



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

No. 139

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 14, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG COLLINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

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.

MEMORIALIZING CHELSEY JEAN HOOD RUSSELL

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize the tragic passing of Chelsey Jean Hood Russell of Denver, Colorado.

Throughout her life, Chelsey displayed extraordinary strength. She gave birth to her daughter 3 days before acing the Colorado bar exam. Her lifelong goal was to run a marathon in every State. Last summer, she ran a 100-mile race at elevations of over 9,200 feet near Leadville, Colorado.

Chelsey was a loving mother to her two children. Leading by example, she taught her children a love for outdoor adventures, a commitment to hard work, the importance of family and friendship, and a strong sense of passion, fearlessness, and a love of life.

Chelsey's life was cut short when she displayed the ultimate act of motherly love. At the end of a family vacation on Lake Powell in August, she suffered an acute cardiac event while rescuing her son from drowning.

Chelsey is survived by her mother, Trisha; her brother, Cayman; her children, Hayden and Harvey; and countless friends and family members who loved her dearly.

Mr. Speaker, Chelsey lived fully and died courageously. We can all learn from the passionate example she set in her 35 years.

OSCAR LOPEZ RIVERA

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, Oscar Lopez Rivera is the last Puerto Rican political prisoner still held in Federal custody, now for more than 35 years. He never killed anyone and wasn't charged with killing anyone, but he is still in jail.

The man who shot President Reagan, John Hinckley, Jr., is no longer being held. Other high-profile offenders get clemency and have their sentences reduced.

All of us have seen in the past months that the Obama administration commuted the sentences of hundreds of

nonviolent drug offenders. Most of us have applauded that decision, and Oscar Lopez Rivera is still in jail for 35 years—35 years.

No matter what party or faction or class or race or walk of life you are from in Puerto Rico or in the Puerto Rican communities all over the United States, you know about Oscar Lopez Rivera and what he symbolizes for the Puerto Rican people. He is our elder statesman, our Nelson Mandela, our pride, and our sense of nationhood.

We all cheered for Monica Puig at the Olympics and heard our national anthem played for the very first time. Yet there is a piece missing from our national identity, a piece missing from our souls because Oscar Lopez may be forgotten and may die in jail.

It is with deep sadness that I say that it is looking more and more like there is no meaningful review of his case going on at the Justice Department or at the White House or anywhere else.

I met with President Obama on June 8 in his office, and I took the opportunity to ask him about the case of Oscar Lopez Rivera. Lin-Manuel Miranda said that Oscar's case was on the President's desk when they met, and everyone in Puerto Rico relaxed. But the President told me: No, his case is not on my desk. You need to talk to McDonough, my Chief of Staff. I did that at 3 that afternoon. He said: I don't know anything about the case, but the Deputy Attorney General will meet with you and discuss the case.

I tried and tried and tried to get the information from her about where the case stood and how the process of clemency works under the Obama administration. Well, 10 weeks later—yes, 10 weeks later—I heard from the DOJ's assistant to the assistant's assistant in legislative affairs, and he said: I don't know anything about Oscar's case. He went on to say that Deputy Attorney General Yates will not meet with me or anyone else. The reason is they only

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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make contact with outside parties when they initiate it, when they are reaching out for more information on a candidate to make a decision. So they are not making a decision.

Basically, they said, don't call us, we will call you. But no one I know—no one—has received any kind of contact from the DOJ, which makes it pretty clear to me that they are not seriously reviewing the case.

To recap, the President said: It is not on my desk. The Chief of Staff said: I don't know anything about the case, talk to this person at DOJ; and that person, more than 2 months later, told someone to tell me that we will call you if we are seriously reviewing the case. And there has been nothing from the Obama administration.

That is why I continue to call on Puerto Ricans and people of good conscience to come on October 9 to Washington, D.C., as we join together to show our unity and resolve that Oscar Lopez Rivera should be set free to return to Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, I don't mean to be rude, but my message to Puerto Ricans about Oscar Lopez Rivera is so important, I will deliver the rest in Spanish with a translation provided to the House.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

I am sad to say that our optimism and confidence that President Obama would finally set Oscar Lopez Rivera free is in jeopardy.

Every indication I am getting from the President and his staff is that the review of Oscar's case is not progressing, so we need to make our voices perfectly clear and work together to send the strongest possible message to the President.

If you need to walk, take a bus, crawl, or swim to get to Washington on October 9, you should do so.

We will be gathering on Sunday, October 9, across the street from the White House in Lafayette Park with celebrities, leaders and Puerto Ricans of all kinds.

We cannot let our brother die in jail.

We cannot let our nation be ignored.

We must stand together as Puerto Ricans—no matter who we are, no matter where we were born, no matter where we live now—and tell the President of the United States and the government here in Washington that 35 years is enough. Enough.

We want our brother, Oscar Lopez Rivera, to walk amongst us and to touch his feet on the warm land of Puerto Rico again.

Show that you care and that you will not be silent. Join us on October 9.

Me da tristeza decir que el optimismo y la confianza que el Presidente Obama liberará a Oscar López Rivera está en grave peligro.

Cada vez que me he comunicado con el personal del Presidente me han indicado que la evaluación del caso de Oscar no está progresando; por eso tenemos que hacer nuestras voces

perfectamente claras y trabajar juntos para mandarle el mensaje más fuerte posible al Presidente.

Si tienen que caminar, tomar un autobús, gatear o nadar para llegar a Washington el 9 de octubre, háganlo.

Estaremos reunidos con celebridades, líderes, y Puertorriqueños de todo tipo el domingo, 9 de octubre al cruzar la calle de la Casa Blanca, en Lafayette Park.

No podemos dejar que nuestro hermano muera encarcelado.

No podemos dejar que nuestra patria sea ignorada.

Debemos seguir unidos como Puertorriqueños—sin importar quienes somos, donde nacimos y donde vivimos ahora—y decirle al Presidente de los Estados Unidos y al gobierno aquí en Washington que 35 años es suficiente. Ya basta.

Queremos que nuestro hermano, Oscar López Rivera, camine entre nosotros y que sus pies toquen la tierra cálida de Puerto Rico una vez más.

Demuestren que esto les importa, y que no se quedarán callados. Únete a nosotros el 9 de octubre.

FISCAL CLIFF IS LOOMING

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I heard Congressman Mo Brooks from Alabama give a very disturbing speech, but a speech that everyone should hear, and that is: America is headed toward Greece. Financially we are in a bad situation. We are \$19.4 trillion in debt.

In 2000 I was here when President Clinton was leaving office. We had a Republican House, a Republican Senate, and we were headed for a surplus. In fact, the debt in 2000 was \$5.6 trillion. Today that debt is \$19.4 trillion.

The poster I have with me, Mr. Speaker, I used all during August. It is a great political cartoon. It is kind of sad in a way, I guess. The cartoon is this: It has got Uncle Sam in a wheelchair, and Uncle Sam is saying, "I can see Greece from here," and the cliff has got written the words "fiscal cliff." And then who is pushing Uncle Sam but Mr. Obama, and he is saying, "Forward." And who is pushing Mr. Obama? The donkey, representing the Democrats? Who is pushing the donkey? The Republicans, the elephant. What it is saying is both parties are guilty of this debt that is going to strangle this country before very long.

Last week there was an article in Reuters News. The headline was: "U.S. Army Fudged Its Accounts by Trillions of Dollars, Auditor Finds." The auditor said that, in the year 2015, he found that the Army had misappropriated over \$6 trillion. I don't know where the outrage is anymore. I have no idea where it is. Six trillion dollars they cannot account for. And yet I hear very little about it from the Department of

the Army and very little from leadership in the House of Representatives.

In addition to that, I, for months, and maybe even years now, have been talking about the absolute waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan. It is one of the worst failed policies America has ever had. We are not changing anything.

You go back to Alexander the Great. Alexander the Great went to Afghanistan, or what was known as Afghanistan then. He was going to make it a different part of the world. It failed.

Then you had the British. Winston Churchill was a young reporter and was in Afghanistan in 1920. He wrote and said: What is this country? What is this land? It is impossible.

And then you had the Russians. The Russians went there, and they failed and they left. Now America is spending billions and billions of dollars, and it is failing.

There was an article about 3 months ago, and the title of the article was: "12 Ways Your Tax Dollars Were Squandered in Afghanistan." John Sopko is the inspector general for Afghan Reconstruction. What he said was:

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

That is John Sopko's group. They are known as SIGAR. Anyone can look it up on the Internet. They will just verify everything I am saying of just how much waste, fraud, and abuse, and how it is worse today than it was 15 years ago.

I do not understand how we in Congress can be complicit.

Well, what do you mean complicit?

Well, when we pass the bill to fund the Department of Defense, if we know a percentage of that money, billions of dollars, is going to Afghanistan waste, fraud, and abuse, aren't we being complicit? I think so. I started voting against the bills because I don't want to be part of that, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank Congressman Brooks for coming on this floor yesterday, as I have done many times, to warn not only Congress but the American people that we are going to have a collapse sooner rather than later if we don't change the way that we are spending money here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our men and women in uniform, thank the families of our men and women in uniform, and thank the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

PEOPLE ARE JUSTIFIABLY CONCERNED ABOUT ZIKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, after one of the longest congressional breaks

in history, House Republicans are trying to wrap things up and leave town, leaving critical work unfinished. Meanwhile, millions of Americans in New York, Florida, and throughout the United States are justifiably concerned about the dangers of the Zika virus.

Nowhere has this disease hit harder than in Puerto Rico, where Zika has become an epidemic. As of last week, more than 1,380 pregnant women in Puerto Rico have been diagnosed with Zika; and overall, there have been 16,000 laboratory cases of the virus found on the island.

□ 1015

It would be a tragic and heart-breaking mistake for this Congress to ignore the severity of this threat. Let us be clear: this is the first time we have identified a “mosquito-borne” form of birth defect. It is also the first new, major infectious cause of birth defects in five decades.

There are some things we do not know about the Zika virus. It is not clear what proportion of infants affected by the virus will suffer birth defects, but what we have seen so far is saddening, troubling, and horrifying. To look upon their helpless faces and do nothing is unconscionable. Yet, despite what we do not know, one thing is tragically clear: this House has failed to provide adequate resources to address this danger.

It has now been 7 months since President Obama’s administration requested adequate resources to help stem the threat of Zika, but House Republicans have taken zero—I repeat, zero—votes on adequate funding that will help tackle this problem.

Now, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is telling us they are running out of money to deal with this potential catastrophe. There are critical public health steps we need to take but cannot because the CDC is essentially out of money. Already, NIH is drawing resources from other priorities, like HIV and AIDS and cancer research, because this body has failed to act.

Sometimes my colleagues on the other side like to talk about how we must “protect the unborn.” Well, let me ask you this: When we fail to tackle a disease that causes unborn babies to develop birth defects that will haunt them the rest of their lives, how are we protecting the unborn?

These are innocent children—American children in Puerto Rico and on the mainland—who are suffering enormously because this Congress has not done its job. We are learning that this disease is sexually transmitted, making contraception a key part of any solution. But Republicans are raising objections to adequate funding for contraception.

Mr. Speaker, protecting the safety and health of the American people is a solemn obligation for every Member of Congress. It is a responsibility that we are currently not living up to.

I call on my colleagues to do the right thing. Do your job. Pass a supplemental funding bill so the CDC can get to work and help stop this terrible virus from spreading.

DOL OVERTIME RULE

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to represent the concerns of Kentucky’s Sixth Congressional District’s business, education, and nonprofit leaders who will be negatively impacted by the Department of Labor’s final rule on overtime pay. These new regulations will have a crippling effect on businesses’ ability to create jobs and even continue operations in our already tough economic climate.

Today I want to share some stories from my constituents, who are among the millions of Americans whose businesses and educational institutions and nonprofits will be significantly harmed by the Department of Labor’s final rule.

Darshana Patel, a first-generation American who emigrated to Kentucky from India, sat in my office with tears in her eyes, voicing concerns to me about the impact of the overtime rule on the three hotels that she worked hard to build and own.

As a result of the high cost of the rule, Mrs. Patel’s small business will be forced to demote a manager who has worked with her for 14 years to an hourly position on December 1. She also worries that she will have to let go some of her employees. She says she will be forced to take these drastic actions because, with this rule, she will have to come up with about \$25,000 per property—money that she did not budget for.

This hardworking, first-generation American entrepreneur was crying because she said she came to this country to achieve the American Dream, and the government of the United States is tearing that dream apart with overregulation.

According to the Asian American Hotel Owners Association, more than half of hotel managers in the United States start in entry level positions. The Department of Labor rule will reduce employment opportunities for these workers just starting off and significantly limit upward mobility.

The Department of Labor’s overtime rule will also negatively impact educational employment opportunities at our colleges and universities. The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, which includes the University of Kentucky, in my district, has stated that the overtime rule will likely place upward pressure on tuition and adversely impact outreach missions of universities. Because of the rule, students who are already facing significant barriers to accessing higher education will be further burdened by increased tuition.

Caroline Ruschell, the executive director of the Kentucky Association of Children’s Advocacy Centers, also reached out to me about the negative impact of the overtime rule on her organization’s critical work with child victims of sexual abuse.

To avoid penalties under the overtime rule, many clinics that provide vital exams and treatment to sexually abused children will be forced to reduce the hours of salaried workers, while supplementing those lost hours by overworking other employees. This will result in lower quality care and longer wait times for children to receive the critical treatment they need after facing such horrific trauma.

While the Department of Labor bureaucrats claim that the overtime rule will improve economic conditions for middle-class employees, this onerous regulation on businesses, educational institutions, and nonprofits will have the exact opposite effect by reducing job opportunities and limiting hours for many workers. Nonprofit and universities doing critical work in our communities will be forced to reduce the reach of their efforts by these burdensome regulations.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015, regulations cost us \$1.89 trillion in lost productivity and growth. At a time when job creation and small business growth are critical to our recovering economy, the Department of Labor’s final regulation will be detrimental for millions of hardworking Americans.

This regulation, like so many other regulations in the avalanche of red tape coming out of the Obama administration, hurts the very people that they claim that they are trying to protect and that they are trying to help.

Nearly 8 years after the Great Recession, Americans are stuck in the slowest and weakest economic recovery of their lifetimes, and the reason is simple: this administration is burying the American economy in red tape.

Enough is enough. Leave the American people alone and let them do their work.

VOTE ON GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on July 14, Republican leaders recessed the House for 7 weeks without taking a single vote on legislation to help keep Americans safe from gun violence.

Ignoring an issue that you don’t want to deal with doesn’t make it go away. House Republicans desperately need to learn that lesson. When Republican leaders in the House refuse to deal with gun violence, the American people pay the price.

During the 7 weeks that the House was in recess, 2,015 people were killed by someone using a gun. Thousands of families across our country have spent the last 7 weeks grieving.

While Republicans are putting their fingers in their ears and pretending that our country isn't in the grips of a gun violence epidemic, innocent people continue to die. What makes this inaction even harder to accept is the fact that, for over 3½ years, I have had bipartisan, pro-Second Amendment legislation that would help make these tragedies less common.

My bill would close a dangerous loophole in our background check system that allows criminals, domestic abusers, and the dangerously mentally ill to bypass a background check in 34 States when purchasing guns online, at a gun show, or through classified ads.

Background checks are our first line of defense when it comes to making sure that dangerous people don't purchase guns. We know that, when used, they work. Every day, background checks stop more than 170 felons, some 50 domestic abusers, and nearly 20 fugitives from buying a gun. But, sadly, this gaping hole allows those same felons, domestic abusers, and fugitives to easily bypass a background check when buying firearms.

H.R. 1217 has 187 bipartisan coauthors and 90 percent of the American people support strengthening and expanding our background check system.

Mr. Speaker, let us have a vote on this bill. Gun violence shouldn't be a partisan issue. When deranged gunmen open fire in a nightclub, movie theater, or school, they don't care if you are a Democrat or Republican. Together, we can build a country in which all Americans feel safe being who they are, having fun in a nightclub, going to school, seeing a movie, going to Bible study, an office party, or simply walking down the streets of their own neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker, let us do the work the American people sent us here to do. Let us vote on the legislation they want to see enacted. Let us vote to keep our fellow Americans safe.

Each day the Republican majority drags its feet and refuses to give us a vote on bipartisan, pro-Second Amendment bills to help keep guns out of dangerous hands, more innocent lives are lost.

Give us a vote. And give us a vote now, before you recess for another break.

CONSTITUTION WEEK

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

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, September 17–23 is Constitution Week, where we celebrate the document and principles that are the foundation of this great Nation. Constitution Day on the 17th marks the ratification of this great document.

The Constitution is the basis of our Nation. It is the reason we are here today. It lays out the fundamental principles and structures of our Nation

and our government. And the Bill of Rights makes clear the rights we enjoy as Americans and the fact that the Federal Government cannot infringe on these rights. Every decision I make as a Member of Congress is informed by the words written in the pages of this Constitution.

All over the world, our Constitution stands as a pillar of justice, freedom, and good governance. Other countries look to our Constitution for guidance as they write their own constitutions and establish their own democracies.

As we celebrate Constitution Week, I also want to recognize the great work of the Daughters of the American Revolution, including the chapters in my district, for their efforts to educate America about this document and its history.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our Founding Fathers in crafting this great document, a Constitution that has stood the test of time.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, during two townhall meetings recently, I had the opportunity to hear from our veterans about the care they are receiving from VA hospitals. They want, they need—no, they deserve—a VA healthcare system that works for them, one that gives them timely care, one that treats our veterans with respect and one that holds VA bureaucrats accountable.

I am proud to support H.R. 5620, a necessary step to getting the VA working again for our veterans. I will not stand for a system that rewards Washington bureaucrats for failing to do their job. There are a lot of good, caring people at the VA and their employees at our hospitals, and we need to make sure they have an environment and system where they can serve our veterans.

□ 1030

I stand with our veterans, and for the commonsense reforms to the problems that they are facing. I will continue to work to make sure the VA is held accountable; that veterans receive the best health care in the country—no, in the world—and that a broken system is fixed. Our veterans have sacrificed so much for us, and we must keep the promises we have made to them.

SILENCE EQUALS DEATH IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to demand a vote on commonsense gun safety legislation. It has been 26 years since our country has passed any meaningful gun safety legislation.

I have only been in the House for a little over 2½ years, and we have had 10 moments of silence to recognize victims of mass shootings during that time.

After Fort Hood in April of 2014, when 19 people were shot in a deadly rampage, Republican leaders brought us together for a moment of silence, but there was no discussion about honoring those lives with our action.

In May of 2014, the country came together after a massacre in Santa Barbara, and families looked to our Nation's leaders to see what they could do. What did they hear? More silence.

In June of 2015, nine parishioners were murdered by a hate-filled radical—who was able to get his gun because of a loophole—while they were at a Bible study at the Emanuel Church in South Carolina. While those lost inspired our country, the Members of Congress bowed their heads in silence and did nothing else.

Then there was Chattanooga, Roseburg, Colorado Springs, and San Bernardino. Dozens were murdered in senseless killing sprees. And while the country demanded a vote to finally do something about gun violence, this Congress responded with silence.

Three months ago, after the worst gun massacre in modern history took place at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, some of us had finally had enough. If our friends in the LGBT community have taught us anything, it is that silence equals death. And this is no time to be silent.

Our frustration, and the frustration of the American people, resulted in a sit-in that gave voice to the American families who are fed up with a Congress that is cowed into silence by the rich and powerful gun lobby.

Here we are, 3 months later, and House Republicans have spent more time thinking about how they can punish us for that sit-in than doing anything to address the gun violence devastating Americans.

In July, rather than allow debates and votes on keeping American children and families safe, Republican leaders adjourned this House. Since then, an additional 2,015 Americans were killed by guns. In Chicago alone, 3,000 people have been killed or injured by guns just this year.

This is a public health crisis, and this Republican Congress has returned to its routine silence instead of working to keep Americans safe. I am here to tell you, the American people will not forget and will not continue to stand for this silence and inaction.

Every single day, victims and survivors of gun violence come and tell their heart-wrenching stories to Members of Congress.

I have stood with Felicia Sanders as she gathered the courage to stand in front of our Nation's Capitol and tell the story that no mother should have to tell. At Emanuel Church in North Carolina, Felicia's son, Tywanza, ran toward the gunman while trying to shield others in his Bible study group. Tywanza was only 26 when Felicia said her final goodbye.

I have had the honor of thanking Catherine Bodine for coming and telling her story to the American people.

Her abuser, who had prior felony convictions, found a loophole, purchased a gun online with no background check, no waiting period, nothing. Catherine was shot three times trying to protect her 10-year-old daughter. Her daughter, Sami, the girl she called her best friend and her inspiration, died in her arms.

These mothers, and thousands more like them, get up every single morning and summon the bravery to be beacons for change this country is asking for. Although their lives are forever changed by violence, they take it upon themselves to fight for their communities, tell their stories, and make sure that no other family has to experience this horror.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is this: If everyday people, moms like Felicia and Catherine, can find the courage to fight for change, why is their courage met with the cowardice of silence?

Let's have a vote, have the debate to honor the lives that they have lost and that we have lost as a country, and let's end this stony, callous silence.

NATIONAL MANUFACTURING DAY

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

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize October 7 as National Manufacturing Day here in America. As the bipartisan co-chair of the House Manufacturing Caucus, with my good friend from Ohio, TIM RYAN, I think it is only right that we stand to recognize the efforts of U.S. manufacturing across our great country.

We care about U.S. manufacturing because it brings family-sustaining, good quality jobs to the 12.33 million workers that are employed in the United States in the manufacturing industry. That is 9 percent of our workforce, Mr. Speaker, and it contributes \$2.17 trillion to the U.S. economy on an annual basis.

In my district alone, in western New York, the 23rd Congressional District, Mr. Speaker, there are over 404 manufacturers who employ approximately 44,000 people. That is food on the table, Mr. Speaker. That is roofs over the heads of those workers and their families, and it provides an opportunity for those families and the generation that follows with an opportunity to succeed and advance in their life.

It is only right, Mr. Speaker, that we join together, on a bipartisan basis, to support U.S. manufacturing in America. That is why I partnered with my good friend on the other side, JOE KENNEDY, to author and finally get passed into law the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act that is the source of innovation in advanced manufacturing going forward.

That is also why I support an all-of-the-above energy plan. That is why we have also put forth a plan in writing to advance the energy effort here in America.

Also, on the Ways and Means Committee on which I serve, I am fully

committed to a better way when it comes to revising and reforming the American Tax Code. It is time for us to have a fair, simple, and competitive Tax Code for all Americans.

On the trade front, Mr. Speaker, I stand in unison with my colleagues on the other side who want to make sure that we have fair trade; that we have enforceable agreements where unfair practices by countries that violate the spirit, the rules, and the law of trade are held accountable. That is why we need to make sure that when we engage in these trade negotiations going forward that we have trade agreements that not only open our market but also, most importantly, open the market of the 95 percent of the world's consumers that live outside of America's borders.

We need to stand with U.S. manufacturers in those negotiations. We need to make sure that U.S. manufacturing interests are put at the foremost priority of the negotiation points.

There is a firm philosophy that I adhere to in our office when it comes to U.S. manufacturing. We have one of the greatest, if not the greatest—no, strike that, Mr. Speaker. We have the greatest workforce in the world. We have the brightest minds in the world in America, and we have the ability to make it here and sell it there.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing October 7 as U.S. Manufacturing Day. And if you are so inclined, join us in the U.S. Manufacturing Caucus, so you can be an active member participating in the debate to advance U.S. manufacturing interests so that we do, again, make it here to sell it across the world, and we put America's manufacturing interests first in all conversations that we have.

GUN VIOLENCE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, there is a public health emergency in our country. Are you thinking of Zika? Are you thinking of opioids? Yes, they are public health emergencies, but there is another ongoing, long-term public health emergency, and that is gun violence.

I thank the chair of our task force, Mr. THOMPSON; Mr. LARSON for organizing it; the great icon, JOHN LEWIS, for galvanizing all of the concern in the Congress around this issue; DAVID CICILLINE and, of course, our distinguished Member we just heard from, Congresswoman CLARK from Massachusetts, for their leadership.

ROBIN KELLY of Illinois has been a champion, and so has JUDY CHU. So many Members have taken the lead on this issue, as ELIZABETH ESTY did before she was even sworn in in Congress, addressing the concerns at Newtown.

Ninety-one people lose their life to gun violence every day. That is not a statistic, that is an outrage. It is a

challenge to the conscience of our Nation to end Congress' appalling inaction on gun violence prevention.

Across America, communities are standing up, speaking out, and lighting the way. A preventable public health crisis is taking the lives of our children, our neighbors, and our friends. You would think that when the lives of little children in school were taken that that would be the end of it, that would end the discussion, and that any common ground that we could find to expand the background checks, which is not a big thing really, in terms of just including Internet sales and gun shows—just expanding what we have, not a big legislative move but would make a tremendous difference in saving lives in our country.

This Congress must hear the voices of those calling for action to keep guns out of the wrong hands. And I want to just talk about some of the voices that I recently heard when I was in Florida a couple of weeks ago. I went to Orlando and visited Pulse, the nightclub where the gun violence there took place. It was gun violence, and it was a hate crime, which is a deadly combination.

When I met with the families and some of the survivors there to hear their concerns about hate crimes and gun violence, they said to me, really to a person, please do something to stop gun violence. As consumed as they were with the fact that this was a hate crime, the gun violence issue was what each one of them spoke about, that they had lost their loved ones.

These are young people out on a Saturday night. One mom who went there to take her son to see his friends and the rest and make sure he was safe, the mom died, and the son survived. Any mom would prefer that outcome, but why does that have to be the choice?

So here they are: if you are in kindergarten, if you are in the movie theater, or if you are in church praying, as was referenced by our colleagues about South Carolina—that was a hate crime, too. The awful statements made by the perpetrator of that crime where he exploited the hospitality that was extended to him to pray together, and then for him to make his hateful remarks, racist remarks, and then do violence on the people who had welcomed him to pray with them.

So where is it that people are safe? What can we do to make a difference?

Well, for one thing, if you are too dangerous to fly, you should be too dangerous to buy a gun. Eighty to 90 percent of the American people subscribe to that. That shouldn't be controversial in the Congress.

We are supposed to be Representatives representing the will of the people. And where there is consensus—we have enough disagreement, but where there is consensus, a public health emergency, and loss of life, even to little children, people in church, young people out on the town, people going to the movies, what is it that our colleagues don't understand?

□ 1045

What is it that our colleagues don't understand? In addition to keeping guns out of the hands of those who are too dangerous to fly, our Nation depends on keeping guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them, again, just simply expanding to gun shows and Internet sales. Yet House Republicans won't even give the American people a vote.

Give us a vote and see how it goes. What are you afraid of? Are you afraid? Are you afraid that the American people will be done and that we will have a successful vote on no fly, no buy, strengthening our background check system?

So we are going to be leaving soon. Before we left for the summer, under the leadership of our distinguished leader, whom we all consider a privilege to call colleague, JOHN LEWIS, there was a sit-in on the floor of this House that reverberated across the country. Then we left. Congress shut down and we left.

We are about to do so again, but we have a little time. We have a little time to save lives. What more important thing does any of us have to do than to stay here and pass a law to save lives? If somebody said to you: You could save 90 lives by passing a bill today, wouldn't you do that? Or, why wouldn't you do that? Why wouldn't you do that?

It is really quite a sad thing when people go to the movies—as my colleague, Mr. ISRAEL, keeps pointing out. When they go to the movies, usually they are concerned about are they going to be able to get their popcorn and their whatever in time to get a seat in the theater. Now they want to know where the nearest exit is when they go to the theater. What is that about?

Some people say it is about politics and it is just too politically dangerous for some of our colleagues to vote for the simple expansion of the background check legislation and passing no fly, no buy. It is politically dangerous to them. Whose political survival is more important than the lives of these children, of those people in church, and of those young people out on a Saturday night, people going to the movies? Whose political survival is more important than protecting the American people? That is the oath we take, to protect and defend, whether it is the Constitution, whether it is protecting our country's national security, our neighborhood security, or our personal security.

So let's honor our oath of office. Let us honor our sense of responsibility. Let us respond to those moms and family members and survivors from polls that said: Why? Why are you not passing legislation in the House of Representatives to prevent gun violence, to save lives—to save lives?

So, in any case, I think it is really important. I thank Mr. LARSON for, again, bringing us together. We are not

going away. This will go on and go on and go on until we disarm hate. We are here to save lives here and across the country. We are not going to stop until we enact gun violence prevention laws. We are not going to stop until we get the job done.

Again, I thank our leaders on this important issue. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership for years now on this subject. Again, hopefully, it won't be too long before our colleagues see the light and decide that their political survival is not more important than the survival of little children in first grade.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

HONORING SHELBY POLICE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICER TIM BRACKEEN

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver a speech to this body that no one wants to deliver. It is with a heavy heart that I speak today in honor of Tim Brackeen, an officer with the Shelby, North Carolina, Police Department, who was mortally wounded in the line of duty this past weekend.

Officer Brackeen was doing his job, keeping our community safe, when he was shot in the line of duty very early Saturday morning. He passed away from his injuries on Monday.

Officer Brackeen was only 38 years old. He leaves behind his wife, Mikel, and a 4-year-old daughter, Daphne.

Officer Brackeen was a law enforcement officer who loved his job and loved what he was doing. He had been with the Shelby Police Department since 2004 and, prior to that, was a detention officer with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office. For the past several years, he had worked as a K-9 officer with his partner, Ciko. He had a passion for his work and was well-known throughout the community. Officer Brackeen and his dog, Ciko, often did demonstrations to show how officers and their K-9 partners work together to keep us safe.

In 2012, Officer Brackeen's service and dedication to his duty was recognized as he was named the Shelby Police Officer of the Year. The city of Shelby is a truly special place, and so was this police officer.

It was Shelby Police Chief Jeff Ledford who summed up the officer best when he said: "Tim was a great person. If you want to know what Tim was like, just look around this town."

He is exactly right because, Mr. Speaker, Shelby is that very special place. It is a tight-knit community

that still exhibits what it really means to be a community. That was clear Monday night when hundreds and hundreds of people in this small town representing a variety of backgrounds packed the Court Square to pray for Officer Brackeen's family and his fellow officers. It is clear as you drive around Shelby and the rest of Cleveland County and see the black and blue ribbons and the messages of sympathy that adorn the windows of businesses and homes. It was clear yesterday as police officers, firefighters, and everyday citizens lined the streets and overpasses to pay respect to this fallen law enforcement officer as the procession traveled to the funeral home.

This is not the first time I have spoken on the House floor about the Shelby Police Department. In June of 2015, after the tragedy in Charleston, that horrific violence that occurred there, it was the Shelby Police Department that apprehended that vile shooter in that event. What we saw then was a community where faith leaders from every part of that region worked hand in hand with law enforcement to replace the divisions we see in other parts of the country with conversation and understanding that represents the best of what is in western North Carolina. I have no doubt Shelby will respond to this tragedy in similar fashion.

With the perpetrator of this heinous crime captured, our focus turns solely to paying tribute to Officer Brackeen and his life of service.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my condolences to Officer Brackeen's family and to the entire Shelby Police Department as they mourn this tragic loss. May we keep his family, fellow officers, and all our men and women in blue in our prayers.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today disappointed by the lack of leadership on display in this House. Gun violence is a terror in many of our communities, and we must stop it. In 2016, we have had more than 10,000 preventable gun deaths in America.

Consider this: this past Labor Day, the city I represent, Chicago, saw its 500th homicide of the year. We have seen 3,000 people, alone, shot in 2016—3,000 shot, 500 dead, and 90 murdered in August, alone, in one city.

Too often we write gun violence off as an urban condition. But the gun deaths we are facing are not only urban; it is everywhere and impacts us all:

Kids died in Newtown; people were murdered on live TV in Roanoke and massacred in Orlando. Gun violence has altered the lives of Speaker RYAN's constituents in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. It turned fatal for Nykea Aldridge, a mother of four young children in Chicago, who was just walking back from

registering her children for school. It turned family movie night into a horrific final act for 12 people in Aurora, Colorado. Gun violence turned a fun night out into a final terrifying moment for 49 people in Orlando and left indelible emotional wounds in the hearts of more than 50 others who suffered injury.

Mr. Speaker, what will you do before this year ends to prevent even more unnecessary and preventable gun violence? What are you and your caucus going to do to change the fact that American children are 4 times more likely to be killed by a gun than Canadian children, 7 times more likely than Israeli children, and 65 times more likely than British children?

There is no room for your deafening silence. There is no justification for your gavel to drown out the cries of families being terrorized by gun violence. It is said that “the blood brother of apathy is the inability to prioritize that which is important.”

Mr. Speaker, your apathy is America’s agony. Our constituents elected us to work together to solve our Nation’s biggest problems. If gun violence is not monumental, then what is? Right now, anyone can buy a gun online or at a gun show without a background check. Why does that make sense? We have a gaping hole in our system that must be closed.

Some States and municipalities already have strong, comprehensive background check laws, but many others do not, preventing laws from truly having their fullest impact. This is the case in Illinois.

I represent communities plagued by gun violence. Despite Chicago and Illinois having strong gun laws, our neighbors have very weak gun laws; so a criminal, a domestic abuser, a terrorist, or a person who is dangerously mentally unstable cannot get a gun in Illinois, but they can jump in their car, drive to a gun show in a bordering State like Wisconsin to buy a gun, and drive back to commit a horrible and preventable crime.

In a 4-year period from 2010 to 2014, 10,000 crime guns recovered in Illinois were from other States. Nearly 1,000 of the guns killing my fellow Illinois residents came from the Speaker’s home State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin’s lax gun laws are tied to 10 percent of Illinois crime guns.

This demonstrates what is all too obvious to 90 percent of the American public: it is the duty of Congress to pass comprehensive background checks to ensure that no matter where a dangerous person lives or travels, they cannot access a firearm.

If you are too dangerous to buy a gun in Illinois, you are too dangerous to buy a gun in Wisconsin. Forty percent of gun sales are online or at gun shows, where a background check is not required.

What if 4 out of every 10 people at an airport or right here in the Capitol didn’t have to go through security?

Would we enjoy the same level of safety as we do?

Requiring comprehensive background checks is a simple, logical measure. It is embarrassing that we are even having this discussion. This isn’t about taking away our constitutional right to bear arms. Law-abiding citizens who aren’t dangerous and can pass a background check will still have access to their firearms for hunting, self-defense, and for personal, legal use.

So, if you are not a danger to yourself or others, is undergoing a background check in order to maintain and buy a gun really that much of a big burden? Second Amendment rights, like all other Amendments guaranteed by our Constitution, have logical limits.

Keep guns out of the hands of the terrorists killing our children, off our playgrounds and streets, and away from people who are killing police officers like the one we just heard about. Once again, I ask: Who has to get shot, and just how many have to die before you do your job, Mr. Speaker?

MINNESOTA’S HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL RECIPIENT

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible work of Keith Kieffer, which has made him the deserving recipient of the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Keith began his service to this great Nation when he joined the Air Force in 1975. Three years after his enlistment, Keith received orders to go to Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands, where his mission was to clean up contamination from 43 atomic bombs that were dropped on that island.

During his time on the island, Keith cleaned up World War II wreckage as well as dug trenches, which exposed him to contaminated soil.

□ 1100

Upon his retirement from the Air Force in 1978, Keith earned the title of “Atomic Veteran.”

Keith is a true American hero. He selflessly put his own well-being on the line to protect future generations.

Congratulations on receiving the long, overdue Humanitarian Service Medal, Keith. Your service will never be forgotten.

REMEMBERING HAZEL YOUNGMAN

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Hazel Youngmann, a St. Cloud native who dedicated her life to helping the disabled.

Hazel worked tirelessly to reform our community in order to make it more accessible for those with disabilities. She did so through her work on the Whitney Senior Center Board, the St. Cloud Parks and Recreation Board, and the Stearns County Human Services

Advisory Committee, just to name a few.

Even though Hazel had her own limitations with mobility, hearing loss, and vision loss, she pushed through and attended countless meetings despite the physical toll it took on her.

Hazel’s unwavering optimism, determination, and passion for others is an inspiration and should serve as a model for the rest of us. Our thoughts and prayers are with Hazel and her loved ones during this difficult time. Be assured and comforted that her legacy will live on.

EVERSON’S HARDWARE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SUCCESS

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Everson’s Hardware in Waconia, Minnesota, for 50 years of business success.

Ron and Mary Ann Everson bought the store back in 1966, when they were just a young couple with two growing children. Throughout the years, Everson’s Hardware has become a well-respected and established part of the community, and the Everson family has realized their American Dream.

Eventually, Ron and Mary Ann passed the store along the way to Tracy and Deborah Everson, who continue to work behind the counter in this family store today. Small, family-operated businesses are what make Minnesota so great. They make our community special.

I want to thank the Everson family for their lasting contribution to Waconia. Congratulations and best of luck on the next 50 years.

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION DAY OF ACTION

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of all Americans whose lives and communities have been affected by gun violence, and to highlight the Gun Violence Prevention Day of Action.

After the tragic 2014 mass shooting in my Congressional District on the central coast of California, our community declared that not one more life should be lost to gun violence. Yet, today I stand before this Chamber with a heavy heart to mourn the many individuals who have been killed by a gun since that tragedy. And that number is staggering.

In fact, over 2,000 men, women, and children have lost their lives to gun violence since the start of the congressional recess in July. That is 2,000 people in just 60 days. Right here in our country. Our country is better than this.

House Republicans’ decision to dismiss the House for 7 weeks without so much as debating gun violence legislation is shameful. Going home to our districts without addressing life and death issues is not what the American people expect of us. They deserve better.

But here we are, back in D.C., with Democrats ready to work together to move commonsense gun safety measures. We just need a partner. We cannot ignore these problems because they are hard. We cannot stand by hoping the problem of gun violence will go away by itself. We cannot continue to shirk our duties as Representatives while those we represent are dying.

There are commonsense regulations for Congress to debate. The American people overwhelmingly support closing loopholes in the background check system for firearm sales. Democrats, Republicans, gun owners, even members of the NRA support background checks; but the Republican leadership will not debate expanded background checks.

The American people also support closing gun sale loopholes, which let dangerous individuals gain access to weapons without any review. Democratic and Republican lawmakers have introduced bills that would close gun sale loopholes, but the Republican leadership will not allow the House to debate closing these dangerous loopholes.

The American people support the no fly, no buy bill, which would prevent terror suspects—terror suspects on the FBI watch list—from purchasing weapons. This is the very least we can do. But, again, the Republican leadership will not bring up no fly, no buy for debate.

By not allowing these kinds of votes, or even these important debates, House leaders are failing the American people. We know that if we do nothing, if we don't even try, nothing will change. Our communities are hurting, and they demand action. It is time to answer that call.

Mr. Speaker, whether or not you support this legislation, the American people demand that you do your job and hold a vote on the commonsense gun legislation they overwhelmingly support. It is the least we can do.

105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, this Nation has many friends around the world, but almost no country has been a better friend to the United States than has been the Republic of China on Taiwan, or, as it is more commonly known, Taiwan.

I would like to recognize Taiwan in advance of the 105th anniversary of the founding of that great country. On October 10, the people of Taiwan will commemorate the founding of a nation which has much to be proud of in this year.

Over the past 50 years, Taiwan has undergone dramatic political, social, and economic changes, and is now the only democracy in the Chinese-speak-

ing world. This year, the people of Taiwan witnessed the third peaceful transition of power. This election was especially meaningful with the election of the first woman President, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen.

There are important common values and principles that fundamentally link the United States and Taiwan, including respect for human rights, freedom, and democracy. I commend President Tsai Ing-wen for refreshing Taiwan's commitment to renewing Taiwan's commitment to these values.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has become a trailblazer in the industrialized world with a vibrant and growing economy and a flourishing free people. Taiwan has surpassed India and Saudi Arabia to become the 10th largest trading partner of the United States. I cannot overemphasize how important this economic powerhouse and democratic ally is to the United States and to our trade relations.

While I have some very serious concerns regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, if the United States ends up finalizing this agreement, Taiwan should definitely be included.

In the early 1960s, my father was the mayor of Knoxville, and he met at that time a man named Nelson Nee. Mr. Nee was then head of the University of Tennessee's international students program, but he later became a very successful businessman in California importing products from Taiwan. The result of Mr. Nee and my father's efforts to bring students from Taiwan to UT has resulted in a very large UT alumni group in Taipei—an alumni group of several hundred. Also, we have a very large and active Taiwan group in Knoxville and east Tennessee.

I had the privilege of spending a week in Taiwan, along with Congressman PETE SESSIONS and former Congressman Sonny Callahan, about 15 years ago. At the end of that trip, I asked one of the officials to tell me how you say in Chinese, "Thank you for your friendship." I was told that you say, "Shieh shieh ni de yo yi."

I simply will end by saying to Taiwan once again, thank you for your friendship.

UNIVERSAL BACKGROUND CHECK AND NO FLY, NO BUY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to join our Nation's great civil rights leader, JOHN LEWIS, and so many of our outstanding colleagues that have spoken out on the issue of gun violence when we had our historic sit-in in the House in June.

Our request then and our request today are the same. I think it is really rather simple. We are asking to be allowed to vote on two commonsense bills to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people—a universal back-

ground check bill that will close loopholes and no fly, no buy legislation to prevent people who are on the FBI's terrorist watch list from buying guns. Imagine, the FBI has them on a watch list but they can still buy guns. Both proposals have overwhelming support of the American people and they have bipartisan support in Congress.

Background checks are supported by 9 out of 10 Americans, and they have been proven to be successful at keeping guns out of the wrong hands. Every day, background checks stop more than 170 felons, 50 domestic abusers, and 20 fugitives from buying guns. Where these loopholes have been closed in States, such as Connecticut, the numbers have dropped dramatically.

Today, under current law, up to 40 percent of gun sales are completed with no background checks whatsoever. In our great country, no background checks whatsoever. People can buy guns online the way you can go out and buy M&Ms. Meanwhile, the most common places where the American people go—to church, to school, to movie theaters—they are under siege.

This Congress, do you know what this Congress has done, for anyone who is listening in?

We have had 31 moments of silence.

Mr. Speaker, sympathy is not enough. In fact, it comes off as being hypocritical. As sincere as people have been when they bow their heads for less than a minute, it is not enough. We have an epidemic in our country, and we can do something about it. We have bipartisan legislation.

Now, meanwhile, bills have been brought to the floor without one cosponsor. But Mr. KING's and Mr. THOMPSON's legislation, H.R. 1217, has 186 cosponsors.

Now, why can't we vote on this? Why?

I think that there is a complicity with the NRA with all of these deaths around the country, the violence that has taken place, of innocent people—children, young people, adults—and then all of the aftermath of grieving. And the families that have lost someone, they have a mark on their soul. They will grieve the rest of their lives.

We are asking for a vote. If you don't agree with me, vote "no." But, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility, and I think a high moral responsibility, to address this. We are asking that these two bills be brought to the floor. Law enforcement supports these bills. The American people support these bills. Mr. Speaker, I think it is about time that these bills be brought to the floor. We can save American lives. Imagine that. By adopting these two bills, we can save American lives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY), someone who has been a leader on this issue.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, we need a vote. What will it take for this House, the people's House, to finally vote on commonsense, bipartisan legislation to save American lives?

Since the murder of 20 schoolchildren and 6 educators in one of my communities in Newtown, Connecticut, 3 years and 9 months ago, we have not had one single debate and not one vote.

□ 1115

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, we are here again today because the American people are demanding action; they are begging us to stop the killing. And I urge my Republican colleagues: Listen to your constituents. Do your job. Pursue commonsense gun violence legislation.

We need to vote on legislation that makes a real impact on the epidemic of gun violence in this country, and we need to vote now. The American people want us to do our job. They want bipartisan legislation, and we have a moral obligation to take action.

For each of us, it is personal. In every community, the effects of gun violence have left scars that will never heal. In my home State of Connecticut, we know how devastating this can be. After the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary, we lost 6 incredible caring adults, 20 beautiful children. We said, "Never again."

