distinguished career at Black Hawk College in 1979, where she helped former manufacturing workers train for new careers. As a professor of Political Science, Joan introduced thousands of students to politics, inspiring many to pursue careers in the field themselves. To many students, Joan has been far more than just an educator, but also an incredible mentor and role model. She has shown her students the importance of fulfilling their civic duties, serving their communities, and working to advance causes that truly better our country.

In addition to her work as a professor, Joan has been an active figure in the fight for women's equality. She is a founding member of the Quad-Cities chapter of the National Organization for Women, a group dedicated to supporting women's rights all across the United States. During the 1970s and 1980s, Joan joined thousands of other activists as they marched to support landmark legislation to advance women's rights and equality.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Joan Eastlund for her commitment to inspiring the next generation of students and women in our region. Joan has undoubtedly made a difference in the lives of her students, and her retirement will be a significant loss to Black Hawk College.

I congratulate her on a well-earned retirement and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

COMMENDING JOSEPH SCIACCA

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staten Island resident Joseph Sciacca for his positive contributions to our community. Joseph was born in the Little Italy neighborhood and moved to Staten Island at the age of four. He grew up in Grant City and graduated from Tottenville High School in 1937. Joseph began a business career in his early adult years, but had to put this on hold when he was drafted into the military in 1941, serving until 1946. Joseph has been an outstanding model of success and humility in our community.

In the private sector, Joseph had a long career as a sales executive, but has remained involved with other causes throughout his life. In the mid-1960s, then-Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller named him a deputy commissioner of the State Athletic Commission, which issued regulations on boxing matches in New York. Later on, Joseph was named as a research assistant to the Speaker of the New York State Assembly.

Joseph has shown support for health care throughout his life. He is a former trustee of and currently on the advisory board for Bayley Seton Hospital. Additionally, Joseph has been co-chairperson of the Seton Society, the hospital's fund-raising arm. Joseph is also a trustee of St. Elizabeth Ann's Hospital Care and Rehabilitation Center and is an honorary member of the American Cancer Society's Staten Island Chapter, as well as the Staten Island Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The organization that has remained closest with him throughout the years is the Staten Island Council of the Boy Scouts of America, of which he is the former president and currently a member of its executive committee. His affiliation with the Boy Scouts dates back to his son's youth. His unrelenting passion for helping children on Staten Island has been inspiring, as Joseph is a man who stresses the greater good over the individual.

Mr. Speaker, Joseph Sciacca's dedication to selflessly helping others has been remarkable. I thank him for all of his hard work and I am proud to honor this great man who has been such a strong influence on the residents of Staten Island.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2503–S2600

Measures Introduced: Thirty-one bills and nine resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2869–2899, and S. Res. 447–455. **Pages S2556–57**

Measures Reported:

S. 434, to strengthen the accountability of individuals involved in misconduct affecting the integrity of background investigations, to update guidelines for security clearances, to prevent conflicts of interest relating to contractors providing background investigation fieldwork services and investigative support services. (S. Rept. No. 114–246)

S. 1620, to reduce duplication of information technology at the Department of Homeland Security. (S. Rept. No. 114–247)

S. Res. 340, expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Da'esh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble.

S. Res. 381, honoring the memory and legacy of Michael James Riddering and condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016.

S. Res. 394, recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

S. Res. 418, recognizing Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sanchez, and Akanksha Hazari for their selflessness and dedication to their respective causes.

S. Res. 436, supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day, and with an amended preamble.

S. Res. 442, condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels and honoring the memory of the United States citizens murdered in those attacks, and offering thoughts and prayers for all the victims, condolences to their families, resolve to support the Belgian people, and the pledge to defend democracy and stand in solidarity with the country of Belgium and all our allies in the face of continuing terrorist attacks on freedom and liberty.

S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 2824, to designate the Federal building housing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Headquarters located at 99 New York Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C., as the "Ariel Rios Federal Building".

S. 2845, to extend the termination of sanctions with respect to Venezuela under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014, with an amendment. **Pages S2554–55**

Measures Passed:

Afghanistan Accountability Act: Senate passed S. 1875, to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, the committee amendment was withdrawn, and after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S2573–76**

McConnell (for Menendez) Amendment No. 3885, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2576**

National Bison Legacy Act: Senate passed H.R. 2908, to adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States. **Page S2576**

Kids to Parks Day: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 435, designating May 21, 2016, as "Kids to Parks Day", and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S2576**

Recognizing the Contributions of U.S. Teachers: Senate agreed to S. Res. 448, recognizing the roles and contributions of the teachers of the United States in building and enhancing the civic, cultural, and economic well-being of the United States. **Pages S2576–77**