Since Sandy Hook, 39,000 or more people have been killed by a gun. There have been over 1,200 mass shootings in movie theaters, churches, nightclubs, and safe havens. We have held 31 moments of silence on the floor of the House in honor of these brothers, sisters, children, and babies; yet we have held zero votes on bipartisan gun violence prevention legislation.

Let's move to a real no fly, no buy bill, one that actually prevents potential terrorists from getting dangerous weapons. We need to address the issue of universal background checks. The gun lobby would have you believe that background checks are a wedge issue. It is a lie. Ninety two percent of gun owners support background checks and 72 percent of NRA members support background checks.

The victims' families do not get a break from their grief, so we will not take a break until we get a bill, a real bill with concrete, enforceable measures that will stop the killing. The American people deserve real, concrete gun legislation.

How many more people must suffer and die before we open our eyes?

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, you probably haven't heard of Tamia Sanders.

This young woman here was 14 years old. She was killed while sitting on her porch next to her mother on August 12 in Jacksonville. You probably didn't hear that Tamia was an honor student or that she had a beautiful smile. There were no moments of silence for Tamia on the House floor because she was just another little Black girl killed by street violence.

You probably haven't heard about Willow. She was 2 years old. She and her mother, her 8-year-old sister Liana, and 6-year-old brother Mark, Jr., were killed. Willow was just 2 years old when her father killed her along with the rest of the family on August 6 in Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania. And you probably haven't heard that Willow had survived a heart transplant when she was 6 days old and that her mother fought hard to make sure Willow had enough medication.

Willow didn't get a moment of silence on the House floor either because she was just another child killed by someone who was supposed to love her.

You definitely didn't hear about the two people found dead in the house in Mead Valley, California, on August 5. No one published their names or their ages or whether anyone noticed they were dead.

The same can be said for an unidentified woman killed on the street in Los Angeles on August 8, two unidentified men killed in a parking lot on August 13 in Milwaukee, and two unidentified women killed on the street on August 28 in St. Louis. They certainly didn't get a moment of silence on the House floor because they were just more anonymous victims of gun violence.

There have been 322 mass shootings this year, more shootings than there have been days in the year so far; 416 people gunned down; 1,161 people who have been injured. Yet we only tell their stories if the killing is particularly large, like the Pulse nightclub, or particularly terrifying and political, like the San Bernardino terrorist attacks.

Daily mass shootings have somehow become commonplace, their victims nameless and mourned only by those who knew them. But I say that this is a national tragedy, and we should all mourn.

We should grieve for Antonio Hinkle, who was 32 when he was killed at a cookout on August 27 in Brighton, Alabama. He died pushing children out of the way of gunfire, and he left behind three children of his own.

We should grieve for Isaiah Solomon, 15, and Tafari West, 22, who were killed when someone opened fire on a vigil for another dead teenager on August 27 in Miami, Florida.

We should grieve for Shannon Randall, 35; her boyfriend, Joseph Turner, 27; her brother, Robert Brown, 26; and their relatives Justin Reed, 23, and Chelsea Reed, 22, who were killed in their sleep by a friend's boyfriend on August 20 in Citronelle, Alabama. They were sheltering their friend who had

fled an abusive relationship. Chelsea was 5 months pregnant when she and the others were gunned down.

These are the people who don't make the national news: the girl walking to her neighborhood convenience store, the boy playing on the front lawn, the woman trying to leave an abusive relationship, the grandfather sitting on his porch. They were robbed of life because this Congress refuses to act.

Colleagues, we must honor them by speaking out. Now is the time for a vote. Let's lift the ban on research on gun violence. Let's expand background checks to all gun purchases. Let's close loopholes that let known and suspected terrorists buy guns. Let's commit resources to make smart guns that are less dangerous to children who find them.

A little girl was killed while sitting on her porch right next to her mother. Say her name, Tamia Sanders, and honor her memory with more than a moment of silence.

PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise yet again to speak out about mass shootings and gun violence in our Nation. When I think of Newtown, of Charleston, of Orlando, my heart just breaks.

Mr. Speaker, what would it take for Congress to act? How many more must suffer? How many more must die? How many more little children must die? How many more mothers and fathers will mourn the loss of a child?

Today, Mr. Speaker, I ask you to think of Taylor Hayden, the beautiful young woman celebrating a girls' weekend in Atlanta who was killed by gang crossfire. Please think of the young woman killed while driving home from work in southwest Atlanta. Think of the woman fighting for her life at this very moment in Grady Hospital in downtown Atlanta. Just last week, she was injured in a shooting that brought the interstate, I-85, to a stop.

Mr. Speaker, time and time again, we asked for compassion. Time and time again, we asked for action. Time and time again, we asked for leadership. Our people are sick and tired of a do-nothing Congress. They elected us to do our jobs. Instead, Mr. Speaker, we take a break.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans must join with Democrats and do what is right, what is just, what is fair, and what is long overdue. There are good, commonsense proposals that not only protect rights, but also will save lives. These bills should be passed. Bring them to the floor. Let us have a vote. Give us a vote. Time is of the essence. We cannot be silent, and we will not be silent. We cannot wait for another time, another place, another person. Mr. Speaker, the time is now for us to act.

Today I urge all of my colleagues to join us. Be brave. Be bold. Take a stand for what is good and necessary. Or if you prefer, please take a seat, roll up your sleeves, and let's go to work. The time for silence is over. It is time to move.

Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that the spirit of history is upon us. We have a mission. We have a moral obligation and a mandate to do what is right. History will not be kind to us if Congress continues to turn a blind eye and a cold shoulder to those crying, begging, and pleading for action.

I ask my colleagues, each and every one of you, to join me in the well. We must pass commonsense legislation to prevent gun violence and mass shootings in our country, and we must act now. History is demanding, the people are demanding that we act, and that we act now—not next week, next month, or next year, but now, before we leave and go home.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

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 11 o'clock and 27 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. DOLD) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Phillip L. Pointer, Sr., Saint Mark Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, offered the following prayer:

Great Eternal One, we thank You for these Representatives whom you have given the sacred trust of participating in governing this great Nation.

We ask for Your blessing as they begin this session, which will serve to improve the lives of the citizens of this country. Please give them Your wisdom, resolve, and compassion.

May Your Spirit guide every heart, mind, and word so that, by Your power, justice, peace, prosperity, and wholeness are experienced by all who are blessed to live in this land.

Help our Representatives to continue to fully embrace the enormity of this task and to carefully execute their duties with integrity.

Bless their families and loved ones who participate in the sacrifice of governing vicariously.

Encourage them and grant them Your joy during difficult and lonely times.

Let Your loving light emanate from this House today and every day for the sake of Your 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. KILDEE. 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. KILDEE. 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 gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ROTHFUS 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR.

PHILLIP L. POINTER, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome today's guest chaplain and my good friend, Reverend Phillip Pointer, or "Pastor P" as he is known throughout our community.

Realizing his love for preaching the ministry as a teen, Pastor P earned his Doctor of Ministry from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and his Master of Divinity with honors from The Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia.

Having devoted much of his life to the church, Pastor Pointer found his way to Saint Mark Baptist Church in my hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas, in 2012, after 10 years as pastor of St. John Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

As a loving husband and father, Pastor P understands the challenge in balancing his responsibility to the church and to his family. At Saint Mark Baptist Church, Pastor P highlights the importance of our youth, with the church, adopting the motto "You. Grow. Here." to advance a safe, loving environment for families and children.

Within 2 years of Pastor P's time as senior pastor of the church, a new youth center was built to give Saint Mark kids a safe environment to learn and play.

Pastor P is the proud husband of his wife, Keya, and he is the loving father of their three children, Gabie, P.J., and Elijah.

I want to thank Pastor Pointer for gracing us with a wonderful opening prayer, and I wish him, his family, and Saint Mark Baptist Church continued success in the Little Rock community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

VA REFORMS NECESSARY

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

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I heard from veterans in my district years ago—long before I was the majority leader—that they weren't getting the disability payments they deserved. They submitted their claims, but the VA was too backed up. The process was taking months, sometimes years. The appeals process quickly became a never-ending bureaucratic maze.

After a report from the GAO and countless legislative hearings and testimony, today we vote on reforms by Chairman MILLER to ease the backlog that has only gotten worse.

Reforms to the VA are necessary. You can ask any vet who has had to wait or any whistleblower frustrated with the VA's culture. The VA has a long laundry list of changes it must make, but there is a problem. Unless the VA holds that handful of employees accountable who turn a blind eye, show up to work intoxicated, or falsify wait times, the culture won't change.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask: What would you do if you found an employee drunk on the job? Or, what if an employee was caught high on cocaine or found selling heroin in his free time? I think the words, "you're fired," come to mind pretty quickly. But for reasons I cannot even begin to understand, this logic is suspended for government employees.

When you turn a blind eye to unacceptable behavior, that is more than a management issue. Bad employees can make mistakes that threaten people's very lives.

Today, the average time to dismiss somebody from the VA is more than a

year. That is unacceptable. That is why Chairman MILLER's bill is needed. We need to protect the VA and those who go to it—the veterans who need the service. That is why I ask all, when we bring the bill up, please support it.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on gun violence.

Two-thirds of gun deaths are suicides, but rarely part of the conversation. These deaths are not inevitable. Allowing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to research this, along with doing universal background checks, can and do save lives.

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. It is time for advocates to share stories of hope and to find solutions to self-harm. We must educate ourselves and our neighbors on signs and symptoms of depression to reduce suicide by gun.

Further work is needed. We must promote gun safety without stigmatizing those with mental illness. Congress must work to keep guns out of the hands of people who should not have them: domestic abusers and individuals with violent histories like assaults.

This is too important. We must act now. No longer can we tolerate it.

STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, in my district, industries ranging from manufacturing to renewable energy production to mineral production regularly tell me about the need for a trained and qualified workforce. When I visit with students and families across my district, I hear about how eager workers are for these advanced opportunities.

Over the past 2 years, I have visited many of the BOCES, CV-TEC, and P-Tech programs throughout my district and know how critical the training they provide is to preparing our students to compete in a 21st century economy.

This is why I was proud to work with my colleagues on the Education and the Workforce Committee to pass the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. This bipartisan bill will help equip students with the skills and experience they need to find jobs that will lead to long, fruitful careers by encouraging more local control and flexibility.

I am pleased that the House overwhelmingly passed this important legislation, and I urge the Senate to pass it and send it to the President's desk.

VOTE ON GUN LEGISLATION

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

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve and the American people demand a vote on commonsense, bipartisan gun safety legislation.

During the 7 weeks that Congress was in recess, thousands of Americans were killed by guns. Each one of those Americans was precious. They had family, loved ones, coworkers, and neighbors. In the 3 years and 9 months since 26 people were killed in my district—20 first-graders, six teachers and educators—we have had not one debate, not one vote on this legislation.

The time has come. The time is now. We demand a vote.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act, of which I am a cosponsor.

We owe our brave veterans a debt we can never repay. As a small token of our gratitude, we have the privilege of providing veterans with appropriate care and benefits. Too often, the care provided at the VA expresses the opposite of gratitude and does not demonstrate the privilege of serving veterans.

This legislation promotes accountability by allowing incompetent VA employees to be fired for poor performance or misconduct. This legislation will also help the thousands of veterans stuck in the appeals quagmire by providing veterans more options in the appeals process.

Restoring accountability and transparency at the VA should not be a political issue. I urge all my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 5620.

GUN ACTION THREAT OF CENSURE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 3 months since I joined JOHN LEWIS and my Democratic colleagues right here for a sit-in on the House floor to demand a vote on commonsense gun violence legislation.

Instead of letting us vote, instead of confronting this issue, Speaker RYAN and my Republican colleagues left town. Now we are back in session, there is still no talk about holding a vote, but there is a lot of talk coming from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle about punishing us for protesting on the House floor.

I hope they do. But I am not going to apologize for what I did. I am proud

that I did something to try to save lives.

I think they should apologize to the American people because they have not allowed us to vote on commonsense gun violence legislation. I think they should apologize, but they continue to do the bidding of the gun lobby. And I think they should apologize that, during our 7-week recess, 2,015 Americans were shot and killed.

My Democratic colleagues and I took action. They continue to sit on their hands.

□ 1215

LITTLE KIM WANTS WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES

(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, "This is not directed at Japan. The nuclear development is toward the United States," said an adviser to North Korean dictator Kim Jung Un.

Frankly, Little Kim makes his father look normal. His saber-rattling regime has once again attempted to fire intercontinental ballistic missiles. Meanwhile, the administration is naively pursuing a strategy they call "strategic patience." In layman's language, that means "doing nothing."

This hopeless appeasement policy has not worked. The North Korean plan is to launch nuclear missiles from submarines at the United States. Isn't that lovely?

The rogue state's belligerency has put the entire region at grave risk of aggression, nuclear proliferation, and war.

Historically, North Korea, like Iran, was a state sponsor of terrorism. Eight years ago, the United States withdrew the designation when North Korea lied and promised to halt its nuclear program. But North Korea continues to develop nukes.

Strategic patience is a blissfully ignorant failed foreign policy. North Korea must have consequences for its aggressive and belligerent actions. Time to put Junior Kim's regime back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list, because he is a terror to world peace.

And that is just the way it is.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss gun violence facing our citizens and police.

Law enforcement officers and first responders across the country are faced with difficult and often unpredictable situations on a daily basis that require careful response to ensure public safety. That is why I introduced H.R. 5864.

This bill aims to provide officer and law enforcement personnel with appropriate intervention tools and techniques to address interactions involving individuals with mental illness experiencing a crisis.

H.R. 5864 calls for specialized training that provides officers with the tools to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness, including stabilization and deescalation techniques; partnerships community resources; and provides funding to create State databases for public safety and outreach.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5864 to provide our police with additional resources benefiting our communities.

THE EPIDEMIC OF DRUG USE

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

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the need for us to work together to fight the epidemic of meth and other dangerous drugs. Meth affects all of our communities.

In Montana, the criminal justice and foster care systems are being pushed to their absolute limits. In Missoula County this year, 72 cases of meth. At the same time in 2007, there were zero. And the meth seizures are up 38 percent.

So what can we do? We need to stop the drug from making its way to communities, and we need to secure our southern border. The FBI, DEA, Border Patrol, and local law enforcement officials all say the same thing. Mexico is where the preponderance of the drugs are coming from. We know how to stop it and we can shut it down, and we can secure our southern border.

We also need to empower our health providers to provide addicts and users a path for recovery. All too often, those who suffer drug addiction also battle with mental health issues, and, sadly, it drives many to take their own lives.

I was at a powwow with the Assiniboine-Sioux, the great nation, and a gentleman told me a term for it, "oh-nee-op-ee," which means complete loss of hope. I haven't lost hope. I believe this House and this Nation are up to the task.

TRIBAL PIPELINE

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, recently, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe watched in anger as an oil pipeline project near their homes moved forward. Sadly, the tribe's concerns about the impact on their drinking water and on sacred lands was not properly taken into account, so the tribal members raised their voices, and they weren't alone.

In an unprecedented demonstration of support, thousands of Americans, tribal members from all over, including

many from my region, journeyed to North Dakota to stand in solidarity and peaceful protest with the Standing Rock Sioux.

The call to respect their rights was heard. Thanks to the Obama administration, construction in the disputed area has been halted so that there can be further review, and that is a victory.

But there is more work to do. I joined many of my colleagues to call on the Government Accountability Office to thoroughly inspect Federal policies that protect the health and environmental security of American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

We have a sacred trust and treaty obligations to our tribal neighbors that cannot be broken. Their sovereignty must be respected, not just on this project, but whenever the Federal Government is acting in a way that impacts them.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is being ravaged by skyrocketing levels of prescription opioid and heroin abuse, and our veterans have been particularly hard hit. Today, 68,000 veterans are struggling with opioid abuse disorder.

Veterans suffer higher rates of opioid abuse than their civilian counterparts, and the number of opioid abuse disorders among veterans has increased 55 percent over the past 5 years.

This is why I joined my colleague from across the aisle, BILL KEATING, in introducing H.R. 5057, the Safe Prescribing for Veterans Act. This bill encourages increased safety in opioid prescribing practices by ensuring that healthcare professionals within the VA who are authorized to prescribe controlled substances complete at least one continuing medical education course in pain management every 2 years.

Last night, Mr. KEATING and I offered this proposal as an amendment to H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act, and it passed with strong bipartisan support. This amendment has the potential to save thousands of lives by increasing opioid abuse awareness among the nearly 55,000 VA health professionals working across the country.

I commend my colleagues for supporting our efforts.

THE NUMBERS ARE VERY GOOD

(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, yesterday's annual report by the Census Bureau brought some very good news to the American people.

Last year, for the first time in nearly two decades, three key economic indicators all moved in the right direction: median household income is up a staggering 5.2 percent, which translates into over \$2,800 a year for the typical American family; the poverty rate went down by the largest amount, or largest 1-year drop, in recorded history; and the number of Americans without health insurance has now dropped to a historic low. Add to all of that an unemployment rate at 4.9 percent, and we have witnessed the largest and longest streak of job growth in history.

These numbers show, even as we face serious challenges, our progress is real, our recovery is sound, and our reasons to hope are many.

IRAN MONEY FOR HOSTAGES

(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, Iran is the single biggest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, but that didn't stop the Obama administration from providing \$1.7 billion in cash, we finally found out, to the Iranian Government. This money, along with the \$150 billion already in sanctions relief that Iran previously received, will likely be used to finance acts of terrorism directed at our interests and our allies.

Many Americans at home are probably wondering why their government provided such a large cash payment to a country that sponsors terrorism, especially in the dark of night on a big pallet. The Obama administration says these payments were connected to an Iranian purchase of American airplane parts back in the 1970s.

Of all the disastrous foreign policy blunders this administration has made, this is the hardest one to understand. Paying \$1.7 billion in cash to one of our adversaries is outrageous, and the fact that these payments were used as leverage in order to secure American hostages raises serious questions about the administration and the State Department's judgment.

Iran refuses to act like a responsible nation that respects international norms and rules. Our government should treat them accordingly. That is why I am proud to sponsor Chairman ED ROYCE's bill, H.R. 5931, which will prohibit all cash payments to Iran.

HONORING THE HEROIC ACTIONS OF ROB MCCANN

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

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a moment about Rob McCann.

Rob came to our office in Maine a year ago as a fellow with the House Wounded Warrior Program. Just as he

served our country in countless combat missions in Afghanistan, Rob is now serving Maine veterans as a congressional staffer.

Last week, Rob represented our office at the retirement ceremony of an employee at Togus, our VA Hospital in Maine. The retiree's 92-year-old father, a World War II veteran, was there to participate in the ceremony. But moments before it ended, as they walked to a barbecue nearby, he collapsed from a heart attack.

Rob leapt into action and put his Marine Corps training to work. With the help of a few other bystanders, he began administering CPR, which they continued until medical professionals from the hospital arrived.

Thanks to Rob and the VA employees who jumped in to help, a World War II vet is alive and well and walking around today.

I couldn't be more proud of the work that Rob does in our office every day, and I am especially proud of his quick response to save the life of a fellow veteran last week.

NORTH SHORE SENIOR CENTER CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

(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 celebrate the North Shore Senior Center's 60th anniversary. Since 1956, they have been a vital part of our community. I am proud to have one of the largest senior centers in the entire Nation in our community.

We have seen their impact firsthand on thousands of our residents. Our seniors benefit from the many services and activities they offer, providing help for all who need it, regardless of social, physical, or economic hardships.

Mr. Speaker, the organization has won countless awards throughout their 60 years of service, and I would like to acknowledge them once again.

I offer my most sincere congratulations to the executive director, Jordan Luhr, and president emeritus, Joan Golder, and everyone else who has helped make this center grow over the years.

Moving forward, I remain committed to working with the leadership at the North Shore Senior Center to continue their strong legacy of providing a positive and healthy community for seniors in the 10th Congressional District.

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of respect for all those across the country who have lost a loved one due to suicide.

September is Suicide Prevention Month, time to raise awareness of a mental illness that far too many of our

veterans and their families find great difficulty discussing.

We have all heard the numbers: an estimated 20 veterans commit suicide every day, nearly one life every hour. Those horrific numbers have names, the names of men and women who put themselves in harm's way to keep each other and every one of us safe.

Last year, we passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act. It addresses the need for more mental health care experts inside the VA, evaluates what is working and what is not, and gives veterans more time to get the mental health care they need.

In Nebraska, we are working with the VA to create centers of excellence, a national model for veterans care that will include top-flight mental health treatment, including for post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety.

The debt we owe our veterans is a debt that can never be repaid, but we must keep our promises to our veterans and support their unique healthcare issues.

CONGRATULATING SOUTHWEST INDIANA CHAMBER

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Southwest Indiana Chamber on an outstanding and well-deserved national recognition. In August, the Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce was named the National Chamber of the Year at a gathering of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

This national designation is a testament to the indelible impact the men and women at the Southwest Indiana Chamber have made in the community to improve education, transportation, economic development, and the quality of life of our fellow citizens.

Southern Indiana has a reputation as a great place to live, work, and raise a family, and people around the country are taking notice, thanks in part, to the hard work and dedication of this organization.

So congratulations to the entire staff, board, and members of the Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce on this outstanding and much-deserved recognition.

□ 1230

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, in just 7 weeks, as Members were in their districts this summer, at least 2,015 lives were lost to gun violence—2,015 men, women, and children. Add a few more weeks to that total and you have al-

most as many people as were murdered in the deadliest terrorist attack in the United States when two planes flew into the World Trade Center. That is the equivalent of 41 Orlando terror attacks in 7 weeks. This is appalling, and yet these killings are barely discussed, as if they are simply the new normal.

In a town hall I hosted last month, I talked with constituents about gun safety and how we could attack the scourge of gun-related deaths in this country. The message from that meeting was clear: we need universal background checks. We need the ability to prevent terrorists and the seriously mentally ill from getting easy access to deadly weapons. If you can't fly, you can't buy. These are steps that the vast majority of constituents, gun owners, and Americans all across the country agree are necessary.

In refusing to pass the most basic legislation, the Congress is complicit in this continued slaughter. The Speaker must do his job and let us vote so that we can do ours.

LEE MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Lee Memorial Hospital recognized 100 years ago that Lee County needed a quality healthcare provider, so it opened its doors at that time to a 15-bed hospital back on October 3, 1916. That small hospital has now grown into a world-class premier healthcare system in southwest Florida providing top quality care throughout the area.

Lee Memorial today has a team of over 15,000 highly qualified and skilled staff members and volunteers making it one of our largest organizations in southwest Florida.

I want to thank the Lee Memorial team, and particularly those who took care of my mom during her final days. When loved ones are sick, what we really want is for those that take care of them to show love. For that, I express appreciation to the Lee Memorial folks. Numerous times Lee Memorial has been recognized with national and State awards for outstanding performance.

My constituents and I are blessed and grateful for the staff members, physicians, and volunteers who work at Lee Memorial. I am certain that they will continue to provide top quality care for 100 more years and beyond.

On another personal note, I want to express my big thank-you to Jim Nathan, president of the system, for his leadership and for his selfless service to our community for so long.

Jim, I don't know what we would do without you.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Lee Memorial Health System for its commitment to southwest Florida as it celebrates 100 years.

RECOGNIZING CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY—FRESNO

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my alma mater, California State University at Fresno.

Fresno State recently was ranked number 25 this year on Washington Monthly's Top 30 Universities listed in America and yesterday earned the number one spot for graduation rate performance from U.S. News & World Report. This is indeed good news.

To use President Joseph Castro's words, the school secured places on these lists by "being bold." From conducting drought research to encouraging community service, offering Ph.D.'s, they have done an outstanding job of integrating campus life and student research to benefit the people of our valley, our State, and our Nation.

Additionally, nearly 70 percent of Fresno State's 25,000 students are the first in their family to attend a 4-year university.

President Castro and his staff have made it their mission to ensure that all valley students in the San Joaquin Valley of California have access to high quality, affordable university education.

As a proud Bulldog, it is an honor to congratulate Fresno State on these very well-deserved national recognitions. I thank the student body and the faculty for being bold and making a difference in our community, State, and Nation. As the red wave likes to chant: Go dogs.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S OVERTIME RULE

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, recently, President Obama's activist Department of Labor released its final rulemaking to revise overtime regulations. This rule doubles the overtime salary threshold to just over \$47,000 virtually overnight when it goes into effect on December 1.

Many Americans will soon realize they have fewer job prospects, less flexibility in the workplace, and less opportunity to move up the economic ladder. Those who least can afford it will be hit the hardest—small businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions.

Augusta University, the second largest employer in my district, is just one example of the many organizations that is affected by this ill-advised rule. The school just announced it will have to switch about 800 employees from salary to hourly wages to comply with this new mandate resulting in a partial paycheck for them during this transition.

A university administrator stated that keeping the employees salaried is not an option and, while tearing up, said this move will be tough for the employees and their families. Even one employee went so far as to say: It is going to kill us.

We need to get the government out of the way to let Americans do what they do best—innovate, flourish, and create jobs for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING CHESSY PROUT

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

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Chessy Prout, a courageous young woman who has shown tremendous bravery and resolve in the wake of a tragic and disturbing act that no one should ever have to face.

Chessy was sexually assaulted by an upperclassman at her boarding school when she was just 15 years old. Just last month, after lengthy and traumatic legal proceedings, Chessy came forward on national television to reclaim her identity and take back what was stolen from her. Chessy's willingness to publicly share her story will let other survivors know that they, too, can come out of the shadows and that they are not alone.

Speaking out against this painful ordeal Chessy went through took a huge amount of strength and courage. Like so many people, I am inspired by her actions, and I hope that they empower other survivors to come forward.

Sadly, Chessy's ordeal is not unique. One out of every six American women have been victims of sexual assault. While our country has made progress on this issue, survivors of sexual assault continue to face far too many obstacles in their pursuit of justice.

That is why I have cosponsored the Survivors' Bill of Rights Act, legislation that would codify important basic rights for sexual assault survivors. The House and Senate have passed this bill, and I urge the President to sign it into law.

Thanks to the courage of people like Chessy Prout, we have taken important steps to change the culture around sexual assault, and I know that together we can build on our progress.

HONORING INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROXCY BOLTON

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Roxcy Bolton, a true pioneer who, at the age of 90, is hailed as a champion of women's rights, as well she should be. It is because of Roxcy's efforts that our Nation gathers each year to celebrate Women's Equality Day.

As a brave and outspoken woman, Roxcy made waves on many issues, in-

cluding the creation of the first rape treatment center in the country located at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami. This was at a time when people didn't even want to talk about rape. Roxcy also organized Florida's first crime watch to help curb crime against women.

Roxcy was in the front lines fighting on behalf of abused women and created the first women's rescue shelter in our State to provide services to women in crisis.

It was because of Roxcy's leadership that residents and visitors in south Florida can learn about the many contributions of women through the creation of The Women's Park of Miami-Dade County, which was correctly renamed after Roxcy Bolton.

Roxcy's vision will live on forever. She is an honored constituent, a voice of hope for all women, and I am proud to call her a friend.

GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, a sit-in on the House floor should not be necessary to get a vote on gun safety legislation overwhelmingly supported by the American people. That is what I had to do as a kid in the civil rights movement.

Why would I be driven and why would Democrats have to be driven to do that in this House?

Closing the loophole after Charleston and Orlando has become a virtual mandate. Orlando probably accounted for my success in keeping dangerous bills from coming to the floor this session to erase three D.C. gun laws that protect residents, Federal officials, and 20 million visitors alike.

Congress, close the loophole. Do your job.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS OF HAPPY VALLEY LAUNCHBOX

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, small businesses are, and have always been, a key to the economic success of our Nation. With that in mind, I want to recognize the importance of the Happy Valley LaunchBox, which was introduced last year as part of the Invent Penn State initiative.

As an alumni and longtime friend of the university, I am proud to consistently celebrate the unique accomplishments of the leadership, faculty, staff, and student body at Penn State.

Additionally, in my role as a senior member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, I often have the opportunity to highlight the importance of cutting-edge concepts—such as the Invent Penn State initiative—in strengthening the overall economy of our Nation.

The Happy Valley LaunchBox is a place where entrepreneurs from the community as well as Penn State faculty, students, and staff can work to commercialize their innovative business concepts.

Last month I had the chance to meet with university officials and those, including students, who have been able to get their small businesses off the ground thanks to this initiative.

I know that I join those from the university and the Centre County region in wishing the LaunchBox the best of success in the future.

GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in, again, calling for this Congress to just simply call a vote on commonsense, lifesaving gun safety legislation. It has been almost 3 months since House Democrats have taken to the floor to call for a vote, and the statistics indicate that this Congress' inaction has been complicit in thousands of lost lives.

Mr. Speaker, gun violence continues to claim the lives of too many young people in this country. Sadly, it appears that every time I take to this podium to speak out against this Congress' inaction, there is another life lost to gun violence in my home district.

As a nonvoting Delegate of Congress, I may not have a vote on the floor, but I have a voice; and I want to use that voice in joining the American public and my constituents in the Virgin Islands in saying enough is enough.

As the mother of four young Black men, I hold my breath every time my sons go out to go about constructive daily life. Statistically, my sons are in the sight of being the victims of gun violence. Twice last week, one of my sons was within blocks and minutes of others in my community being shot—people doing their job.

While we were in recess, my own former scheduler lost her husband, a fireman on his job, to gun violence in our community. Dorene, the prayers of all of us are with you and your family.

Every day this Congress fails to act, more American families mourn, more American lives are cut short, and more American cities continue to mount homicide and shooting statistics. We can ensure responsible gun ownership while closing loopholes that allow terrorists and criminals to get their hands on dangerous weapons.

I am urging—urging—my colleagues across the aisle to bring commonsense gun safety legislation to a vote.

□ 1245

COMMEMORATING DR. PREM PAUL

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and accomplishments of my friend, Dr. Prem Paul, vice chancellor at the University of Nebraska, who recently died.

Prem was an extraordinary person with an inviting personality and tireless enthusiasm. I recall seeing Prem at a speech in 2001 when I was finishing up my own work on the Lincoln City Council, and it was clear then that his vision was solid for the university. It was so different and so refreshing.

Dr. Paul established a culture of excellence at our university, and he went on to establish the Nebraska Center for Energy Science Research, as well as the Center for Brain, Biology and Behavior, and the Social Sciences Behavioral Research Consortium.

Prem is survived by his wife, Missi; daughter, Neena; son, Ryan; and granddaughter, Ashland, of whom Prem was very, very proud. It was a privilege to know Dr. Prem Paul. It was a privilege to work with him. It was a privilege, most importantly, to call him my friend.

Well done, my friend, well done.

LISTEN TO THE MILLENNIALS

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the Gun Violence Prevention Day of Action to highlight the voices of my district's young people.

Nearly one-third of my constituents are millennials. These young people are smart, they are active, and they are very optimistic about their future.

This summer I asked them a simple question: What is the most important issue Congress should be working on? Despite all of the challenges facing young people, from mounting student debt to growing income inequality, their answer was clear: Do something about gun violence.

For young people, gun violence is a harsh reality. They have seen it, they have lived it, and they have lost friends and family to it.

Since 2013, there have been 192 school shootings, including one at Hillside Elementary School in my district. Schools are supposed to be places of learning, not war zones.

More than 80 percent of young people, including 83 percent of young Republicans, support commonsense background checks for all gun sales. This one commonsense solution to help prevent gun violence is what we need to do. We need to do our job and pass this legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we start listening to these young people. Let's ensure a background check for every gun sale and help stop this senseless violence.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, on June 22, along with many of my colleagues, I sat on this floor right here with my Democratic colleagues demanding that Speaker RYAN give us a vote on commonsense gun violence prevention legislation.

In July, I again joined my colleagues on this floor holding up photos of Americans lost to gun violence, and again Speaker RYAN failed to give us a vote. Instead, he and the rest of the House Republicans left town for the longest recess in decades.

During the recess, 2,015 people died from gun violence—76 people in Chicago alone, my hometown. That is the worst month for gun violence in Chicago since 1997.

We have called for solutions like comprehensive background checks that have overwhelming public support. But 2 months later, House Republicans still refuse to bring these measures to a vote.

Each day that we fail to act, more families lose loved ones to gun violence. So I come to the floor again today, and I will come back as often as it takes, until Congress finally steps up to stop gun violence.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2016.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 14, 2016 at 9:45 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 131.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5351, PROHIBITING THE TRANSFER OF ANY DETAINEE AT UNITED STATES NAVAL STATION, GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5226, REGULATORY INTEGRITY ACT OF 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 863 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 863

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 5351) to prohibit the transfer of any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment

printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5226) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-63. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 863 allows for consideration of two pieces of legislation.

First, H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act, would require the publication of information relating to proposed and pending agency regulations. Already, in this year alone, the Obama administration has imposed \$63 billion in new regulatory costs and has proposed an additional \$16 billion.

When I tour small businesses back in southwest Alabama, the top complaint I hear is that they are drowning in red tape and regulations. They are forced to take time and resources away from running their business and instead focus them on complying with government bureaucracy. Regulations don't just hurt businesses. They in turn cause prices to increase on goods and services, which is felt by American families all across the United States.

This bill is about transparency and open government. It simply requires Federal agencies to post, in a central unified location, information regarding regulatory actions. Americans shouldn't have to search Web site after Web site looking for this information, if they can even find it at all.

The bill also would prevent agencies from actively lobbying or campaigning in support of any proposed rules. This has been an issue in the past, and it is simply not the role of a Federal agency to act as a lobbyist or an activist.

Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to believe that anyone will disagree with making the government more open, transparent, and accessible. I hope this legislation passes with broad, bipartisan support.

The other bill covered under this rule is very important as it relates to our Nation's national security. H.R. 5351 will prohibit the transfer of any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This bill would prevent any of the 61 prisoners remaining at Guantanamo Bay from being brought to the United States or transferred to a foreign country.

President Obama's pledge to close Guantanamo Bay started as a campaign promise in 2007. After his election, he signed an executive order declaring that the prison would be closed in 1 year. Thanks to bipartisan opposition by Congress and resistance by intelligence agencies, these efforts have so far proved unsuccessful.

President Obama originally planned to bring the prisoners to a new facility here in the United States. Not surprisingly, no State wanted to be the one selected to house terrorists. Members of this body from both sides of the aisle were up in arms.

Since that plan failed, President Obama has been releasing these terror-

ists to foreign countries, most of which are located in the Middle East. So here we are in the waning days of the Obama administration, and I fear that the President may try a new trick to close the prison. In fact, on August 15, President Obama released 15 Guantanamo detainees at once. That is the most detainees he has released at one time during his entire Presidency.

I think it is also important to remember that most of the remaining prisoners are very dangerous. Yesterday, in testimony before the Rules Committee, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. SMITH, testified that 41 of the remaining detainees are "considered to be so dangerous as to be untransferable." So this legislation is necessary and is required in order to keep the American people and our allies around the world safe.

One of the main goals of Guantanamo Bay is to keep these terrorists from returning to the battlefield. Sadly, it has become clear that some of the detainees released have returned to the fight against the United States.

Information on the status of released detainees is hard to come by. The White House has released very few details and hidden almost all of the information out of the eye of the American people by placing it under extreme classification requirements. But in testimony before Congress, an Obama administration official admitted that at least 12 individuals released from Guantanamo Bay have gone on to launch attacks and kill Americans—12 individuals released from Guantanamo Bay have gone on to launch attacks and kill Americans.

□ 1300

During testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the official testified that, "What I can tell you is unfortunately, there have been Americans that have died because of Gitmo prisoners."

Reports have indicated that it was a former Guantanamo detainee who helped organize and plan the attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya. Let's not forget that four Americans lost their lives during that attack.

I want to point out that this problem isn't new under the Obama administration. In fact, reports show that 111 of the prisoners released by former President George W. Bush returned to terrorist activities.

And let's be clear, any life lost at the hands of a former Guantanamo detainee is one life too many. These are deaths that are preventable, if we just keep these terrorists locked up.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our servicemembers to put their lives on the line each day and every day in order to keep the American people safe. How can we ask them to do that while knowing that we are releasing cruel, brutal terrorists back to the battlefield? It is reprehensible.

These releases and efforts to close the prison must stop. It is a shame that congressional action is even needed, but that is the reality of the situation.

And let's not forget, the individuals still left in Guantanamo are the worst of the worst. The Pentagon told Senator KELLY AYOTTE that 93 percent of the detainees left at Guantanamo were "high risk" for returning to terrorist activities.

Here is a quick snapshot of the remaining terrorists: Many of them fought on the front lines against U.S. coalition forces in Afghanistan. Some of them served as bodyguards for Osama bin Laden and worked as instructors at al Qaeda training camps. One person is well versed in explosives and served in an al Qaeda improvised explosive device cell that targeted coalition forces in Afghanistan. When captured, he had 23 antitank land mines.

These are just a few examples of the people we are talking about here. We aren't talking about low-level operatives. These are really bad guys.

So I fear this President may once again put politics above national security. I fear he is more concerned about keeping a campaign promise than he is about keeping the American people—especially our servicemembers fighting in the Middle East—safe.

Ultimately, if we don't keep them in Guantanamo, where exactly do you want these terrorists to go? Do you want them to be transferred into the United States? I would ask my colleague on the other side of the aisle: Would he want them in his home State of Massachusetts? Or do you want us to send them back to the Middle East, where we can't control what actions they take and where many of them are returning to terrorist activity?

To me and a majority of Americans, the choice is clear: We need to keep these terrorists in Guantanamo Bay where they can do no more harm.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 863 so we can move forward with consideration of these two very important bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and to the underlying legislation.

We are only scheduled to be in session for two more weeks before leaving until after the November election. And instead of considering legislation to adequately respond to the Zika crisis or address the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, or deal with the terrible gun violence plaguing our communities, we are back on the floor with more Republican messaging bills that are going nowhere.

On these pressing matters, where is the leadership from Speaker RYAN and

the Republican Conference? How can this Congress further delay action on these issues that are so important to the health and the safety of the American people?

The rule before us today provides for consideration of two deeply flawed pieces of legislation. The first, H.R. 5226, imposes overly burdensome requirements designed solely to hamstring the Federal rulemaking process. The second, H.R. 5351, prohibits the transfer of any individual detained at the prison at the U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Until January 21, H.R. 5351 would prohibit the transfer of any detainee held at Guantanamo not just to the United States but also to any foreign country.

The Republican leadership could have chosen to use these final months to work constructively with the administration on how to transfer to other countries the approximately 20 remaining detainees who have been cleared for transfer. The Republican leadership could have chosen to help build a consensus around the timeframe for transferring to maximum security facilities in the United States the remaining detainees who have been charged with crimes or deemed too dangerous to release.

Instead, they chose to bring this bill to the House floor and close down any and all reasonable avenues to safely and securely reduce the population at Guantanamo. Mr. Speaker, this is simply crazy.

Continuing the operation of Guantanamo prison is a threat to our national security of our own making. It damages our relations with key allies and partners. It provides a rallying cry to violent extremists. And it undermines our moral authority and credibility in ways large and small across all aspects of our foreign policy and military policy.

Since it opened in 2002, the prison at Guantanamo has cost the American taxpayer \$4.8 billion. In 2013, U.S. taxpayers spent \$454 million on this prison, which now holds just 61 detainees. That is about \$7.4 million for each prisoner, compared to around \$70,000 for a prisoner held in solitary confinement in a maximum security prison here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the Oklahoma City bomber was tried and imprisoned in the United States. The World Trade Center bomber was tried and imprisoned in the United States. The Boston Marathon bomber was tried and imprisoned in the United States. Serial killers, psychopaths, terrorists, saboteurs—they have all been in custody, tried, and imprisoned safely and securely in the United States and, I would add, far more successfully than any trial or tribunal held at Guantanamo and at a much smaller taxpayer expense. Why not the remaining detainees at Guantanamo?

There should be a way for both parties to work this out. If only the leaders of this Congress were willing to work with this administration and be

committed to finding a way to shut down Guantanamo once and for all. But instead, we are here today throwing up yet another set of roadblocks.

Eight years ago, Presidential candidates JOHN MCCAIN and Barack Obama agreed on one issue: it was time to shut down the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Former President George W. Bush believes we should shut it down.

I have a letter dated yesterday and addressed to all Members of Congress from Marine Corps Major General Michael P. Lehnert, the very first commander of the detention facility at Guantanamo, asking us to oppose this bill and to close Guantanamo.

I have another letter here, dated March 1, from retired generals and admirals who also advocate for the closure of our prison at Guantanamo.

Mr. Speaker, the failure to close Guantanamo is a stain on Congress. It is Congress that has hindered efforts to release detainees cleared for transfer to third-party countries. It is Congress that has barred the Pentagon from moving those who must remain in prison to maximum security facilities here in the United States. It is Congress that has undermined America's standing as a champion for human rights.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is going nowhere. It certainly will never be signed into law. It is a waste of time that could be better spent on addressing the crisis of clean water in Flint, Michigan, granting real money to deal with the national opiate crisis and the spread of the Zika virus in the United States, and responding to the crisis of gun violence in our cities and communities across America.

Mr. Speaker, in June, when 49 innocent people were ruthlessly killed in an LGBT nightclub in Orlando, Americans across the country were heartbroken and looked to their leaders for action. Surely in the face of such tragedy, House Republicans would put partisan politics aside. Surely both parties could come together to pass bipartisan legislation to reduce gun violence by keeping guns out of the wrong hands.

House Democrats tried repeatedly to bring up bipartisan gun reform legislation that the overwhelming majority of the American people support. The bills would expand background checks and stop anyone on the FBI's terrorist watch list from buying a gun. What could be more common sense than that?

All we wanted was to debate the legislation and have a fair up-or-down vote, but Republicans continued to put up roadblocks and refused to even let us consider these bills. So House Democrats held a 25-hour sit-in on the House floor, raising the voices of millions of Americans who are sick and tired of seeing their families and neighbors gunned down in communities all across the country while Congress does absolutely nothing.

Instead, Speaker RYAN and House Republicans abruptly shut Congress down

for summer recess, the longest in modern era. While House Republicans were on summer vacation, more than 2,300 Americans were killed by guns.

Now Congress is back, and, instead of doing the right thing and finally bringing bipartisan gun reform legislation to the floor, we hear through the press that Speaker RYAN and House Republicans are looking at ways to punish Democrats for our sit-in demanding action to reduce gun violence.

Really? Congress is only scheduled to be in session for 2 weeks until we recess again, and this is one of the Republican priorities?

We need real leadership, not more finger wagging. I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to ask themselves: Is this really what your constituents want? Is this what they send you to Congress to do?

And let me be clear, and let me be crystal clear. If Republicans think that we will be intimidated or silenced by any legislation that they bring to the floor to slap us on the wrist simply for asking Congress to do its job, they are wrong.

The fact that Republicans are appalled by our demand to debate and the fact that they are appalled by our demand that there be a debate and a vote on gun safety legislation I find outrageous.

My question is: Why aren't my Republican friends appalled by the massacres in Orlando and San Bernardino and Aurora and Newtown and Charleston—and I could go on and on and on and on. Why are they not appalled by the gun deaths that happen each and every day in these United States of America? All we get from them is nothing. All we get from them is silence and indifference and apathy and, oh, legislation to condemn Democrats for wanting to do something. It is sad, and it is pathetic, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask my colleagues to defeat the previous question; and if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation that would allow the Attorney General to bar the sale of firearms and explosives to those on the FBI's terrorist watch list.

Mr. Speaker, the time to act is now. There were more than 2,000 gun-related deaths during this summer alone while we were on recess. This country cannot tolerate Republican intransigence any longer. Mr. Speaker, we are asking and we are demanding that the Republican leadership and this House do its job.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the State of Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), my colleague from the Rules Committee.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I would like to thank the gentleman from Alabama for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying legislation, H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act. In recent years, a disturbing trend has emerged among Federal agencies. In a number of instances, Federal agencies have used taxpayer dollars to fund public communication campaigns attempting to lobby for agency regulations. Despite multiple Federal laws explicitly prohibiting this, agencies continue to ignore these laws and use taxpayer dollars to lobby on the very regulations their agencies are developing.

Several months ago, in my own home State of Washington, a campaign known as What's Upstream came to light. I would like to point your attention to this poster. Through this broad and unfair ad campaign, all farmers were demonized as careless polluters. What's Upstream used billboards, bus and radio ads, and a visually assaulting Web site depicting dead fish and polluted water to encourage private citizens to contact their State legislators and push for stricter regulations on farmers. It is also important to note that it has been discovered that these images were not even from the State of Washington.

□ 1315

As a lifelong farmer myself, who has seen firsthand the remarkable proactive steps farmers have taken to protect our resources, I was insulted by the blatant lies this campaign has spread about farmers. What is probably more insulting, though, can be seen by these pictures of the What's Upstream Web site. What's Upstream encouraged site visitors to send messages to "Washington State Senators whose votes we hope to influence." This is lobbying in the truest sense of the word. The real kicker is when you scroll down to the bottom of the page to see who it was funded by: "This message has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency."

Now, just stop and think about that for just a second. Your hard-earned taxpayer dollars are being used by the EPA to lie about farmers and then to lobby State legislators to put in place stricter regulations against farmers. It is unconscionable, and it violates the law.

Earlier this year, I was proud to colead a letter with my friend from Nebraska, Congressman ASHFORD, to EPA Administrator McCarthy expressing outrage and demanding an investigation into this campaign. I was honored to have 145 House Members—fully one-third of the entire body—join us on that letter demanding accountability.

This campaign exposed us to a very real need for grant and lobbying reform, which H.R. 5226 takes a good first step in bringing. By requiring all executive agencies to disclose their public communications, it will help bring transparency to agency communications and ensures that these types of activities cannot hide or go unnoticed. While future steps may be necessary, I was proud to work with Congressman WALBERG to introduce this legislation, and I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Our agricultural community and the American taxpayers deserve accountability, and I look forward to continuing to work for this bill's enactment.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, so let me get this straight. In response to 49 people killed in Orlando, 14 in San Bernardino, 9 in Charleston, 27 mostly kids in Newtown, 12 in Aurora, 6 in Tucson, Arizona—and our former colleagues, Congressman Giffords and Congressman Ron Barber, were shot there—and 32 in Virginia Tech—I can go on and on and on.

So, in response to all of that, what my Republican friends are doing is bringing a bill to the floor, and we are talking about legislation that is going nowhere. The Senate is not going to take it up. And even if it did, the White House is going to veto it. That is the response.

That is where the frustration on this side of the aisle is, that there are real, meaningful things that we need to do in this Congress, including protect the American people from this epidemic of gun violence, and instead of bringing legislation to the floor to do that, instead of working with us, instead of holding hearings, we get press releases from the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee that are going nowhere. We are wasting our time. We are wasting the American taxpayers' money.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Kenneth D. Whitaker, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of silence on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise the minority manager that the customary 30 minutes of debate time that has been yielded to him is for debate purposes only.

As a result, the Chair must ask the majority manager if he would yield for this unanimous consent request.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, during consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama does not yield; therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Jeanette Hernandez, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Once again, the gentleman from Massachusetts is reminded that the time yielded is for purposes of debate only. The gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for purposes of this unanimous consent request, and it, therefore, cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Martavious Carn, age 3, a Florida victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Once again, the gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for this unanimous consent request. It cannot be entertained at this time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Justin Lee Sifuentes, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for this unanimous consent request. It cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Jennie Lou Hawley, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for this unanimous consent request, so it cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, in honor of the memory of Jennie Marie Keener, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on this House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for this unanimous consent request; so, therefore, it cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Fredrick Richardson of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama has not yielded for this unanimous consent request, so it cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Lekeshia Moses, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on this House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan close-the-loophole-on-background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Jeffrey Adams, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the floor of this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Megan, Liana, Mark Jr., and Willow Short, who never received a moment of action on this House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of a constituent, Teqnika Moultrie, a school bus driver who at age 30 was gunned down outside a doughnut shop, and never received a moment of action on the House floor on her behalf.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

As the Chair advised on January 15, 2014, and March 26, 2014, even though a unanimous consent request to consider a measure is not entertained, embellishments accompanying such requests constitute debate and will become an imposition on the time of the Member who yielded for that purpose.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Officer Michael Krol, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Miguel Angel Leon Bravo, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Jordan Ebner, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Kayana Armond, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Lakeith Hurd, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Aimee Kirst, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of 41-year-old Officer Matthew Gerald, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Christopher Jerome Smith, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Rosemond Octavius, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Tyreke Borel, who was 17 years old, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York

(Ms. SLAUGHTER), the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Bobbie Odneal, III, 23 years old, Cincinnati, Ohio, who died a victim of gun violence and never received a moment of action on the House floor.

□ 1330

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would like at this time to yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is advised that time will be deducted from the gentleman's time for the last unanimous consent request.

The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire why?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As was advised earlier, embellishments constitute debate, and as such, the time will be deducted from the gentleman's time.

The gentlewoman from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Officer Montrell Jackson, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Ana Solis, 46 years of age when she was a victim of gun violence, who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Donald Stoney Boatman, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr.

HUFFMAN) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Alex Freeman, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of silence on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, to honor the memory of Paula Nino, age 20, of Houston, Texas, a tragic victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Sheree Barker, age 24, from Colorado Springs, Colorado, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Chelsea and Justin Reed from Citronelle, Alabama, killed in their sleep, who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Daquarius Tucker, who was a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on this House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1076, the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, in honor of the memory of Lisa Ann Fabbri, 38 years old, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the floor of the United States Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), a leader on issues of justice and non-violence, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, in the memory of Billy Talley from Union, Mississippi, a victim of gun violence who never, ever received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, in honor of Robert Lee Brown from Alabama, age 26, who was killed in his sleep by a friend of an abusive boyfriend, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of silence on the floor of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The time consumed by the gentlewoman from Alabama will be charged to the gentleman from Massachusetts' time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of James "JJ" Hurtado, a victim of gun violence killed at age 14 in Hermiston, Oregon, by his mother's ex-boyfriend, who never received a moment of silence or moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Time consumed by the gentleman from Oregon will be deducted from the gentleman from Massachusetts' time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the

expanded background checks legislation, in honor of Anna Bui, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Corey Bishop, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Kiesha Betton, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Abner B. Garcia, age 23, an Army veteran who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Charles Jackson, age 28, Houston Texas, killed on the Fourth of July and a father of 3, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of silence or action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The gentleman from Massachusetts is advised that the time consumed by the gentlewoman from Texas will be charged to the time of the gentleman.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Mary Matzke and Birdell Beeks, victims of gun violence who never received a moment of action on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of John Comer, a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of silence on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1217, the bipartisan expanded background checks legislation, to honor the memory of Jennifer Rooney, age 44 from Bristol, Virginia, who was shot by a stray bullet while driving. She is a victim of gun violence who never received a moment of action on this House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unanimous consent request cannot be entertained, and the gentleman's time will be charged.

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

I mean, I don't know what it is going to take to compel my Republican colleagues to do something, to do more than just have a moment of silence in the aftermath of every massacre. I mean, these are real people. They had families. They were loved, and now they are gone, and we need to do something.

For the life of me, I can't understand the inaction in this House, the silence and the indifference. It is appalling. I would suggest to my colleagues, rather than trying to bring legislation to the floor to slap us on the wrist for having the audacity to come to the floor and demand that this House of Representatives do its job, my Republican friends ought to do their job and bring these bills to the floor.

Let's have a debate and let's have a vote, and let's try to save some lives. This is real. This is meaningful. It is a heck of a lot more important than the message bills that are going nowhere that are being brought to this floor.

I urge my colleagues to vote to defeat the previous question so we can have a vote on the no fly, no buy legislation, and I plead with my Republican colleagues: Do your job. Do something. Enough of this silence. Enough of this indifference. Too many people in this country are dying.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Let's see, where were we? We were talking about a rule that covers two bills. One bill would stop Federal departments and agencies from using their money to spread falsehoods against innocent Americans. The gentleman from Washington gave a very good, very clear statement of a precise fact situation that happened in the State of Washington where a Federal agency was using its money to spread falsehoods about farmers. That is what we were talking about. And I think that is a very important piece of legislation for us to deal with and deal with right now.

And the other piece of legislation, the other piece of legislation would protect the people of the United States from a President who wants to let very dangerous people out of Guantanamo Bay. As I said before, at least 12 individuals who have already been released from Guantanamo Bay have gone on to launch attacks and kill Americans. That is what we were talking about. That is what we are talking about. That is what this rule and the underlying legislation is all about.

This House is here to do its work and do its job to defend the people of the United States and also to protect the people of the United States from their own government preying on them. So I think this legislation is completely appropriate. I am glad to bring this rule before the House.

I, again, urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 863 and the underlying bills.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 863 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN

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

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1076) to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of a firearm or the issuance of firearms or explosives licenses to a known or suspected dangerous terrorist. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1076.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 863 will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting House Resolution 863, if ordered; and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 232, noes 172, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 505]

AYES—232

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

Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski

Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman

Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 238, noes 171, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 506]

AYES—238

NOES—172
Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
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
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr

Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schradler
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Hanna
Babin
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)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)

Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder

Yoho
Young (AK)

Young (IA)
Young (IN)

Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—171

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
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr

Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B. T.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kilmer
Kildeer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lawrence
Lee
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lowenthal
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)

Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—22

Barletta
DesJarlais
Deutch
Doyle, Michael F.
Fincher
Granger
Guinta

Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
Larson (CT)
Levin
Lofgren
Maloney, Carolyn
McDermott

Norcross
Palazzo
Payne
Rush
Schradler
Titus
Visclosky
Welch

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1410

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.

Stated against:
Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 506.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on

NOT VOTING—27

Barletta
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Brady (TX)
Crawford
DesJarlais
Deutch
Fincher
Gohmert

Granger
Guinta
Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
LaHood
Lofgren
McDermott
Murphy (PA)
Norcross

Palazzo
Payne
Price (NC)
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Visclosky
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Young (IN)

□ 1403

Mr. ENGEL changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:
Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 505, I was unavoidably detained and missed the vote on the previous question. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

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.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 252, noes 145, answered "present" 2, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 507]

AYES—252

Abraham	Eshoo	McClintock
Aderholt	Esty	McCollum
Allen	Farenthold	McHenry
Babin	Farr	McMorris
Barr	Fleischmann	Rodgers
Barton	Forbes	McNerney
Beatty	Fortenberry	McSally
Becerra	Foster	Meadows
Bera	Frankel (FL)	Meehan
Bilirakis	Franks (AZ)	Meeks
Bishop (MI)	Frelinghuysen	Meng
Bishop (UT)	Garamendi	Messer
Black	Garrett	Mica
Blackburn	Gibbs	Miller (FL)
Blum	Goodlatte	Miller (MI)
Blumenauer	Gosar	Moolenaar
Bonamici	Gowdy	Mooney (WV)
Boustany	Graham	Moore
Brady (TX)	Grayson	Moulton
Brat	Griffith	Mullin
Bridenstine	Guthrie	Murphy (PA)
Brooks (AL)	Hahn	Napolitano
Brooks (IN)	Hardy	Neugebauer
Brown (FL)	Harper	Newhouse
Buchanan	Harris	Noem
Bustos	Hastings	Nugent
Butterfield	Heck (WA)	Nunes
Byrne	Hensarling	O'Rourke
Calvert	Higgins	Olson
Capps	Himes	Palmer
Carney	Hinojosa	Pascrell
Carter (TX)	Honda	Perlmutter
Castro (TX)	Huffman	Pingree
Chabot	Huizenga (MI)	Pocan
Chu, Judy	Hultgren	Polis
Ciциlline	Hunter	Pompeo
Clark (MA)	Issa	Posey
Clawson (FL)	Johnson (GA)	Price (NC)
Clay	Jolly	Quigley
Cole	Kaptur	Rangel
Collins (NY)	Katko	Reichert
Comstock	Keating	Ribble
Conaway	Kelly (MS)	Rigell
Conyers	Kelly (PA)	Roby
Cook	Kennedy	Rogers (AL)
Cooper	Kildee	Rogers (KY)
Courtney	King (IA)	Rohrabacher
Cramer	King (NY)	Rokita
Crawford	Kline	Rooney (FL)
Crenshaw	Kuster	Roskam
Crowley	Labrador	Ross
Cuellar	LaMalfa	Rothfus
Culberson	Lamborn	Royce
Davidson	Langevin	Ruiz
Davis (CA)	Larsen (WA)	Ruppersberger
Davis, Danny	Latta	Russell
DeGette	Lipinski	Salmon
DeLauro	Long	Sanford
DelBene	Loudermilk	Scalise
Denham	Love	Schiff
Dent	Lowey	Schweikert
Diaz-Balart	Lucas	Scott (VA)
Dingell	Luetkemeyer	Scott, Austin
Doggett	Lujan Grisham	Scott, David
Donovan	(NM)	Sensenbrenner
Duckworth	Lujan, Ben Ray	Serrano
Duffy	(NM)	Sessions
Duncan (SC)	Lummis	Sherman
Duncan (TN)	Maloney,	Shimkus
Edwards	Carolyn	Shuster
Ellmers (NC)	Massie	Simpson
Emmer (MN)	McCarthy	Sinema
Engel	McCaull	Slaughter

Smith (NE)	Tsongas
Smith (NJ)	Upton
Smith (TX)	Van Hollen
Smith (WA)	Wagner
Speier	Walker
Stefanik	Walorski
Stewart	Walters, Mimi
Stivers	Walz
Stutzman	Wasserman
Takano	Schultz
Thornberry	Waters, Maxine
Tiberi	Webster (FL)
Trott	Wenstrup

NOES—145

Adams	Green, Gene	Nolan
Aguilar	Grothman	Pallone
Amash	Guinta	Paulsen
Ashford	Gutiérrez	Pearce
Bass	Hanna	Perry
Benishak	Hartzler	Peters
Bishop (GA)	Heck (NV)	Peterson
Bost	Herrera Beutler	Pittenger
Boyle, Brendan	Hice, Jody B.	Poe (TX)
F.	Hill	Poliquin
Brady (PA)	Holding	Price, Tom
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Ratcliffe
Buck	Hudson	Reed
Bucshon	Huelskamp	Renacci
Burgess	Hurd (TX)	Rice (NY)
Capuano	Israel	Richmond
Carson (IN)	Jackson Lee	Roe (TN)
Carter (GA)	Jenkins (KS)	Ros-Lehtinen
Cartwright	Jenkins (WV)	Rouzer
Castor (FL)	Johnson (OH)	Roybal-Allard
Chaffetz	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Clarke (NY)	Jones	Sánchez, Linda
Clyburn	Jordan	T.
Coffman	Joyce	Sanchez, Loretta
Cohen	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Collins (GA)	Kind	Schrader
Connolly	Kinzinger (IL)	Sewell (AL)
Costa	Kirkpatrick	Sires
Costello (PA)	Knigh	Smith (MO)
Cummings	LaHood	Swalwell (CA)
Curbelo (FL)	Lance	Thompson (MS)
Davis, Rodney	Larson (CT)	Thompson (PA)
DeFazio	Lawrence	
Delaney	Lee	
DeSantis	Lewis	
DeSaulnier	Lieu, Ted	
Dold	LoBiondo	
Doyle, Michael	Loeb sack	
F.	Lofgren	
Ellison	Lowenthal	
Fitzpatrick	Lynch	
Fleming	MacArthur	
Flores	Maloney, Sean	
Fox	Marchant	
Foxe	Marino	
Gibson	McGovern	
Graves (GA)	McKinley	
Graves (LA)	Mulvaney	
Graves (MO)	Murphy (FL)	
Green, Al	Neal	Young (AK)

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—2

Rice (SC)

Tonko

NOT VOTING—32

Amodei	Granger	Palazzo
Barietta	Grijalva	Payne
Beyer	Hurt (VA)	Pelosi
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Pitts
Cleaver	Johnson, Sam	Rush
DesJarlais	Kelly (IL)	Schakowsky
Deutch	Levin	Thompson (CA)
Fincher	Matsui	Titus
Gabbard	McDermott	Visclosky
Gallego	Nadler	Welch
Gohmert	Norcross	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1416

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on rollcall 505, 506, and 507. I would have voted "no" on rollcall 505 and 506, and "aye" on rollcall 507 had I been there.

TERMINATION OF EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-163)

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

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order that terminates the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, and revokes that Executive Order.

The President issued Executive Order 13396 to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which had resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and attacks against international peacekeeping forces leading to fatalities. In Executive Order 13396, the President addressed that threat by blocking the property and interests in property of, among others, persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to constitute a threat to the peace and national reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, to be responsible for serious violations of international law in Côte d'Ivoire, or to have supplied arms to Côte d'Ivoire. Executive Order 13396 also implemented United States sanctions obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1572 and subsequent resolutions.

I have determined that the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire that gave rise to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 has improved significantly as a result of the progress achieved in the stabilization of Côte d'Ivoire, including the successful conduct of the October 2015 presidential election, progress on the management of arms and related materiel, and the combating of illicit trafficking of natural resources. With these advancements, and with the United Nations Security Council's termination of sanctions obligations on April 28, 2016, in UNSCR 2283, there is no further need for the blocking of assets and other sanctions measures imposed by Executive Order 13396. For these reasons I have determined that it is necessary to terminate the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 and revoke that order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, September 14, 2016.

ENDING THE SUSPENSION OF PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR BURMA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-164)

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

To the Congress of the United States:

I am writing to inform you of my intent to end the suspension of preferential treatment for Burma as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, and to designate Burma as a least-developed beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program. I have carefully considered the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2462(c)). After considering the criteria set forth in section 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP beneficiary developing countries in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) of the United States. After considering the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP least-developed beneficiary developing countries in the HTS.

I submit this notice in accordance with section 502(f)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(1)).

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 14, 2016.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 21 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. HOLDING) at 3 p.m.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 859 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5620.

Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) kindly take the chair.

□ 1501

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole

House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5620) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, with Mr. ROTHFUS (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, September 13, 2016, amendment No. 13 printed in House Report 114-742 offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. BEN RAY LUJÁN OF NEW MEXICO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 14 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. 11. IDENTIFICATION OF MATTERS RELATING TO PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO ARE PHYSICIANS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall identify—

- (1) the number of members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who are physicians employed at a Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility on a part-time basis;
- (2) the process by which the Department hires such physicians on a part-time basis; and
- (3) the process by which the Department hires civilian physicians on a part-time basis; and
- (4) the steps the Department is taking to recruit members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who are physicians for employment at Department medical facilities on a part-time basis.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, my amendment directs the VA to produce a report related to the part-time employment of Active Duty military positions at VA health facilities.

In 2014, Congress passed the Veterans Choice Act to help address the access to care crisis facing our Nation's veterans. As part of those reforms, the legislation called for a Commission on Care to examine how best to strategically organize the Veterans Health Administration, locate healthcare resources, and deliver health care to veterans over the next 20 years. The report was released on July 15 of this year.

The report's very first recommendation highlights VHA's provider shortages and suggests the VHA should expand their provider networks. They specify: "These providers must be fully

credentialed with appropriate education, training, and experience, provide veterans access that meets VHA standards, demonstrate high-quality clinical and utilization outcomes, and demonstrate military cultural competency."

Recently, it came to my attention that Active Duty military physicians are confronting a number of hurdles when seeking part-time positions at our VA facilities and that these hurdles are preventing an entire group of physicians who exceed these standards from caring for our veterans.

The Department of Defense employs over 11,000 Active Duty military physicians. For many reasons, a number of these physicians choose to seek part-time employment in civilian hospitals. In fact, physician moonlighting is encouraged by the Department of Defense.

Yet, despite these military doctors exceeding all of the VA's employment standards, longstanding red tape seems to be preventing the VA from hiring them. At a time when VA facilities across the country are struggling to hire enough physicians, we cannot afford to turn away qualified doctors.

Recently, my office raised this issue with the Veterans Health Administration, and I appreciate the VHA's willingness to work with me on this issue. However, we need to get these facts on the record in order to continue the conversation and address this issue.

I would also like to thank Chairman MILLER for giving me the opportunity to raise this issue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do what we can to help soldiers treat our vets.

While I greatly appreciate all physicians who choose to use their training, skills, and time to serve our Nation's veterans, there is no one more naturally equipped to care for our vets than our military physicians.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the chairman and the committee staff on both sides of the aisle for their work here.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague, Representative BEN RAY LUJÁN from New Mexico, for yielding.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to ensure our veterans are fully taken care of.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I am not opposed.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

I do support this amendment. It does require a report on DOD physicians who are part-time VA employees, and

it is important to have an accurate accounting of how DOD clinicians are practicing at the VA on a part-time basis and how they are recruited.

So I want to thank Representative LUJÁN for bringing this valuable piece of legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY), I offer amendment No. 15.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. 11. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONDUCT OF MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.

Section 704(c) of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-183; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2016” and inserting “December 31, 2017”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, as this body works to find ways to ensure that the VA is meeting the needs of the veteran community, we must ensure that we do not rob them of critical tools which have already helped the VA to address its claims backlog.

This amendment, based on Representative SEAN PATRICK MALONEY’s stand-alone legislation, the Disabled Veterans Red Tape Reduction Act, ensures that the VA has one more tool in its toolkit in order to meet its mission. It accomplishes this by allowing veterans to have their medical examinations done by physicians outside the VA system to help process veterans’ disability claims faster.

In the past, we have been able to work across party lines in order to keep in place this essential tool the VA needs to address the backlog. This important authority is due to expire at the end of the year; and without timely action from Congress, the VA would be even more overburdened.

This program works; that is why we need it. The fact that Congress would otherwise let this expire, when our VA system is already overburdened, is just unconscionable.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I do not oppose it.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) for bringing this piece of legislation to the floor. It is something that we already have passed, but putting it in a couple of different places probably doesn’t hurt, so I would urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, at this time, I would like to use the remaining time I have on this amendment to make the following statement.

I would like to take a moment to recognize Chairman MILLER, who will be retiring at the end of this Congress.

I have only been acting ranking member for a couple of months, but I have enjoyed working with him as a member of the committee for the last 4 years. He is a dedicated public servant. He is charming and wily, and, with a smile, he can convince anyone across the table from him that his way is the right way, even though it is not.

I consider him a friend, but also a worthy adversary. Although we are at odds today on this underlying bill, I have enjoyed the bipartisan nature of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee. I think we set an example for the American people that Congress can come together and get things done.

With all this talk about Congresswoman DINA TITUS’ Appeals Modernization bill, I am reminded of another Titus bill. I worked with the chairman to include language in the Choice Act that increased the number of graduate medical education slots at the VA—1,500, to be exact. It was one of my proudest moments as a legislator, and I will look back fondly on the experience of working with Chairman MILLER. We did right by veterans, and we did right by the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your service, and I wish you the best of luck with your retirement.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MR. O’ROURKE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 16 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. O’ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 11. RECRUITMENT OF PHYSICIANS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7402(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “or to be offered a contingent appointment to such position,” after “position,”; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following new subparagraph (B):

“(B)(i) have completed a residency program satisfactory to the Secretary; or

“(ii) with respect to an offer for a contingent appointment upon the completion of a post-graduate training program, complete such a residency program by not later than two years after the date of such offer; and”.

(b) OVERSIGHT OF GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall—

(1) ensure that a recruiter or other similar official of each Veterans Integrated Service Network visits, not less than annually, each allopathic and osteopathic teaching institution with a graduate medical education program within the Network to recruit individuals to be appointed to positions in the Veterans Health Administration; and

(2) submit to Congress an annual report on the implementation of paragraph (1), including the success of such recruiting efforts.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O’ROURKE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. O’ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak on behalf of amendment No. 16, which will allow us to help the VA fulfill its responsibilities and truly be accountable to our veterans by hiring enough physicians and care providers so that we can meet the demands and the needs and the care that has been earned by these veterans.

Today, by the VA’s own admission, there are 43,000 authorized, funded, but unfilled positions in our community clinics and hospitals throughout the country. That means that veterans are waiting far too long and, in some cases, are not able to get in to receive that care that they have earned.

This amendment would allow the VA to begin doing what everyone else in modern medicine in America is doing today, and that is recruiting effectively from this country’s residency programs.

Today, the VA is prohibited from talking to residents until they have completely completed their residency. As we all know, by that point, most of those residents have selected an employer, and that employer is not the VA.

This brings us into line with every other Federal recruiting practice throughout the government and brings us in line with the private and other

public sector employers against whom we are competing.

I will note that this amendment is also sponsored by Ms. STEFANIK of New York. It enjoys bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, before I yield to my ranking member, I want to join Representative TAKANO in recognizing the incredible service of Chairman MILLER, who has really ensured that this is the most bipartisan committee in the Congress, and that bipartisanship is needed now more than ever. If we are going to fix a VA system and deliver the care that those veterans have earned, we are going to need everyone working together as closely as possible, and Chairman MILLER has done a lot of work toward that end. So I want to thank him for his service and for what he has done for this committee and for veterans throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the ranking member.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I fully support the gentleman's amendment, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I am not opposed to the amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Mr. O'ROURKE, a valued member of our committee, and Ms. STEFANIK for bringing this timely piece of legislation to the floor in amendment form. I think it is very important.

As the VA tries to recruit new physicians to fill the 40,000-plus openings that they may have at any one time, it is important to be able to get the younger folks that are coming in so that they can be a part of the VA system and helping our veterans.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1515

AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MR. O'ROURKE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 17 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following new section:
SEC. 11. AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE CERTAIN MEDICAL RECORDS OF VETERANS WHO RECEIVE NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE.

Section 7332(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(H) To a non-Department entity (including private entities and other departments or agencies of the Federal Government) that provides hospital care or medical treatment to veterans.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. O'ROURKE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, as we now know, we are 43,000 providers short within the VA, which means that there is an unmet need and demand from veterans in the communities that we serve and whom we represent. To be able to bridge this gap, we are going to have to more effectively leverage capacity for care in public and private institutions throughout this country. These are public hospitals, private hospitals, and public and private clinics.

There are different means of doing this right now, which the VA Secretary seeks to streamline into one program, and I support this; but in the meantime, while we are largely dependent on the Choice Program that this Congress passed not too long ago, we must ensure that the care for these veterans is coordinated in a seamless manner.

Part of the problem in doing that is that the medical records for veterans are not effectively traveling with them from the VA to their provider in the community, and, in fact, because of an antiquated interpretation of veterans' medical information records, veterans have to sign a waiver allowing the VA to share that information.

Now, no other provider of medical care in this country operates under those same standards. And today, it is estimated that fewer than 3 percent of veterans have affirmatively signed these release forms allowing their information to be effectively shared with the community providers so that provider can make informed medical decisions for that veteran's treatment.

Inclusion of this amendment in the final bill's passage will ensure that we bring the VA up to modern medical standards, where veterans will still be protected by HIPAA and privacy laws but will have their critical medical information effectively shared without fear of exposure of any of their private and identifiable information.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the Congress support this amendment into inclusion in the final bill so that we can effectively leverage that care in the community.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I do not oppose the amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Again, Mr. O'ROURKE has brought an outstanding addition to this important piece of legislation. It is critical for continuity and the provision of safe, quality health care to our veterans to allow them to be able to communicate back and forth without any impediments, so I appreciate Mr. O'ROURKE's hard work and, again, bringing this amendment to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 18 OFFERED BY MR. O'ROURKE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 18 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, add after line 2 the following:

SEC. 11. SURVEY OF VETERAN EXPERIENCES WITH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract with a non-government entity with significant experience conducting scientifically verifiable surveys and research to conduct an annual survey of a statistically significant sample of veterans who reside in the geographic area served by each of the medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to determine the nature of the experiences of such veterans in obtaining hospital care and medical services furnished by the Secretary at each such medical facility. Each such survey shall be conducted using scientific and verifiable methods. Such contract shall provide that the non-government entity shall conduct such annual surveys during the five-year period beginning on the date on which the Secretary enters into the contract with the non-government entity.

(b) CONTENTS.—The contract entered into under subsection (a) shall provide that each survey conducted pursuant to the contract shall be specific to a medical facility of the Department and shall include questions relating to the experiences of veterans in requesting and receiving appointments for hospital care and medical services furnished by the Secretary at that medical facility, including questions relating to each of the following:

(1) The veteran's ability to obtain hospital care and medical services at the facility in a timely manner.

(2) The period of time between the date on which the veteran requests an appointment at the facility and the date on which the appointment is scheduled.

(3) The frequency with which scheduled appointments are cancelled by the facility.

(4) The quality of hospital care or medical services the veteran has received at the facility.

(c) CONSULTATION.—The contract entered into under subsection (a) shall provide that in designing and conducting the surveys for each medical facility of the Department pursuant to such contract, the non-government entity shall consult with veterans service organizations.

(d) CERTIFICATION.—The contract entered into under subsection (a) shall provide that—

(1) before conducting a survey pursuant to the contract, the non-government entity shall submit the proposed survey to the Comptroller General who shall assess whether the survey is scientifically valid and whether the proposed sample size of veterans to be surveyed is statistically significant; and

(2) the non-government entity may not conduct such a survey until the Comptroller General provides such a certification for the survey.

(e) SUBMITTAL OF RESULTS AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 30 days after the completion of the surveys conducted pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a) for a year, the Secretary shall make the results of the surveys publicly available on the Internet website of the Department.

(f) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—Subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code shall not apply to this section.

(g) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall enter into a contract under subsection (a) for each medical facility of the Department by not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. O'ROURKE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak on behalf of this amendment No. 18, which we are referring to as the Ask a Veteran amendment to the underlying bill.

This essentially builds on some of the pioneering work taking place in the community I have the privilege to represent in El Paso, Texas. Before the wait-time scandal broke in Phoenix, we were hearing alarming discrepancies between what the VA was telling us that a veteran was waiting in our community and what we were hearing at our townhalls from veterans themselves.

In order to try to resolve this issue, we conducted a scientific survey by an independent third-party with a margin of error under 4 percent to ask veterans from their own experience and in their own words what they had experienced in terms of care at the VA. We found that instead of meeting the 14-day standard then in place by the VA for access to care, veterans, on average, were waiting over 70 days to see a primary care physician and over 60 days to see a mental health care provider.

Most alarmingly, 37 percent of the veterans who were surveyed who

sought mental health care were not able to get an appointment in 14 days or 60 days or 1 year. They never got in at all. It is important that we remember that in the context of the VHA's recent admission that after a scientific survey of veterans in all 50 States, an average of 20 veterans a day are taking their lives in this country, and 14 of those 20 veterans who will take their lives today have not had a chance to see someone at the VA.

We have learned that we cannot depend on the VA to tell us how the VA is doing. We must ask veterans directly. This amendment will do just that. It will, in every community that we serve, ask the veterans themselves how long they are waiting, when they first requested care and when that was received, the continuity of that care, the quality of that care, and the customer service.

If we are to create a culture of accountability in the VA, as the chairman has said over and over again, and which I agree with wholeheartedly, we need to ask the veterans directly about their experience. We can no longer make the same mistake of trusting the VA to tell us how the VA is doing.

Mr. Chairman, I ask for this body's full support of this measure that will help us hold the VA in check, keep them accountable, and ensure that veterans always have a voice in oversight of this most important institution.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the ranking member.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me 30 seconds. Mr. Chairman, I fully support his amendment, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I do not oppose the amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Again, Mr. O'ROURKE has brought another good piece of legislation to the floor. In fact, this has previously passed the House in the 113th Congress. I think that veterans' voices must be heard, and we also must be careful how the questions are asked. We know how any survey or poll can be manipulated. It is very important that this is a trusted survey. I would urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 19 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 19 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), I offer amendment No. 19.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, add after line 2 the following:

SEC. 11. PROVISION OF STATUS UNDER LAW BY HONORING CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS AS VETERANS.

(a) VETERAN STATUS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 107 the following new section:

“§ 107A. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components

“Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10 to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this section.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 107 the following new item:

“107A. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components.”

(b) CLARIFICATION REGARDING BENEFITS.—No person may receive any benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs solely by reason of section 107A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment, which would provide deserved recognition for the National Guard and Reserve retirees.

The National Guard and Reserve component retirees who have served less than 180 straight days of Active Duty are not able to call themselves veterans due to the legal definition. This is despite their 20 years of service to their State and their Nation and despite their service in emergencies like floods, fires, and other natural disasters.

The amendment allows these National Guard and Reserve retirees to say “I am a veteran,” the ability to get a license plate showing their veteran status and to go to the store and buy a hat that says “Proud Veteran” without feeling guilty. It is simply a way to honor the men and women who have served in and retired from our National Guard and Reserve forces. It has no cost, and it already passed the House last by a vote of 407-0. I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I do not oppose it.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, this is an important piece of legislation to many. It would give the ability for those who have served in the National Guard or Reserve for 20 years selflessly to be able to call themselves a veteran. It has already passed the House, as my colleague has already brought to our attention, back in February.

Representative WALZ is steadfast in his support of the National Guard and Reserve and all those who have worn the uniform of this Nation. I think it is very fitting that it be a part of this legislation today. I urge its passage.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have no further speakers, and I urge all my colleagues to support the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 20 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 20 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), I offer amendment No. 20.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, add after line 2 the following:

SEC. 11. PROVISION OF REHABILITATIVE EQUIPMENT AND HUMAN-POWERED VEHICLES TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1714(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “Any veteran” and inserting “(1) Any veteran”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) The Secretary may furnish rehabilitative equipment to any veteran who is entitled to a prosthetic appliance.

“(B) In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary may modify non-rehabilitative equipment owned by a veteran only if the veteran elects for such modification.

“(C) The Secretary shall annually submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on rehabilitative equipment fur-

nished to veterans under subparagraph (A). Each such report shall include, with respect to the year covered by the report—

“(i) the number of veterans eligible to receive such rehabilitative equipment;

“(ii) the number of veterans who received such rehabilitative equipment;

“(iii) the number of veterans who elected to receive modified equipment pursuant to subparagraph (B); and

“(iv) any recommendations of the Secretary to improve furnishing veterans with rehabilitative equipment.

“(D) In this paragraph, the term ‘rehabilitative equipment’ means—

“(i) rehabilitative equipment, including recreational sports equipment that provide an adaption or accommodation for the veteran, regardless of whether such equipment is intentionally designed to be adaptive equipment; and

“(ii) includes hand cycles, recumbent bicycles, medically adapted upright bicycles, and upright bicycles.”.

(b) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the requirements of this section and the amendments made by this section. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment, which would allow the VA flexibility in providing equipment to help injured veterans recover through adaptive recreation. Specifically, it allows the Secretary of the VA to furnish rehabilitative equipment to veterans entitled to prosthetic appliances or modify non-rehabilitative equipment owned by a veteran. For example, this bill would allow a veteran with a prosthetic to bring his or her bike in and have it fitted to work with their prosthetic.

Currently, the VA can purchase new recreational equipment to support healing for the veteran, but sometimes a veteran just wants to use his or her own equipment; they want a return to normal after a major life-changing event that led to their need for a prosthetic.

This bill has no cost since the VA already has the equipment and the people to do this. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, even though I am not opposed to the amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, this is another valuable piece of legislation brought to us by our friend, Mr. WALZ. Disabled veterans do, in fact, need access to adapt-

ive equipment, including recreational sports equipment. I think that this is a very commonsense amendment. I support it. I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 21 printed in House Report 114-742.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. 11. APPOINTMENT OF LICENSED HEARING AID SPECIALISTS IN VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) LICENSED HEARING AID SPECIALISTS.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—Section 7401(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting “licensed hearing aid specialists,” after “Audiologists,”.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—Section 7402(b)(14) of such title is amended by inserting “, hearing aid specialist” after “dental technologist”.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to appointing hearing aid specialists under sections 7401 and 7402 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a), and providing services furnished by such specialists, the Secretary shall ensure that—

(1) a hearing aid specialist may only perform hearing services consistent with the hearing aid specialist’s State license related to the practice of fitting and dispensing hearing aids without excluding other qualified professionals, including audiologists, from rendering services in overlapping practice areas;

(2) services provided to veterans by hearing aid specialists shall be provided as part of the non-medical treatment plan developed by an audiologist; and

(3) the medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs provide to veterans access to the full range of professional services provided by an audiologist.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In determining the qualifications required for hearing aid specialists and in carrying out subsection (b), the Secretary shall consult with veterans service organizations, audiologists, otolaryngologists, hearing aid specialists, and other stakeholder and industry groups as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the following:

(A) Timely access of veterans to hearing health services through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(B) Contracting policies of the Department with respect to providing hearing health

services to veterans in facilities that are not facilities of the Department.

(2) **TIMELY ACCESS TO SERVICES.**—Each report shall, with respect to the matter specified in paragraph (1)(A) for the one-year period preceding the submittal of such report, include the following:

(A) The staffing levels of audiologists, hearing aid specialists, and health technicians in audiology in the Veterans Health Administration.

(B) A description of the metrics used by the Secretary in measuring performance with respect to appointments and care relating to hearing health.

(C) The average time that a veteran waits to receive an appointment, beginning on the date on which the veteran makes the request, for the following:

(i) A disability rating evaluation for a hearing-related disability.

(ii) A hearing aid evaluation.

(iii) Dispensing of hearing aids.

(iv) Any follow-up hearing health appointment.

(D) The percentage of veterans whose total wait time for appointments described in subparagraph (C), including an initial and follow-up appointment, if applicable, is more than 30 days.

(3) **CONTRACTING POLICIES.**—Each report shall, with respect to the matter specified in paragraph (1)(B) for the one-year period preceding the submittal of such report, include the following:

(A) The number of veterans that the Secretary refers to non-Department audiologists for hearing health care appointments.

(B) The number of veterans that the Secretary refers to non-Department hearing aid specialists for follow-up appointments for a hearing aid evaluation, the dispensing of hearing aids, or any other purpose relating to hearing health.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

□ 1530

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment, amendment No. 20, to Chairman MILLER's VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act.

My amendment would add hearing aid specialists to the list of medical providers at the VA, allowing veterans access to timely hearing aid adjustments while still providing them with the same quality of care.

I come from rural America. One of the issues that we come across is that many of our veterans have hearing issues and—by the way, hearing and audiology issues are increasing at a rate of 10 percent per year in the VA—it takes a long time to get an appointment with an audiologist.

Once they get that appointment with the audiologist and they get a hearing aid, oftentimes they have to come back to the audiologist, waiting 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 6 weeks for that appointment to get that hearing aid adjusted and fitted. Or if something goes wrong, they have to wait another 4 weeks to go back to get it refitted and fixed.

So what this amendment would do is allow for our veterans to use hearing

aid specialists, oftentimes in their own community, getting quick access to care so that they can hear. It is also going to free up our audiologists to do the more serious work that is necessary with our veterans. We are in a scenario where not only are we going to save money, but we are also going to be able to provide better quality care to our veterans.

In my neck of the woods, if a veteran can get a hearing aid adjusted in their own community as opposed to driving 2 hours or 3 hours to a VA facility, it is a big, big deal for them.

So often I am hearing stories from family members who talk about their loved one who is maybe from Vietnam or from World War II. They will sit around the table and just smile, nodding their head in conversations because they can't hear.

I have heard stories where they have gotten their hearing aids and they have actually thrown them away because they can't get appointments. They don't know how the darn things work.

This is an easy fix. I appreciate the chairman's support. I think we have support from my friends across the aisle. It is an easy fix with no cost.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, though I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to support the amendment, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chair, I appreciate the gentleman's support.

Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD six letters from numerous veterans service organizations in support of H.R. 5620, as amended.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN
VETERANS OF AMERICA,

August 26, 2016.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) and our 425,000 members are pleased to offer our strong support for H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act.

It has been over two years since the scandal in Phoenix alerted the country to the egregious state of the VA health care system. And yet little has been done to ensure the VA is equipped with the necessary authorities to address workforce accountability. The large majority of VA employees serve veterans with distinction, but there are employees whose poor performance or, at worst, gross negligence put veterans at risk. They need to immediately be removed from the VA to restore trust within the VA system. IAVA believes this legislation provides the VA leadership those necessary authorities while still providing due process. While accountability at the VA is past due, the changes to due process and the appointments clause ensure such accountability is done responsibly.

Additionally, this legislation provides many improvements to the disability compensation appeals process desperately needed at the VA to better manage the appeals backlog. Reducing burdensome red tape will better serve veterans and their families and will improve efficiency within the VA.

Veterans have made great sacrifices in service to our nation, and IAVA believes they deserve a VA that can provide the level of care they have earned. If we can be of help, please contact Tom Porter, IAVA's Legislative Director.

Sincerely,

JONATHAN SCHLEIFER,
Interim Chief Policy Officer,
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
UNIFORMED SERVICES,
Springfield, VA, July 13, 2016.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: On behalf of the nationwide membership of the National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS), I would like to offer our full support for H.R. 5640, a bill that combines VA accountability provisions with personnel appeals reform.

Your legislation would enhance the power of the Department of Veterans Affairs to hold its employees accountable for their actions and for when they abuse their public trust and their obligation to care for sick and injured veterans. At the same time, your bill is balanced. It does not come at the expense of fairness and equitable treatment of VA employees.

NAUS supports efforts to reform VA into an organization worthy of the veterans it is charged with serving. Various personnel policies and antiquated rules have played a part in pushing its ranks into a culture of corruption that has led to a list of scandals in VA facilities nationwide. It is time to ensure accountability where it is needed.

Once again, thank you for introducing legislation that will address the intolerably corrosive culture of no-accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Thank you as well, for your continued support for America's veterans.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. JONES,
Legislative Director.

RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 15, 2016.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: The Reserve Officers Association of the United States supports H.R. 5620, the "VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016," to amend title 38 U.S.C., giving the Secretary of Veterans Affairs broader authority to establish performance accountability among employees within the department and to reform the disability claims appeal process.

The public's trust in the quality of VA health care and benefits administration has needlessly suffered because VA employees were not doing their jobs and because VA managers at all levels neglected their responsibilities. Poor performance has cost veterans their health and even their lives; veterans die waiting for a claim settlement. Families trust that their loved one will be taken care of and not taken from them.

Civil servants must be accountable; poor performance must not be tolerated, nor rewarded with promotions and bonuses. The VA leadership's disciplinary failure is clear: according to congressional sources, in the wake of the 2014 scandals only three employees have been terminated; of 452 disciplinary

cases, nearly a third were mitigated. “. . . in the San Diego [regional office], a Veteran Service Representative was proposed for removal, but the employee only received a suspension for less than 14 days. The suspensions can also be misleading as we have seen plenty of cases where VA merely uses a ‘paper’ suspension but in reality the employee serves a much shorter suspension, if they serve one at all.”

Accountability will strengthen the civil service: high-performing teams will attract quality into public service. Of special value are measures impacting the Senior Executive Service. Essentially beyond the reach of discipline and accountability, the SES is the “center of gravity” for an agency’s performance: the effects of mediocrity at the top, with bonuses unjustified by performance, cascades devastatingly through the ranks.

ROA also supports the act’s increased whistleblower protections; in truth, the legislative branch and the agency’s internal controls, such as its inspector general, have at best a limited capacity to identify abuses of the public trust that occur beyond detection, deep in the bureaucracy. Whistleblowers are a veteran’s best friend and must be encouraged and protected.

But merely giving an agency the tools to make internal corrections does not necessarily lead to their use: Congress must exercise rigorous oversight, unsparingly revealing to public scrutiny the failures of agency heads and the administration in discharging their duties, and exerting all influential means appropriate to bring about correction.

ROA has a membership of 50,000 and is the only national military association that exclusively supports all the uniformed reserve components of the United States. Thank you for your efforts on this issue, and your support of our veterans. Please have your staff call Susan Lukas, ROA’s legislative director with any question or issue you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY E. PHILLIPS,
Executive Director.

STUDENT VETERANS OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, July 7, 2016.