17th Annual National Charter Schools Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 449, congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and leaders of charter schools across the United States for making ongoing

contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 17th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 1 through May 7, 2016. **Pages S2576–77**

National Small Business Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 450, honoring May 1 through May 7, 2016, as "National Small Business Week" and celebrating the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States. **Pages S2576–77**

National Travel and Tourism Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 451, supporting the goals and ideals of National Travel and Tourism Week and honoring the valuable contributions of travel and tourism to the United States. **Pages S2576–77**

National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 452, recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. **Pages S2576–77**

Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans: Senate agreed to S. Res. 453, designating April 30, 2016, as "Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans". **Pages S2576–77**

Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response Program 30th Anniversary: Senate agreed to S. Res. 454, recognizing the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response program on its 30th anniversary. **Pages S2576–77**

Cinco de Mayo Holiday: Senate agreed to S. Res. 455, recognizing the cultural and historic significance of the Cinco de Mayo holiday. **Pages S2576–77**

Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act: Senate passed S. 2845, to extend the termination of sanctions with respect to Venezuela under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014, after agreeing to the committee amendment. **Page S2577**

Department of State Operations Authorization and Embassy Security Act, Fiscal Year 2016: Senate passed S. 1635, to authorize the Department of State for fiscal year 2016, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S2577–95**

McConnell (for Corker) Amendment No. 3886, to remove language relating to Iran hostages compensation, to provide that the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom shall have primary responsibility for religious freedom training, and to make other technical amendments. **Pages S2577–78**

Measures Considered:

Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S2514–29**

Pending:

Alexander/Feinstein Amendment No. 3801, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2514**

Alexander Amendment No. 3804 (to Amendment No. 3801), to modify provisions relating to Nuclear Regulatory Commission fees. **Page S2514**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on April 27, 2016, was agreed to. **Page S2526**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on April 27, 2016, was agreed to. **Page S2526**

By 52 yeas to 43 nays (Vote No. 65), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate upon reconsideration rejected the motion to close further debate on Alexander/Feinstein Amendment No. 3801 (listed above). **Pages S2526–27**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Alexander/Feinstein Amendment No. 3801, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, April 28, 2016, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, May 9, 2016. **Page S2527**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 4 p.m., on Monday, May 9, 2016, Senate resume consideration of the bill, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided between the two managers, or their designees; that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to Alexander/Feinstein Amendment No. 3801, occur at 5:30 p.m.; and that for the purpose of Rule XXII, the filing deadline for all first-degree amendments to Alexander/Feinstein Amendment No. 3801, be at 3:30 p.m., and the second-degree filing deadline occur under Rule XXII. **Page S2595**

Pro Forma Sessions—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that when Senate adjourns, it convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, May 2, 2016, at 2 p.m.; Thursday, May 5, 2016, at 11:30 a.m.; and that

when Senate adjourns on Thursday, May 5, 2016, it next convene at 3 p.m., on Monday, May 9, 2016. **Page S2595**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Roberta S. Jacobson, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the United Mexican States. **Page S2577**

13 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

24 Army nominations in the rank of general.

14 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. **Pages S2571–73**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Angela L. Kokosko Ripley, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers for a term of two years.

Leslie Greene Bowman, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022.

George Sanchez, of California, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022.

Gail H. Marcus, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2018.

Kent Yoshiho Hirozawa, of New York, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2021.

Patricia D. Barksdale, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Todd E. Edelman, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

William F. Jung, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Philip R. Lammens, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Florida.

Florence Y. Pan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Regina M. Rodriguez, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado.

Patricia Ann Timmons-Goodson, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

Anne Rachel Traum, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Kathleen Marie Marshall, of Nevada, to be a Member of the Election Assistance Commission for a term expiring December 12, 2019.

3 Army nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Army, Foreign Service, and Navy. **Pages S2596–S2600**

Messages from the House: **Pages S2553–54**

Measures Referred: **Page S2554**

Executive Communications: **Page S2554**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S2555–56**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2557–60**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2560–67**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2551–53**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S2567–71**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2571**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S2571**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—65) **Page S2526**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:42 p.m., until 2 p.m. on Monday, May 2, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2595.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

COUNTER-ISIL OPERATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine counter-ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) operations and Middle East strategy, after receiving testimony from Ash Carter, Secretary, and General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, both of the Department of Defense.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining concluded a hearing to examine the impacts of invasive species on the productivity, value, and management of land and water resources, to conduct oversight on the National Invasive Species Council's new framework for early detection and rapid response, and to examine improved cooperative tools for control and management, including S. 2240, to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, after receiving testimony from Glenn Casamassa, Associate Deputy Chief, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Mike Pool, Acting Deputy Director for Operations,

Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior; Doug Miyamoto, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Cheyenne; George Beck, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, on behalf of the Healthy Habitats Coalition; and Faith T. Campbell, Center for Invasive Species Prevention, Springfield, Virginia.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2848, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, with an amendment;

S. 2808, to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize appropriations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

S. 2824, to designate the Federal building housing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Headquarters located at 99 New York Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C., as the ''Ariel Rios Federal Building'';

Army Corps of Engineers Study Resolutions; and

General Services Administration resolutions.