Chairman JEFF MILLER,
*Committee on Veterans Affairs,
House of Representatives.*

CHAIRMAN MILLER: On behalf of Student Veterans of America (SVA), a coalition of over 1,390 student veteran organization chapters at colleges and universities with over 550,000 student veterans at those campuses, I am writing to express our support of HR 5620 the “VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016”. The bill supports stronger accountability measures for Department of Veterans Affairs employees and increases the efficiency of the disability appeals process. This bill gives the VA secretary the authority to take necessary action against negligent employees, such as recalling their bonuses and relocation expenses. Accountability is a major challenge for the VA and this bill addresses accountability challenges with specific measures. In addition, we support reform of the benefit appeals process.

As supporters of the previous legislation the “VA Accountability Act of 2015”, we support these necessary changes. Student veterans nationally rely on the Department of Veteran Affairs for benefits and for health care as well as other programs and services. The goals of HR 5620 align with those of SVA. As Secretary McDonald said, “As the Nation’s foremost advisory body in medicine and healthcare, you know that the Department of Veterans Affairs is in the midst of overcoming problems involving access to

healthcare. We own them, and we’re fixing them.”

The Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs requires legislative authority to fix accountability challenges so he may hold employees accountable with appropriate policies and processes. SVA supports this bill for these reasons. Please contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

JAMES SCHMELING,
Executive Vice President.

JULY 22, 2016.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association is writing to express its upmost support for H.R. 5620, “VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016.” As a VA recognized National Veterans Service Organization, United Spinal Association, through its VetsFirst program, advocates on behalf of all of our nation’s veterans. With the numerous scandals plaguing VA now, it is essential that Congress take action to rectify the situation and this legislation is an important first step.

The VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016 is a worthy piece of legislation as it proposes to tackle several issues that have undercut the taxpayers’ faith in VA. H.R. 5620 provides for the removal or demotion of employees based on performance or misconduct. This is critical as it not only removes bad apples within VA, but addresses the culture of VA and shows that Congress will no longer tolerate the abuse of our nation’s veterans. It provides for the reduction of benefits for senior executive service (SES) members convicted of certain crimes, recoups bonuses and relocation bonuses of certain VA employees, streamlines personnel actions and addresses the treatment of whistleblowers. Finally, it provides much needed reform to the current VA appeals process. This reform is essential as it addresses employee’s misconduct more efficiently, while establishing procedures that ensure the accused’s Constitutional rights are properly protected.

VetsFirst, believes that Veterans deserve honest, timely and efficient service. For too long VA and its culture have allowed for abuses against those who have sacrificed for this nation. H.R. 5620 addresses both the abuses and the need for cultural reform. Therefore, we are proud to offer our support for this meaningful legislation.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Ross Meglathery, Vice President of VetsFirst, if VetsFirst can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

ROSS MEGLATHERY,
*Vice President, VetsFirst,
a program of United Spinal Association.*

UNITED STATES ARMY,
WARRANT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Herndon, VA, August 9, 2016.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
*Chairman, House Veterans Affairs Committee,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: The United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA) is the only military service organization thoroughly devoted to the welfare of Army Warrant Officers—serving, former and retired—and their families. The USAWOA writes in support of your bill, H.R. 5620, the “VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016.”

Your bill would provide the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) increased flexibility to remove VA employees for performance or misconduct, would pro-

vide improved protections for whistleblowers (including restricting bonus awards for supervisors who retaliate against whistleblowers), and would strengthen accountability of VA Senior Executive Service (SES) employees.

This legislation would also reform and streamline the VA’s appeals process for disability benefits. This is crucial, as the backlog of appeals appears to be growing at geometric rates.

USAWOA joined other members of The Military Coalition in working hard with members of Congress on the VA Choice Act in 2014. H.R. 5620 expands on this good work, to provide vastly more efficient service to our Veterans in need, as it also enforces greater accountability of the professionals tasked with serving them.

The USAWOA thanks you for your leadership on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me for clarification of USAWOA’s position on this, or any other issue in the future.

Sincerely,

JACK DU TEIL,
Executive Director.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 22 OFFERED BY MR. MILLER OF FLORIDA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 22 printed in House Report 114-742.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I offer an amendment as the designee of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 54, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. 11. ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 7734 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting before the period the following: “and on the performance of any regional office that fails to meet its administrative goals”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “and”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) in the case of any regional office that, for the year covered by the report, did not meet the administrative goal of no claim pending for more than 125 days and an accuracy rating of 98 percent—

“(A) a signed statement prepared by the individual serving as director of the regional office as of the date of the submittal of the report containing—

“(i) an explanation for why the regional office did not meet the goal;

“(ii) a description of the additional resources needed to enable the regional office to reach the goal; and

“(iii) a description of any additional actions planned for the subsequent year that are proposed to enable the regional office to meet the goal; and

“(B) a statement prepared by the Under Secretary for Benefits explaining how the failure of the regional office to meet the goal affected the performance evaluation of the director of the regional office; and”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 859, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I offer this amendment, which is similar to a provision that was previously passed in the House in the 113th Congress. It improves transparency and provides important information about each regional office’s accuracy and productivity.

I think that each regional office is required to submit a report whenever it fails to meet its goal of processing claims within 125 days and with 98 percent accuracy. Those are numbers that VA has set forth. I think that it is very important that we keep a timely track on this and not allow the backlogs to continue for an inordinate period of time.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida) having assumed the chair, Mr. ROTHFUS, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5226) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REGULATORY INTEGRITY ACT OF 2016

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5226.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 863 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on

the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5226.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1538

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 5226) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, and for other purposes, with Mr. ROTHFUS in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my bipartisan bill, H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act of 2016, a good government transparency bill.

This bill is a simple concept, but I believe it will have an important and positive impact on the public’s participation in the regulatory process. That positive impact will, in turn, benefit the regulatory process as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, the public comment period is an essential part of upholding our democratic values. It ensures that Americans will have their voices heard in the Federal Government’s regulatory process.

H.R. 5226 helps preserve the integrity of the public commenting in two primary ways. First, the bill defines the parameters of how an agency should communicate when the agency is offering a proposal to the public and when asking that the public provide feedback. This bill requires agencies to do only what you should expect them to do, if the request for feedback was genuine and sincere.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 5226 requires the agency to, one, identify itself; two, clearly state whether the agency is accepting public comments or considering alternatives; and, three, most importantly, speak about the regulation in a neutral, unbiased tone.

The people I represent in Michigan’s Seventh District are ready to offer honest and thoughtful feedback, but they currently lack confidence that Federal agencies are actually open to their insights and constructive criticism.

There may be no better example of this tendency to ignore the American public than the EPA’s Waters of the U.S. Rule. The EPA not only overlooked the very real concerns of the countryside—concerns expressed by my constituents in Monroe, Jackson, and

Lenawee County—but the EPA actually engaged in a social media campaign to gin up support for their proposal.

In fact, the Government Accountability Office found that the EPA undertook a “covert propaganda” campaign by soliciting social media comments in support of their proposed rule. GAO also told the EPA to report this violation to the President and Congress because “the agency’s appropriations were not available for these prohibited purposes.”

The public comment period is the opportunity afforded to American people to voice their concerns on proposed rules, and agencies must take their input seriously.

Mr. Chairman, this bill simply tells agencies that they need to keep to the facts and avoid soliciting support when they ought to be soliciting comments.

Mr. Chairman, the second way this bill helps to preserve the integrity of the regulatory process is that it establishes transparency requirements for the agency in how it communicates to the public.

The bill requires agencies to post on their Web site some basic information about each communication the agency makes about pending regulatory action. For each communication, the public will be able to see a copy of the communication, the intended audience, the method of communication, and the date the communication was issued.

Additionally, agencies will be required to post online a description of each regulatory action, the date the agency first began to consider or develop each action, the status of each action, and the expected date of completion for each action.

Mr. Chairman, these basic transparency measures will allow the public to have a central source for all communication about a specific regulatory action so that the public can have a full and equal opportunity to understand the intent of the agency.

It will also allow Congress and the American public to verify that communications to the public about regulatory actions are honest, unbiased, and compliant with the requirements of the bill.

Mr. Chairman, although individuals may disagree about how much regulation is appropriate or how intrusive regulations might be, we should all agree that the public’s participation is a vital part of legitimizing the rule-making process. Without input from the public—input that is fully considered by the agency promulgating the rule—something fundamental is missing from the legislation itself.

Unfortunately, we have seen over and over again agencies that seem to believe that the regulatory process is simply a perfunctory act of compliance necessary to reach the end goal of whatever regulatory scheme the agency’s staff feels is best.

What we see when the agency diminishes the public input is that the rule-making process is used by agencies to

advocate for what should be a proposed rule rather than used to refine and improve upon the agency's existing thoughts.

□ 1545

In fact, Congress originally established the regulatory process as a way to crowdsource the development of regulations long before the term "crowdsourcing" was even a thing.

Mr. Chairman, this bill helps us return to our original intent of crowdsourcing regulatory efforts, by preventing agencies from boasting to the public about how great their proposal is, instead of honestly and earnestly asking for feedback, constructive criticism, and a dialogue about how best to solve problems. As a result, H.R. 5226 will restore integrity to our regulatory process.

I appreciate the opportunity to bring the bill to the floor today. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 5226, and I cannot support this bill as drafted. This legislation is another attempt by House Republicans to attack agency rulemakings with which they disagree. This attack is done under the guise of creating more transparency, but the bill will actually lead to less openness in the agency rulemaking process.

The bill we are considering today supposedly aims to prohibit improper communications by agencies, known as agency aggrandizement. What the bill actually does is muzzle agencies from talking about pending rules.

This bill would prohibit agencies from making public communications to solicit support for or to promote a pending agency regulatory action. Agencies currently are prohibited from grassroots lobbying for an agency rule or from engaging in publicity or propaganda.

The GAO has issued opinions that define what agencies can and cannot say. GAO says that three categories of communications are off limits: one, covert communications; two, self-aggrandizement; and three, purely partisan activities.

This bill goes far beyond that by prohibiting communications that are to promote a rule. Almost anything an agency says would be considered promotion of a rule. The practical impact of this legislation is that almost any action the agency made to communicate the benefits of a rule could be considered to be improperly promoting a pending action.

The bill defines public communication to include every oral, written, or electronic communication. This means that tweets as innocuous and as popular as the Department of the Interior's daily nature photo could even be considered improper promotion. I cannot believe that the sponsors of this

bill would really intend to regulate nature photos on Twitter.

In addition to limiting communications between agencies and the public, this legislation contains a number of other unnecessarily burdensome requirements.

Yesterday, the White House issued a Statement of Administration Policy that said that, if this bill were presented to the President, his senior advisers would recommend that he veto the bill. That statement said: "The Regulatory Integrity Act would be duplicative and costly to the American taxpayer. The separate tracking and reporting of agency communications as prescribed by the bill is unnecessary, is extremely burdensome, and provides little to no value while diverting agency resources from important priorities."

I urge my colleagues to reject H.R. 5226.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS).

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this important issue.

Congress and the courts have stated time and again, agencies cannot use taxpayer funds to lobby Congress on rules and regulations. It is supposed to be perfectly clear, but, unfortunately, we have seen that this administration thinks it is above the law, disregarding the clear differences between disseminating information and lobbying.

In 2004, The New York Times—yes, The New York Times—reported on the EPA's use of taxpayers' funds for a propaganda campaign to promote its proposed clean water rule.

The minority talks about muzzling. Well, we do need to muzzle propaganda. At the same time the EPA was working with outside groups to actively promote the rule on social media like Facebook and Twitter, this covert propaganda came, despite the clear line that prohibits Federal agencies from engaging and lobbying on causes.

Enough is enough, Mr. Chairman. Federal agencies should not be using taxpayer dollars to lobby on behalf of rules and regulations they are issuing, as The New York Times pointed out and discovered.

I have heard from farmers, manufacturers, miners, and more in West Virginia about their concerns with rules such as waters of the U.S. Their concerns are legitimate, and the EPA should not be drowning out criticism by actively lobbying for their own rules on social media.

This is a commonsense bill. This deserves bipartisan support by all Members of Congress. It shouldn't matter which party is in control of Congress or which party is in the White House. It is simply good policy.

I encourage approval of this legislation.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am awaiting additional Members who would like to speak to this issue, but, in the intervening time, let me just say again I certainly, having majored in forestry and land management early in my academic career, love pictures of nature. We are not attempting to stop that from taking place. We are simply saying that the American public deserves the opportunity, in regulatory issues, to make clear public comments and to know, with transparency, what agencies are doing.

To find out, with the new social media opportunities, that agencies like the EPA are using taxpayer dollars to purchase specific tools, electronic media tools, to engage in encouraging people only to comment positively about their rules, that is a great concern. So, Mr. Chairman, I think it is appropriate for us to put a little further block in saying taxpayers ought to be considered and agencies ought to listen to them, and not the other way around.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I have a letter in my possession signed by numerous groups, public interest groups, stating their opposition to H.R. 5226. It is a very interesting combination of groups: the AFL-CIO, AFSCME, American Association of University Women, Americans for Financial Reform, Clean Water Action, Consumer Action, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety, Earthjustice, U.S. PIRG, United Steelworkers, Voices for Progress, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Project on Government Oversight, Public Citizen, Prairie Rivers Network, and NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice.

What they all agree on is that the Regulatory Integrity Act will significantly undermine a Federal agency's ability to engage and inform the public in a meaningful and transparent way regarding its work on important, science-based rulemakings that will greatly benefit the public.

As a result, the bill will lead to decreased public awareness and participation in the rulemaking process in direct contradiction of the Administrative Procedure Act and agencies' authorizing statutes which specifically provide for broad stakeholder engagement.

They point out that substantial ambiguities in the bill threaten to create uncertainty and confusion among agencies about what public communications are permissible and, thus, risk discouraging them from keeping the public apprised of the important work that they do on its behalf.

In an era when agencies should be increasingly embracing innovative 21st century communications technologies needed to reach the public, including

social media, H.R. 5226 sends exactly the wrong message. So that means that all of these groups feel as though this legislation would dampen or chill the public's ability to be able to weigh in on a rule, to be able to even know what those agencies are doing. I just, for the life of me, cannot understand what the urgency is to pass this bill into law and to have the chilling effects that it would have on the public's ability to communicate with its government.

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

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

I thank my friend and colleague from Missouri. I appreciate his concerns, appreciate the list. But in that list, I didn't hear anyone that would have to live directly under the new regulations that are being proposed or people that would offer comment with great concerns of how it would impact them.

I am thinking of the agriculture community in my district, major community in the district, with great concerns about waters of the U.S. and the impact that it would have in doing away with the opportunity of the family farm, in many cases.

So I don't see any significant problems with any ambiguity, if there be any, which this legislation might produce amongst agencies because we are always open to agencies coming to Congress asking questions. What did we mean?

I think debates like this, that I appreciate, give an opportunity to look back and say this is what we debated, this is what we meant to do, and this is how you ought to carry it out. So the issue of any ambiguity that would come up from this legislation, in fact, I don't think it is a problem. It adds more insight.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS).

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Chairman, again, listening to the critical nature of this issue about communication—I served 18 years in our State legislature. One of the great awakenings to me up here was the fact that, once we pass a law and we tell the administration, who tells an agency to craft a rule to carry out that law, under the Federal system, the agency can do essentially whatever it wants to do.

□ 1600

That rule doesn't officially come back and not go into effect until the Congress gives its stamp of approval. The agency basically can do almost anything it wants. The role, responsibility, and power of Congress is somewhat limited.

In the State legislature, a rule had to come back in West Virginia and get the full approval of the legislature once again. That was the voice of the legislature to say: We think you got it right, agency, or not.

We don't have that luxury here. That is why in this rulemaking process, the

communication as the draft rule and proposed final rule get published, we run into the issue where an agency, through all these incredible communication tools, might cross the line and actually try to influence the public comments to bolster their rule, essentially lobbying for their own rule. That is simply wrong. We need to have a clearly defined rule.

That is what this bill does. We need to put the power back in the people and to make sure that they are not unduly influenced by an agency that is simply trying to sell their rule. Communicating with the public is important. We have incredible communication tools. That is a positive thing. But they have to be used in the right way, and that is why this legislation makes sure that they are used in the right way and why this is so important.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, my friend from Michigan mentioned that he didn't hear in the list people that may be impacted by this legislation. The list includes 34 different groups, and some of them that I think that all of us represent that would be impacted by this arbitrary legislation are groups like Consumer Federation of America, Earthjustice, Environment America, Greenpeace, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Prairie Rivers Network—I am not even sure where that is based, but I represent the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers right at St. Louis, so water is important to the people in my region—U.S. PIRG, Union of Concerned Scientists, United Steelworkers, and United Support and Memorial for Workplace Fatalities. Those are some of the groups that are represented in this letter.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from the U.S. Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT).

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Missouri.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act of 2016, would, we believe, impose duplicative and unnecessary procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from efficiently performing their statutory responsibilities and could potentially lead to a less informed public due to the nature of the communication that is requested or not to be requested by this bill. Additionally, Mr. Chairman, these duplicative services will be costly to the American taxpayer.

While we agree that some increased transparency should be considered, this bill actually grinds regulatory processes and has an onerous and chilling reporting requirement to it. The bill increases bureaucratic red tape my Republican colleagues purport to be the problem with government and creates additional oversight by the Federal Government on agencies. We do have the ability to keep agencies from what their rulemaking is through our own appropriation of those agencies and what they do.

If that isn't reason enough not to support this legislation, its added costs to the American taxpayers should do the job. The separate tracking and reporting of agency communications as prescribed by the bill is unnecessary and extremely burdensome and provides little to no value while diverting agency resources from the important priorities and work that the agencies with limited resources as it is are supposed to carry out.

This bill is designed for the majority to more easily combat agency actions that they disagree with.

Mr. Chairman, there are more urgent matters that we need to be taking up at this time that need our immediate attention: the Zika virus, the Flint water crisis, gun violence, and the heroin and opiate crisis that are going on right now. This is really unnecessary time that this Congress should be taking, and we believe that this should be struck down by this Congress.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP), my good friend and colleague.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. WALBERG for all his hard work on this issue. It is a very important issue for this country and the people that we represent.

Every year, unelected bureaucrats create thousands of onerous rules that have the full effect of a law without any input from the people that they will impact—rules like the EPA's waters of the United States rule or the Department of Labor's overtime rule—which I hear about often in my office. These rules are able to be crafted and adopted behind closed doors without ever being voted on by a single elected official with absolutely no transparency and no public debate.

Nevertheless, this administration continues to churn out these rules without regard for the negative consequences or the fact that this rulemaking process is contrary to the express terms of the United States Constitution, Article I, section 1, which gives exclusive lawmaking power to the legislative branch.

These rules have so many negative consequences like fewer jobs and less workplace flexibility, and they impact virtually everyone in some way or another. That is why I support Mr. WALBERG's bill, H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act. It provides much-needed transparency into the rulemaking process by requiring agencies to post all public comments in a central location. It also prohibits Federal agencies from actively soliciting support for any and all proposed rules during the public comment period.

Mr. Chairman, I have worked here for 2 years, and I am still shocked by the brazen disregard this administration has shown for the rule of law and the United States Constitution. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "yes" on this measure.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I would like to make the gentleman

from Missouri, my friend, aware that I have no further speakers and I am prepared to close.

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I want to close by reiterating a few of the problems with the Regulatory Integrity Act. This bill would require agencies to report every interaction with the public regardless of whether it is a phone call, email, tweet, or more formal statement. The bill would prove completely unworkable and would have the effect of chilling agencies' interactions with the public and leading to less transparency with the agency rulemaking process.

I would support a bill that actually improved transparency. This bill will not accomplish that, and I cannot support it. I, again, urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for the concerns. I think we really want the same thing. We want to make sure that in the process of doing regulation rules, that they fit the need, but I guess I would add to the point that as limited as possible in order to keep the liberty, opportunity and growth in our country is what I would feel to be necessary.

We have regulatory agencies that are—because of their strength, their power, and their pervasiveness—able to direct the course of regulation under the guise of having public comment, under the guise of seeking that advice and even best practices; yet behind the scenes are using resources with some of the abilities they have today with social media and other things to lobby for a particular proposal before they have even looked at the comments from those that have to deal with it, whether it is a corporation or whether it is a farmer or whether it is a union.

As a former proud United Steel worker myself, I understand that regulations are important to make sure that protections are taken. But as a steelworker, I wanted to know that I had a job to come back to at a site to come back to. The place I worked at in the south side of Chicago is no longer there. Many of the reasons were because of bad decisions by the corporation, but also a regulatory climate that made it difficult to compete.

So all we are asking here is that there be full transparency, that Congress gets more involved in saying yes to good ideas from the agencies or saying no to bad ideas from the agencies, in listening to people and making sure that their concerns are met first and foremost. That is all I ask.

Mr. Chairman, that is why I ask support for H.R. 5226, I believe a common-sense and, yes, a bipartisan proposal to put transparency back into the system

and integrity in the way we do our regulatory reform.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chair, there is loads of work for Congress to do “before we sleep”—from the budget for the federal government itself to funding for the Zika health emergency before it gets any more out of control.

Instead, the House just wasted time on H.R. 5226, the badly misnamed Regulatory Integrity Act, a bill so costly to taxpayers and so redundant of existing legislation that it has attracted a veto threat.

The bill adds wasteful costs to the regulatory process Republicans incessantly claim is too costly now. H.R. 5226 requires every public communication to be published within 24 hours. Duh! Public communications are by definition—public.

Republicans have never seen a regulation they like. Putting new and costly work on agencies won't make regulations any less acceptable. If the point was the same as usual—to try to deter regulations—Republicans are going to have to try harder.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WESTMORELAND). All time for general debate has expired.

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

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-63. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

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

H.R. 5226

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 “Regulatory Integrity Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION RELATING TO PENDING REGULATORY ACTIONS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 306 the following new section:

“§ 307. Information regarding pending agency regulatory action

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AGENCY REGULATORY ACTION.—The term ‘agency regulatory action’ means guidance, policy statement, directive, rule making, or adjudication issued by an Executive agency.

“(2) AGGRANDIZEMENT.—The term ‘aggrandizement’ means—

“(A) any communication emphasizing the importance of the Executive agency or agency regulatory action that does not have the clear purpose of informing the public of the substance or status of the Executive agency or agency regulatory action; or

“(B) any communication that is puffery.

“(3) PUBLIC COMMUNICATION.—The term ‘public communication’—

“(A) means any method (including written, oral, or electronic) of disseminating information to the public, including an agency statement (written or verbal), blog, video, audio recording, or other social media message; and

“(B) does not include a notice published in the Federal Register pursuant to section 553 or any requirement to publish pursuant to this section.

“(4) RULE MAKING.—The term ‘rule making’ has the meaning given that term under section 551.

“(b) INFORMATION TO BE POSTED ONLINE.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—The head of each Executive agency shall make publicly available in a searchable format in a prominent location either on the website of the Executive agency or in the rule making docket on Regulations.gov the following information:

“(A) PENDING AGENCY REGULATORY ACTION.—A list of each pending agency regulatory action and with regard to each such action—

“(i) the date on which the Executive agency first began to develop or consider the agency regulatory action;

“(ii) the status of the agency regulatory action;

“(iii) an estimate of the date of upon which the agency regulatory action will be final and in effect; and

“(iv) a brief description of the agency regulatory action.

“(B) PUBLIC COMMUNICATION.—For each pending agency regulatory action, a list of each public communication about the pending agency regulatory action issued by the Executive agency and with regard to each such communication—

“(i) the date of the communication;

“(ii) the intended audience of the communication;

“(iii) the method of communication; and

“(iv) a copy of the original communication.

“(2) PERIOD.—The head of each Executive agency shall publish the information required under paragraph (1)(A) not later than 24 hours after a public communication relating to a pending agency regulatory action is issued and shall maintain the public availability of such information not less than 5 years after the date on which the pending agency regulatory action is finalized.

“(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS.—Any public communication issued by an Executive agency that refers to a pending agency regulatory action—

“(1) shall specify whether the Executive agency is considering alternatives, including alternatives that may conflict with the intent, objective, or methodology of such agency regulatory action;

“(2) shall specify whether the Executive agency is accepting or will be accepting comments;

“(3) shall expressly disclose that the Executive agency is the source of the information to the intended recipients; and

“(4) may not—

“(A) solicit support for or promote the pending agency regulatory action; or

“(B) include statements of aggrandizement for the Executive agency, any Federal employee, or the pending agency regulatory action.

“(d) REPORTING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 15 of each year, the head of an Executive agency that communicated about a pending agency regulatory action during the previous fiscal year shall submit to each committee of Congress with jurisdiction over the activities of the Executive agency a report indicating—

“(A) the number pending agency regulatory actions the Executive agency issued public communications about during that fiscal year;

“(B) the average number of public communications issued by the Executive agency for each pending agency regulatory action during that fiscal year;

“(C) the 5 pending agency regulatory actions with the highest number of public communications issued by the Executive agency in that fiscal year; and

“(D) a copy of each public communication for the pending agency regulatory actions identified in subparagraph (C).

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF REPORTS.—The head of an Executive agency that is required to submit a report under paragraph (1) shall make the report publicly available in a searchable format in

a prominent location on the website of the Executive agency.”.

(b) *TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—The table of sections for chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to section 306 the following new item:

“307. Information regarding pending agency regulatory action.”.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 114-744. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BOUSTANY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 114-744.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 13, strike “; and” and insert a semicolon.

Page 3, line 15, strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

Page 3, after line 15, insert the following: “(v) if a regulatory impact analysis or similar cost-benefit analysis has been conducted, the findings of such analysis, including any data or formula used for purposes of such analysis.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 863, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, I am here to offer an amendment to H.R. 5226, the Regulatory Integrity Act of 2016. This amendment is based on legislation I proposed earlier in the year.

By creating a new process that requires the administration to keep a clear, organized, and easy-to-understand list of all proposed and outstanding rules and regulations, we are forcing transparency on bureaucrats who are currently running amok.

I also want to thank my colleague, Mr. LOUDERMILK, for working with me to offer this very sensible amendment.

Our simple amendment requires the administration to make the data collected and the formula used for all Regulatory Impact Analysis, or RIA, publicly available. This is about simple transparency.

In other words, for an example, let’s say BSEE, under the Department of the Interior, says that the well control rule—a proposal that will drastically affect the Louisiana energy offshore sector—will only cost the offshore oil and gas industry \$800 million to implement, and industry projections put

that number over \$9 billion, well, BSEE should be required to prove how they reached those figures. They should be required to make completely transparent their assumptions and their methodology. That is what the American people ask for.

□ 1615

The Obama administration is responsible for an unparalleled expansion of the regulatory state, with the imposition of 229 major regulations since 2009, a lot of costs incurred.

These proposals are being made with little regard to impact on businesses at a time of weak economic growth. The constant barrage of new regulations is causing some of the rules to be counterproductive, contradictory, difficult to understand, and impossible to implement.

This simple amendment will allow Congress to send a clear message to the administration that regulations must be based in facts, clearly understood, and completely transparent to the impacted industry and to the American public.

I encourage my colleagues to join us in supporting this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

This amendment does not alleviate my concerns with the underlying bill. In fact, this amendment may lead to more confusion.

It would require an agency to publish a cost benefit analysis for all rules if such a study was conducted. Agencies are already required to conduct a cost-benefit analysis for major rules under Executive Order 12866. Agencies publish the results of those analyses in the rulemaking dockets for those rules.

This is an unnecessary amendment, and I oppose it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, this is an absolutely essential amendment because we need more transparency about methods and how these assumptions are built into what they are proposing.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Louisiana for working with us on combining two really good amendments to this.

Mr. Chairman, we live in an era right now of vast growth of our government. Those that are bearing the burden of this growth and this overregulation are the American people. The average American family pays \$15,000 a year in hidden regulatory costs. The burden of regulation upon the market and upon the industry today in our businesses is almost \$1.9 trillion, nearly a \$2 trillion impact on our economy that is coming out of our GDP.

If we want to see a recovery, if we want to actually see success in this Nation in our economy, let’s reduce the regulation. But we live in an era right now where the mentality of this government is: if it breaths, tax it; if it doesn’t breath, subsidize it; and if it is successful, then we will regulate it.

All this amendment does is require that these regulatory agencies be honest with the American people, be transparent with the American people, and let the American people know the cost that is going to come out of their pocketbooks for increasing regulation upon Americans, upon individuals, and upon their businesses.

I thank the gentleman for stepping forward and working with us on this amendment.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

The American people want transparency. I don’t understand why our friends on the other side of the aisle would be opposed to transparency. All we are asking is that these agencies be truthful and very clear with the American public and provide all assumptions built into their methods of calculating the impact and the cost.

This is a simple amendment. It is a simple ask. We shouldn’t even have to ask for this.

I urge adoption of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. FLEMING

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 114-744.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 13, strike “; and” and insert a semicolon.

Page 3, line 15, strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

Page 3, after line 15, insert the following: “(v) if applicable, a list of agency regulatory actions issued by the Executive agency, or any other Executive agency, that duplicate or overlap with the agency regulatory action.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 863, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to H.R. 5226,

also known as the Regulatory Integrity Act.

My amendment requires agencies to disclose where a proposed rule would duplicate or overlap with other existing rules when they are making the on-line disclosure required by the underlying bill. Our economy, and small businesses in particular, are suffering under a wet blanket of legislation, and it is particularly onerous when businesses have to comply with multiple sets of these regulations. One area that hits particularly close to home in Louisiana is the EPA's methane rule and its overlap with the BLM's methane and waste reduction rule.

Louisiana's Fourth District is home to the Haynesville Shale, one of our Nation's largest sources for natural gas. BLM doesn't have any authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate emissions, so, instead, they decided to regulate methane emissions under the guise of eliminating waste. This is a poorly disguised attempt to double-regulate those who produce natural gas on Federal lands and comes after BLM has superseded State fracking regulations with their own additional layer of costly Federal regulation.

EPA's regulation alone will make many oil and gas production wells cost prohibitive in today's economy, which of course is their desire as they pursue a "keep it in the ground" agenda. That is why I introduced H.R. 4037, the Keeping Oil and Natural Gas Flowing for Consumers Act, to block EPA's harmful rule and protect consumers.

One example that might appeal to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is with respect to renewable energy. Now, I do not believe the Federal Government should be subsidizing any form of energy. We should have a marketplace where the most affordable and reliable energy sources freely compete with one another. But if my colleagues do want to subsidize wind farms, I would ask them, why do they have 10 different regulatory agencies with 96 forms that impose 3 million hours of paperwork costing an estimated \$177 million to complete? That seems counterproductive to their cause.

The House has recognized the need to eliminate costly and duplicative regulations. In January of this year, we passed H.R. 1155, the SCRUB Act, by JASON SMITH. My amendment would complement that effort by requiring agencies to identify, within their own regulations, where there is duplication or overlap with other regulations and disclose that to the public.

As we seek to root out corruption and prevent agencies from organizing Astroturf advocacy campaigns to promote costly regulations on the public, we must also be on the lookout for commonsense changes we can make to help our struggling economy recover. Identifying and ending duplicative rules is an easy way to start.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, this amendment does nothing to fix the unworkable reporting requirements in the underlying bill. This amendment would require an agency to report if a proposed rule duplicates or overlaps with an existing regulation.

Executive Order 13563, issued by President Obama in 2011, already requires agencies to review rules for duplication and overlap. This amendment, itself, is duplicative and adds an unnecessary requirement without fixing the underlying problem.

I oppose this amendment, along with the underlying bill, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend from Missouri. However, if such executive orders were actually enforced, we wouldn't have this problem. That would be great if President Obama's executive orders actually did prevent duplication and overlapping and the conflict and the problems that occurred. That would be great.

But, evidently, people in his own administration, the Obama administration, don't heed the requirements that are set forth by the leader of that, which is President Obama. That is why we need this in law, Mr. Chairman, because Congress itself needs to hold the agencies, and certainly the Obama administration, accountable for not enforcing the very executive orders that they put out.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 114-744.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 3, strike "; or" and insert a semicolon.

Page 5, after line 3, insert the following new subparagraph:

"(B) be sent through the private email account of an officer or employee of the Executive agency; or"

Page 5, line 4, strike "(B)" and insert "(C)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 863, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment. It is a fairly simple amendment which will

prevent employees and other officers of an executive agency from using private email accounts when discussing pending regulatory actions.

In doing so, we will ensure that there is a clear record of communication throughout the rulemaking process, while making certain that no favoritism is received privately to a particular organization or outside group when drafting a rule.

Private communications—and that is the key word, "private communications"—between those that stand to gain from a pending rule and a regulatory agency raise, I believe, legitimate questions. We have seen this time and time again in the last few years. Specifically, there has been evidence of these private emails being used and working in the shadows with outside groups on cross-State air pollution, the Clean Power Plan, and Pebble Mine, just as examples.

These attempts to circumvent transparency by secretly using an outside group, by providing an outside group a seat at the table when regulations are being developed, is unacceptable and unfair. It has to stop, Mr. Chairman. This amendment would prevent this from happening and go a long way to promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity by our regulatory officials.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and final passage of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I respectfully submit that this amendment is simple, but it is simply another excuse for Members on the other side to talk about emails. I believe that the issue that my colleague is attempting to address has already been addressed when, in 2014, President Obama signed into law the Presidential and Federal Records Act Amendments.

That legislation was sponsored by the ranking member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, ELIJAH CUMMINGS, and it added into law, for the first time, a specific requirement for Federal employees who use personal email accounts. That law now requires Federal employees, if they create a Federal or Presidential record using a personal email account, to forward a copy of the email to their official account within 20 days of that email.

□ 1630

This amendment would create a unique requirement for emails about rulemaking. I agree that employees should use their government email accounts whenever possible, but this bill is not the place to make new rules about Federal records. I—and I hope my colleagues—will oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.
 Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chair, what I could hear was that what we are trying to do here actually is expand that deal with rules and regulations. We understand it can be on other matters. I accept that. If they want to use official communication, that is fine. We just want a record that someone doesn't have to explore to try to find out what that is under rules and regulations.

So, again, I believe that we should stand on this, adopt this amendment, and ultimately pass the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.
 The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BOUSTANY

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 241, noes 154, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 508]

AYES—241

Abraham	Costello (PA)	Guinta
Aderholt	Cramer	Guthrie
Allen	Crawford	Hanna
Amash	Crenshaw	Hardy
Amodei	Cuellar	Harper
Ashford	Culberson	Harris
Babin	Curbelo (FL)	Hartzler
Barletta	Davidson	Hice, Jody B.
Barr	Davis, Rodney	Hill
Barton	Denham	Holding
Benishek	Dent	Hudson
Bilirakis	DeSantis	Huelskamp
Bishop (GA)	Diaz-Balart	Huizenga (MI)
Bishop (MI)	Dold	Hultgren
Black	Donovan	Hunter
Blackburn	Duffy	Hurd (TX)
Blum	Duncan (SC)	Hurt (VA)
Bost	Duncan (TN)	Issa
Boustany	Ellmers (NC)	Jenkins (KS)
Brady (TX)	Emmer (MN)	Jenkins (WV)
Brat	Farenthold	Johnson (OH)
Bridenstine	Fitzpatrick	Jolly
Brooks (AL)	Fleischmann	Jones
Brooks (IN)	Fleming	Jordan
Buchanan	Flores	Joyce
Buck	Forbes	Katko
Buechson	Fortenberry	Kelly (MS)
Burgess	Fox	Kelly (PA)
Byrne	Franks (AZ)	King (IA)
Calvert	Frelinghuysen	King (NY)
Carter (GA)	Garrett	Kinzinger (IL)
Carter (TX)	Gibbs	Kline
Chabot	Gibson	Knight
Chaffetz	Gohmert	Labrador
Clawson (FL)	Goodlatte	LaHood
Coffman	Gosar	LaMalfa
Cole	Gowdy	Lamborn
Collins (GA)	Granger	Lance
Collins (NY)	Graves (GA)	Latta
Comstock	Graves (LA)	Lieu, Ted
Conaway	Graves (MO)	LoBiondo
Cook	Green, Gene	LoFgren
Cooper	Griffith	Long
Costa	Grothman	Loudermillk

Love	Pitts
Lucas	Poe (TX)
Lummis	Poliquin
MacArthur	Pompeo
Marchant	Posey
Marino	Price, Tom
Massie	Ratcliffe
McCarthy	Reed
McCaul	Reichert
McClintock	Renacci
McKinley	Ribble
McMorris	Rice (SC)
Rodgers	Rigell
McNerney	Roby
McSally	Roe (TN)
Meadows	Rogers (AL)
Meehan	Rogers (KY)
Mica	Rohrabacher
Miller (FL)	Rokita
Miller (MI)	Rooney (FL)
Mooney (WV)	Ros-Lehtinen
Mullin	Roskam
Mulvaney	Ross
Murphy (PA)	Rothfus
Neugebauer	Rouzer
Newhouse	Royce
Noem	Salmon
Nugent	Sanford
Nunes	Scalise
Olson	Schrader
Palmer	Schweikert
Paulsen	Scott, Austin
Pearce	Sensenbrenner
Perry	Sessions
Peters	Shimkus
Peterson	Shuster
Pittenger	Simpson

NOES—154

Adams	Frankel (FL)
Aguilar	Fudge
Beatty	Gabbard
Bera	Gallego
Beyer	Garamendi
Blumenauer	Graham
Bonamici	Grayson
Boyle, Brendan F.	Green, Al
Brady (PA)	Grijalva
Brown (FL)	Hahn
Brownley (CA)	Hastings
Bustos	Heck (WA)
Butterfield	Higgins
Capps	Himes
Capuano	Hinojosa
Cárdenas	Honda
Carney	Hoyer
Carson (IN)	Huffman
Castor (FL)	Israel
Castro (TX)	Jeffries
Chu, Judy	Johnson (GA)
Cicilline	Johnson, E. B.
Clark (MA)	Kaptur
Clarke (NY)	Kelly (IL)
Clay	Kennedy
Clyburn	Kildee
Cohen	Kilmer
Connolly	Kind
Conyers	Kirkpatrick
Courtney	Kuster
Crowley	Langevin
Cummings	Larsen (WA)
Davis (CA)	Larson (CT)
Davis, Danny	Lee
DeFazio	Levin
DeGette	Lewis
DeLaney	Lipinski
DeLauro	Lowenthal
DeBene	Lowe
DeSaulnier	Lujan Grisham (NM)
Deutch	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Dingell	Maloney, Carolyn
Doggett	Maloney, Sean
Doyle, Michael F.	Matsui
Duckworth	McCullum
Edwards	McDermott
Ellison	McGovern
Engel	Meeks
Eshoo	Moore
Esty	Moulton
Farr	Murphy (FL)
Foster	

NOT VOTING—36

Bass	Cleaver
Becerra	DesJarlais
Bishop (UT)	Fincher
Cartwright	Gutiérrez

Sinema	Johnson, Sam
Smith (MO)	Keating
Smith (NE)	Moolenaar
Smith (NJ)	Lawrence
Smith (TX)	Loeback
Stefanik	Luetkemeyer
Stewart	Lynch
Stivers	McHenry
Stutzman	Meng
Thompson (PA)	
Thornberry	
Tiberi	
Tipton	
Trott	
Turner	
Upton	
Valadao	
Wagner	
Walberg	
Walden	
Walorski	
Walters, Mimi	
Weber (TX)	
Webster (FL)	
Wenstrup	
Westmoreland	
Wilson (SC)	
Wittman	
Womack	
Woodall	
Yoder	
Yoho	
Young (AK)	
Young (IA)	
Zeldin	
Zinke	

Messer	Thompson (MS)
Moolenaar	Veasey
Palazzo	Visclosky
Pelosi	Walker
Ruiz	Westerman
Rush	Williams
Russell	Wilson (FL)
Serrano	Young (IN)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
 There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1654

Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. PALLONE, and Miss RICE of New York changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Mr. SHIMKUS changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chair, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for rollcall vote 508 on Wednesday, September 14, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I was unavoidably detained at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted: Rollcall No. 508, “nay.”

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Chair, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 508.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN) having assumed the chair, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5226) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 863, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

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

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

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

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed.

Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Kildee moves to recommit the bill H.R. 5226 to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 5, after line 6, insert the following:

“(d) APPLICABILITY.—The restriction described in subsection (c)(4) shall not apply to any public communication to combat a public health crisis including the Zika virus, opioid abuse, and lead poisoning.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

This bill is yet another Republican attempt to delay the formation of critical regulations, including those we need to keep our communities safe. In addition, this bill actually prohibits agencies from publicly communicating to the American people about why a proposed regulation or action is beneficial, including vital information about the impact on public health. We cannot allow the underlying bill to impede the government's ability to share critical public health information.

□ 1700

Mr. Speaker, my motion to recommit is pretty simple. It would allow agencies to provide critical information to the public in order to combat public health crises, like Zika, like opioid abuse, or like the lead poisoning that has been experienced in my hometown of Flint. I know what happens when we ignore or impede the ability to enforce regulations. Thousands of children in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, have suffered from lead poisoning.

Even now, I know many Members on both sides of the aisle ask: How is it going in Flint? They often ask me: Is this crisis over; has it been settled? Today, a year after this crisis became public, 2 years after the State of Michigan switched Flint's drinking water source from the Great Lakes to the Flint River in order to save money, 2 years later, 2 years after lead has poured through the pipes into the bodies of children, you still can't drink the water in Flint.

If you came to Flint today, you would see families still lugging bottled water from distribution sites into their homes to drink, to cook, to bathe their children in bottled water. In the 21st century, in the greatest country on Earth, the wealthiest nation ever imagined, we have a city of 100,000 people that can't drink the water that comes from the tap because it is poisoned.

Federal standards require action if water gets above 15 parts per billion. Because the State of Michigan ignored the regulations and assured the public

that the water was safe, we have levels in Flint that have been tested not at 15 parts per billion, 150 parts per billion, 1500 parts per billion, 23,000 parts per billion in the city of Flint today, a year after this crisis became public.

How did this happen? It happened because State agencies decided that dollars and cents come before the health of people, ignored the regulations that are on the books, were prevented from explaining that to the people, and, in fact, told them a story that the water was safe. And a year later—a year later—the State has barely acted, sending Flint a get-well card. As many of you know, I have come to this well time and time again, imploring my colleagues to join me in providing some relief to the people of Flint.

I came here with a lot of folks in 2012, when I was elected. In 2013, one of the first votes I cast on the floor of the House of Representatives was to provide help, much-needed help to the victims of Hurricane Sandy. Not my district, none of that money flowed to my district, but I was proud—I am still proud of that vote because I and so many of us stood with Americans who were facing the biggest struggle they ever faced. Yet, a year later, in this poor community, which in many ways has been left behind before, you still can't drink the water in Flint, and we can't get even a little help to try to rebuild this community.

Look, time matters. We can't wait more months. Every day, every week that passes that this community does not get the help it needs just to make sure that this doesn't happen again, just to fix the distribution system, to replace some of those lead lines so that a year from now or 2 years from now this doesn't happen again and these children are poisoned again, at the very least, for God's sake, at the very least, we ought to be able to help this community provide its families with water that they can drink. That is all I am asking for.

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I am going to say from the outset, I certainly appreciate my good friend. I want to join, as I have all along, in support for my good friend and colleague from Flint in making sure that we do something about what has gone on there, the pain and suffering that they have gone through needlessly.

I am proud to say that I have been supportive and have traveled to Flint and have been supportive of the legislation we have moved from this House. We look forward when we hear possible good reports of optimism that something will be coming from the Senate, that we will do something further in dealing with that problem. I want to stand with my friend on that.

I think there are questions that have to be addressed relative to public health, but in this legislation, that goes way outside of what we are talking about. First of all, in committee, as well as in the Committee on Rules, this amendment wasn't offered. I think it wasn't because it didn't need to be.

Nothing in this legislation precludes an agency from communicating on these issues, whether it be lead poisoning in the water, Zika, or opioid abuse. Nothing precludes that from taking place. In fact, that is what we are encouraging, when agencies are promulgating a rule and a proposed rule has been put forward that they put forward the facts. That is all.

They have a power way beyond the general public to get information out, but, in turn, the general public ought to know that when they have an opportunity for public comment that agencies will honestly listen to what they are offering, and that the American public and American free enterprise system will be heard, and then the opportunity for Congress to interact as well with the bureaucratic agencies, and ultimately a rule will be promulgated and put in place that makes sense for all concerned, and people are protected.

That is what this bill does. It goes against agencies such as EPA. On the waters of the U.S., EPA and organizations should have been assisting Michigan and their environmental protection entities in dealing with issues of lead poisoning. Rather, on waters of the U.S., they were putting out releases, public statements through media, social media, saying: “Choose clean water,” “clean water is important to me,” “I support EPA's efforts to protect my health, my family, and my community.” Send that back in the rulemaking process. They were lobbying, and we have laws against that. This beefs that up and makes it very clear that the bureaucracy will listen to us to meet our needs, to make sure we are taken care of, and ultimately society works well.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to oppose this motion to recommit and vote against it, vote it down.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 238, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 509]

AYES—185

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

NOES—238

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

Hensarling McMorris
 Herrera Beutler Rodgers
 Hice, Jody B. McSally
 Hill Meadows
 Holding Meehan
 Hudson Mica
 Huelskamp Miller (FL)
 Huizenga (MI) Miller (MI)
 Hultgren Moolenaar
 Hunter Mooney (WV)
 Hurd (TX) Mullin
 Hurt (VA) Mulvaney
 Issa Murphy (PA)
 Jenkins (KS) Neugebauer
 Jenkins (WV) Newhouse
 Johnson (OH) Noem
 Jolly Nugent
 Jordan Nunes
 Joyce Olson
 Katko Palmer
 Paulsen
 Kelly (MS) Pearce
 Kelly (PA) Perry
 King (IA) Pittenger
 King (NY) Pitts
 Kinzinger (IL) Poe (TX)
 Kline Poliquin
 Knight Pompeo
 Labrador Posey
 LaHood Price, Tom
 LaMalfa Ratcliffe
 Lamborn Reed
 Lance Reichert
 Latta Renacci
 LoBiondo Ribble
 Long Rice (SC)
 Loudermilk Rigell
 Love Roby
 Lucas Roe (TN)
 Luetkemeyer Rogers (AL)
 Lummis Rogers (KY)
 MacArthur Rohrabacher
 Marchant Rokita
 Marino Rooney (FL)
 Massie Roskam
 McCarthy Ross
 McClintock Rothfus
 McHenry Rouzer
 McKinley Royce

NOT VOTING—8

DesJarlais Meng
 Fincher Messer
 Johnson, Sam Palazzo

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
 The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remain-

□ 1715

Mr. TROTT changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 250, noes 171, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 510]

AYES—250

Abraham Barletta Bishop (UT)
 Aderholt Barr Black
 Allen Barton Blackburn
 Amash Benishek Blum
 Amodעי Bilirakis Bost
 Ashford Bishop (GA) Boustany
 Babin Bishop (MI) Brady (TX)

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

NOES—171

Adams Carson (IN) Delaney
 Aguilar Cartwright DeLauro
 Bass Castor (FL) DeBene
 Beatty Castro (TX) DeSaulnier
 Becerra Chu, Judy Deutch
 Bera Cicilline Dingell
 Beyer Clark (MA) Doggett
 Blumenauer Clarke (NY) Doyle, Michael
 Bonamici Clay F,
 Boyle, Brendan Cleaver Duckworth
 F, Clyburn Edwards
 Brady (PA) Cohen Ellison
 Brown (FL) Connolly Engel
 Brownley (CA) Conyers Eshoo
 Bustos Crowley Esty
 Butterfield Cummings Farr
 Capps Davis (CA) Foster
 Capuano Davis, Danny Frankel (FL)
 Cárdenas DeFazio Fudge
 Carney DeGette Gabbard

Gallego	Loeb sack	Roybal-Allard
Garamendi	Lofgren	Ruiz
Graham	Lowenthal	Ruppersberger
Grayson	Lowe y	Ryan (OH)
Green, Al	Lujan Grisham	Sánchez, Linda
Green, Gene	(NM)	T.
Grijalva	Luján, Ben Ray	Sanchez, Loretta
Gutiérrez	(NM)	Sarbanes
Hahn	Lynch	Schakowsky
Hastings	Maloney,	Schiff
Heck (WA)	Carolyn	Scott (VA)
Higgins	Maloney, Sean	Serrano
Himes	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Hinojosa	McCollum	Sherman
Honda	McDermott	Sires
Hoyer	McGovern	Slaughter
Huffman	McNerney	Smith (WA)
Israel	Meeks	Speier
Jackson Lee	Moore	Swalwell (CA)
Jeffries	Moulton	Takano
Johnson (GA)	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (CA)
Johnson, E. B.	Nadler	Titus
Kaptur	Napolitano	Tonko
Keating	Neal	Torres
Kelly (IL)	Nolan	Tsongas
Kennedy	Norcross	Van Hollen
Kildee	O'Rourke	Vargas
Kilmer	Pallone	Veasey
Kind	Pascrell	Velázquez
Kirkpatrick	Payne	Visclosky
Kuster	Pelosi	Walz
Langevin	Perlmutter	Wasserman
Larsen (WA)	Peters	Schultz
Larson (CT)	Pingree	Schakowsky
Lawrence	Pocan	Schiff
Lee	Polis	Schrader
Levin	Price (NC)	Scott (VA)
Lewis	Quigley	Scott, David
Lieu, Ted	Rangel	
Lipinski	Rice (NY)	

amendment No. 22 printed in House Report 114-742 offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) had been disposed of.

Lewis	O'Rourke	Serrano
Lieu, Ted	Pallone	Sewell (AL)
Lipinski	Pascrell	Sherman
Loeb sack	Payne	Sires
Lofgren	Pelosi	Slaughter
Lowenthal	Perlmutter	Smith (WA)
Lowe y	Peterson	Speier
Lujan Grisham	Pingree	Swalwell (CA)
(NM)	Pocan	Takano
Luján, Ben Ray	Polis	Thompson (CA)
(NM)	Price (NC)	Titus
Lynch	Quigley	Tonko
Maloney,	Rangel	Torres
Carolyn	Rice (NY)	Tsongas
Matsui	Richmond	Van Hollen
McCollum	Roybal-Allard	Vargas
McDermott	Ruiz	Veasey
McGovern	Ruppersberger	Vela
McNerney	Ryan (OH)	Velázquez
Meeks	Sánchez, Linda	Visclosky
Moore	T.	Walz
Moulton	Sanchez, Loretta	Wasserman
Murphy (FL)	Sarbanes	Schultz
Nadler	Schakowsky	Waters, Maxine
Napolitano	Schiff	Watson Coleman
Neal	Schrader	Welch
Nolan	Scott (VA)	Wilson (FL)
Norcross	Scott, David	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Courtney	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Crenshaw	Meng	Thompson (MS)
DesJarlais	Palazzo	
Fincher	Richmond	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 114-742 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

Amendment No. 5 by Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

Amendment No. 15 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

Amendment No. 19 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

Amendment No. 20 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

Amendment No. 21 by Mr. DUFFY of Wisconsin.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. WALZ

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 173, noes 250, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 511]

AYES—173

Adams	Cooper	Green, Al
Bass	Costa	Green, Gene
Beatty	Courtney	Grijalva
Becerra	Crowley	Gutiérrez
Beyer	Cummings	Hahn
Bishop (GA)	Davis (CA)	Hastings
Blumenauer	Davis, Danny	Heck (WA)
Bonamici	DeFazio	Higgins
Boyle, Brendan	DeGette	Himes
F.	Delaney	Hinojosa
Brady (PA)	DeLauro	Honda
Brown (FL)	DelBene	Hoyer
Brownley (CA)	DeSaulnier	Huffman
Butterfield	Deutch	Israel
Capps	Dingell	Jackson Lee
Capuano	Doggett	Jeffries
Cárdenas	Doyle, Michael	Johnson, E. B.
Carney	F.	Kaptur
Carson (IN)	Edwards	Keating
Cartwright	Ellison	Kelly (IL)
Castor (FL)	Engel	Kennedy
Castro (TX)	Eshoo	Kildee
Chu, Judy	Esty	Kilmer
Cicilline	Farr	Kind
Clark (MA)	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Clarke (NY)	Frankel (FL)	Kuster
Clay	Fudge	Langevin
Cleaver	Gabbaro	Larsen (WA)
Clyburn	Galleo	Larson (CT)
Cohen	Garamendi	Lawrence
Connolly	Graham	Lee
Conyers	Grayson	Levin

Abraham	Fleming	MacArthur
Aderholt	Flores	Maloney, Sean
Aguilar	Forbes	Marchant
Allen	Fortenberry	Marino
Amash	Fox	Masie
Amodei	Franks (AZ)	McCarthy
Ashford	Frelinghuysen	McCaul
Babin	Garrett	McClintock
Barletta	Gibbs	McHenry
Barr	Gibson	McKinley
Barton	Gohmert	McMorris
Benishek	Goodlatte	Rodgers
Bera	Gosar	McSally
Bilirakis	Gowdy	Meadows
Bishop (MI)	Granger	Meehan
Bishop (UT)	Graves (GA)	Messer
Black	Graves (LA)	Mica
Blackburn	Graves (MO)	Miller (FL)
Blum	Griffith	Miller (MI)
Bost	Grothman	Moolenaar
Boustany	Guinta	Mooney (WV)
Brady (TX)	Guthrie	Mullin
Brat	Hanna	Mulvaney
Bridenstine	Hardy	Murphy (PA)
Brooks (AL)	Harper	Neugebauer
Brooks (IN)	Harris	Newhouse
Buchanan	Hartzler	Noem
Buck	Heck (NV)	Nugent
Bucshon	Hensarling	Nunes
Burgess	Herrera Beutler	Olson
Bustos	Hice, Jody B.	Palmer
Byrne	Hill	Paulsen
Calvert	Holding	Pearce
Carter (GA)	Huelskamp	Perry
Carter (TX)	Huizenga (MI)	Peters
Chabot	Hultgren	Pittenger
Chaffetz	Hunter	Pitts
Clawson (FL)	Hurd (TX)	Poe (TX)
Coffman	Hurt (VA)	Poliquin
Cole	Issa	Pompeo
Collins (GA)	Jenkins (KS)	Posey
Collins (NY)	Jenkins (WV)	Price, Tom
Comstock	Johnson (GA)	Ratcliffe
Conaway	Johnson (OH)	Reed
Cook	Jolly	Reichert
Costello (PA)	Jones	Renacci
Cramer	Jordan	Ribble
Crawford	Joyce	Rice (SC)
Crenshaw	Katko	Rigell
Cuellar	Kelly (MS)	Roby
Culberson	Kelly (PA)	Roe (TN)
Curbelo (FL)	King (IA)	Rogers (AL)
Davidson	King (NY)	Rogers (KY)
Davis, Rodney	Kinzinger (IL)	Rohrabacher
Denham	Kline	Rokita
Dent	Knight	Rooney (FL)
DeSantis	Labrador	Ros-Lehtinen
Diaz-Balart	LaHood	Roskam
Dold	LaMalfa	Ross
Donovan	Lamborn	Rothfus
Duckworth	Lance	Rouzer
Duffy	Latta	Royce
Duncan (SC)	LoBiondo	Russell
Duncan (TN)	Long	Salmon
Ellmers (NC)	Loudermilk	Sanford
Emmer (MN)	Love	Scalise
Farenthold	Lucas	Schweikert
Fitzpatrick	Luetkemeyer	Scott, Austin
Fleischmann	Lummis	Sensenbrenner

VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota). Pursuant to House Resolution 859 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5620.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) kindly take the chair.

□ 1723

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5620) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, with Mr. WESTMORELAND (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today,

Sessions	Tiberi	Westerman	Lipinski
Shimkus	Tipton	Westmoreland	Loeb
Shuster	Trott	Williams	Loesack
Simpson	Turner	Wilson (SC)	Loewenthal
Sinema	Upton	Wittman	Lofgren
Smith (MO)	Valadao	Womack	Lujan Grisham (NM)
Smith (NE)	Wagner	Woodall	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Smith (NJ)	Walberg	Yoder	Lynch
Smith (TX)	Walden	Yoho	Maloney, Carolyn
Stefanik	Walker	Young (AK)	Maloney, Sean
Stewart	Walorski	Young (IA)	Matsui
Stivers	Walters, Mimi	Young (IN)	McCollum
Stutzman	Weber (TX)	Zeldin	McDermott
Thompson (PA)	Webster (FL)	Zinke	McGovern
Thornberry	Wenstrup		McNerney

NOT VOTING—8

DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Fincher	Meng	Thompson (MS)
Hudson	Palazzo	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1727

Mr. GARRETT changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 184, noes 240, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 512]

AYES—184

Adams	Connolly	Green, Al
Aguilar	Conyers	Green, Gene
Ashford	Cooper	Grijalva
Bass	Costa	Gutiérrez
Beatty	Courtney	Hahn
Becerra	Crowley	Hastings
Bera	Cummings	Heck (WA)
Beyer	Davis (CA)	Higgins
Bishop (GA)	Davis, Danny	Hinojosa
Blumenauer	DeFazio	Honda
Bonamici	DeGette	Hoyer
Boyle, Brendan	Delaney	Huffman
F.	DeLauro	Israel
Brady (PA)	DelBene	Jackson Lee
Brown (FL)	DeSaulnier	Jeffries
Brownley (CA)	Deutch	Johnson (GA)
Bustos	Dingell	Johnson, E. B.
Butterfield	Doggett	Kaptur
Capps	Doyle, Michael	Keating
Capuano	F.	Kelly (IL)
Cárdenas	Duckworth	Kennedy
Carney	Edwards	Kildee
Carson (IN)	Ellison	Kilmer
Cartwright	Engel	Kind
Castor (FL)	Eshoo	Kirkpatrick
Castro (TX)	Esty	Kuster
Chu, Judy	Farr	Langevin
Cicilline	Foster	Larsen (WA)
Clark (MA)	Frankel (FL)	Larsen (CT)
Clarke (NY)	Fudge	Lawrence
Clay	Gabbard	Lee
Cleaver	Gallego	Levin
Clyburn	Garamendi	Lewis
Coffman	Graham	Lieu, Ted
Cohen	Grayson	

Pallone	Sewell (AL)	Smith (NJ)	Valadao
Payre	Sherman	Smith (TX)	Wagner
Payne	Sires	Stefanik	Walberg
Pelosi	Slaughter	Stewart	Walden
Perlmutter	Smith (WA)	Stivers	Walker
Peters	Speier	Stutzman	Walorski
Peterson	Swalwell (CA)	Thompson (PA)	Walters, Mimi
Pingree	Takano	Thornberry	Weber (TX)
Pocan	Takano	Tiberi	Webster (FL)
Polis	Thompson (CA)	Tipton	Young (IA)
Price (NC)	Thompson (MS)	Trott	Young (IN)
Quigley	Titus	Turner	Wenstrup
Rangel	Tonko	Upton	Westerman
Rice (NY)	Torres		Westmoreland
Richmond	Tsongas		Williams
Roybal-Allard	Van Hollen		
Ruiz	Vargas		
Ruppersberger	Veasey		
Ryan (OH)	Vela		
Sanchez, Linda T.	Velázquez		
Sanchez, Loretta	Visclosky		
Sarbanes	Walz		
Schakowsky	Wasserman		
Schiff	Schultz		
Schrader	Waters, Maxine		
Scott (VA)	Watson Coleman		
Scott, David	Welch		
Serrano	Wilson (FL)		
	Yarmuth		

NOES—240

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

Smith (NJ)	Valadao	Wilson (SC)
Smith (TX)	Wagner	Wittman
Stefanik	Walberg	Womack
Stewart	Walden	Woodall
Stivers	Walker	Yoder
Stutzman	Walorski	Yoho
Thompson (PA)	Walters, Mimi	Young (AK)
Thornberry	Weber (TX)	Young (IA)
Tiberi	Webster (FL)	Young (IN)
Tipton	Wenstrup	Zeldin
Trott	Westerman	Zinke
Turner	Westmoreland	
Upton	Williams	

NOT VOTING—7

DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Fincher	Palazzo	
Grothman	Pittenger	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1730

So the amendment was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. KUSTER

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 183, noes 236, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 513]

AYES—183

Adams	Davis (CA)	Huffman
Aguilar	Davis, Danny	Israel
Ashford	DeFazio	Jackson Lee
Bass	DeGette	Jeffries
Beatty	Delaney	Johnson (GA)
Becerra	DeLauro	Johnson, E. B.
Bera	DelBene	Kaptur
Beyer	DeSaulnier	Keating
Bishop (GA)	Deutch	Kelly (IL)
Blumenauer	Dingell	Kennedy
Bonamici	Doggett	Kildee
Boyle, Brendan	Doyle, Michael	Kilmer
F.	F.	Kind
Brady (PA)	Duckworth	Kirkpatrick
Brown (FL)	Edwards	Kuster
Brownley (CA)	Ellison	Langevin
Bustos	Engel	Larsen (WA)
Butterfield	Eshoo	Larson (CT)
Capps	Esty	Lawrence
Capuano	Farr	Lee
Cárdenas	Foster	Levin
Carney	Frankel (FL)	Lewis
Carson (IN)	Fudge	Lieu, Ted
Cartwright	Gabbard	Lipinski
Castor (FL)	Gallego	Loeb
Castro (TX)	Garamendi	Lofgren
Chu, Judy	Graham	Lowenthal
Cicilline	Grayson	Lowy
Clark (MA)	Green, Al	Lujan Grisham (NM)
Clarke (NY)	Green, Gene	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Clay	Grijalva	Lynch
Cleaver	Gutiérrez	Maloney, Carolyn
Clyburn	Hahn	Maloney, Sean
Coffman	Hastings	Matsui
Cohen	Heck (WA)	McCollum
	Higgins	McDermott
	Himes	McGovern
	Hinojosa	
	Honda	
	Hoyer	
	Cummings	

McNerney Rangel Swalwell (CA) Walters, Mimi Williams Yoho Garrett Lowenthal Roskam
Meeks Rice (NY) Takano Weber (TX) Wilson (SC) Young (AK) Gibbs Lowey Ross
Meng Richmond Thompson (CA) Webster (FL) Wittman Young (IA) Gibson Lucas Rothfus
Moore Roybal-Allard Thompson (MS) Wenstrup Womack Young (IN) Gohmert Luetkemeyer Rouzer
Moulton Ruiz Titus Westerman Woodall Zeldin Goodlatte Lujan Grisham Roybal-Allard
Murphy (FL) Ruppertsberger Tonko Westmoreland Yoder Zinke Gosar (NM) Royce
Nadler Ryan (OH) Torres
Napolitano Salmon Tsongas
Neal Sánchez, Linda Van Hollen
Nolan T. Vargus
Norcross Sanchez, Loretta T. Veasey
O'Rourke Sarbanes Vela
Pallone Schakowsky Velázquez
Pascrell Schiff Visclosky
Payne Schrader Walz
Pelosi Scott (VA) Wasserman
Perlmutter Scott, David
Peters Serrano Schultz
Peterson Sewell (AL) Waters, Maxine
Pingree Sherman Watson Coleman
Pocan Sires Welch
Polis Slaughter Wilson (FL)
Price (NC) Smith (WA) Yarmuth
Quigley Speier

NOES—236

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

NOT VOTING—12

Blackburn DesJarlais Palazzo
Conyers Fincher Rohrabacher
Courtney Hudson Rush
Davidson Johnson, Sam Smith (NJ)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1734

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO
The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from California (Mr.
TAKANO) on which further proceedings
were postponed and on which the ayes
prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 426, noes 0,
not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 514]

AYES—426

Abraham Calvert Davis, Rodney
Adams Capps DeFazio
Aderholt Capuano DeGette
Aguilar Cárdenas Delaney
Allen Carney DeLauro
Amash Carson (IN) DeBene
Carter (GA) Carter (TX) Dent
Ashford Cartwright DeSantis
Babin Castor (FL) DeSaulnier
Barletta Castro (TX) Deutch
Barr Chabot Diaz-Balart
Barton Chaffetz Dingell
Bass Chaffetz Doggett
Beatty Chu, Judy Dold
Becerra Cicilline Donovan
Benishek Clark (MA) Doyle, Michael
Bera Clarke (NY) F.
Beyer Clawson (FL) Duckworth
Bilirakis Clay Duffy
Bishop (GA) Cleaver King (IA)
Bishop (MI) Clyburn Duncan (SC)
Bishop (UT) Coffman Duncan (TN)
Black Cohen Edwards
Blackburn Cole Ellison
Blum Collins (GA) Ellmers (NC)
Blumenauer Collins (NY) Emmer (MN)
Bonamici Comstock Engel
Conaway Conaway Eshoo
Connolly Connors Esty
Conyers Conyers Farenthold
Cook Cook Farr
Cooper Cooper Fitzpatrick
Costa Costa Fleischmann
Costello (PA) Costello (PA) Fleming
Courtney Courtney Flores
Cramer Cramer Forbes
Crawford Crawford Fortenberry
Crenshaw Crenshaw Foster
Crowley Crowley Foxx
Cuellar Cuellar Frankel (FL)
Culberson Culberson Franks (AZ)
Cummings Cummings Frelinghuysen
Curbelo (FL) Curbelo (FL) Fudge
Davidson Davidson Gabbard
Davis (CA) Davis (CA) Gallego
Davis, Danny Davis, Danny Garamendi

Green, Al Green, Gene Griffith Grijalva Grothman Guinta Guthrie Gutiérrez Hahn Hanna 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 Issa Jackson Lee Jeffries Jenkins (KS) Jenkins (WV) Johnson (GA) Johnson (OH) Johnson, E. B. 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 Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Latta Lawrence Lee Levin Lewis Lieu, Ted Lipinski LoBiondo Loeb sack Lofgren Long Gabbard Loudermilk Love
Lowenthal Lowey Lucas Luetkemeyer Lujan Grisham (NM) Luján, Ben Ray Lummis Lynch MacArthur Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Marchant Marino Massie Matsui McCarthy McCaul McClintock McCollum McDermott McGovern McHenry McKinley McMorris Rodgers McNeerney 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 Nolan Norcross Nugent Nunes O'Rourke Olson Pallone Palmer Pascrell Paulsen Payne Pearce Pelosi Perlmutter Perry Peters Peterson Pingree Pittenger Pitts Pocan Poe (TX) Poliquin 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 Russell Sanford Sarbanes Scalise Schakowsky Schiff Schrader Schweikert Scott (VA) Scott (TX) Scott, David Sessions Sewell (AL) Sherman Shuster Simpson Sinema Sires Slaughter Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Smith (WA) Speier Stefanik Stewart Stivers Stutzman Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Neal Thompson (MS) Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Titus Tonko Torres Trott Tsongas Turner Upton Valadao Vargus Veasey Vela Velázquez Visclosky Wagner Walberg Walden Walker Walorski Walters, Mimi Walz Wasserman Polis Schultz Waters, Maxine Watson Coleman Webster (TX) Webster (FL) Welch Wenstrup Westerman Westmoreland Williams Wilson (FL) Wilson (SC) Wittman Womack Woodall Yarmuth Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IA) Young (IN) Zeldin Zinke

NOT VOTING—5

DesJarlais Johnson, Sam Rush
Fincher Palazzo

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1738

Messrs. WESTMORELAND, ROGERS of Alabama, EMMER of Minnesota, and JOHNSON of Ohio changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 19 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 421, noes 1, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 515]

AYES—421

Abraham Cárdenas Dent
Adams Carney DeSantis
Aderholt Carson (IN) DeSaulnier
Aguilar Carter (GA) Deutch
Allen Carter (TX) Diaz-Balart
Amash Cartwright Dingell
Amodi Castor (FL) Doggett
Ashford Castro (TX) Dold
Babin Chabot Donovan
Barletta Chaffetz Doyle, Michael
Barr Chu, Judy F.
Barton Cicilline Duckworth
Bass Clark (MA) Duffy
Beatty Clarke (NY) Duncan (SC)
Becerra Clawson (FL) Duncan (TN)
Benishek Clay Edwards
Bera Cleaver Ellison
Beyer Clyburn Ellmers (NC)
Bilirakis Coffman Emmer (MN)
Bishop (GA) Cohen Engel
Bishop (MI) Cole Eshoo
Bishop (UT) Collins (GA) Esty
Black Collins (NY) Farenthold
Blackburn Comstock Fitzpatrick
Blum Conaway Fleischmann
Blumenauer Connolly Fleming
Bonamici Conyers Flores
Bost Cook Forbes
Boustany Costa Fortenberry
Boyle, Brendan Costello (PA) Foster
F. Courtney
Brady (PA) Cramer Frankel (FL)
Brady (TX) Crawford Franks (AZ)
Brat Crenshaw Frelinghuysen
Bridenstine Crowley Fudge
Brooks (AL) Cuellar Gabbard
Brooks (IN) Culberson Gallego
Brown (FL) Cummings Garamendi
Brownley (CA) Curbelo (FL) Garrett
Buchanan Davidson Gibson
Buck Davis (CA) Gohmert
Bucshon Davis, Danny Goodlatte
Burgess Davis, Rodney Gosar
Bustos DeFazio Gowdy
Butterfield DeGette Graham
Byrne Delaney Granger
Calvert DeLauro Graves (GA)
Capps DelBene Graves (LA)
Capuano Denham Graves (MO)

Grayson Lummis Roybal-Allard
Green, Al Lynch Royce
Green, Gene MacArthur Ruiz
Griffith Maloney, Ruppertsberger
Grijalva Carolyn Russell
Grothman Maloney, Sean Ryan (OH)
Guinta Marchant Salmon
Guthrie Marino Sánchez, Linda
Gutiérrez Massie T.
Hahn Matsui Sanchez, Loretta
Hanna McCarthy Sanford
Hardy McCaul Sarbanes
Harper McClintock Scalise
Harris McCollum Schakowsky
Hartzler McDermott Schiff
Hastings McGovern Schrader
Heck (NV) McHenry Schweikert
Heck (WA) McKinley Scott (VA)
Hensarling McMorris Scott, Austin
Herrera Beutler Rodgers Scott, David
Hice, Jody B. McNerney Sensenbrenner
Higgins McSally Serrano
Hill Meadows Sessions
Himes Meehan Sewell (AL)
Hinojosa Meeks Sherman
Holding Meng Shimkus
Honda Messer Shuster
Hoyer Mica Simpson
Hudson Miller (FL) Sinema
Huelskamp Miller (MI) Sires
Huffman Moolenaar Slaughtor
Huizenga (MI) Mooney (WV) Smith (MO)
Hultgren Moore Smith (NJ)
Hunter Moulton Smith (TX)
Hurd (TX) Mullin Smith (WA)
Hurt (VA) Mulvaney Speier
Israel Murphy (FL) Stefanik
Issa Murphy (PA) Stewart
Jackson Lee Nadler Stivers
Jeffries Napolitano Stutzman
Jenkins (KS) Neal Swalwell (CA)
Jenkins (WV) Neugebauer Takano
Johnson (GA) Newhouse Thompson (CA)
Johnson (OH) Noem Thompson (MS)
Johnson, E. B. Nolan Thompson (PA)
Jolly Norcross Thornberry
Jones Nugent Tiberi
Jordan Nunes Tipton
Joyce O'Rourke Titus
Kaptur Olson Tonko
Katko Pallone Torres
Keating Palmer Trott
Kelly (IL) Pascrell Tsongas
Kelly (MS) Paulsen Turner
Kelly (PA) Payne Upton
Kennedy Pearce Valadao
Kildee Pelosi Van Hollen
Kilmer Perlmutter Vargas
Kind Perry Veasey
King (IA) Peters Vela
King (NY) Peterson Velázquez
Kinzinger (IL) Pingree Visclosky
Kirkpatrick Pittenger Wagner
Kline Pitts Walberg
Knight Pocan Walden
Kuster Poe (TX) Walker
Labrador Poliquin Walorski
LaHood Polis Walters, Mimi
LaMalfa Pompeo Walz
Lamborn Posey Walters, Mimi
Lance Price (NC) Wasserman
Langevin Price, Tom Schultz
Larsen (WA) Quigley Waters, Maxine
Larson (CT) Rangel Watson Coleman
Latta Ratcliffe Weber (TX)
Lawrence Reed Webster (FL)
Lee Reichert Welch
Levin Renacci Wenstrup
Lewis Ribble Westerman
Lieu, Ted Rice (NY) Westmoreland
Lipinski Rice (SC) Williams
LoBiondo Richmond Wilson (FL)
Loebsock Rigell Wilson (SC)
Lofgren Roby Wittman
Long Roe (TN) Womack
Loudermilk Rogers (AL) Woodall
Love Rogers (KY) Yarmuth
Lowenthal Rohrabacher Yoder
Lowe Rokita Yoho
Lucas Rooney (FL) Young (IA)
Luetkemeyer Ros-Lehtinen Young (IN)
Lujan Grisham Roskam Zeldin
(NM) Ross
Lujan, Ben Ray Rothfus
(NM) Rouzer Zinke

NOES—1

Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—9

Cooper Fincher Palazzo
DesJarlais Gibbs Rush
Farr Johnson, Sam Smith (NE)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1742

So the amendment was agreed to.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chair, on roll-call No. 515, had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

AMENDMENT NO. 20 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 421, noes 0, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 516]

AYES—421

Abraham Capuano DeLauro
Adams Cárdenas DelBene
Aderholt Carney Denham
Aguilar Carson (IN) Dent
Allen Carter (GA) DeSantis
Amash Carter (TX) DeSaulnier
Amodi Cartwright Deutch
Ashford Castor (FL) Diaz-Balart
Babin Castro (TX) Dingell
Barletta Chabot Doggett
Barr Chaffetz Dold
Barton Chu, Judy Donovan
Bass Cicilline Doyle, Michael
Beatty Clark (MA) F.
Becerra Clarke (NY) Duckworth
Benishek Clawson (FL) Duffy
Bera Clay Duncan (SC)
Beyer Cleaver Duncan (TN)
Bilirakis Clyburn Edwards
Bishop (GA) Coffman Ellison
Bishop (MI) Cohen Ellmers (NC)
Bishop (UT) Cole Emmer (MN)
Black Collins (GA) Engel
Blackburn Collins (NY) Eshoo
Blum Comstock Esty
Blumenauer Conaway Farenthold
Bonamici Connolly Fitzpatrick
Bost Conyers Fleischmann
Boustany Cook Fleming
Boyle, Brendan Cooper Flores
F. Costa Forbes
Brady (PA) Costello (PA) Fortenberry
Brady (TX) Courtney Foster
Brat Cramer Foxx
Crawford Frankel (FL)
Crenshaw Franks (AZ)
Crowley Fudge
Cuellar Gabbard Gallego
Culberson Garamendi
Cummings Gibson
Curbelo (FL) Gohmert
Davidson Gohmert
Davis (CA) Goodlatte
Davis, Danny Gosar
Davis, Rodney Gowdy
DeFazio Graham
DeGette Granger
Delaney Graves (GA)
DeLauro Graves (LA)
DelBene Denham Graves (MO)

Granger Luján, Ben Ray
 Graves (GA) (NM)
 Graves (MO) Lummis
 Grayson Lynch
 Green, Al MacArthur
 Green, Gene Maloney,
 Griffith Carolyn
 Grijalva Maloney, Sean
 Grothman Marchant
 Guinta Marino
 Guthrie Massie
 Gutiérrez Matsui
 Hahn McCarthy
 Hanna McCaul
 Hardy McClintock
 Harper McCollum
 Harris McDermott
 Hartzler McGovern
 Hastings McHenry
 Heck (NV) McKinley
 Heck (WA) McMorris
 Hensarling Rodgers
 Herrera Beutler McNerney
 Hice, Jody B. McCally
 Higgins Meadows
 Hill Meehan
 Himes Meeks
 Hinojosa Meng
 Holding Messer
 Honda Mica
 Hoyer Miller (FL)
 Hudson Miller (MI)
 Huelskamp Moolenaar
 Huffman Mooney (WV)
 Huizenga (MI) Moore
 Hultgren Moulton
 Hunter Mullin
 Hurd (TX) Mulvaney
 Hurt (VA) Murphy (FL)
 Israel Murphy (PA)
 Issa Nadler
 Jackson Lee Napolitano
 Jeffries Neal
 Jenkins (KS) Neugebauer
 Jenkins (WV) Newhouse
 Johnson (GA) Noem
 Johnson (OH) Nolan
 Johnson, E. B. Norcross
 Jolly Nugent
 Jones Nunes
 Jordan O'Rourke
 Joyce Olson
 Kaptur Pallone
 Katko Palmer
 Keating Pascrell
 Kelly (IL) Paulsen
 Kelly (MS) Payne
 Kelly (PA) Pearce
 Kennedy Pelosi
 Kildee Perlmutter
 Kilmer Perry
 Kind Peterson
 King (IA) Pingree
 King (NY) Pittenger
 Kinzinger (IL) Pitts
 Kirkpatrick Pocan
 Kline Poe (TX)
 Knight Poliquin
 Kuster Polis
 Labrador Pompeo
 LaHood Posey
 LaMalfa Price (NC)
 Lamborn Price, Tom
 Lance Quigley
 Langevin Rangel
 Larsen (WA) Ratcliffe
 Larson (CT) Reed
 Latta Reichert
 Lawrence Renacci
 Lee Ribble
 Levin Rice (NY)
 Lewis Rice (SC)
 Lieu, Ted Richmond
 Lipinski Wittman
 LoBiondo Roby
 Loeb sack Roe (TN)
 Lofgren Rogers (AL)
 Long Rogers (KY)
 Loudermilk Rohrabacher
 Love Rokita
 Lowenthal Rooney (FL)
 Lowey Ros-Lehtinen
 Lucas Roskam
 Luetkemeyer Ross
 Lujan Grisham Rothfus
 (NM) Rouzer

Roybal-Allard
 Royce
 Ruiz
 Ruppertsberger
 Russell
 Ryan (OH)
 Salmon
 Sánchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sanford
 Sarbanes
 Scalise
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schrader
 Schweikert
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, Austin
 Scott, David
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Sewell (AL)
 Sherman
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Sinema
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Smith (WA)
 Speier
 Stefanik
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stutzman
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Titus
 Tonko
 Torres
 Trott
 Tsongas
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Barton
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walker
 Walorski
 Walters, Mimi
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters, Maxine
 Watson Coleman
 Weber (TX)
 F.
 Webster (FL)
 Welch
 Wenstrup
 Westerman
 Westmoreland
 Williams
 Wilson (FL)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Buchanan
 Buck
 Bucshon
 Burgess
 Bustos
 Butterfield
 Byrne
 Calvert
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cardenas
 Zinke

DesJarlais
 Farr
 Fincher
 Frelinghuysen
 Carter (GA)
 Adams
 Aderholt
 Aguilar
 Allen
 Amash
 Amodei
 Ashford
 Babin
 Barletta
 Barr
 Barton
 Bass
 Beatty
 Becerra
 Perry
 Benishak
 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
 Cardenas
 Carney
 Carson (IN)

NOT VOTING—10
 Graves (LA)
 Johnson, Sam
 Palazzo
 Peters
 Rush
 Serrano
 ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
 The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
 There is 1 minute remaining.
 □ 1745
 So the amendment was agreed to.
 The result of the vote was announced
 as above recorded.
 AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY
 The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
 business is the demand for a recorded
 vote on the amendment offered by the
 gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY)
 on which further proceedings were
 postponed and on which the ayes pre-
 vailed by voice vote.
 The Clerk will redesignate the
 amendment.
 The Clerk redesignated the amend-
 ment.
 RECORDED VOTE
 The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
 has been demanded.
 A recorded vote was ordered.
 The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
 minute vote.
 The vote was taken by electronic de-
 vice, and there were—ayes 423, noes 1,
 not voting 7, as follows:
 [Roll No. 517]
 AYES—423

Guinta
 Guthrie
 Gutiérrez
 Hahn
 Hanna
 Hardy
 Harper
 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.
 Jolly
 Jones
 Jordan
 Joyce
 Kaptur
 Katko
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kelly (MS)
 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
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Long
 Loudermilk
 Love
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lujan Grisham
 (NM)
 Luján, Ben Ray
 (NM)
 Lummis
 Lynch
 MacArthur

Maloney,
 Carolyn
 Maloney, Sean
 Marchant
 Marino
 Massie
 Matsui
 McCarthy
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McCollum
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McHenry
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 McNerney
 McSally
 Meadows
 Meehan
 Meeks
 Meng
 Messer
 Mica
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Moolenaar
 Mooney (WV)
 Moore
 Moulton
 Mullin
 Mulvaney
 Murphy (FL)
 Murphy (PA)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Neugebauer
 Noem
 Newhouse
 Nolan
 Norcross
 Nugent
 Nunes
 O'Rourke
 Olson
 Pallone
 Palmer
 Pascrell
 Paulsen
 Payne
 Pearce
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Perry
 Peterson
 Pingree
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Pocan
 Poe (TX)
 Poliquin
 Polis
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (NC)
 Price, Tom
 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
 Rothfus
 Rouzer

Roybal-Allard
 Royce
 Ruiz
 Ruppertsberger
 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
 Stutzman
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Titus
 Tonko
 Torres
 Trott
 Tsongas
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walker
 Walorski
 Walters, Mimi
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters, Maxine
 Watson Coleman
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Westerman
 Westmoreland
 Williams
 Wilson (FL)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yarmuth
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IA)
 Young (IN)
 Zeldin
 Zinke

NOT VOTING—7

DesJarlais	Palazzo	Welch
Fincher	Rush	
Johnson, Sam	Veasey	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1748

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) having assumed the chair, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5620) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 859, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

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

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

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

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. TITUS. I am opposed to the bill in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Titus moves to recommit the bill H.R. 5620 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 11. DEFINITION OF SPOUSE FOR PURPOSES OF VETERAN BENEFITS TO REFLECT NEW STATE DEFINITIONS OF SPOUSE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 101 of title 38, United States Code is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “of the opposite sex”; and

(2) in paragraph (31), by striking “of the opposite sex who is a wife or husband” and inserting “in a marriage recognized under section 103 of this title”.

(b) DETERMINATION.—Subsection (c) of section 103 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“(c)(1) For the purposes of all laws administered by the Secretary, the Secretary shall

recognize a marriage based on the law of the State where the marriage occurred. In the case of a marriage that occurred outside a State, the Secretary shall recognize the marriage if the marriage was lawful in the place where it occurred and could have been entered into under the laws of any State. Except in the case of a purported marriage deemed valid under subsection (a), the Secretary may not recognize more than one marriage for any person at the same time.

“(2) In this subsection, the term ‘State’ has the meaning given that the term in section 101(20) of this title, except that such term also includes the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.”.

Mr. MILLER of Florida (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I rise to reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued to read.

Ms. TITUS (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Nevada is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill. It will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

The motion to recommit that I offer today is simple, straightforward, and long overdue. The amendment is a technical correction to update our Nation's laws to reflect the realities of the day by eliminating outdated, discriminatory language that is currently found in the U.S. Code.

Over a year ago, the Supreme Court ruled definitively on the question of equal protection for all citizens under the law. Their decision in Obergefell v. Hodges struck down discriminatory laws that defined marriage and made marriage equality the law of the land.

Following that decision, the Veterans Administration issued guidance to ensure that all legally married veterans and their spouses would have access to the full range of Federal benefits that they earned through their military service. Yet, title 38 of the U.S. Code, which governs the VA, still reflects decades-old language that does not meet the constitutional reality of today. This is why I am offering the motion to remove the sex-specific definition of “spouse” found in the VA Code.

Now, updating the U.S. Code is nothing new to this body. In 1986, Congress updated our Nation's laws to reflect the fact that not all veterans are men and not all veteran spouses are wives. Earlier this year, I would remind the House that we passed, by unanimous vote, a measure offered by my friend and colleague from New York, Congresswoman MENG, to remove discriminatory language on race found in the Code.

By passing this MTR, we can take yet another step to clean up our laws and recognize that all American veterans and their families are equal. Indeed, we owe it to those who have worn the uniform and to their loved ones to respect their service and their sacrifice in both word and in deed. So let's remove this discriminatory language and ensure that all veterans are provided the respect, the benefits, and the equal protection they deserve.

Accordingly, I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to have just a fraction of the courage that these brave American heroes have and vote for this motion to recommit.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of a point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the gentlewoman's motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, one thing that can be said about Ms. TITUS is she is consistent and she has tried every way possible in order to have this piece of legislation pass. Actually, it was debated and defeated in the committee when we had an opportunity to talk about this issue before.

There were 80 amendments that were offered on this particular piece of legislation. Twenty-two amendments were accepted, and as the Members have seen, a vast number of Democratic amendments were accepted and allowed to be debated on the floor.

This bill is about accountability. This bill is trying to give the Secretary the tools that he needs in order to hold people accountable. The problem that exists today at the Department of Veterans Affairs, as the Department Secretary has said and as other high-ranking officials at the Department have said, is it is almost impossible to hold somebody accountable or to fire somebody at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Imagine this: a VA employee that was drunk went into an operating room, and it took almost a year in order to hold them accountable; a VA employee was a willing participant in an armed robbery in Puerto Rico, and after a lengthy and administrative battle where the employee was supported by the public employee unions, the employee was reinstated in their previous position and got no discipline at all.

The VA has not held anybody accountable for the \$2.5 billion budget shortfall that took place in 2015, and they have held nobody accountable for the \$1 billion cost overrun at the Aurora, Colorado, VA Medical Center.