MENTAL HEALTH IN AMERICA

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine mental health in America, after receiving testimony from Doug Thomas, Utah Department of Human Services Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Director, Salt Lake City; Brandon Marshall, PROJECT 375, Chicago, Illinois; Maggie Bennington-Davis, Health Share of Oregon, Tualatin; and Linda Rosenberg, National Council for Behavioral Health, Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original bill entitled, ''Department of State Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2017'';

H.R. 2494, to support global anti-poaching efforts, strengthen the capacity of partner countries to counter wildlife trafficking, designate major wildlife trafficking countries, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2845, to extend the termination of sanctions with respect to Venezuela under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014, with an amendment;

S. Res. 442, condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels and honoring the memory of the United States citizens murdered in those attacks, and offering thoughts and prayers for all the victims, condolences to their families, resolve to support the Belgian people, and the pledge to defend democracy and stand in solidarity with the country of Belgium and all our allies in the face of continuing terrorist attacks on freedom and liberty;

S. Res. 340, expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Da'esh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 418, recognizing Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sanchez, and Akanksha Hazari for their selflessness and dedication to their respective causes;

S. Res. 394, recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States;

S. Res. 436, supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day;

S. Res. 381, honoring the memory and legacy of Michael James Riddering and condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016; and

The nominations of Swati A. Dandekar, of Iowa, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador, R. David Harden, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and Christine Ann Elder, of Kentucky, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia, Kelly Keiderling-Franz, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Elizabeth Holzhall Richard, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic, Stephen Michael Schwartz, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia, Adam H. Sterling, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Slovak Republic, and routine lists in the Foreign Service, all of the Department of State.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Patrick A. Burke, to be United States Marshal for the District of Columbia.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 34 public bills, H.R. 5088–5121; and 3 resolutions, and H. Res. 709–711 were introduced. **Pages H2107–09**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2110–11**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Duncan (TN) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2069**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:28 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2072**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H2072, H2094**

Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term "Fiduciary": The House passed H.J. Res. 88, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term "Fiduciary", by a yea-and-nay vote of 234 yeas to 183 nays, Roll No. 176. **Pages H2081–93**

H. Res. 706, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4901) and the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 234 yeas to 183 nays, Roll No. 174, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 231 yeas to 182 nays, Roll No. 173. **Pages H2076–81**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:51 p.m. and reconvened at 3 p.m. **Page H2092**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures which were debated on Tuesday, April 26th:

Directing the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports: H.R. 5019, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 411 yeas to 6 nays, Roll No. 175; and **Page H2081**

Flood Insurance Market Parity and Modernization Act: H.R. 2901, amended, to amend the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to require that certain buildings and personal property be covered by flood insurance, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 419 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 177. **Pages H2093–94**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on pages H2075–76.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2080, H2080–81, H2081, H2092–93, H2093–94. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Committee Meetings

TO REVIEW THE IMPACT OF CAPITAL MARGIN REQUIREMENTS ON END-USERS

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit held a hearing entitled "To Review the Impact of Capital Margin Requirements on End-Users". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FOCUS ON THE FARM ECONOMY: FOOD PRICES AND THE CONSUMER