This is about holding bad bureaucrats accountable. We don't need poison pills in this particular bill. We need

to move forward, and I urge my colleagues to oppose the MTR.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 239, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 518]

AYES—185

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

NOES—239

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

NOT VOTING—7

Davis, Rodney Johnson, Sam
DesJarlais Palazzo
Fincher Roby

□ 1804

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 518, I was unavoid-

ably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 518, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam 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 310, nays 116, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 519]

YEAS—310

Abraham Dold Keating
Aderholt Donovan Kelly (MS)
Aguilar Duckworth Kelly (PA)
Allen Duffy Kennedy
Amash Duncan (SC) Kilmer
Amodei Duncan (TN) Kind
Ashford Ellmers (NC) King (IA)
Babin Emmer (MN) King (NY)
Barletta Esty Kinzinger (IL)
Barr Farenthold Kirkpatrick
Barton Fitzpatrick Kline
Benishek Fleischmann Knight
Bera Fleming Kuster
Bilirakis Flores Labrador
Bishop (GA) Forbes LaHood
Bishop (MI) Fortenberry LaMalfa
Bishop (UT) Foxx Lamborn
Black Franks (AZ) Lance
Blackburn Frelinghuysen Langevin
Blum Gabbard Larson (CT)
Bost Garamendi Latta
Boustany Garrett Lipinski
Boyle, Brendan Gibb LoBiondo
F. Gibson Loeb sack
Brady (TX) Gohmert Long
Brat Goodlatte Loudermilk
Bridenstine Gosar Love
Brooks (AL) Gowdy Lowenthal
Brooks (IN) Graham Lucas
Brownley (CA) Granger Luetkemeyer
Buchanan Graves (GA) Lujan Grisham
Buck Graves (LA) (NM)
Bucshon Graves (MO) Lujan, Ben Ray
Burgess Grayson (NM)
Bustos Green, Al Lummis
Byrne Green, Gene MacArthur
Calvert Griffith Maloney, Sean
Carney Grothman Marchant
Carter (GA) Guinta Marino
Carter (TX) Guthrie Massie
Castro (TX) Hahn McCarthey
Chabot Hanna McCaul
Chaffetz Hardy McClintock
Cicilline Harper McHenry
Clawson (FL) Harris McKinley
Coffman Hartzler McMorris
Cole Heck (NV) Rodgers
Collins (GA) Heck (WA) McNeerney
Collins (NY) Hensarling McSally
Comstock Herrera Beutler Meadows
Conaway Hice, Jody B. Meehan
Cook Hill Messer
Cooper Himes Mica
Costa Hinojosa Miller (FL)
Costello (PA) Holding Miller (MI)
Courtney Hudson Mooleenaar
Cramer Huelskamp Mooney (WV)
Crawford Huizenga (MI) Moulton
Crenshaw Hultgren Mullin
Cuellar Hunter Mulvaney
Culberson Hurd (TX) Murphy (FL)
Curbelo (FL) Hurt (VA) Murphy (PA)
Davidson Israel Neal
Davis (CA) Issa Neugebauer
Davis, Rodney Jenkins (KS) Newhouse
DeFazio Jenkins (WV) Noem
Delaney Johnson (OH) Nugent
DeLauro Jolly Nunes
Denham Jones O'Rourke
Dent Jordan Olson
DeSantis Joyce Palmer
Diaz-Balart Kaptur Paulsen
Doggett Katko Pearce

Perry	Ruppersberger	Trott
Peters	Russell	Tsongas
Peterson	Ryan (OH)	Turner
Pittenger	Salmon	Upton
Pitts	Sanchez, Loretta	Valadao
Poe (TX)	Sanford	Veasey
Poliquin	Scalise	Vela
Pompeo	Schrader	Wagner
Posey	Schweikert	Walberg
Price, Tom	Scott, Austin	Walden
Ratcliffe	Scott, David	Walker
Reed	Sensenbrenner	Walorski
Reichert	Sessions	Walters, Mimi
Renacci	Shimkus	Walz
Ribble	Shuster	Weber (TX)
Rice (NY)	Simpson	Webster (FL)
Rice (SC)	Sinema	Wenstrup
Rigell	Smith (MO)	Westerman
Roby	Smith (NE)	Westmoreland
Roe (TN)	Smith (NJ)	Williams
Rogers (AL)	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)
Rogers (KY)	Speier	Wittman
Rohrabacher	Stefanik	Womack
Rokita	Stewart	Woodall
Rooney (FL)	Stivers	Yoder
Ros-Lehtinen	Stutzman	Yoho
Roskam	Thompson (CA)	Young (AK)
Ross	Thompson (PA)	Young (IA)
Rothfus	Thornberry	Young (IN)
Rouzer	Tiberi	Zeldin
Royce	Tipton	Zinke
Ruiz	Titus	

NAYS—116

Adams	Foster	Pascarell
Bass	Frankel (FL)	Payne
Beatty	Fudge	Pelosi
Becerra	Gallego	Perlmutter
Beyer	Grijalva	Pingree
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Pocan
Bonamici	Hastings	Polis
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Price (NC)
Brown (FL)	Honda	Quigley
Butterfield	Hoyer	Rangel
Capps	Huffman	Richmond
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Roybal-Allard
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Sánchez, Linda
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	T.
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Sarbanes
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Schakowsky
Chu, Judy	Kildee	Schiff
Clark (MA)	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Clarke (NY)	Lawrence	Serrano
Clay	Lee	Sewell (AL)
Cleaver	Levin	Sherman
Clyburn	Lewis	Sires
Cohen	Lieu, Ted	Slaughter
Connolly	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
Conyers	Lowey	Swalwell (CA)
Crowley	Lynch	Takano
Cummings	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Davis, Danny	Carolyn	Tonko
DeGette	Matsui	Torres
DelBene	McCollum	Van Hollen
DeSaulnier	McDermott	Vargas
Deutch	McGovern	Velázquez
Dingell	Meeks	Visclosky
Doyle, Michael	Meng	Wasserman
F.	Moore	Schultz
Edwards	Nadler	Waters, Maxine
Ellison	Napolitano	Watson Coleman
Engel	Nolan	Welch
Eshoo	Norcross	Wilson (FL)
Farr	Pallone	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—5

DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Fincher	Palazzo	

□ 1811

So the bill is passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3765

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name from H.R. 3765, the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCSALLY). Is there objection to the re-

quest of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

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

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING CHASE BUSBY

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the courageous Chase Busby from St. Simons Island, Georgia—a 3-year-old battling leukemia.

After Chase showed symptoms of a fairly common cold for about a month, his parents, Chris and Cassie, took him to the doctor for tests. Unfortunately, those tests showed that he had an acute type of childhood cancer found in bone marrow.

Since that time, Chase has gone through many more tests, medicines, and painful procedures, including chemotherapy. He is set to complete his treatment in 2018.

In true south Georgia fashion, I am proud to say that Chase's local community is rallying behind him. In his honor, on September 23, Redfern Village in St. Simons is hosting a block party called "Redfern Goes Gold," and the proceeds will go to funding childhood cancer research.

With September being National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, I rise today to wish Chase Busby all the best in fighting this disease. Chase, we are here to support you every step of the way.

□ 1815

CELEBRATING MS. MAE CORA PETERSON'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th birthday of Ms. Mae Cora Peterson, a resident of Fort Worth, Texas, in the Stop Six, Carver Heights community.

Ms. Peterson was born on September 13, 1916, in Orangeburg, South Carolina, during the Jim Crow era. Understanding the value of education during the time of racial segregation, she attended and graduated from South Carolina State University. She went on to earn her master's degree from the University of Michigan. After graduation, she volunteered with the YWCA and was offered a full-time job in the city

of her choice. She took on the position of executive director at a segregated branch in Fort Worth.

She continued her passion to serve youth and later served as the dean of girls and vice principal at Dunbar High School, where she worked for 27 years. In addition to her civic duties, Ms. Peterson is also the oldest active living member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Madam Speaker, I rise to give tribute to my good friend, Ms. Mae Cora Peterson.

NO LAMEDUCK VOTE ON TPP

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on Congress to rule out an end-of-the-year lameduck end-run vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

No other time in the Congress is less accountable to the people who entrust us to represent their interests than the period between election and the swearing in of a new Congress in January. That is why it is called lameduck.

Retiring Members or those who lost elections still have a say. And whose interests are they more likely to represent?

Sometimes corporate interests weigh in with tantalizing offers of high-dollar remuneration on their retirement. Or for those fresh off an election, a lame-duck can present pressures from donors who funded their campaigns.

In 2000, I watched this scenario play out when the permanent normal trade relations with China, unfortunately, passed. For China's PNTR vote, look at Texas. The President secured at least five Members' votes by promising an environmental cleanup of a military factory, a study on job losses due to imports, and finalized an EPA study for a pipeline.

And what happened to those promises?

Nothing. In fact, the factory closed with the district losing 5,000 jobs.

Madam Speaker, we have been told time and again that free trade deals create jobs, but they outsource our jobs instead. Americans deserve a vote from accountable, elected Representatives. No lameduck TPP vote.

AMERICAN FREEDOMS

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

Mr. GIBSON. Madam Speaker, this evening I will be joined with three other veterans, and among the four of us are three airborne Ranger-qualified veterans and one Navy SEAL. We will be talking about our freedoms and this exceptional way of life.

Madam Speaker, earlier this year, on the Fourth of July, we celebrated 240

years of our independence, celebrating our freedoms.

Earlier this week in a series of somber memorials, I was in some of my towns across the 11 counties of the 19th Congressional District of New York, and we marked the 15th year since the 11th of September of 2001.

Madam Speaker, it has often been the case in the human experience that in adversity, character is revealed. I would submit that the character of the American soul was revealed on that day. Courage in the face of danger.

At the World Trade Center, when so many Americans were working their way down the stairs, our first responders were on their way up to make sure that no one was left behind. Remarkable courage in the face of danger.

And I think about what it must have been like on United Airlines Flight 93 when they had that revelation that the country was under attack and that their plane, which had been hijacked, was destined for some target, likely in the National Capital Region, and how they summoned up the courage to attack. Ordinary Americans doing extraordinary things. Courage in the face of danger. Part of the American soul, part of our character. Also, I would add, unity, unity of our country.

Very often we celebrate the diversity in this country. And, in fact, we are very proud of the fact that we have freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and we celebrate that diversity. But, Madam Speaker, we also at the same time honor our unity, and that was clearly on display on the 11th of September and all the days after.

Then, finally, what I would add is courage in the face of danger, unity, love, and support. I saw that firsthand again this week throughout my district at these memorials. It certainly was the case on the 11th of September.

When you think about what it means to be an American and the freedoms that we hold dear, this is a way of life worth defending, and that is why I am excited to be with my colleagues here this evening to talk about that. Because oftentimes we don't think about this, it is no less true.

What we did in the 18th century was truly radical. We changed the trajectory of history with our Revolution. Think about those summoning words in the Declaration of Independence:

"WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed."

We have a tendency to look back on that and say, Well, of course. That was utterly radical. The 18th century was the era of the divine right of kings and queens and aristocracies. The heads of state of Europe, they gave us no chance. They never thought this would

work. They scoffed at us. They believed that, ultimately, chaos would unfold and that we would beg for the monarchy to come back. And, Madam Speaker, we showed the world a humble nation, mostly farmers at the time; and we showed the world that we could not only survive, that we could thrive and flourish and really go on to be, as many have said, the greatest hope for mankind.

Madam Speaker, that is why we are here tonight. We all believe passionately in this. We took an oath that said we were ready to give our life for that, and we are still fighting for that now, as we serve in the United States Congress.

And when we consider the kind of government that we brought forward, this was a government of the people, by the people, for the people, a self-governing people. Philosophers had written about it. We had some forms of that in republics over the centuries. But really what many had theorized, we were really the first to put in full practice.

And here I am talking explicitly about an independent judiciary. Heretofore, they had been, you know, extensions of the crown, extensions of the executive branch.

James Madison and many of the Founders came forward and they said—and this is what was so revolutionary—we are going to put the individual at the center, the citizen at the center. Before that time, government really was the state, it was the king, it was the queen. And we said we are going to be self-governing.

Madam Speaker, to do that, we brought forward a Constitution. And that was, again, what was really, I think, in the end, pivotal because we had a contemporary.

Less than a decade later, France had a revolution, but, unfortunately, ultimately, they begged for the monarchy to come back. Their revolution did not succeed, but ours did. And it really was the genius design of the Constitution that diffused power, that celebrated liberty, and put the citizen at the center, the separation of powers, the checks and balances, the auxiliary checks that came with it. We are talking about Federalism.

We chose the word "state" on purpose. We could have chose "province." We could have chose any other word. We chose the word "state" because we believed in that cosovereignty. And, of course, undergirding all of that was the idea of an empowered citizen, as I mentioned.

Some historians have said that when you look at all of this, when you look at Federalist Papers, when you look at the Constitution, when you look at the Bill of Rights, it has been argued that these are some of the most summoning words ever penned; and I agree with that. But, Madam Speaker, this was also very real.

What our Founders instantiated in the Bill of Rights, everything they put

there, had happened to us. I mean, King George had abused the colonists. He had abused us. And we said, No more. We said that we shall have liberty.

So when you look at the First Amendment, for example, the king had denied us the ability of freedom of speech. He told us that we could not have freedom of religion. He superimposed his religious views on all of the colonists. He said that we couldn't meet in groups of more than three because he said we would be conspiring against him. It turns out he was actually right about that.

Madam Speaker, he denied us the right to petition our government. We put together petitions. We sent it overseas to the king, anxiously waiting on a response. The king didn't even open them. He wouldn't open these petitions. He said they didn't have the standing, they don't have the right.

Our Founders said that all of our citizens have the right to petition their government; they have the right to assemble; they have the right to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion. We hold these dear, and we are very proud of this.

The Second Amendment. Madam Speaker, we often learn that the Brits marched on our guns; and that, in part, is why the Second Amendment was put there. Well, let's remember this: sure, it was the Brits, but that doesn't even make the point. That was our government. The Brits at the time were essentially our national government, and they marched on our guns. The Founders said, No more. Free citizens who have rights and responsibilities have the right to keep and bear arms.

The Third Amendment. Madam Speaker, the king had quartered troops in our homes. He did that without asking; didn't pay us any money. Our Founders said that is a violation; it is a violation of the citizen; and that the only time that a government can quarter troops in a home is if Congress declares that there is a state of war and if citizens are reimbursed for that.

Madam Speaker, the Fourth Amendment. The king routinely sent his troops into our homes. He didn't need cause. They turned furniture upside down. They could look for anything. Our Founders said that would not happen again. They said that we have the right—as citizens, we have the right to be reasonably secure in ourselves, in our belongings, and that the only way the government could get access to that is if they followed a process, due process where they stood before a judge and they showed probable cause for action. Only then shall warrants be writ, and those warrants shall have specificity in person, place, and thing. Central to liberty.

Madam Speaker, the Fifth through the Eighth Amendments have to do with the rights of the accused. We have the right to hear the charges against us. We have the right to not be locked up, indefinitely detained without

charge. We have the right to counsel. We have the right to not be forced to testify against ourselves. We also won't have double jeopardy. If we are facing a capital crime, it shall first go to a grand jury. We have the right to speedy and public trials by jury, and we have the right to protection from unjust punishment.

□ 1830

Madam Speaker, the Ninth and Tenth Amendments are an affirmation of limited government because the Founders said that anything that wasn't explicitly written in the document would be left for the States or the people.

Madam Speaker, this changed the history of the world. This was an incredible moment when freedom was born. And every generation since, servicemen and -women have had to stand up to protect those freedoms because we believe in the idea of the citizen and we believe in the idea of liberty.

Madam Speaker, I want to be clear. There has been a lot of discussion in this Chamber about the safety and security of our families and our communities. I want to state very clearly that all of us veterans here, we believe deeply in this. We love our families, we love our friends, we love our communities, and we want to assure their safety. That is partly what inspired us to go forward, to deploy, to fight our enemies: to ensure the protection of our loved ones.

We don't believe that by targeting with law-abiding citizens we are going to be safer. We believe in background checks. Of course, we do. We don't want terrorists to get guns. In fact, we endeavor to kill or capture terrorists.

We believe this. We believe that any public policy that is enacted needs to actually solve the problem while at the same time protecting our liberties, assuring us of the freedoms that we fought for.

As we look across, what is evident is that we have issues right now with gangs and narcotraffickers, and so we support action. In fact, we helped pass, in this Chamber, legislation that addressed that. When we addressed the opioid issue, we addressed education, which is so important to cutting down on opioid abuse. We addressed treatment. We also addressed enforcement.

Federalism has many virtues, but it has some challenges, too. There are seams. There are seams that these narcotraffickers and gangs can exploit, and we helped address that.

Madam Speaker, these are constructive actions that can help make us safer. We fought to defend these freedoms. We are still fighting to defend these freedoms.

Madam Speaker, we are now going to hear from a series of speakers. I want to first bring up my friend from Oklahoma, STEVE RUSSELL. He represents the Fifth District in Oklahoma. He served in the United States Army for 21

years. He commanded a battalion. His battalion was actually the main effort that captured Saddam Hussein back in December of 2003 in Iraq. This is an incredible person. He is a warrior. He is a scholar. He is a statesman. He was decorated with the Combat Infantryman Badge. His servicemen and -women were awarded the Valorous Unit Award, and he personally was decorated for valor. He is also a small-business owner, rifle manufacturing business. He was a representative in Oklahoma before he came here. I am very honored to serve with him.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL).

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and fellow warrior from New York and my brother warriors who are joining me in this effort today. It is an honor to have a sister warrior who is also sitting in the chair with us here tonight.

The right to keep and bear arms is as fundamental to our freedom as any other inalienable right we enjoy as Americans. This right is God-given—as much as the freedom of religion and to exercise worship, the freedom to assemble and express, the freedom to own property and protect our privacy.

As such, serious-minded individuals must have serious deliberation on any attempt to alter these fundamental rights. In a time where Americans face uncertain threats from terrorists at home and abroad, most Americans clearly understand why we must preserve the right to defend ourselves, our families, and our property.

For those who would refuse their right to defend themselves, they certainly have the freedom to do so. They do not have the freedom to make that decision for others.

In terms of human behavior, our survival instincts are inherent. The Creator of the universe did not make human beings with fangs, claws, quills, odors, or poisons for their self-defense. Instead, he gave them their intelligence and, by extension, their hands to fashion implements to protect their lives.

While the Progressives are certainly welcome to choose not to defend themselves, as is their right, it is not their right to prohibit others from protecting their lives, liberty, and property or the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States.

It was New Year's Eve in Blanchard, Oklahoma. Eighteen-year-old mother Sarah McKinley, who was alone with her 3-month-old son, heard a ruckus at the door. Two men were outside trying to break it down. Grabbing her baby and barricading the door with her sofa, she immediately called 911.

In the frantic and desperate situation, it became clear that law enforcement would not arrive in time to prevent the assault by armed intruders with designs that can only be imagined. She informed the dispatcher that she had a shotgun and asked if it was all right to shoot the intruders if they

made it inside. Wisely, the dispatcher told Sarah: I can't tell you to do that, but you do what you have to do to protect your baby.

Sarah already knew what she had to do and hoped against hope that law enforcement, while responding quickly, would arrive in time. When the armed intruders broke down the door, 24-year-old Justin Martin climbed over the couch and was greeted with a shotgun blast to the chest. While his accomplice ran for his life, Sarah had saved hers and her son's.

A year ago, 88-year-old Arlene Orms was at home in Miami, Florida, when an intruder kicked in her door. Orms responded by retrieving a small .25-caliber pistol and fired at the home invader, prompting the criminal to flee.

Following the incident, Orms' neighbors expressed support for her actions, with one telling a local media outlet: "You have to do something . . . You have to do something to protect yourself."

Americans all across this land understand inherently you have the right to defend yourself, your property, your loved ones, and your liberty.

Progressives can no more rewrite history than they can rewrite the Constitution. From Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Adams, all the way to the Supreme Court decisions with Heller and McDonald, this inalienable right has been affirmed in defense of its articulation in the Bill of Rights.

While the President complains of congressional inaction on the right to keep and bear arms, we can no more take action to deny this right that we could deny a free press, free religious expression, or property rights of individuals. Congress cannot become a vehicle to destroy the Bill of Rights.

Madam Speaker, my fellow warriors and I have nearly lost our lives like you defending this Republic in our Nation's Armed Forces doing very hard things. We stand as brothers in arms to declare that we will stand in the way of any Executive who will not uphold the Constitution of the United States, plain and simple.

Still, the administration and progressives press forward with passion and conviction, convincing Americans that the threat is so grievous, the injury so great, that Americans must now act. We are told that mass shootings are on the rise and gun deaths are out of control and the worst possible environment exists among developed nations.

Before America signs up to eliminate one of her inalienable rights, let's deliberate with a sober mind on this issue. The President and his party would report outrage if conservatives suggested that the First Amendment must be scrapped because of outrageous libel, hate speech, religious bigotry, and sit-ins warranted necessary commonsense reforms so that we could take away the first of our enumerated freedoms embodied in the Bill of Rights. There would be outrage

over such a suggestion. Americans recognize that we must face the unpleasantness of its abuse to secure its inviolable status.

Not the same, some may say. We are talking about outrageous loss of life and injury, and it has to stop. Since when did our security become substitute for our liberty? Americans for 240 years have rather sacrificed to secure it.

My brother warriors with me here, Madam Speaker, along with you and your service, we stand in that group of those who have defended and supported the Constitution since we were very young adults.

What about the facts? With more than 33,000 gun homicides last year, the question is asked: Don't you think it is time to do something about gun violence?

Well, here are the facts:

More than 60 percent of these homicides are suicides. While tragic, it is not the same.

Only 8,124 were with firearms of the 11,961 that were murders. That is 8,124, not the 33,000 that you hear.

This is a 9 percent decline in gun murders since 2010. Haven't heard that one, a 20 percent decline in gun murders since 2005. Again, you haven't heard that one. A 50 percent decline in gun murders since 1995.

The laws seem to be working. With shall-issue carry laws and good lawmaking in States, we have seen a 50 percent diminishment in the problem. That is called success. Why on earth would people want to change that?

Here is another one that we see people asking: People are being slaughtered by these assault weapons. Don't you think it is time we ban them?

Assault weapons are fully automatic and unavailable to the public. Semi-automatic rifles make up the majority of rifles owned in the United States. Here is an interesting fact. Of those 8,124 murders with firearms in 2014, the last full statistical year, only 248 were with rifles of any kind—that would be flintlocks; that would be semiautomatic rifles; that could be anything. 8,124—not the 33,000. Of those, 248 were with rifles. Yet people think that: Oh, my goodness. This is the problem. This is what we have to ban. Statistically, the facts are simply not there.

To put that in perspective, of other murders in different categories, 435 people were murdered in 2014 with clubs and hammers; 660 were murdered in 2014 with hands, fists, and feet.

So let's have the deliberative debate, but let's look at the facts. Don't you think a terrorist, if they can't board a plane, they ought not to be able to buy a firearm. News flash: the terrorist watch list has over 1 million names; 99 percent of them are foreigners. As the only firearms manufacturer in Congress, I can assure you in the 18 U.S. Code and in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms regulations that govern manufacturers and dealers, guess what. They can't purchase a firearm,

not as a nonresident alien. Ain't going to happen. If we were to do that, we would be committing a felony.

Of the less than 1 percent that might be eligible, an even smaller fraction of these are on separate no-fly lists. Yet you don't hear these facts. You are hearing them tonight in the people's House.

□ 1845

All Federal prohibitors would trigger an alert to the FBI on any firearms transfer, even if they were eligible.

What about the gun show loophole? Don't you think businesses should be forced to conduct background checks at gun shows? I have a firearms business. If we were to go to a gun show and set up there, and we were to do a firearms transfer under that license without a NICS check and a 4473, we would be committing a felony.

No firearms licensee can transfer a firearm without a background check, period. If so, a felony is committed with stiff penalties. On-site business or off-site transfer, it doesn't matter. It is irrelevant. These are the facts.

What about Internet gun sales, don't you think there should be a background check on those? Why, you can just go on the Internet and they mail you a firearm.

No licensee will transfer a firearm to another location without sending it to another licensee to make the transfer. When people order our products, we send them out to another Federal firearms licensee. They do the background checks. They do the transfer. If that doesn't happen, nothing is transferred. To do so is to commit a felony otherwise.

Further, no firearm can be transferred through the mail or a shipping service unless by a licensee, and unless—the only exception—it is the owner sending it back to the manufacturer to have some repair made or something of that nature.

And so these are the facts that we see and that we deal with. As we go into this debate, we have to go into it with deliberation. We often hear: Why aren't we having these issues? Why aren't we discussing this issue? Let's have the debate. Let's go after the facts.

Serious people decline to trivialize any right expressly addressed in the Bill of Rights. A government that abrogates any of the Bill of Rights, with or without majority approval, forever acts illegitimately and loses the moral right to govern this Republic. This is the uncompromising understanding reflected in the warning that America's gun owners will not go gently into the utopian woods.

While liberals and gun control advocates will take such a statement as evidence of their belief in the back-water, violent, untrustworthy nature of the armed American citizen, as gun owners, veterans, combat veterans, defenders of this Republic, we understand that hope, that liberals hold equally strong conviction with theirs about

printing presses, Internet blogs, and television cameras. We get that. It is the same Bill of Rights, inalienable.

The Republic depends on the fervent devotion to all of our rights, not selective rights. This is the oath we take, and no President's tears or progressives' passionate pleas will shake us from the defense of the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. GIBSON, Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma. I want to thank him for providing real illumination on important data and also on law. I think too often we can move off quickly without having a firm understanding of what the current law is, and so we really appreciate him bringing clarity to that subject.

And also inherent in the gentleman's talk, this idea, this Bill of Rights, is formed with the basis of a citizen that has rights and responsibilities. We know as citizens that we have a responsibility to follow the law. And if we don't follow the law, we are fully held to account for that. That is another piece I think that is occasionally missing from all this. And certainly what is missing, I believe, is the fact that all of us here tonight and, indeed, Madam Speaker, all of us acknowledge your very distinguished career in the United States military and, in so many ways, how you were a trailblazer and how you really are a role model for everyone. We are so honored to serve with you.

We recognize the fact that for all of us, we believe with every fiber in our body that we are going to stand for these rights, that the policy that we bring forward is going to be based on those rights, and also looking to solve the problem which, as I pointed out, when you actually look at the facts and you listen to the data, you know that where the problems are are these narcotraffickers. You know, we have issues with that, and we need to take action with that. So when we focus our policies in the area that is causing the problem, we will actually begin to see an even more safe and secure environment.

By the way, also the deterrence, along with addressing the issue with narcotraffickers and gangs, is the deterrent value itself of the Second Amendment. So I want to thank Mr. RUSSELL.

At this point, I want to bring up another great American, RYAN ZINKE. He is the at-large representative from Montana. Congressman ZINKE spent 23 years in the United States military. He was a United States Navy SEAL. In fact, he commanded SEAL Team Six. He was the commander of Joint Special Operations Task Force in the Arabian Peninsula, leading over 3,500 special operators in Iraq. He also established the Navy Special Warfare Advanced Training Command and served as the first dean of the Naval Special Warfare graduate school. He earned two Bronze Stars during his service, and his service continues now. His daughter was a former U.S. Navy diver, and she is married to a Navy SEAL.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), my good friend.

Mr. ZINKE. Madam Speaker, when I was a Commander at SEAL Team Six, I can tell you I was never the best jumper, diver, explosives expert, but I always knew who was. I was able to surround myself with, I think, the greatest team that this country could muster.

I feel privileged and honored also in Congress to be able to surround myself with what I think are the greatest team of patriots, both men and women who have served our country and have a great love for our Constitution.

Tonight's discussion is about the Constitution. All of us took an oath to defend and support the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic; and this time in our government's history, I don't think there is more of an important message to do that today.

Our Constitution is about individual rights granted to us not by the government but by God, secured by the people. What we find ourselves today is not a Republican or Democrat issue. This is an American issue, and it strikes at the very heart of our country.

Across our great land, there is a sense that America has lost her place. There is a sense that tomorrow is not going to be a better day, that America's greatness has passed. I don't share that thought because I believe in the people of America.

What I think has happened is this: We always thought that our President or elected officials would always have our best interests at heart. And America went busy doing the things that are required every day, moms were dropping the kids off to school, we were working, building small businesses, mom-and-pop stores were out there doing commerce, and we always thought, again, that our officials, our elected officials, would always do what is right.

Well, there is a saying in the SEALs that you have to earn your Trident every day. In America, we have to earn our freedoms every day. And earning our freedoms is participating in our elections, and it is holding our elected officials accountable, making sure that this great democracy, which is the light of the world, maintains its place.

John F. Kennedy, in his inaugural address, said that our great Nation would pay any price and bear any burden in the defense of freedom. That sounding call was a call to all men and women worldwide that the United States would be there in the defense of our freedoms. There was a bond, a democracy, and a government by the people and for the people that provided the most opportunity for all of us. At the heart of it is the defense of our individual freedoms—our freedom of speech, religion, and our freedom to bear arms. They are sacred. They are sacred to Americans and the envy of the world.

So tonight, as we think about what is important in our country, I say this: It is time for America to stand. It is time for us to rally. Our country is worth fighting for. Our values are worth defending. Our Nation requires all of us to act. We all rise and fall on the same tide. We all share the same experience of being American.

With that, I am honored to be with you tonight. Thank you, and God bless.

Mr. GIBSON. I want to thank the gentleman. I want to thank him for really putting in focus the fact that these natural rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—these natural rights come from God, and that governments are instituted among men and women to secure those rights, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

As I mentioned earlier, what really made us different from the rest of the world, this exceptional Nation which many people thought would never work out, I want to thank the gentleman for putting that in focus. I thank him for his service to our Nation, thank him for his leadership.

We are now going to hear from one of our newest Members here in the House, WARREN DAVIDSON, who represents the Eighth District in Ohio. He is no stranger to service. He is certainly no stranger to hard work. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1995, and he spent 11 years in the United States Army. He served in some of our most elite units. He served in the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 101st Airborne Division, and right here in Washington, D.C. with the Old Guard.

After 11 years having defended these freedoms, he went back home, and he began to work in his family business. Then later, he branched out on his own and started his own small business in manufacturing, something very important to an independent nation. We are very proud of his service. We are glad he is here with us now, and we know we see great things in his future.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here with my colleagues. It is a different way to support and defend the Constitution than I ever expected to have. I began my service here much like, well, everyone else. We all start the same way. We swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And that was the first time that I swore it, or any of us here tonight.

In 1988, at the climax of the cold war, I enlisted in the infantry. I was honored to serve in Germany after Ronald Reagan had uttered the famous words, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." I was honored to be there at a time when many people in the world worried that Ronald Reagan, with his intense rhetoric, would somehow cause world war III, that maybe he was pushing too far, too hard, or asking too much.

I was honored to be there when East Germans tore down their own wall.

Word had gotten past the Iron Curtain and penetrated the lies they had been told, and they knew what we had here. They tore down their own wall, and, for once, the oppressor did not stop them.

□ 1900

I was honored that Thanksgiving to meet East Berliners who could not believe what they were seeing. They were seeing stores with goods on the shelves, open at night.

They asked: Is it like this everywhere?

I thought they were talking about how big Berlin was, but they were just in shock because they had not experienced what we had.

And what did we have?

We had the birth of plenty. We had the world's best markets—and still do—for goods, for services, for capital, for intellectual property, for innovation. We are the world's land of opportunity, and they were hungry for it.

Ronald Reagan, much earlier in his career, had a famous speech: "A time for choosing." I would encourage everyone one who has not watched it, to watch it, and everyone who has not watched it in a while, to watch it again. Reagan said—back then, famous words—"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction."

Sadly, that is more true today than perhaps at any time since he uttered those words then.

No one knows the divide between freedom and oppression better than servicemen and -women. They fight our Nation's wars. They risk their lives to defend our Constitution. Sadly, the threat to our Constitution is not just from foreign enemies. Sometimes, sadly, it is right here in the Halls of Congress.

In my short 3 months here, I have seen attempted infringements on the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Amendments. That is hard to believe.

Just this past summer, we had Members of Congress obstructing the people's work here, staging a sit-in on the House floor to subvert our Second Amendment with a radical gun control agenda. It is an agenda that seeks to deprive us of the very rights our Founding Fathers sought to preserve with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Anyone could do a plain reading of the Constitution and see that the right to bear arms is named right there, to be applied at the individual level. The rest of the Bill of Rights is certainly talking about rights at the individual level, and the Second Amendment is no exception.

Justice Scalia wrote it in the Heller decision, "Nowhere else in the Constitution does a 'right' attributed to the people refer to anything other than an individual right."

"The people" refers to all members of the political community, not an unspecified subset. We start, therefore, with a strong presumption that the

Second Amendment right is exercised individually and belongs to all Americans.

You see, for more than 100 years, the 14th Amendment has been used to link the rest of the Bill of Rights to the State. Somehow, the same folks that are onboard with applying the First Amendment to States, whether it is free speech, voting rights, or freedom of religion, in some cases, they are reluctant to let the same be true for the Second Amendment.

When they want a uniform view of things that aren't even addressed in our Constitution, like marriage, they are not willing to apply the same logic to our Constitution with something that is very plainly stated: The right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

I take that right very seriously. Those of us who served in the military know all too well what a society looks like when freedoms are squashed. We have seen these places and met the people who have lived under tyranny.

Our Founding Fathers knew the battle between freedom and tyranny too well, many sacrificing their lives in the struggle to establish this Nation. It is not an accident that they enshrine that right to keep and bear arms squarely right after the right to speech and freedoms of religion. It is so essential to stave off oppressors that we cannot be truly free without it.

After these men sacrificed life and limb, let us not besmirch their legacy by subjecting it to an agenda which would seek to attack away this freedom one firearm or one freedom at a time.

The threats are real. It is hard to imagine. It is not just rhetoric. Those words, "freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction," sound like political rhetoric, but it is just so real and we have to take it very seriously. It is an honor to be here to talk about it.

Mr. GIBSON. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, and I really want to express what a privilege it is to serve in this House. I believe in this country and this exceptional way of life. Not that we don't have warts and challenges—we certainly have those—but there is nothing that we can't solve together.

We also need to recognize that what we did in the 18th century that allowed for the most freedom and the opportunity in the history of mankind is not a birth right. It is not a foregone conclusion. Every generation has to defend it. They have to defend it from threats from abroad and also be vigilant for unintentional or perhaps intentional encroachment here at home.

Our colleagues here believe deeply in protecting this exceptional way of life. As I stated earlier, we love our family, we love our friends, we love our communities. We want to ensure that they are safe. We are ready to work with our colleagues on that. As we do, we need to keep forefront this exceptional way

of life which the first generation of Americans fought to provide for us and that every successive generation has fought to preserve and that we also take commonsense approaches that are based on data and that are focused on actually solving the problem.

We identified some of those problems tonight and areas where we think we can find some common ground. I mentioned one of them we already have in terms of the law enforcement and cracking down on the narcotraffickers.

Madam Speaker, we are here tonight because we also wanted to make it very clear that—while there are passions and emotions in every direction, we wanted to make it very clear that what we hold so dear, this exceptional way of life, the liberties, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, this is something we will defend. We have defended it and we continue to defend it. May God bless this country.

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

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: TPP

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

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I am here on behalf of the Progressive Caucus, which is in charge of this hour. We are here today to talk about the Trans-Pacific Partnership and trade.

The people in the Progressive Caucus have been some of the leaders in the movement to make sure that we have trade deals that protect American jobs and lift our wages here in the United States.

We want to make sure that there are environmental protections across the globe. We want to make sure our food is safe and our prescription drugs are affordable. We want to make sure there are human rights in countries that do trade with the United States. And we want to make sure we are addressing issues like currency manipulation. All of those issues are important when you want to advance trade.

No one in this room is against trade. We are all for increasing our ability to have more exports and to have imports into this country, but you have to have trade deals that work on behalf of the American worker. And all too often, past trade deals have cost us jobs here in the United States. They have made our wages continue to be depressed.

That is not a good trade deal, in the minds of the members of the Progressive Caucus. That is why we are here at this hour to talk specifically about what is good trade, why we are skeptical of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and why we especially don't want to see a vote during the lameduck session after the election in November. With people who are no longer going to be serving in Congress, taking that vote at that time would be an especially bad idea.

Today is a national call-in day of action on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. There are over 90 public interest groups that have been calling our offices. I heard my staff picking up the phone over and over again, responding to people who want to make sure that we have trade deals that take care of all those things that we talked about, all the things that members of the Progressive Caucus have been leaders in this Congress and trying to advocate for.

In conjunction with the tens of thousands of people who have called Congress today to urge their Members not only to not support the Trans-Pacific Partnership, because it is really not a trade deal, there are parts about a trade—this is a rewriting of corporate rules that could have huge ramifications.

Forty percent of the world's gross domestic product is involved in this one large deal. We want to make sure we get it right, not just fast. That is why we are joining with these groups today to make sure that people know what is in the Trans-Pacific Partnership and why it is vitally important that we don't take this up during a lameduck session.

As I said, not only do we have Members who will no longer be serving here who might even be looking for jobs with some of the very industries advocating for the Trans-Pacific Partnership because it will benefit their bottom line, but also we have two Presidential candidates in the main two parties who both oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

This should be something that, with as much enormous respect I have for President Obama, we should allow the next President to be able to address trade, especially when a deal like this has so much controversy and so many questions about it.

So we are here. During the next hour we are going to hear from various members of the Progressive Caucus. It is my honor to yield to one of my colleagues from the great State of California. The 17th District of California is very lucky to have a representative who has been such an outspoken advocate for middle-class families not just in California, but across the country.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), my colleague from the 17th District of California.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to TPP, an unfair trade deal that will hurt our Nation's workers, our environment, and give corporations dangerous new rights.

Through an alarming expansion of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement process, the ISDS, TPP will give corporations a legal weapon to enforce their agendas on sovereign nations. Corporations have already used ISDS to bring over 700 lawsuits against more than 100 governments around the world.

When my home State of California banned the use of MTBE as an additive in gasoline because it was polluting the ground water, the Canadian company sued, costing the State and Federal Government millions of dollars to defend the case. TPP would extend these rights to 1,000 additional corporations owning more than 9,200 subsidiaries.

We need to stop foreign corporations from suing the U.S. Government before unaccountable panels of corporate lawyers. And while giving these rights to corporations, TPP will provide little benefit to the American economy.

The widely cited estimate of 0.13 percent growth in U.S. GDP under TPP is over 10 years. It is not an annual gain. A gain that benefits only a few is undone by the negative impact TPP will have on workers at home and abroad.

Under NAFTA, 700,000 American jobs moved to Mexico to take advantage of Mexican workers making 30 percent less than American workers, even after adjusting for differences in living costs.

While TPP requires nations to implement minimum wage laws, nothing in the language of the deal prevents them from setting the wage as low as 5 cents an hour. TPP is a small win for high-income earners at the huge expense of low-income workers.

TPP also lacks strong provisions to deal with countries with repulsive human rights abuses, including human trafficking and intolerance of the LGBTQ communities.

Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei criminalize consensual same-sex sexual relations. Rewarding them with a trade agreement is really very unacceptable.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have evaluated each trade agreement based on whether it ensures strong, clear, and enforceable labor, environmental, and human rights standards. I do not believe that the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that was sent to Congress meets my standards. It does not deserve to be considered during a lameduck session.

As it is currently written, TPP should not be brought to a vote. It should not be brought to a vote, period.

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the 17th District of California for his words. As he mentioned, there are a number of provisions that you can start to drill down to. In the giant volumes that make up the Trans-Pacific Partnership, there are provisions that I think the American people have no idea about. In fact, I would argue there are some people in Congress who have no idea what is in the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

□ 1915

Just one of those provisions that Representative HONDA mentioned is the investor-State dispute settlement process, the ISDS provisions, where you have a three-person tribunal of unelected, unaccountable people, people who are corporate lawyers one day and then fair arbitrators of the law an-

other day, that set up this separate legal process from the American judicial system that international companies, multinational companies, can access if they want to sue a local government for a law that they have passed that they think affects their future profits.

Think about it. Everyone else in the country has to follow the court system we have in the United States, but if a multinational company, because of the provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, decides that they want to go around that system and go to three corporate lawyers who form a tribunal under this ISDS provision and they want to challenge that law, they can sue for monetary damages. Think about it.

For example, if the State of Wisconsin, where I come from, were to pass a higher minimum wage than the Federal minimum wage and it would be challenged, potentially, by a multinational corporation saying that is going to affect their future profits, they could sue the taxpayers of Wisconsin over that law.

This isn't just something that we are dreaming up. Over and over again, we have seen countries in trade deals be sued by multinational corporations because of environmental law and other laws that they have passed that they have said affect their future profits, and it doesn't happen in the American legal system.

Now, as bad as this sounds, to skirt the American legal system, a special system for multinational corporations, let me tell you what is even worse about that provision. It is only a tribunal for those corporations. But the parts of the trade agreement that affect labor law or environmental law don't have access to the same provisions. They have to go through the normal legal court system.

Recently, there was a labor dispute with the country of Honduras with a company, and it took us 6 years to get that resolved. So for environmental law, for labor law, for things that are going to affect most people, we still have to follow the court system, which is the way it should be. But for multinational corporations, they have a special, streamlined process with, basically, their own arbitrators making the decisions, allowing you to sue taxpayers within a local government or a State government that may pass a law. Clearly, that doesn't make any sense whatsoever. That is just one of those provisions that is a real problem.

Another thing that MIKE HONDA from the great State of California said, he talked about some of the human rights violations. There are explicit human rights violations with some of the countries that don't respect things like single mothers, who don't respect the LGBT community, and those are things that we absolutely can't allow.

Our country has done so much to work with other countries to raise human rights standards, and yet, in

this bill, this trade agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, it does not have those things in place to make sure that we have got those protections for so many different people and so many different provisions. So what he mentioned are just a couple of the provisions.

Let me mention something I think that people don't know about. As I mentioned at the very beginning, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is made up of countries that are going to make up for 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product.

Now, it is one thing to have a trade agreement with a country that is very similar, like Canada, or a country like Japan that also has a lot of similar goods that they are producing; but we also have countries in here like Vietnam, where they don't allow trade unions, where people make, on average, 65 cents an hour.

As you can tell, there is going to be a huge difference in a trade agreement that you have with a country like Canada and a country like Vietnam. But in this trade agreement everyone is lumped together, and there is a long lead time that Vietnam would have to try to get their act together, especially just around issues like having a trade union, much less around those wage issues.

But you can just imagine that if you open that door to have trade preferences for a country like Vietnam, at 65 cents an hour, yes, I will contend that we will lift their wages ever so slightly; but I will also tell you, based on evidence we have seen from past trade deals, that you will further depress our wages here. You will keep the wages flat because that is what happens with these trade agreements, and more jobs that are done here in the U.S. will go overseas.

I say this from someone who grew up in a very industrial town. I grew up in Kenosha, Wisconsin. We made autos for the entire time I grew up in that town. When I was growing up, it was American Motors Company. We made Pacers and Gremlins and some cars that people actually bought. But thousands of thousands of people worked at those auto plants and supported their families with good family-supporting, middle class wages. That is the type of jobs that we need here in this country, but those jobs aren't going to happen under these trade agreements.

I have watched in my hometown of Kenosha after American Motors sold to Renault, and then Renault sold to Chrysler. Chrysler made engines for Jeeps. At some point, finally, they went away, and we lost what was over 5,000 jobs at one time in the city of Kenosha, Wisconsin, and the ripple effects of the industries that fed into that company because, all too often, we watched those jobs go to Mexico, to Canada, to other countries because of wages.

Another thing, for almost three decades of my life, I have had a specialty

printing business. One of the things that we do is screen print T-shirts. So I have been buying T-shirts and goods like that for nearly 30 years. Over the years, I have watched the U.S. mills go away, and more and more of those jobs have gone to countries, literally, that are paying wages that are subpoverty.

I have gone to El Salvador and met with people who work in the sweatshops where people make \$3 a day; and because that sweatshop area is in a special free trade zone that is not near where people live, they spend a dollar of that to get there. Now, this is, granted, a couple of decades ago, but the wages are still severely depressed.

Those jobs that were in America now are going to countries—in fact, one of the things we are hearing out of this trade agreement is Central American countries are afraid they are now going to lose jobs to places like Vietnam because they can have even lower wages. None of those things are going to help the American worker.

So there is a reason why this fall, when you talk and hear from candidates who are running for office—we have two Presidential candidates in the major parties both opposing the Trans-Pacific Partnership as it is currently written.

We have candidates across the country, for Congress and the Senate, running ads talking about a better vision for what trade should be. With all of that going on, it makes no sense whatsoever that we would take this up after the November elections, between that little period of time between November 8 and the end of the year, when we are going to have a new Congress sworn in in January. To take that up with a Congress of people that may not be serving here and may be looking for jobs from the very companies that advocate for these sweetheart multinational deals is a huge, huge mistake.

So that is why the 90 organizations today are having a day of action; tens of thousands of calls coming into Washington, D.C., to try to make sure that Congress does the right thing around trade. That means making sure that we have trade deals that protect American jobs and, hopefully, grow American jobs; ones that protect our wages and hopefully grow our wages; ones that protect us when it comes to things like food safety; ones that protect us on things like pharmaceutical prices.

We want trade agreements that make sure that you don't have a country—you can have the best language in a trade deal, but if you still allow currency manipulation, you can make that language virtually meaningless. And there is nothing in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement that addresses currency manipulation, which is a huge, huge problem.

So those are some of the things that we are trying to get done, much less international human rights provisions that should be in any meaningful trade agreement. So many of us are going to

be talking about this over the next few months.

But tonight I would like to yield to another one of my colleagues who has been one of the leaders in Congress on this issue. He represents New York State's 20th District. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding. I thank Representative POCAN for leading us in what I think is a very meaningful discussion this evening in this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, trade, absolutely critical to our economy, but fair trade, not free trade, a fair trade situation where our manufacturers, our businesses, are operating on a level playing field where they have an equal shot at being able to go forward and be productive and provide for jobs, the dignity of work for Americans from coast to coast.

Recently, I talked to an individual, Representative POCAN, in my district, who had to close his doors. And it was years of assistance that we provided when I was yet in the State assembly, and then after, in the U.S. Congress, to assist them so that they could be competitive. Their major competitors were in China.

If we try to talk about public-private partnerships as being something that don't exist out there, on this House floor, then we are not getting it. It was the public-private coziness of China that really destroyed the competitive edge of a business in my community, one that had spun fibers for many defense contracts.

They alluded to the fact that, in some cases, the government, China, will own the building. The government, China, will pay the utility bill. They will offer subsidies to the industry, and then, as was just mentioned by my colleague from Wisconsin, they will manipulate the currency.

All four of those items drag down the opportunity for American workers. It dulls the competitive edge that we should be able to enjoy in the marketplace. We build smarter, and it doesn't have to be cheaper. But when these sorts of dynamics are working against us, we are really swimming upstream with very difficult challenges facing us.

Now, this factory owner had told me, if you take away one or two of the items that I just mentioned, we win easily. If you take three of the four away, we are a strong winner, and if you take all four away, winners hands down.

So it is about fairness. It is about having an equal shot at the opportunity to function in the international marketplace and be able to be creative and innovative with all sorts of intellectual capacity that comes, oftentimes, with research that should be another counterpart to this equation. When we do that, we are the strength beyond belief, and so our efforts here in the House, Representative POCAN, Rep-

resentative SLAUGHTER from upstate New York, Representative DELAURO from Connecticut, a great number of us who have been working together, Representative DOGGETT from Texas, a great number of us working to make certain that our colleagues know about the damage inflicted if we go forward with the current format of the TPP, the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

It is important for us to be pro-worker, pro-business, pro-trade in a free or, rather, a fair capacity, not a free and open-ended concept that has been part and parcel to negotiated deals before this.

Now, what I hear oftentimes is that the biggest problem that had come, when talking to manufacturers in northeast U.S., is that many of the arrangements in these contracts were never implemented. So the contracts might have been a little weak or unfair to begin with, but when you add to that the lack of genuine implementation, then you really have compounded the damage. The pain is real, and it is the exodus of many, many jobs in upstate New York. That is the territory of the 20th Congressional District.

Now, Mr. POCAN, I have to tell you, I am the host community, my 20th Congressional seat in New York, the eastern end to the Erie Canal corridor. Now, that gave birth to a number of mill towns. They took a little town called New York and said they were going to make it a port, and then, by building the canal, we developed a necklace of communities dubbed mill towns that became epicenters of invention and innovation, and we sparked the westward movement. We inspired an industrial revolution. Because of that, there was a great bit of manufacturing going on.

I know that we need to upgrade and retrofit and continually grow the economy by transforming some of the workforce skill sets. I know that. We invest in that. But to put us at a competitive disadvantage by having these situations where we don't require climate change response in the contract, so we are allowing people to live in fifties and sixties standards with the environment—and we are doing our best to respond to climate change. We see the damage that has been ravaging many of our communities, either through extreme dry situations, drought in the Southwest, or flooding in the Southeast and in the Northeast, these are issues that need to be addressed, and we are doing the right thing. But when the left hand is not responding to what the right hand is doing and we are giving people a different level of standards, workforce conditions, workforce protection, these are things that need to be standard across the board and not sinking down to a lowest common denominator, but rising to the highest level amongst us.

□ 1930

I think of the fact that we could end up with situations, having had favored

a labor scale, a payment mechanism, such as 65 cents per hour for Vietnamese workers as being that standard out there across the world. Nothing could be more harmful. That is undignified when it is seen through the lens of the worker.

So there is a lot of work to be done here. There is a lot of improvement that needs to be had.

We have opposed the TPP in its current form. Certainly we are for trade. It is important for us to have that marketplace. We are 4.7 percent of the world's population. Of course we want to advance trade. It needs to be fair trade, and that is what we are asking here. This is the message that we have been resonating so as to make certain that there is progress made here for our communities, our neighborhoods, our workers, and our businesses. We won't stop until we are successful with that. I believe the message is probably not even dealing with this during a lameduck session of Congress.

So I appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts and stay with you in this Special Order for a while, Representative POCAN, because this is a very important topic to workers from coast to coast.

Again, it is the fairness that we want to bring not only to the workforce but to the business communities that invest in jobs in our neighborhood.

Mr. POCAN. This is my second term in Congress. You have been here a little longer. One of the questions I have is when I was elected 4 years ago I remember New Year's Eve when you were all voting during a lameduck session on things. Tell me more about this lameduck session portion. I think that is the real question. Some people might be amenable to what is in the TPP which we still have arguments about, but to do that in a lameduck session certainly sets up problems.

Could you explain a little more about why that is a problem? I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. I think there needs to be strong dialogue here. With the elections being early in November and probably some time to pass before we really gather again and reconvene as a base, as a body, as a House, and then with holidays consuming some of the time during December, it gives you precious little time to really have that dialogue—that conversation—that is so essential. Great things happen when we communicate, when we talk to each other and suggest these are concerns, and let's raise the given solutions that are, indeed, required to make it acceptable. That takes time.

Quite literally, there has been no work on this. People have been advancing the TPP in its original—in its now-given format, and many people see weaknesses, loopholes, and concern for workers. There are situations where labor is not protected by union forces because the governments run the unions. And if you are a dissident to the cause then there are just extreme

outcomes for individuals if you become that whistleblower or that critic, that dissident, you are then maybe finding yourself incarcerated.

So it is important for us to clear up a lot of the issues, to correct them, and fine-tune them, everything from environmental standards, to worker protection, to the cost of pharmaceuticals, which has been raised many times over, and what it might do to the average pricetag out there. So there is not enough time. To rush and get that done, to beat the clock, so to speak, I think is a faulty bit of a scenario. It is not the way to do something as so critically important as this is.

Mr. POCAN. You mentioned there are a lot of areas that we clearly need to make changes on. There are areas of concern around labor rights, environmental rights, consumer protections, the ISDS provisions, and other things. Why not simply amend the trade agreement to fix those things? I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. Congress has very little opportunity to adjust. It is basically a thumbs up, thumbs down. We can recommend. It is not like we can make major adjustments.

The administrator overseeing the document will have to take that back and make recommended changes. You have to bring other nations together to get agreement because it is 40 percent of the world's GDP that is the audience for this given negotiated settlement. This TPP covers a huge portion of the world's GDP. So there are a lot of partners that would have a say in the process. We can recommend, and then the changes that we can inspire are quite mild compared to what needs to be done by the framers of the settlement.

Mr. POCAN. Again, I thank you so much for all your work on this.

Mr. TONKO. My pleasure. Back at you because it has taken a lot of time for all of us who have been whipping in the House. I think, to the credit of our group, we have sacrificed a lot of time, but we have been working in a steadfast way that has allowed people to really question how this fits into their given district. When this is done, it has got to be done correctly because it is there. It is a long-term project.

People have seen what faulty agreements can mean in their districts. While we lost many manufacturing jobs, luckily this administration has helped to hold on to several manufacturing jobs and stop the bleeding. But now let's grow this, and let's invest in the intellect for manufacturing. Let's make it smarter, and let's also retrofit our systems so that we do have a heavy hand from a competitive edge. At the same time, let's get the negotiated agreement that is most favorable to a level playing field.

Mr. POCAN. Again, I thank the gentleman so much. I appreciate it.

Mr. TONKO. My pleasure.

Mr. POCAN. I think the point that the gentleman brought up, especially around why we can't amend it, is a real

significant one. Congress gave up its ability when it passed trade promotion authority to allow the President to do the final negotiations. We gave up our ability to have any amendments, and we have limited debate. So when there are so many concerns with this trade agreement, unfortunately, there is very little other than an up-or-down vote that we can do. This is exactly why when you have two major party Presidential candidates and scores of candidates for Federal office across the country in both parties opposing this agreement to allow people who could be kicked out of office, essentially by the voters, to make that decision in a lameduck is certainly undemocratic, with a small D. That is one of the real problems we are facing on this.

The other issue you brought up, gentleman, and I want to talk about too is the accompanying job loss. Other trade agreements we have had in the past, we have seen that we have had a net job loss both, I believe, from the Korea Free Trade Agreement where we were made one promise and a different result happened from NAFTA.

I just last year had a company leave Lafayette County, Wisconsin. Lafayette County is one of the most rural counties in the State of Wisconsin. The largest city is 2,400 people, Darlington. It is one of two counties in the State of Wisconsin that doesn't have a stop-and-go light. This is a rural, rural area.

A company just last year, with about 32 jobs that did auto parts, left to go to Mexico. Now, there is some trade adjustment assistance that can help in the short term to help the workers. But think about it: 32 jobs in a community of 2,400.

I also have Madison, Wisconsin, in my district, with about 240,000 people. That would be like losing 3,000-plus jobs in the city of Madison, Wisconsin. That is the effect that happened to that city, Darlington, because of previous past trade deals. That is why it is so important we get it right and we get it right the first time. In this case, I think there are many people in both parties who don't think we have it quite right, and that is why we need to address it.

Another thing I want to raise that we talked about, and I think it is so important because this is new news from this week, is the provisions around the investor-state dispute settlement, the provisions that allow, essentially, the multinational corporations to sue government if they think something affects their future profits.

Just this week there was a group of academics who have traditionally embraced free trade but are alarmed by the inclusion of the ISDS provisions in the deal who just sent a letter to Congress warning of this system. It is 223-strong, led by Harvard law professor, Laurence Tribe. He warned that the U.S. will be subject to a flurry of suits by profit-seeking actors with no interest in working through a democratic or constitutional process.

Let me read the quote in the letter: “Unfortunately the final TPP text simply replicates nearly word for word many of the problematic provisions from past agreements, and indeed would vastly expand the U.S. government’s potential liability under the ISDS system.”

This is about our sovereignty.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. Doesn’t this give corporations an opportunity to undo regulations that are established by our country or laws that are established?

Mr. POCAN. The net effect by suing for financial gain will do exactly that if someone is going to have to pay damages.

There is an ISDS provision that happened in Peru over an environmental law change by a company that had toxic contamination. That company is now, because of that change to environmental law in Peru, demanding \$800 million from the country—\$800 million because they are saying that that is somehow going to affect their future profits and because of a violation of a trade agreement.

These are real. This is just one of many, many examples. Canada and other countries have been sued through these provisions. But now we have the experts in the United States telling us not to do that.

So this is something that clearly is one of the biggest problems that is in there. As we said, you can’t amend it out. We are not allowed. As Congress, we gave up our ability to amend that section out.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. I think what you are pointing to here is a very important component of the agreement. We do lose the control, the direct authority, required of us by the constituency that places its trust in each and every Representative that is elected to come to Congress. They believe rightfully that we are going to have their best interests.

We vote in accordance with what we hear from them about standards that should be maintained, established, and implemented; and to have that passed on to a court of whatever, of a format that is far removed from a given situation and may be looking at just greed as a factor, an unwillingness to pay abundantly well for what our standards should be maintained for just reasons, moves the process away from us with any control that we might have had taken away. I think that anonymity is a dangerous outcome as a result of this sort of agreement.

So I think that, again, there is a lot of fine print in the agreement that has to be really examined and thoroughly reviewed so that we are not putting our situations at risk and our communities at risk.

All in all, it is wanting to maintain standards that will respond to the needs of the environment. We know how critical that is. We know how

much improvement is required and that we make great gains. But for those who signed into the process—some were actually directly communicating to the executive branch saying: let’s get this fast track going.

Why would you circumvent your role? Why would you, as a Member of the House, want to remove yourself from the process when we should be here reviewing, examining, recommending, and at least having some sort of input that won’t pass it over and absolve ourselves of given responsibilities?

So I appreciate, again, your yielding, Representative POCAN.

Mr. POCAN. I thank the gentleman.

As much as this is the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour, and many of us are working against this, I see Republicans in the room. I know Republicans are just as concerned about the sovereignty of this country. When you have the ISDS provisions that you have, you take away that sovereignty. So I don’t care if you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent, you want to make sure that if we have a legal system here it is a legal system for everyone and there is not a special system set up for a few multinational corporations that no one else can access with their own players arbitrating these decisions. That is the real problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will close our hour just by repeating a few of the things that I think are really important for our people who are watching to understand. This is a day of action, and 90 organizations have had calls coming into Congress throughout the day. Tens of thousands of calls have come into Washington, D.C., to ask people not to support TPP, but especially not to support a vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership in a lameduck Congress.

Don’t let people who have just been rejected by the voters make a decision that could impact this country for decades in the future. Don’t allow a vote that is going to take away more American jobs and further depress our wages here. That is what people have been calling us all day about.

I think that an important question for anyone who wants to serve in this body is: are we going to give up those sorts of sovereignty issues? Are we going to give up the very concerns we have around things like food safety and prescription drug prices; around labor standards and environmental standards?

□ 1945

Are we going to give all of that up through one giant trade deal that has 40 percent of the world’s gross domestic product wrapped into it and think that any agreement we have with Canada and Vietnam are identical?

I don’t think anyone really believes that is in the best interest of America. That is why we had this Special Order tonight. That is why so many people called in today. We thank those people

for watching, and we hope that they will get active on this issue as well. It is important that we have trade, but we need fair trade, not just free trade.

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

IMPEACHING JOHN KOSKINEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, John Koskinen should no longer hold office. John Koskinen should no longer be the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Tonight I am joined by some of my colleagues to talk about why that should happen, why he should be removed from office.

If you remember what took place here, the Internal Revenue Service targeted our fellow citizens for their political beliefs. They did it, and they got caught. Maybe most importantly tonight, thinking about the current Commissioner, the targeting continues.

Now, you don’t have to take my word for it. You can take what the United States Appellate Court for the District of Columbia stated. This is a decision from August 5, 2016, last month, from the opinion.

The IRS has admitted to the inspector general, to the District Court, and to us—the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia—that applications for exemption by some of the plaintiffs have never to this day been processed. They are still targeting conservative groups.

They say it again right here:

It is absurd to suggest that the effect of the IRS’ unlawful conduct, which delayed the processing of plaintiffs’ applications, has been eradicated when two of the plaintiffs’ applications remain pending.

So here is the takeaway: they are still doing it.

Here is the standard for removing someone from office: gross negligence, breach of public trust, dereliction of duty.

Mr. Koskinen has certainly had those things take place under his tenure at the Internal Revenue Service.

Here are the facts. February 2014, John Koskinen’s chief counsel is on notice that there are problems with Lois Lerner’s hard drive and missing emails from during the time of the initial targeting. They wait 4 months before they tell Congress and, therefore, the American people.

During that 4 months, they learn in February: Oh, we have got missing emails, problems with Lois Lerner’s hard drive, an essential figure in this scandal.

They wait until June before they tell Congress and the American people.

During that 4-month timeframe, 422 backup tapes are destroyed. Most importantly, they are destroyed with three orders to preserve all documents, and two subpoenas to get those documents are in place. Now, think about

that. You have got missing emails, the backup tapes that contain those missing emails are destroyed during the 4 months you are trying to figure out and 4 months before you tell Congress, and those 422 backup tapes contain potentially 24,000 emails.

That is why he should no longer hold office. That is why it is important that we take this vote at some point and remove him from office. So you have got the standard, which he certainly meets based on that fact pattern; and you have got the court, which just told us last month the targeting continues.

The last thing I will say before turning to my colleagues: No private citizen could get away with that same scenario. If any one of us, any one of the three-quarters of a million people we all get to represent, any of those folks back in the Fourth District of Ohio, which I have the privilege of serving, if any one of those folks are audited by the IRS and they discover that they are missing documents that are critical to that audit and critical to what the IRS is looking for and they wait 4 months to tell the IRS that they are missing those documents, and during that time the backup disk or the backup tape that contains those missing documents somehow gets destroyed, what is going to happen to them?

Well, they are definitely getting fined and they are probably going to jail. But somehow when it happens to John Koskinen, the Commissioner of the IRS, it is okay. It is not okay. It is not okay in this country. This is what frosts so many Americans today. There are now two standards in this country. One for we, the people, and a different one for the politically connected. One for us regular folks and a different one if your name is Lerner, Koskinen or Clinton. That is not supposed to be how it works in this country, not in the greatest Nation ever, where we are all supposed to be treated equally under the law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING), my good friend.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for having this Special Order tonight.

My good friend, Congressman JORDAN has laid out the facts of this case. There are many other detailed facts that we don't have time to get into. But just to give you an example of what my constituents are saying to me, they are over-the-top angry at what Congressman JORDAN was talking about, and that is that there seems to be two standards in America. There is one standard for the elite, there is one standard for the high-up officials in Washington, and then there is a standard for everyone else. We see this play out all the time.

But there are some very notable groups and people who support our effort to begin the impeachment of John Koskinen, head of the IRS. I will just give you some examples.

The National Review's editorial board:

A weaponized IRS put to partisan political ends constitutes an unbearable assault on American democracy and undermines the very institutions of government itself.

The Wall Street Journal, their editorial board:

The U.S. attorney has refused to honor Congress' contempt charge against Ms. Lerner for refusing to testify. The Justice Department has closed its investigations into the IRS targeting without prosecutions, and the press corps winks at abuses of power when conservatives are the targets.

That is precisely the point. It appears that the media—the liberal media, which most media is nationally, seems to be agreeing with this. In fact, I have had a number of media outlets out there who ask me: Why would you want to impeach the head of the IRS? What is wrong with him?

Yet, you heard how we learned how Mr. Koskinen deceived Congress, refused to respond to subpoenas, evidence was destroyed in his tenure. So either he did it or someone did it while under his authority, and then again deceived Congress about that as well. So it is very clear there has been wrongdoing.

While Mr. Koskinen has come to the Hill here to talk to Members—but he wants to do it offline and without being sworn in—he has not shown any interest in doing it under oath.

The New York Post editorial board:

If you responded to an IRS audit the way Koskinen's IRS has behaved, you'd be looking at huge penalties and maybe prison time.

George Will, a noted conservative:

Congress should impeach the IRS Commissioner or risk becoming obsolete.

Red State:

Why the impeachment of the IRS Commissioner is a sign that Congress might actually work?

The American people have given up on Congress. Congress is the legislative branch, which is a co-equal branch of government, and it should be a check on the executive branch, and the judicial branch, for that matter. Yet, Congress has shriveled up and atrophied so much. The American people have given up on Congress ever doing anything about corruption at high levels of our government.

And then Americans for Tax Reform:

Why Congress should impeach IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. Since then, Koskinen has failed to reform the IRS with the agency becoming increasingly politicized. Under Koskinen, the agency destroyed several sources of Lois Lerner's emails while he gave numerous false statements to Congress under oath.

So it is very clear that very notable people, patriots, and people of stature, people who are well-respected in America agree with the House Freedom Caucus that we should move forward.

Finally, there has been polling on this matter. Freedom Works, for instance, has commissioned a poll. Very clearly the American people say by as much as a 66 percent net positive over negative that John Koskinen should lose his job. So I think it is very clear.

I would just say that we are not sure what votes that we are going to have tomorrow on this subject, but any vote short of impeachment of the IRS Commissioner would be a vote against impeachment and would be a vote against showing Mr. Koskinen the door and getting someone who will do right by our leadership in the Internal Revenue Service, a very important agency, and one that has been so much abused—or, actually, victims. Americans have been abused—through its institution.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his hard work on this issue and for bringing the motion forward to get this issue in front of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Under the Obama administration, the IRS has consistently proven that it cannot be trusted to serve the best interests of the American people. Unelected bureaucrats like Lois Lerner and John Koskinen have weaponized the agency and used it as a tool to blatantly target innocent Americans simply for having different political beliefs.

Rather than cleaning house and restoring the trust of the American people, the IRS Commissioner John Koskinen has continued the pattern of criminal behavior and lawlessness within the IRS. On Koskinen's watch, more than 24,000 emails and 420 backup tapes providing critical evidence were completely erased.

Koskinen failed to comply with a congressional subpoena, failed to testify truthfully in front of Congress four different times while under oath, and is now the ringleader for the cover-up of the targeting of innocent Americans by this rogue agency.

Our Founding Fathers specifically empowered the House of Representatives with the authority to hold the executive branch in check when it violates the trust of the American people and, more importantly, when it violates the law.

The only way we can change the climate of corruption in Washington, D.C., is to make an example of bureaucratic lawlessness. And we can start right now by removing John Koskinen from his job.

Just you watch, if the House of Representatives takes action to fire John Koskinen, I guarantee you that the rest of the Obama administration and future administrations to come will get that message.

It is beyond outrageous that not a single IRS employee has been brought to justice for targeting innocent Americans. The House has an obligation to pursue all constitutional options on the table to remove John Koskinen, including impeachment.

Koskinen and accountability are within our reach, and my colleagues and I will not yield in our efforts to hold this lawless agency accountable until we get it done.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, Commissioner John Koskinen took over the Internal Revenue Service in the wake of the IRS conservative targeting scandal ostensibly to reform the agency internally. Instead, he continued his predecessor's legacy of stonewalling justice.

After Lois Lerner, Director of the IRS' Tax Exempt Organizations Unit, invoked the Fifth Amendment when she appeared before Congress, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform issued a subpoena for IRS documents, including all of Lois Lerner's emails.

The IRS' Chief Technology Officer also issued a preservation order instructing employees not to destroy any emails, backup tapes, or anything relevant to the investigation. But, Mr. Speaker, despite a congressional subpoena and a do-not-destroy order, the IRS inspector general found that the agency had erased 422 backup tapes containing as many as 24,000 emails. All the while, Commissioner John Koskinen knowingly and deliberately kept Congress in the dark.

□ 2000

Commissioner Koskinen was clearly aware that the emails were lost, but he knowingly and deliberately withheld that information from Congress for 4 months and stonewalled the entire investigation.

Mr. Koskinen testified under oath four times before Congress during that 4-month period, saying he would turn over all of Lerner's emails, making no mention of the fact that the bulk of them had been "lost."

Mr. Koskinen provided false testimony and swore under oath that the information on the bulk of the backup tapes was unrecoverable. The inspector general found that approximately 700 of those emails had not, in fact, been erased and were, in fact, recoverable.

Mr. Speaker, John Koskinen then failed to protect citizens against the same type of future discrimination. A General Accounting Office report found no significant measures had been implemented under Mr. Koskinen's watch to ensure that civil servants at the IRS do not continue in the future to unlawfully target Americans based on their political or religious views.

Mr. Speaker, this entire matter is absolutely counter to everything a Republic like ours was meant to be. In a constitutional Republic like the United States of America, we are fundamentally predicated on the rule of law; and there are very few things that break faith with America and the American people or that undermine their trust in their government more than witnessing those who are given the sacred responsibility to enforce tax collection equally and according to the law using

the Federal Government's power of taxation unlawfully to economically destroy and deliberately oppress American citizens based on their religious or political views.

Such a tyrannical abuse of power and the betrayal of their sworn oath to the United States Constitution by Commissioner John Koskinen and Barack Obama will be writ large in their shameful legacy because it is something that goes to the very heart of the rule of law in this Republic and that so many lying out in Arlington National Cemetery died to preserve.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Congress has a duty to impeach Commissioner John Koskinen. The impeachment power is a political check that, as Alexander Hamilton wrote in *Federalist 65* of 1788, protects the public against abuse or violation of public trust. And Commissioner John Koskinen, appointed by Barack Obama, has unequivocally violated public trust.

A taxpayer would never get away with treating an IRS audit the way the IRS officials have treated this congressional investigation; and the Congress of the United States owes it to the American people, to future generations, and to our sworn oath to the Constitution to hold the perpetrators of this tyrannical abuse of power accountable and to make sure that this never happens again.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for all his hard work.

I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP), another hardworking Member.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here tonight and tomorrow.

This House will have a chance to redeem itself a bit, or at least remain relevant for now. Hopefully, we will be voting on something of great consequence for a change.

Tomorrow we in this body will be asked to vote for or against removing the IRS Commissioner. Make no mistake, however. This is not just a vote to remove one man from office. It is a vote for or against the rule of law itself. It is a vote for or against maintaining our system of internal checks and balances. It will be a vote for or against accountability for public officials and transparency in our government.

For months, myself and other House Freedom Caucus members have been pushing for this accountability. Those who might oppose this measure most likely believe they are doing the right thing by defending the IRS. In fact, they are defending a toxic status quo in which our Nation's most powerful agency, the IRS, can legitimately be used to thwart one's political enemies. This is a status quo in which one party gains power in one branch of government, then uses the resources of that branch of government to depress the power of all other branches of govern-

ment. This is something we would expect to see in an emerging democracy, not the greatest Republic in the history of man. Let's take a look back at how this all came about.

During President Obama's reelection campaign, the IRS systemically prolonged consideration of applications for nonprofit status from hundreds of conservative organizations—in some cases, as we heard this evening, indefinitely. Many of those organizations were never able to recover from this denial; others were effectively neutralized for the duration of the 2012 election. This, of course, is a matter of fact and not of opinion. Eventually, the discriminatory practice was exposed, and Mrs. Lerner was removed from her position—although, I might note, she retained her full retirement pension from taxpayers.

John Koskinen was imported as Commissioner to sort the mess out. Then, as the President promised, to restore our faith in the Federal Government, he would act in the best interest of all of us and not abuse his power ever again.

But after Lerner refused to testify before Congress, the IRS casually mentioned that some of her emails had gone missing, despite the subpoenas and orders to preserve them—again, casually mentioned. In fact, we found out later, the IRS had erased 422 backup tapes containing as many as 24,000 emails.

Now, think about that. If every email was one single page and you stack those all up, that would be 8 feet worth of erased emails.

When the Commissioner told Congress under oath that many emails had been accidentally destroyed, he was lying. And when the Commissioner told Congress under oath that his agency would provide investigators with all of Mrs. Lerner's remaining emails, he was lying. And when he told Congress under oath that the IRS would fully comply with any FOIA request and otherwise assist our investigation into the practice of unfairly targeting organizations for their First Amendment beliefs, he was lying. And then when he and his boss, the President of the United States, told the American people, under the sacred trust vested in all public officials, that he would reform the IRS, make it more transparent and less hostile to families, faith organizations, and small businesses, he was not telling the truth.

The Commissioner blatantly lied under oath on multiple occasions because he thought he could get away with it. Just like so many other administration officials, the Commissioner believed he was above the law and beyond reproach.

Tomorrow we have a chance to resoundingly prove Mr. Koskinen's audacious assumptions wrong. These Articles of Impeachment—four for each lie he told—represent the negative consequences that the average American would face if he lied under oath.

Some have called this effort petty. There are even some who believe there are other officials more deserving of removal. Perhaps they are right. However, in this case, we have someone whose violations of the law and the public trust cannot be disputed. And I would hope, in light of the indisputable evidence, this body could perhaps move beyond the partisan divisions so that justice can be served. I encourage my fellow Members to do the right thing and vote for accountability, vote for the rule of law, and vote for a government that has checks on its own power.

I thank the Congressman from Ohio for his leadership. He is a true friend. This is a very serious issue. This is not a political issue. This is an issue of principle and rule of law for our government.

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the gentleman for his comments, which are right on target.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT).

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I thank the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, I actually wanted to touch on something that is a little bit different.

Look, we have all seen the documents. We have all heard the argument, even this evening, on the bad acts. Now I want to walk you through why we must do this. And I understand for a lot of our brothers and sisters in this body, this is uncomfortable. This is something that hasn't been done in a very long time. So let me walk through sort of a line of logic, because you can't be a Member of Congress and go home and do townhalls and talk to reporters and say, "I am going to defend the Constitution," "I am going to defend our Article I authority," and then not stand up and defend it. So let's actually do sort of a linear line of logic here.

If tomorrow one of you became a CEO, 15 years ago this body passed something called Sarbanes-Oxley, which basically said, if you are in the leadership and someone commits bad acts in your organization, you accept the responsibility because you accepted that position of leadership. These are the things we require from the real world outside this body.

Has anyone here ever been a real estate broker, had a securities license, other types? If bad acts happen underneath your license, what happens? You lose your license. You are removed from that position. But somehow these rules, this concept of responsibility that this very body has put out on the rest of the country, the rest of the private sector, is not willing—or is uncomfortable—to demand the very same status of responsibility, the very same status of ethics that we require from a real estate broker, from corporate executives. We are not going to require it from the head of one of the most powerful bureaucracies in this Nation?

And this is to all my brothers and sisters in the body. I accept it is un-

comfortable doing something you have not done before. That does not mean it isn't the right thing to do.

You have heard the argument made. The facts are crisp and clear. Now it is time to make that decision. Are you willing to defend the Article I position that this body holds in the Constitution? Are you willing to defend the Constitution? Or are you willing to let our representation of the American people continue to be trampled on by this administration?

Mr. JORDAN, thank you for letting me have the mike.

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the gentleman for his good remarks.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY.)

Mr. PERRY. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his leadership, bringing this to our attention, and giving us the time to talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, on what we are talking about, we have heard all the facts, so I don't want to belabor them. Numerous protective orders, subpoenas—literally, a preservation order from his own organization, his own agency—the IRS Commissioner just disregarded all that stuff and did exactly what he wanted to do in contravention to what any of us would do.

Two standards of justice is what we are talking about, whether it was for Lois Lerner, whether it was for John Koskinen, or whether it was for Hillary Clinton, two standards of justice: one for them, one for the people who are connected; and one for all the rest of us, one for the people out there in the real world.

I remember in my business, when we got a letter from the IRS, "Oh, provide something from 4 years ago," we would go to our accountant and say, "Well, we already turned this stuff in. We have submitted this stuff."

"Well, you have to save your records for 7 years, and you have got to submit that, or you are going to be in trouble."

I mean, when you see something from the IRS, your heart stops. Do you think Lois Lerner's heart stopped?

Do you think if the police were looking at you or investigating you that you would get to go to the judge without talking to the police and say, "Hey, I will tell you what happened here, but we don't need to involve the police in that"? That is what happened here, folks. That is what happened, Mr. Speaker.

Two standards of justice: one for all of us working people out there, and one for the connected.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, the facts are very clear. It is our duty, it is our requirement under the Constitution, to provide justice. And Mr. Koskinen will have his day in court, his due process. That is the impeachment process. That is where he can tell his story. He will have his day. But the people who have been aggrieved by the weaponization of this agency also must have their justice, and it has been denied to this point.

Mr. Speaker, I call for the action that we are talking about.

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the gentleman. He is right on target.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the fine gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to address this body. It is an honor to be here tonight, but it is a sad time to be here talking on this topic.

Mr. Speaker, as the newest guy here, I am still figuring out a lot of things. So maybe for anybody who is thinking about this from home, this IRS scandal has been going on since 2010. The first evidence of targeting was 6 years ago. A lot of people say: Why are you guys still looking into this? Why has it taken so long to get to this? Congress has looked into it since 2013. It has been here for a long time. And what we see here is an act of frustration, of frustration with a system that our own body is having a hard time working. A lot of us would like to see this go through the Judiciary Committee, go through a different standard process, but that process has continued to stall, delay, and not happen.

□ 2015

I think we owe it to the people who sent us here to do what we said we would do, which is to support and defend our Constitution.

If this body can be ignored, if we can have people come and give inaccurate testimony, if we can have subpoenas ignored, if we can have evidence destroyed, then, as George Will wrote, we risk being completely irrelevant.

This is the dilemma: this isn't just the IRS that has done this. This is the email scandal from the State Department. I remember the shock of the CNN anchor saying "the BlackBerry's are destroyed." Fact check that. You just can't believe that these kind of things are going on.

I serve on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee where orders to report data breaches have occurred over and over, and inaccurate testimony is given. Subpoenas are being ignored by Attorneys General for evidence involving cases that are intended to stifle scientific research.

When Congress is acting, the word is on the street: You can ignore these requests. You don't have to respond to subpoenas. You can destroy evidence, and you can always give inaccurate testimony. Nothing is going to happen.

So it is time we do take action. I hope we consider a course that keeps our IRS Commissioner accountable and also sets an example that, when Congress takes action, it should be taken seriously.

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

IMPEACHMENT OF IRS COMMISSIONER

(Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we are facing an extremely important decision right now to examine and weigh the actions of an individual and determine whether or not we are going to hold that individual accountable.

When John Koskinen entered the public arena, he then became accountable to the public, and that is what we are now facing. Here is an individual, Mr. Speaker, who routinely showed disrespect and contempt for this institution, who lied before our committees, who did not give us the evidence we needed to fulfill the investigations we were to do, and destroyed evidence literally on a massive scale. We must hold him accountable for this.

Here is an institution, the IRS, that has the power to destroy lives and to ruin businesses. We know for a fact that, even just a couple weeks ago, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit determined that the IRS has been targeting conservatives and conservative organizations on multiple fronts, and they cannot confirm that that has ceased at all.

So we cannot let him get out of this with just a whimper. It is time for this House to do its job and hold him accountable.

I thank the gentleman from Ohio for holding his Special Order, and I hope my colleagues will join in the impeachment proceedings of John Koskinen.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, September 15, 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:

6825. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Captains Darius Banaji and James E. Pitts, United States Navy, to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half), pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6826. A letter from the Alternate OSD FRLO, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — TRICARE; Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment [DOD-2015-HA-0109] (RIN: 0720-AB65) received September 13, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6827. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a report entitled "Coming Into Focus: The Future of Juvenile Justice Reform, 2014 Annual Report", pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5617; Public Law 93-415, Sec. 207 (as added by Pub-

lic Law 100-690, Sec. 7255); (102 Stat. 4437); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6828. A letter from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final priorities — Enhanced Assessment Instruments [CFDA Number: 84.368A.] [Docket ID: ED-2016-OESE-0004] received September 13, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6829. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Labeling; Technical Amendments [Docket No.: FDA-2016-N-0011] received September 9, 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.

6830. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Requirements for Foreign and Domestic Establishment Registration and Listing for Human Drugs, Including Drugs That Are Regulated Under a Biologics License Application, and Animal Drugs [Docket No.: FDA-2005-N-0464 (formerly Docket No.: 2005N-0403)] (RIN: 0910-AA49) received September 9, 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.

6831. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled "Pre-market Approval of Pediatric Uses of Devices — Fiscal Year 2014", pursuant to Sec. 515A of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6832. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Possession, Use, and Transfer of Select Agents and Toxins — Addition of *Bacillus cereus* Biovar anthracis to the HHS List of Select Agents and Toxins [CDC Docket No.: CDC-2016-0045] (RIN: 0920-AA64) received September 13, 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.

6833. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services [WC Docket No.: 12-375] received September 13, 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.

6834. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final evaluation of vendor submittal — Final Safety Evaluation on the Topical Report "Materials Reliability Program: Primary Water Stress Corrosion Cracking Mitigation By Surface Stress Improvement (MRP-335 Revision 3)" [TAC No.: MF2429] received September 12, 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.

6835. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on Employment of U.S. Citizens by Certain International Organizations during 2015, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276c-4; Public Law 102-138, Sec. 181; (105 Stat. 682); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6836. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Report to Congress on Global Trade Relating to Iran for 2015, pursuant to Public Law 104-172, as amended by Public Law 111-195, Sec. 102(d); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6837. A letter from the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a decision on *United States v. Jimenez*. — F. Supp. 3d —, 2016 WL 3556810 (N.D. Cal. June 6, 2016), pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 530D(a); Public Law 107-273, Sec. 202(a); (116 Stat. 1771); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

6838. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the semiannual report of the Attorney General concerning enforcement actions for the period July 1, 2015, through December 31, 2015, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 1605(b)(1) Public Law 104-65, as amended by Public Law 110-81; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

6839. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-5460; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-188-AD; Amendment 39-18599; AD 2016-16-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6840. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6414; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-175-AD; Amendment 39-18633; AD 2016-18-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6841. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS AIRCRAFT LTD. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7048; Directorate Identifier 2016-CE-014-AD; Amendment 39-18635; AD 2016-18-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6842. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3702; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-103-AD; Amendment 39-18634; AD 2016-18-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6843. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3989; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-220-AD; Amendment 39-18629; AD 2016-17-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6844. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.:

FAA-2016-5467; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-186-AD; Amendment 39-18630; AD 2016-17-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6845. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6415; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-178-AD; Amendment 39-18626; AD 2016-17-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6846. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9047; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-092-AD; Amendment 39-18632; AD 2016-18-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6847. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1075; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-111-AD; Amendment 39-18628; AD 2016-17-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6848. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-8133; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-101-AD; Amendment 39-18631; AD 2016-18-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 12, 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.

6849. A letter from the Regulations Liaison, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Extension of Expiration Dates for Four Body System Listings [Docket No.: SSA-2016-0023] (RIN: 0960-AI03) received September 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

6850. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers [CMS-3178-F] (RIN: 0938-AO91) September 13, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr.

ASHFORD, Mrs. LOVE, Ms. GRAHAM, and Ms. ADAMS):

H.R. 6020. A bill to amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grant program under which the Secretary will award \$19,000,000 of grant funding to the 19 1890-institutions (\$1,000,000 to each institution), such as Tuskegee University in Alabama, Prairie View A&M University of Texas, Fort Valley State University of Georgia, North Carolina A&T State University, and Florida A&M University, and allocate the \$1,000,000 to each such institution for purposes of awarding scholarships to students attending such institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. LOVE, Ms. GRAHAM, and Ms. ADAMS):

H.R. 6021. A bill to rebuild the Nation's crumbling infrastructure, transportation systems, technology and computer networks, and energy distribution systems, by strongly and urgently requesting the immediate recruitment, employment, and on-the-job "earn as you learn" training of African-American young men ages 18 to 39, who are the hardest hit in terms of unemployment, with an unemployment rate of 41 percent nationally, and in some States and cities, especially inner cities, higher than 50 percent, which is a national crisis; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 6022. A bill to authorize a pilot project for an innovative water project financing program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida (for himself and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H.R. 6023. A bill to exempt health insurance of residents of United States territories from the annual fee on health insurance providers; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6024. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to improve safety and security for service weapons used by Federal law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Mr. DOLD, Ms. MOORE, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota):

H.R. 6025. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of American innovation and significant innovation and pioneering efforts of individuals or groups from each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories, to promote the importance of innovation in the United States, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. POLIS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. WALZ, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. LOFGREEN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. THOMPSON of Cali-

fornia, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. RUIZ):

H.R. 6026. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require each candidate for nomination or election to the office of President or Vice President to include in the financial disclosure reports the candidate is required to file under such Act a statement regarding whether or not the Secretary of the Treasury is in the process of auditing any of the candidate's individual Federal income tax returns; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H.R. 6027. A bill to amend section 9010 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide health insurance fairness for Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 6028. A bill to repeal certain obsolete laws relating to Indians; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. NOEM (for herself and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 6029. A bill to require State and local government approval of prescribed burns on Federal land during conditions of drought or fire danger; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. NORTON (for herself, Mr. NADLER, Ms. DELAURO, and Ms. SPEER):

H.R. 6030. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit certain practices by employers relating to restrictions on discussion of employees' and prospective employees' salary and benefit history, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6031. A bill to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to allow the District of Columbia to receive Federal funding under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 6032. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for purchase of data breach insurance; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 6033. A bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for the Middle East respiratory syndrome; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. HURD of Texas, and Mr. POE of Texas):

H.R. 6034. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify certain required mens rea elements for offenses pertaining to the

handling of sensitive information by government officials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. BASS (for herself, Mr. LANDEVIN, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. MARINO):

H. Res. 867. A resolution expressing support for designation of September 2016 as "National Kinship Care Month"; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota (for himself, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. KLINE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. WALZ):

H. Res. 868. A resolution honoring the life of Jacob Wetterling and the efforts of Patty Wetterling and the Wetterling family to find abducted children and support their families; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. HAHN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. BEYER, Ms. MENG, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NADLER, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. BERA, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H. Res. 869. A resolution relating to the death of the Honorable Mark Takai, a Representative from the State of Hawaii; to the Committee on House Administration.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. McCARTHY:

H.R. 6007.

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 Indian tribes.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 6020.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 6021.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 6022.

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 common defense and general welfare of the United States), Clause 3 (relating to regulating commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida:

H.R. 6023.

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. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6024.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 6025.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8. "The Congress shall have the power . . . to coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;"

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 6026.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or office thereof.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 6027.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 6028.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 6029.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6030.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clauses 3 and 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6031.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 6032.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 6033.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. RATCLIFFE:

H.R. 6034.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 213: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 244: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 333: Mr. RUIZ and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 546: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 612: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 613: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 835: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 845: Ms. KUSTER and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 885: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1061: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 1151: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 1209: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mr. GRIF-FITH.

H.R. 1220: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MARINO, and Ms. HAHN.

H.R. 1275: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 1312: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1422: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 1453: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1714: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 1848: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 2016: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 2142: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 2228: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 2280: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 2315: Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 2342: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 2368: Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 2628: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 2713: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 2737: Mr. MACARTHUR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. BLUM, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 2980: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 3066: Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 3137: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3238: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3381: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. HILL.

H.R. 3660: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 3666: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 3687: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 3804: Mr. McCLINTOCK.

H.R. 3991: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 4006: Mr. MULVANEY and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 4016: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 4088: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 4283: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4298: Mr. STEWART, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 4456: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 4480: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4514: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 4575: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 4595: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 4602: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 4621: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 4626: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 4662: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 4683: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 4773: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 4813: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 4818: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 4919: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 4980: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. WEST-MORELAND.

H.R. 5015: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 5082: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 5083: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 5177: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 5208: Mr. WEBER of Texas and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 5254: Mr. JOLLY and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 5351: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 5386: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 5418: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 5476: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
 H.R. 5493: Mr. MULVANEY.
 H.R. 5624: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H.R. 5650: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 5679: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. WITTMAN.
 H.R. 5683: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
 H.R. 5708: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H.R. 5785: Mr. POLIQUIN.
 H.R. 5810: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
 H.R. 5813: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
 H.R. 5823: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H.R. 5824: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H.R. 5825: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H.R. 5826: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H.R. 5883: Mr. COSTA and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
 H.R. 5904: Mr. JONES and Mr. DESANTIS.
 H.R. 5911: Mr. BOUSTANY.
 H.R. 5931: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
 H.R. 5946: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. HECK of Nevada, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 5948: Mrs. CAPPS and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
 H.R. 5953: Mr. GARAMENDI and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H.R. 5977: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 5980: Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. HAHN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MOULTON, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 5986: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H.R. 5999: Mr. KNIGHT.
 H.R. 6003: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 6004: Mr. MCCARTHY and Mr. HOYER.
 H.R. 6007: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
 H.R. 6008: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 6017: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.J. Res. 95: Mr. HUDSON.
 H. Con. Res. 140: Mr. WOMACK, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. MARCHANT.
 H. Con. Res. 149: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H. Res. 586: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H. Res. 590: Mr. KIND.
 H. Res. 655: Mr. COURTNEY.
 H. Res. 836: Mr. BUCSHON.
 H. Res. 848: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H. Res. 851: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. SALMON, and Mr. DONOVAN.
 H. Res. 852: Mr. LAHOOD.
 H. Res. 853: Mr. RIGELL, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. JODY B. HICE of

Georgia, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. FLORES.
 H. Res. 855: Mrs. Radewagen.
 H. Res. 857: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Ms. TITUS.

DELETION OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 3765: Mr. RANGEL.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

87. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson, a citizen of Austin, Texas, relative to urging Congress to enact legislation that would prescribe restrictions on the actions and conduct of Delegates attending a Convention, called by Congress pursuant to Article V of the U.S. Constitution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

No. 139

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Creator of life, You are from everlasting to everlasting. We lift our voices in thanksgiving, for You satisfy humanity's spiritual hunger. Today, we remember Your guidance that we do not live by bread alone but by Your Words that nourish and sustain us.

Feed our lawmakers with Heaven's bread. May their labors produce a harvest of faith, hope, and love. Lord, give them the grace to cherish and cultivate the virtues and values tested and confirmed in the cubicle of life's daily struggle. Nourished by You, may the earthly labors of our Senators fulfill a Heavenly purpose.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

MOVING OUR COUNTRY FORWARD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, by now most Americans are well acquainted with Donald Trump but especially Donald Trump's head-scratching slogan "Make America Great Again." He has his little hat he wears when he doesn't want his hair to get messed up. That

slogan offers a peek inside the minds of Donald Trump and his Republican followers in Congress. These Republicans want to believe our country isn't great. They want to believe this Nation is foundering. They don't want to listen to the facts; they just want to follow Trump.