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Nutrition held a hearing entitled "Focus on the Farm Economy: Food Prices and the Consumer". Testimony was heard from Ephraim Leibtag, Assistant Administrator, Economic Research Service, Department of Agriculture; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 4909, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017". H.R. 4909 was ordered reported, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4843, the "Improving Safe Care for the Prevention of Infant Abuse and Neglect Act". H.R. 4843 was ordered reported, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee concluded a 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 of 2015''; H.R. 4981, the ''Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Expansion and Modernization Act''; H.R. 3250, the ''DXM Abuse Prevention Act of 2015''; H.R. 4969, the ''John Thomas Decker Act of 2016''; H.R. 4586, the ''Lali's Law''; H.R. 4599, the ''Reducing Unused Medications Act of 2016''; H.R. 4976, the ''Opioid Review Modernization Act of 2016''; H.R. 4982, the ''Examining Opioid Treatment Infrastructure Act of 2016''; H.R. 4889, the ''Kelsey Smith Act of 2016''; H.R. 4167, the ''Kari's Law Act of 2015''; 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 Act''; H.R. 2031, the ''Anti-Swatting Act of 2015''; H.R. 2589, to amend the Communications Act of 1943 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website changes to the rules of the Commission not later than 24 hours after adoption; H.R. 2592, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on the website of the Commission documents to be voted on by the Commission; H.R. 2593, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require identification and description on the website of the Federal Communications Commission of items to be decided on authority delegated by the Commission; and H.R. 5050, the ''Pipeline Safety Act of 2016''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 4889, H.R. 4167, H.R. 4111, H.R. 3998, H.R. 2031, H.R. 2589, H.R. 4586, H.R. 3680, and H.R. 3691. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 4190, H.R. 2592, and H.R. 2593.

AMERICA AS A PACIFIC POWER: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ASIA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''America as a Pacific Power: Challenges and Opportunities in Asia''. Testimony was heard from Antony J. Blinken, Deputy Secretary of State, Department of State.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD LEBANON

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Policy Toward Lebanon''. Testimony was heard from Gerald M. Feierstein, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State; and Andrew Exum, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Middle East Policy, Department of Defense.

TRANSFERRING GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEES TO THE HOMELAND: IMPLICATIONS FOR STATES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled ''Transferring Guantanamo Bay Detainees to the Homeland: Implications for States and Local Communities''. Testimony was heard from Nikki R. Haley, Governor, State of South Carolina; Todd Thompson, County Attorney, Attorney's Office, Leavenworth County, Kansas; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1887, to amend certain appropriation Acts to repeal the requirement directing the Administrator of General Services to sell Federal property and assets that support the operations of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in Plum Island, New York, and for other purposes; H.R. 4743, the ''National Cybersecurity Preparedness Consortium Act of 2016''; and H.R. 5056, the ''Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2016''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 1887 and H.R. 4743. H.R. 5056 was ordered reported, without amendment.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law held a hearing on H.R. 5063, the ''Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2016''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the False Claims Act''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on a discussion draft of the ''Locally-elected Officials Cooperating with Agencies in Land Management Act''. Testimony was heard from Leslie Weldon, Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service; Karen Mouritsen, Deputy Assistant Director, Energy, Minerals and Realty Management, Bureau of Land Management; Jerrie Tipton, Commission Chair, Mineral County, Nevada; Sherri Brennan, Supervisor, District 1, Tuolumne County, California; and Hans Dunshee, Councilmember, Snohomish County Council District 5, Washington.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT ALONG THE U.S. BORDER TO RURAL COMMUNITIES AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''The Consequences of Federal Land Management along the U.S. Border to Rural Communities and National Security''. Testimony was heard from Jon Andrew, Interagency Borderland Coordinator, Department of the Interior; LeAlan Pinkerton, Commissioner, Boundary County, Idaho; and public witnesses.

CRIMINAL ALIENS RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Criminal Aliens Released by the Department of Homeland Security''. Testimony was heard from Sarah R. Saldaña, Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security; Ralph Martin, Chief of Police, Santa Maria Police Department, Santa Maria, California; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING EPA'S PREDETERMINED EFFORTS TO BLOCK THE PEBBLE MINE, PART II

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Examining EPA's Predetermined Efforts to Block the Pebble Mine, Part II''. Testimony was heard from Dennis McLerran, Administrator, Region 10, Environmental Protection Agency.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 3209, the ''Recovering Missing Children Act''; H.R. 5053, the ''Preventing IRS Abuse and Protecting Free Speech Act''; and H.R. 3832, the ''Stolen Identify Refund Fraud Prevention Act of 2015''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 3209, H.R. 5053, and H.R. 3832.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing on H.R. 4979, the ''Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2016'' and the ''Nuclear Utilization of Keynote Energy Policies Act'', 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing entitled ''The Pet Medication Industry: Issues and Perspectives'', 9:45 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, markup on H.R. 353, the ''Veterans' Access to Hearing Health Act of 2015''; H.R. 3471, the ''Veterans Mobility Safety Act of 2015''; 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''; H.R. 4977, the ''VA Scheduling Accountability Act''; H.R. 2460, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans; and H.R. 3956, the ''VA Health Center Management Stability and Improvement Act'', 8:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 5077, the ''Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017'', 9 a.m., HVC–304. This markup will be closed.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

2 p.m., Monday, May 2

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, April 29

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 4901—The Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

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