Earlier this year Speaker RYAN echoed Donald Trump when he said, in criticizing President Obama, "We think that the President's policies aren't working. . . . We have flat wages."

Why do Republicans spend so much time rooting against economic growth and ignoring millions of newly insured Americans' access to health care? Why do they root daily against America? Because they say anything to convince their radical base that President Obama is failing, even though the facts are contrary.

Despite what Donald Trump and the congressional Republicans say, we know that America is great already, and because of Democratic policies, we are improving it every day, in spite of the obstacles—filibuster, filibuster, filibuster, obstacle, obstacle, obstacle.

Let's look at the facts. Yesterday the Census Bureau reported that median household incomes grew by 5.2 percent last year. That is the single largest annual income gain ever recorded—ever recorded. Isn't America great? Every major income bracket in our country saw an increase in earnings, with the lowest 10th percentile seeing the biggest gains. This is real progress for all Americans. Really, isn't America great? These remarkable income gains hold true across racial lines as well. In just 1 year, Hispanics saw a 6.1-percent increase in earnings. African Americans experienced a 4.1-percent jump in income. Isn't America great? This is the kind of wage growth we should celebrate, but Republicans have been totally silent because they want America not to be great. They can all start wearing the hats when they want to cover their hair.

For the first time since 1999, we are moving in the right direction on income, health care coverage, and poverty indicators. Household incomes are rising and the poverty rate is falling. That is good. Isn't America great? We are finally regaining the ground we lost during the great recession, which was at the end of the Bush administration. It really started a couple of years after he became President. In 2015 the official poverty rate dropped more than a full percentage point. That means 2 million Americans were lifted out of poverty. Real average weekly earnings have risen at their fastest pace in 15 years. Isn't America great? Yes, it is.

These incredible statistics show how much progress we have made in spite of the obstacles, the filibusters, and they show how much Americans would have to lose from a Trump Presidency that works solely for the rich and completely ignores the middle class because daily Donald Trump is rooting for failure, as are his Republican adherents.

Yesterday's census data also corrects Republicans' false narrative on the Affordable Care Act, on ObamaCare. Because of ObamaCare, more Americans have health insurance than ever before in the history of this country. According to the Census Bureau, the uninsured rate has plummeted in virtually every State. California saw the biggest drop, with a decline of 8.6 percent of those uninsured. Nevada was second, with an 8.4 percentage point drop. Really, isn't ObamaCare great? If other Republican Governors would follow the lead of the Republican Governor in Nevada, they would have the same statistics.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, the Republican leader's home State of Kentucky had the third largest reduction in the number of uninsured people—a decrease of 8.3 percentage points. Isn't ObamaCare great? The Republican leader loves to come to the floor and bash ObamaCare. He was here

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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yesterday doing just that. It is curious how the senior Senator from Kentucky picks and chooses what he says about ObamaCare. He refuses to acknowledge the newly insured Kentuckians who have access to health care because of this law. Kentucky has 4.4 million people, and 500,000 of the Republican leader's constituents have health insurance because of ObamaCare. That is more than 11 percent of his State's population. ObamaCare is great.

The Affordable Care Act is helping the people of Kentucky and the people of America, regardless of what Republicans say here on the Senate floor, and they are rooting for failure.

To no one's surprise, this new census data also shows that the States that refused to expand Medicaid are the ones falling behind in health care. There are 19 Republican Governors doing just that. States that expanded Medicaid have insurance premium rates that are 7 percent lower than States that rejected Medicaid expansion. The States that did not expand Medicaid—States with Republican Governors and Republican legislatures—have an uninsured rate nearly twice as high as States that used ObamaCare to expand coverage. This is no coincidence. We know these policies work, but Republicans simply refuse to listen.

This is the attitude which led to Trump: Republican leaders insisted that no matter what President Obama suggested, it wouldn't work. And we have the filibusters to show that.

We know the truth. Thanks to the policies of President Obama and Democrats, we have emerged from the terrible recession. We are seeing record wage growth. We are making a great nation even greater. We don't hear about the successes as much as we should. Unfortunately, the press is oftentimes more interested in something more scandalous. As all this census data shows, we have moved our country forward, and we did it despite lots of Republican opposition. It is a shame that Republicans didn't help. They were too interested in opposing President Obama on everything. If they helped a little, America would be even greater.

We still have a lot to do. We need to do more for the middle class, more to give Americans a livable wage, and more to ease the burden of student loan debt. We need to work together to improve upon the many successes of the Affordable Care Act. If we had a token of an effort from Republicans, we could make the health care law even better and stronger. We must address the issue of gun violence and take steps to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. We must do something about campaign finance reform. We must protect America from those who would turn America into a Russian oligarchy.

I hope my Republican colleagues will take this opportunity to stop being the party of Trump. The party of Trump,

whose pal is Putin—and he has even gone so far, obviously, as to suggest that maybe we should be an oligarchy also. I hope my Republican colleagues will take this opportunity to stop being the party of Trump, to stop being the party of no and work with us to build on the progress we have already made.

Mr. President, I ask that the leader time be reserved, and I ask the Chair to announce what we are going to do the rest of the day, or perhaps I should just suggest the absence of a quorum, which I will do until the Republican leader gets here.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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, with Senators permitted to speak therein until 11 a.m., with the time until 10:30 a.m. under the control of the Democrats, and the majority controlling the remainder of the time until 11 a.m.

GETTING OUR WORK DONE

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, once upon a time, there were elections and the people of this country, in their wisdom, decided to send a different party to the U.S. Senate as a majority. At that time, to much fanfare, the leader of the Republican Party announced that it was going to be a new day, that there was going to be regular order, that there was going to be a budget. There would be no filling the tree. We would do individual appropriations bills. Most notably, the leader said we were going to put in a full day's work. In fact, my colleagues can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think he even talked about working on Fridays in Washington.

Now, let me hasten to add that I know every Member of this body, when they go back to their homes in their States, they work. We have a lot of meetings to go to and people to see, so I don't mean to say that when we are not in session we are not working. But the American people were told that we would be putting in more work in Washington.

By the way, it is not as if we don't have work to do. I remember month

after month after month, all FOX News talked about was where was the budget. We had no budget. The law says you have to pass a budget. The Republicans over and over and over again, on this floor, on television: Where is the budget? Where is the budget?

Well, I ask that question now. Where is the budget? It hasn't been mentioned by my colleagues across the aisle lately. My colleagues can correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that the budget is required by law to be done in the spring, not during football season and certainly not at Christmas time.

The individual appropriations bills haven't worked out so well, either. The only ones they have been interested in doing are the ones that don't tackle the tough problem of balance; that is, the balance between our homeland security needs and our defense needs, the balance between the needs of educating our kids and making sure that our soldiers are well equipped.

But probably the thing that is most amazing is that in light of no hearing on Merrick Garland, in light of no budget, in light of no spending bills—in light of all of these things—we are working fewer days in Washington than we have in 60 years.

I showed this calendar to people at home, and they thought I was kidding. This is the calendar of our work schedule.

Now, let me also point out that we have heard this week that the leader of the Republican Party doesn't even want us to work these three days—October 4, 5, and 6—so mark a line through those, and the entire month of October is black. That means nothing is happening on the budget, nothing is happening on the Supreme Court vacancy, nothing is happening on oversight hearings, nothing is happening on appropriations, nothing is happening on Zika. Nothing is happening in Washington. I am just going to pause for a minute so anyone who has the C-SPAN bug can just look at this calendar. All the blacked-out days are days that we are not in Washington. A full week plus in January, a full week plus in February, almost two weeks in March, another two weeks in May, another almost week in June, almost 2½ weeks in July, the entire month of August. We didn't even work the full month of September. Now we are told we may not work any days in October. The calendar shows just a handful of days in November. There is a lot of business that has to be done by the end of the year, and obviously it looks like there are only a few days in December that we are working.

I think there are like 240 work days that most Americans work every year. By my estimate, I think we are working about 110 of those. No wonder the American people are angry. No wonder the American people don't get it. It is very simple. Not only is the Republican Senate not doing its job in terms of setting a history of not having even an up-or-down vote on the Supreme Court

nominee, the Republican Senate simply doesn't work.

I yield the floor to my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. I say thank you to Senator MCCASKILL.

The Senator from Missouri is right. Folks in this country are sick and tired of Congress not doing its job.

I was just on the radio a few minutes ago and the radio announcer said: You know you guys have been out for several weeks. What do you anticipate you are going to get done over the next four weeks? I said: I wish we were in session during the next four weeks because the truth is there is a lot of stuff that needs to be done, but people are talking about getting out at the end of this week or the end of next week, and then that is it. That will be it until the lameduck, if we have one.

It seems as though this body runs based on the next election, not based on the policies that need to be passed to make this country do its job. We play political games after political games, worrying about the next election rather than worrying about the next generation.

The Senator from Missouri is right. This Republican-led Senate has not done its job.

Does a hard-working nurse wait until the next election day to insert the IV? No, she goes to work. You wouldn't hire that nurse if that happened.

Does the teacher walk into the classroom and say: You know, it is the middle of September, election day is November 8, so you guys don't have to come back to school until after the election? No. I served on a school board for a good number of years, and that teacher wouldn't have been working, wouldn't have been getting paid.

I will also tell my colleagues that I know firsthand a farmer would not wait for the polls to close to harvest his or her crop. If he or she did, they would be out of business.

We wonder why people are so upset with us. The American people have to do their job day in and day out, no matter what, and they expect the same from the people they elect to this body.

So what is the problem? The Republicans control the Senate. They control the House. Why can't we get anything done? I think it is because there is a total lack of leadership. We need to look no further than Zika and the current impasse and the political games that are being played with that. This is a horrible disease. I have talked with the researchers. They don't know all the impacts. We need to do the research to find that out. We do know that it impacts the unborn and it can be sexually transmitted. We don't know if there are long-term impacts to people who may get it now who don't see any symptoms but could see symptoms later.

We passed a bipartisan bill with 89 votes. We addressed this crisis head-on. But the Senate and the House leader-

ship got together, they shut the doors, they smoked a few cigars, probably ate a few steaks, and said: We are going to make this into a political football. And that is exactly what they did. They inserted partisan politics into a solution. Right now we have no bill passed that deals with the Zika crisis, and it is a health crisis in this country.

But that is not the only one. When I go back to Montana, whose population is fully 10 percent veterans, they talk about the needs of veterans. We have a bill, under the leadership of DICK BLUMENTHAL and JOHNNY ISAKSON, that takes care of our veterans. It helps fix the veterans' problems in this country. It helps fix leadership vacancies. It helps fix the shortage of doctors. It helps veterans get access to the VA. It passed out of committee unanimously. It is called the Veterans First Act. It passed out of committee last May, 125 days ago. The Senate will not take the bill up. It is a step in the right direction to take care of our veterans, yet we will not take it up because we have to go home.

My colleague from Missouri showed us the map. People would think Congress would do their job on behalf of veterans, but they would be wrong.

Then we have the Supreme Court. The Constitution—which people in this body cite a lot, and should—is very clear that the Senate has a duty to advise and consent to the President's Supreme Court nominees. I just heard the Republican leader the other day say that there will be no Supreme Court nominee taken up this year. That is great. Now the Supreme Court is just as dysfunctional as Congress. We see it with the decisions that come out on tally votes. Don't even give Judge Garland a meeting, much less a hearing.

I think the American people deserve better. They need an opportunity to see the nominee in action. My colleagues here in the Senate sit on their hands. It will be probably 15 months before the Supreme Court gets another nominee, and maybe not then either, because who knows what kind of antics are in store.

And there is more. We have not only Zika, the VA, and the Supreme Court but also the appropriations bills. Instead, we are going to pass a short-term resolution.

We have campaign finance. It is expected that more than \$1.4 billion will be spent in this Presidential race. Congress has done nothing to ensure that ideas and voters, not money, decide elections. We need campaign finance reform. Everybody in this body knows it. But, instead, we continue to ignore the problem that faces this country with campaign finance.

Wildfire disaster funding: The way we fight wildfires is broken. If you live in the West, you know that. We are not going to deal with that.

We need to permanently fund and reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. No, it is not going to happen.

We have the Restoring Rural Residencies Act that takes care of the doctor shortages we have in this country. No, it is not going to happen. We don't have time. We do have time; we just choose not to tackle any of these issues.

Year-round Pell grants: We have students who are coming out of college with a mountain of debt. We are not going to deal with that.

We have a bill to give regulatory relief to community banks and credit unions. We are not going to debate that on the floor. No, it is not going to happen.

We have the Secure Rural Schools initiative and Payment in Lieu of Taxes. Both need our attention. Earlier this year, Senator CRAPO and I called on leadership to find a path forward so these counties can have some certainty. Neither is going to happen.

Over the past few years we have seen our national security compromised with faulty background checks. We have a solution. We produced legislation that will help prevent inside attacks. It is not going to happen. Do you notice a pattern? Well, the whole country is waiting. We are waiting for Congress to do their job.

I just turned 60 years old on August 21. In my lifetime, we have never worked less days in the Senate than we have this year. It is unbelievable. We are leaving everyday Americans hung out to dry. We are leaving without doing our job. We are leaving because of the next election, and this is criminal.

There are solutions. This is supposed to be the greatest deliberative body in the world. The only problem is that we are not in session to deliberate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, there is an explanation for why we have worked the shortest number of days in the last 60 years. Everything must be fine. Everybody must be just great. Everybody must be working. Everybody must be able to afford college. The streets have to be safe. That would be a good reason not to work, if everything was just going great for the people of this country. But it is not. In poll after poll, people tell us that they are not happy with the direction of this country. Conversation after conversation we have with our constituents—as I did during our very, very long summer break—educates us as to the simple reality that people are struggling more today than ever before. People, families, and businesses are hurting out there. There are massive problems in this country, as Senator TESTER said, many of which have bipartisan solutions, and still we are not working. If everything were great, if there were no problems to be solved, then maybe that schedule would make sense. But that is not what people think in this country. They know the system is rigged against them. They know their lives can be

better, and they are furious, as Senator MCCASKILL pointed out, when they see that we are not even trying, that we are not even attempting to solve their problems because Republicans would rather be home than be working here in Washington.

Ask the family of Stefan Strawder if everything is OK. Stefan was one of the best basketball players in the State of Florida. He was a star basketball player on his high school team. His coach said everybody wanted to be like Stef. His 19-year-old sister said no matter where he went, everyone invited him into their home as if he was their own. Everybody loved him.

Stefan was killed this summer, while we were on break, in another mass shooting. This time it was in Florida at a teen party, when a bunch of kids left a teen party and kids from 12 years old to 17 years old were shot. Seventeen kids were shot. Stefan lost his life.

How about the 13 people who were shot in Bridgeport, CT, at the end of August? You haven't even heard about this. Thirteen people were shot at a party. None of them were killed, but 13 people's lives are permanently altered because of that mass shooting.

How about what happened this summer in Chicago? Four hundred people were shot in Chicago in the month of August alone. Think about that. That is the worst month of shootings in Chicago's history in the last two decades. People lost their lives. People like Arshell Dennis, who was coming home to surprise his mom on her birthday before he went back to take up his junior year at St. John's University, where he was majoring in journalism. He was shot while he was sitting on his front porch with a friend. He was a member of Upward Bound, a college prep program. He spent the previous summer as an ambassador mentoring other students. He wanted to help kids, he said, because "a lot of people where I'm from don't make it out."

There were 4,000 people killed in this country by guns while we were gone for the longest break in recent memory. There were 400 killed in 1 month in Chicago.

Here is what makes me so mad. I get it that this year we are not going to pass a bill increasing background checks or stopping terrorists from getting guns. We seem to have hit an end point there, but I listen to my Republican colleagues tell me all the time that the real problem, when it comes to gun violence, is mental health. I don't actually agree that this is the panacea for what ails this country when it comes to gun violence, but if we want to work on mental health, then we can. We have a bipartisan, comprehensive mental health bill that, like the veterans bill that Senator TESTER referenced, passed through the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee unanimously. Conservative Republicans and progressive Democrats supported it. It passed the House of Representatives and is sitting

pending on the floor of the Senate. What we are told is that we can't do a mental health reform bill not because we don't have consensus but because we don't have time—bull. We have time. We had all of July and all of August. We can stay here through September and October to pass a mental health reform bill that would probably pass unanimously in the Chamber and would bring new mental health resources to millions of people all across the country.

I am not going to tell you that I think that is what will solve the epidemic of mass shootings in this country, but it is just one of many pieces of legislation that will make people's lives better, that has broad bipartisan consensus, and that we aren't doing simply because we aren't working.

I thank Senator MCCASKILL for putting the chart out, tweeting it out, and letting the American people know that, for all of the lecturing we got from Republicans when we were in charge about not passing a budget or not moving forward on legislation that they supported, nothing is getting done right now simply because Republicans have made a choice to stop doing their job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am joining with the others who are here on the floor today who have called on the majority leader of the Senate to stay here and to take action on matters of critical importance to the American people.

On the first Monday in October, the Supreme Court will begin its new term, and it will do so with a vacancy that has remained unfilled for the last 6 months. Regrettably, the President's nominee to the Court, Judge Merrick Garland, has not even been given the courtesy of a nomination hearing. This is the first time in the history of this country—in the history of the country—that the majority party in leadership has refused to have a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee. It is unconscionable. No wonder the people of America are frustrated with the Congress.

Likewise, the Senate has failed to act with urgency to address the Zika outbreak. I will have more to say about this shortly.

First and foremost, I wanted to come to the floor today to discuss the Senate's failure to provide appropriate emergency funding to address the heroin and opioid epidemic. This epidemic is raging in all 50 States. It is an uncontrolled public health epidemic of the first order. In 2014, some 47,000 people in this country died from drug overdoses—far more than we lose in motor vehicle accidents. Yet despite the staggering death toll, the majority in the Senate has failed to pass legislation to provide emergency funding to first responders, to treatment providers, to law enforcement, and to

those who are on the frontlines in this crisis.

In July, Congress passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. It is a good bipartisan bill. It is a bill I cosponsored and I voted for. But as we all know here, if we are being honest with the public, CARA is an authorizing bill. It is not an appropriations bill. It doesn't provide one penny to fight the opioid epidemic. Even if Congress approves the funding necessary for CARA, it will be about 2 years before New Hampshire and other States see that additional funding.

In New Hampshire we have the highest percentage of overdose deaths in the country. Everywhere I go in the State, I hear that what people need is the resources to address this crisis. That is why early this year I introduced an emergency funding bill to provide an additional \$600 million for policing, prevention, treatment, and recovery. I offered this legislation as an amendment to the CARA bill, but it was defeated with only five of our Republican colleagues voting for it. Again, this is unconscionable. Our Nation has addressed other public health crises with emergency funding bills far larger than the one proposed to address the heroin and opioid epidemic.

Last year, about a year and a half ago, Congress passed nearly \$5.4 billion in emergency funding to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The Ebola outbreak killed one person in America. He wasn't an American. The heroin and opioid epidemic is killing more than 128 people every single day. We know that treatment is the only effective answer to the opioid addiction and that people are being turned away from treatment due to lack of resources. Nationwide in 2013, nearly 9 out of 10 people needing drug treatment didn't receive it. It is the same story on the law enforcement side of the equation. There is a chronic lack of resources.

Heroin traffickers expressly target rural States and counties where law enforcement is spread too thin and lacks resources to respond effectively—places such as northern New Hampshire and northern New England. My legislation would provide \$200 million in emergency funding for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program, which is the flagship crimefighting program that has been cut year after year in a process that has been penny-wise and pound-foolish. It is budgeting at its very worst.

Meanwhile, as Congress fails to act, as Senator MCCASKILL has shown so well, as we have not been here to work, the opioid epidemic is on the verge of expanding dramatically.

Carfentanil is a synthetic opioid that is used to tranquilize elephants. It is now available on the streets and is blamed for a record surge in drug overdoses in the Midwest. Carfentanil is 100 times more potent than fentanyl. Fentanyl is an additive that we have

seen turning up in New Hampshire and in so many other places that makes heroin 50 times more deadly. Until recently, Hamilton County, OH, had four or five overdoses a day. Now, because of carfentanil, the county is reporting 20, 30, or sometimes even 50 overdoses a day, completely overwhelming first responders.

Some public health officials say that the United States has reached a disastrous inflection point in the opioid epidemic. Going forward, we may be seeing more and more synthetic opioids in the market that are cheaper, more potent, more addictive, and even more deadly. This is just one more wake-up call.

The hour is late, and as I travel across New Hampshire and talk to Senate colleagues from across the country, again and again I hear about the lack of resources to marshal an effective, well-coordinated response. As the new and more dangerous synthetic opioids hit the streets, the crisis is becoming exponentially worse, and Congress's failure to act, the fact that we are, again, going home very soon means that more people will die before we take action.

If Congress can spend billions to fight an Ebola outbreak in a distant continent, surely we can allocate \$600 million to combat a raging epidemic back home if we stayed here and if we worked together to get this done.

I also want to raise the issue of the Zika outbreak, as my colleagues have—again, this is one more area—because, while the Senate has been out of session, while Congress has been out of session, while we have been at a standstill, Zika has been on the move with tragic consequences.

Local transmission of Zika is now taking place in the State of Florida. According to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 1,750 pregnant women in the United States and Puerto Rico have tested positive for the Zika virus, and that means their babies are at risk. We are not even sure exactly what all their babies might be at risk for because we are still trying to get the research to determine what all of the impacts of Zika are.

We know microcephaly is one of the birth defects that results from the Zika virus. Since January, I have joined with other Senators in calling for a robust response to the Zika outbreak because we need Congress to act. In fact, the Senate did act. We acted before we went out in August with a bipartisan vote of 89 people, but then we saw the House—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats' time has expired.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Now it is time to put politics aside and work together, to stay here and do what the American people need.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I understand the Senator from North Da-

kota would like 2 or 3 minutes to speak. I will be glad to yield to her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I thank my great friend the senior Senator from Tennessee, always the statesman and always willing to engage in wonderful debate, a great Member of this body.

I thank my colleague from Missouri for shining a bright light on this issue. The Senate work Calendar she displayed is honestly breathtaking. In fact, we are on track to work the fewest number of days in 60 years. That doesn't look like a work schedule anyone from North Dakota has—not that they would not want that but that they have. It should not be a work schedule for the important work that is being done in the Senate.

We are out more than we are in. We were elected to a job, but the Senate is refusing to do that job. In the meantime, the opioid crisis, as my great friend the Senator from New Hampshire has outlined, is destroying families across this country and certainly in North Dakota. When I held discussions throughout my State, mothers and fathers who had lost children to this crisis pleaded for resources to save other families from losing their children.

Their stories brought police chiefs to tears. One even watched his own son serve as a pallbearer for his 19-year-old best friend who had succumbed to addiction. Another man I spoke to became addicted after he dislocated his shoulder when he was just 14. Soon he began dislocating his own shoulder to obtain prescription drugs that washed away the pain of social situations.

This Congress has failed to provide the funding we need to take on the opioid crisis. Now we are headed for the door. Senator MANCHIN, along with a number of us, has introduced a bill that would add just a small cost to prescription drugs, opioids that are prescribed—1 cent per milligram—and put it in a fund.

Shockingly, 1 cent per milligram actually raises over \$1 billion. It tells you how rampant prescriptions for opioids are. So we need to have a debate on that bill. We can't say we are concerned about the opioid crisis unless we come for resources to treat addiction and help our communities get well. I think my police chief in Fargo said it best. He can't protect a community until he heals a community. We have a role in making that happen.

Last month, I also met with 100 North Dakota retirees who stand to lose as much as half of their pensions, sometimes more, after dedicating years of their lives to backbreaking labor, all to support a secure future for their family, and they saw it all disappear in the blink of an eye. That is why we have been calling on Congress to step in and come up with a bipartisan solution to protect the workers and their families who paid into the Central States Pension Plan.

While working to make the fund solvent across the country, nearly one-half million hard-working retirees face cuts through no fault of their own. As one retiree who drove a truck for 30 years put it, "If you cut my pension 50 percent, I am no longer in the middle class."

Are you going to kick 400,000 people out of the middle class? Is that what Congress is prepared to do, even when Members of this body have the power and actually the responsibility and duty to do something about it? We are headed for the exits, but American families are dealing with the heart-breaking loss of children, they have lost their savings that they worked their entire lives to earn, lost their retirement security.

The Senate—instead of dealing with these issues, we simply are not doing our job. What are Members of this Congress going to tell American families—dealing with tough decisions on how to move forward—when they return home for our recess? How are they going to look them in the eyes and explain the possibility of this scheduling getting truncated even more?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Instead of working until October 7, the majority is wrapping up in the next week. So I just ask that we stay here, that we do our job, that we restore the faith the American public has in our democracy, and that we are addressing the issues we are responsible to address.

I thank my friend from Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

ZIKA VIRUS FUNDING

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have been listening carefully to my friends on the other side of the aisle. Zika is truly an epidemic. It is terrifying young families all across the country who are worried their babies might be born with a birth defect. We are working hard to fund the creation of a vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tells us that is likely to happen in the next year and a half.

It takes a certain amount of creativity for the Democratic Senators to come to the floor and complain about the Senate not doing our job on Zika funding when three separate times the majority leader and Republicans have offered \$1.1 billion in funding for Zika, and the Democratic Senators have refused to allow a vote.

Let me say that again. Republican Senators had offered \$1.1 billion in funding for Zika early in the summer, at a time when mosquitoes were flying, and the Democratic Senators have said: No, you can't even vote on it. This \$1.1 billion, passed by the House, we are ready to vote on it here, and they have said no.

Let's be straight up about this. We regard it as an urgent problem. Three

times we have brought it up. We are ready to vote again if that is what we need to do.

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the introduction of S. 3326 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak, I suppose out of turn. I understand the Republicans, the majority, have control of the floor. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes, since there are no other majority Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, through the Chair, may I ask a question, which would be that Republican minutes will be—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator state his inquiry?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Republican minutes be preserved for Senator THUNE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator from Delaware so modify his request?

Mr. CARPER. I am not sure what the Senator from Tennessee is saying.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, following the Senator from Delaware, I ask unanimous consent that whatever Republican minutes are remaining would be reserved for Senator THUNE.

Mr. CARPER. That will be fine. I have absolutely no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from Delaware for his courtesy.

Mr. CARPER. I thank the Senator from Tennessee. As he knows, I am a huge fan of his. I have been for a long time. I respect him as a colleague, I respected him as a Governor, and I respected him long before that when he was a principal aide to Howard Baker, who was one of the greatest Senators who served in this body in the last century.

He and I agree on a lot. We work on a lot of things together, and it has been a source of real joy for me.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I like to tell the story about a Senate Finance Committee hearing about 2 years ago when we had a bunch of very smart people who came in to talk to us about this: What are we going to do about reducing the deficit?

We continue to reduce the deficit. We peaked out at \$1.4 trillion about 6 or 7 years ago. We are down to about \$400 billion now; it is still way to high. But the hearing was designed to ask: What are some things we can do to further reduce our budget deficit?

One of our witnesses was a fellow who used to be Vice Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Blinder. At the

time he testified 2 years ago, he was back at Princeton teaching economics.

As a witness before our committee on reducing Federal budgets, he said: The 800-pound gorilla in the room on health care, on deficit reduction, is health care costs. That is what he said. That is the biggest one—Medicare, Medicaid, the VA system, and so forth. He said that is where the money lies; that is where we have to focus.

When it came time to ask questions of our witnesses, I asked Dr. Blinder: You mentioned that health care is the 800-pound gorilla in the room on deficit reduction. What do you think we ought to do?

He sat there for a while, he sat there for a while, and he sat there for a while. Finally, he said these words: I am not an expert on health care. I am not a health economist, but if I were in your shoes, here is what I would do. I would find what works and do more of that.

That is all he said.

I said: Do you mean to find out what doesn't work and do less of that?

He said: Yes.

If you go back—oh, Lord, this is 2016. If you go back about 22 years in our Nation's history, there was a big debate on Capitol Hill on an idea actually proposed and put forward by the First Lady of our country, Hillary Clinton. She proposed—not ObamaCare; she worked on something that was called HillaryCare. But the idea we had—like a lot of people in this country who were not covered by health insurance—millions, tens of millions of them—we spent way more money in America on health care costs than just about any other developed Nation. We didn't get better results.

Every President since Truman has basically said that we have to do something about extending health care coverage to people who don't have it and trying to make sure it is affordable. Nobody really came up with anything. So the First Lady of this country, of all people, said: Well, I am going to work on this.

And she went to work on it. She came up with a proposal called HillaryCare. It was ultimately not adopted, but our Republican friends, as they should have, came up with an alternative to HillaryCare.

One of the key components of their proposal was something that actually looks a lot like ObamaCare. What they came up with was this idea of creating health care exchanges or purchasing pools, large purchasing pools, that people who don't have health care coverage could elect to join.

As with thousands, maybe tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of people from their States, these State-by-State purchasing pools or exchanges could provide the opportunity for people who don't get health care coverage, are not part of a large purchasing pool, and don't work for a big employer who provides health care coverage—they could derive the same ad-

vantages as those who do have that kind of employment opportunity. That was the Republican alternative.

At the end of the day, it didn't go anywhere. But at the time I thought that was a good idea.

I wasn't here at that time. I was Governor of my State and very active in the National Governors Association. I said: I think these Republicans have a good idea, creating these exchanges, these large purchasing pools, and maybe providing a tax credit from the Federal Government to buy down the cost of premium coverage.

But neither idea ended up flying. HillaryCare ended up going away. The Republican alternative, which was a lot like ObamaCare today, was not enacted.

Fast forward to 2009, with a new President who wanted to finally do something about reining in health care costs, covering people who didn't have coverage—tens of millions of people—and trying to figure out: How do we bring down not only the cost of health care, but how do we get better results?

At the end of the day, a white paper was issued for those of us on the Finance Committee to consider as we took up our debate in 2009. The way negotiations ended up proceeding, in order to try to find a starting point, was to work from the white paper on health care reform but then have three Democrats and three Republicans who would join one another. These were senior members of our committee who were very good at finding the middle, very good at finding consensus. The idea was for them to try to negotiate an agreement, a bill. They tried not just for days, not just for weeks, but for months.

I am a pretty bipartisan guy around here, but I am not sure there was a real bipartisan intent to get to a compromise. I would not cast aspersions, but I think there is probably a little more blame to lie on the other side of the aisle than on this one.

As Democrats, we pretty much decided to put something together, and we took two good Republican ideas. One of those is these large purchasing pools, these exchanges. We said every State should have one and give the opportunity for people to be part of a larger purchasing pool if they don't have health care coverage—if they don't work for an employer that provides health care coverage—to get the advantage of buying health care coverage in bulk, if you will, and having a stronger negotiating position, more leverage.

That was the Republican idea. I thought it was a good idea in 1994, and, frankly, as a member of the Finance Committee, I thought it was a good idea in 1999.

Another good Republican idea that was put forward at the time was the individual mandate. That is not a Democratic idea; that was an idea that came from Governor Romney in Massachusetts, where they put in place their

own RomneyCare plan, which has actually worked pretty well. They have purchasing pools just as we do in States across the country—these exchanges. But they also have something in place that is an individual mandate if somebody didn't get coverage. They want everybody in Massachusetts to be covered. But if they elected not to be covered, after 1 year or 2 years or 3 years, people just said: I am not going to get coverage. I am young, I am invincible, and I don't need health care coverage. I can't afford it—even with the tax credit they received through RomneyCare. They said: You are going to have to pay a tax or a fee if you don't get coverage, if you will not sign up. You can't just get away with it. You are going to have to pay something.

The idea was to have an escalating fee so that eventually people would say: You know, it is one thing to be fined or taxed a \$100 tax if I don't sign up for health care coverage, but how about when it is \$300, \$500, \$700, \$800 a year? So eventually people signed up.

In this country, as well, we have the exchanges, which actually were a gift from our Republican friends. I think it was a good idea then and now.

We also have the individual mandate, which is gradually ramping up so that the young invincibles, the young people who are not getting health care coverage, will get coverage. As more younger, healthier people join the purchasing pools, the idea will be that it will bring down the cost of health care coverage overall so it is not just the sick, the elderly, but it is a healthier group of people.

That is sort of where we are today. The idea of pulling the plug on the Affordable Care Act or significant parts of it because a principal component of it—and that is the purchasing pools, these exchanges—is not working as advertised would be a mistake. If it isn't perfect, make it better.

We had a chance in 2009 to negotiate a real bipartisan health care reform plan. Unfortunately, we didn't do that. We are going to have a chance again in the early part of next year with a new President and a new Congress to again take up that which is flawed, which is imperfect, and that is the Affordable Care Act, to make it better—not to get rid of it, but to make it better.

Senator ALEXANDER is a very wise and highly regarded colleague. He may have a very good idea. I just heard about it here on the fly today. But my hope is that Lamar and the rest of us who want to get things done, to do our job, will seriously take this challenge that is before us and take that original good Republican idea from 1994 on the exchanges, create purchasing pools, and make it better. We should take a look at the individual mandate that Governor Romney adopted in Massachusetts and see how that is working and look at other exchanges as well.

The long-and-short story is that when we took up the Affordable Care

Act in 2009, here is where we were as a country: We were spending 18 percent of GDP for health care costs. In Japan they spent 8 percent. We were spending 18 percent of GDP; they were spending 8 percent. They were getting better results, longer life, longevity, lower infant-mortality rates, and they covered everybody. They covered everybody in 2009.

Where were we? We were spending 18 percent of our GDP. We didn't cover—we had 40 million people going to bed at night without any health care coverage at all. One of the reasons the cost of coverage has gone pretty high right now for people in these new exchanges and purchasing pools is that a lot of the people who are signing up—not all of them, but a lot of them—haven't had health care coverage for years. They have been sick, and they have just not had access to doctors or nurses, except for going to an emergency room doctor.

This is not a time to just throw up our hands and walk away. This is a problem. This is a problem we can fix. I would say we can fix it by embracing what I call the three Cs: communicate, compromise, and collaborate. We need to embrace those when this Congress is over.

ZIKA VIRUS FUNDING

Mr. CARPER. Let me just add a P.S. on Zika funding, which was discussed here earlier today. We had a bipartisan roundtable in the Homeland Security Committee on Zika funding not long ago. Two reasons we need to resolve this funding issue are, No. 1, that we would have money to continue development of a vaccine—that is the single most important thing—and, No. 2, to provide for contraception and family planning. Those are two of the most important things for us to do as we try to avoid this endemic.

I thank my Republican friends for allowing me to speak on their time.

With that, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The majority leader is recognized.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 12 noon today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3318

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3318) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

OBAMACARE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me start by stating the obvious: ObamaCare is a direct attack on the middle class. Premiums are shooting up by double digits, copays are spiking, and deductibles are skyrocketing. Co-ops are collapsing and insurers are withdrawing.

We all know the statistics, and they are literally shocking. Yet they still do not truly capture the toll this partisan law is taking on America's middle class, because behind every premium increase headline is a family budget stretched to its limits, and beyond every co-op collapse is an agonizing uncertainty about where a family will find insurance. This is what too often gets lost in the debate over ObamaCare, especially amongst our Democratic friends, perhaps because it helps them rationalize away the pain of this law. But this is not some theoretical discussion; these are people's lives this law is hurting.

That is why I shared the story of a mom in Louisville who said her family's health care costs would consume nearly a fifth of their budget this year. "I wish somebody would explain to us," she wrote, "how a hard working middle class family paying this much for health insurance became a loser under Obamacare."

That is why I shared the story of the Campbellsburg man who had just lost the health insurance he had had for many years. "Instead of something affordable," he wrote, "I [now] face the possibility of struggling to purchase an Obama[care] health plan that costs two to three times what I had been paying."

That is why I shared the story of a small business man in Lexington who may have to end his decades-long practice of providing insurance to his employees at no cost thanks to, as he wrote, "the cynically named Affordable Care Act."

I shared stories from other States too. There is the New Jersey man with chronic health issues who lost access to his doctor the moment ObamaCare placed him on Medicaid. "You have a card saying you have health insurance," he said, "but if no doctors take it, it's almost like having one of those

fake IDs.” He reminded us that having health insurance under ObamaCare is not the same thing as actually having health coverage.

There is a woman from Ohio who lost her plan after ObamaCare forced out her insurer. “They fine you if you don’t have insurance,” she said, “then they take your options away.” She put words to the frustration of literally millions.

I explained how ObamaCare is chasing out insurers in States such as Ohio, Arizona, and Alabama, throwing thousands off their plans all over again. I explained how ObamaCare’s co-ops are failing in States such as New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Connecticut, massively disrupting coverage for thousands more. I explained how ObamaCare is shooting up premiums by almost unimaginable amounts in States such as Minnesota, Illinois, and Montana, forcing more Americans to make impossible financial decisions.

I invite Democrats to recognize that ObamaCare’s human toll is evident from north to south, from east to west. That includes States such as California, where, according to what the Democratic leader told us yesterday, ObamaCare is supposedly “working wonderfully.” Really? Is it wonderful that premiums in California are set to spike by more than three times the average of recent years? Is it wonderful that ObamaCare is causing huge, double-digit increases in the Golden State, while reducing access to doctors and hospitals at the same time?

The Los Angeles Times quoted a leftwing activist summarizing the situation this way. This is a leftwing activist: “We’re paying more for less.” Indeed, before these massive increases had even been announced, polling showed Californians more concerned about the cost of health care than whether they even had insurance. Two thirds reported they worried “very much” about rising health costs, and a majority credited ObamaCare for causing costs to go up “a lot” for average Americans. It is similar to what Americans said nationwide when they cited health care as their biggest financial worry. That was ahead of wages, ahead of college costs, and even job loss—more concerned about health care. No wonder even some on the left have taken to calling ObamaCare the un-Affordable Care Act.

What we are seeing with ObamaCare may be shocking, but it is not surprising because there are inevitable consequences to this partisan law—the partisan law littered with broken promises. Democrats said premiums would be lower. Remember that? Democrats said copays and deductibles would be affordable too. Obviously, that was wrong. Democrats said Americans could keep their health plans. Remember that promise? Democrats said Americans could keep their doctors. Of course, that wasn’t true. Democrats said ObamaCare wouldn’t touch Medicare. Democrats said taxes wouldn’t in-

crease on the middle class. Democrats said shopping for ObamaCare would be as simple as shopping for a TV on Amazon. Wrong, wrong, and wrong again.

Democrats have broken one promise after the next on ObamaCare. But now, get this: They are asking Americans to trust them to fix—they want to fix the mess they created. They say they have the perfect solution too. It is more ObamaCare. Really. Seriously, I am not kidding. They actually think they can pull another fast one on the American people. They are actually pushing government-run ObamaCare 2.0 as some kind of solution, and they are doing this with a straight face. So, look, we already know what we could expect from a Democratic-run Congress next year on ObamaCare: more broken promises, more stonewalling, more of the same.

ObamaCare’s attack against the middle class is a nationwide phenomenon. It is hurting the very people we were sent here to represent. The only way to deliver true relief for the middle class is to finally build a bridge away from ObamaCare. That is why we passed a bill to repeal this partisan law and sent it to the President—because the middle class deserves better than the pain of ObamaCare.

I think even President Obama, if he is being honest with himself, should be able to recognize that as well. Here is what he himself said last month: “Too many Americans still strain to pay for their physician visits and prescriptions, cover their deductibles, or pay their monthly insurance bills; struggle to navigate a complex, sometimes bewildering system; and remain uninsured.” That is from the President himself. That is not the description of a law that is working. It is time to leave this failed experiment in the past and move toward the real care that Americans deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, a FOX News poll released this month found that “a record-high 54 percent of American voters feel the U.S. is less safe today than it was before 9/11.” Fifty-four percent of Americans think they are less safe than they were before 9/11.

The article went on to say:

Voters also think: A major terrorist attack is likely in the near future. . . . Last year’s U.S.-Iran agreement on Iran’s nuclear program made the U.S. less safe. . . . The \$400 million the U.S. paid Iran after American prisoners were released was ransom. . . . Terrorism is one of the most important issues facing the country.

Those are all quotes from the survey that was done where 54 percent of Americans indicated they thought they were less safe today than they were before 9/11. And it is not surprising that Americans are worried.

When President Obama was elected, he was widely regarded as America’s

next great foreign policy President. Here was a President who would restore America’s standing in the world and calm the troubled waters of international conflict. Confidence in his abilities was so high that he was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize before he had actually done anything to bring peace.

But after 8 years of the Obama administration, the world is less, not more, safe. America’s standing in the world has been weakened, terrorism is spreading, the Middle East is more hostile and dangerous, Iran is counting pallets of ransom money and is in a better position to develop a nuclear weapon, and all too often, President Obama and Hillary Clinton’s foreign policies have been a contributing factor.

Take the rise of ISIS. When President Obama came into office, he was determined to fulfill his campaign promise to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq, and that is exactly what he and Secretary Clinton proceeded to do on a timetable that he announced to our enemies. America’s hasty withdrawal left gaping holes in Iraq’s security, and before too long, ISIS had stepped in to fill the void. By mid-2014, ISIS had made significant territorial gains in Iraq and neighboring Syria.

Although ISIS has since lost territory in both Syria and Iraq, it was able to establish a foothold from which to expand its global terror reach. The list of ISIS-linked attacks has grown very long—Nice in France, Istanbul, Brussels, Paris, Orlando, San Bernardino, and on and on and on. In the past 2 months alone, ISIS has been linked to a suicide bombing at a Turkish wedding, a suicide bombing at a hospital in Pakistan, a suicide bombing in Yemen, and a gruesome attack at a church in northern France. ISIS has also been linked to an attack on police officers in Belgium, a music festival bombing in Germany, and another railway attack there. And that is just in the past 2 months. Yet, despite this ever-growing stream of attacks, the President has never seemed to understand the depth of the threat.

While U.S. efforts have succeeded in reclaiming some territory from ISIS, the group’s terrorist activities continue unabated and its international profile is increasing. Its communications have grown especially sophisticated, making intercepting and decoding ISIS’s messages and tracking its recruitment efforts increasingly difficult.

In June the President’s own CIA Director told Congress, “Our efforts have not reduced the group’s terrorism capability and global reach.” That was from the President’s own CIA Director. Yet, just days before the CIA Director’s testimony, the President claimed we were “making significant progress” against ISIS. As long as ISIS’s global terrorism capability remains unchecked, we are not making significant progress.

Unfortunately, President Obama's foreign policy failures are not confined to his halfhearted campaign against ISIS. Take the President's nuclear agreement with Iran. This agreement was supposed to protect our Nation and the world from the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. The actual deal that emerged, however, doesn't even come close to that goal. Even if Iran complies with all aspects of the deal, which doesn't seem likely, it will not stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. In fact, the deal will actually make it easier for Iran to acquire advanced nuclear weapons down the road. On top of this, recent reports suggest that the United States and the other signatories to the deal have actually already allowed Iran to evade full compliance with some of the deal's provisions. It is no surprise that even some of the deal's supporters are getting worried.

Iran has been in the news lately for other disturbing reasons as well. In August, news emerged that the Obama administration had delivered a \$400 million cash payment to Iran on the same day four American hostages were freed. Furthermore, the administration had paid the money over the objections of Justice Department officials, who were concerned that the Iranians would regard it as a ransom payment. The administration, of course, strenuously denied that the payment was a ransom, but it is pretty hard to get away from the fact that there had been a de facto exchange of money for prisoners. Two weeks after news of the ransom broke, a State Department spokesman admitted that the administration had held the money until three American hostages had departed the country by plane.

The President's ransom payment to Iran is troubling for more than one reason. First, of course, tying the receipt of a large cash payment to the release of prisoners could easily encourage Iran to expand its hostage-taking. Since the ransom payment in January, Iran has continued to detain individuals on spurious grounds. In late August, the State Department warned U.S. citizens not to travel to Iran because of the danger of being detained by the Iranian Government.

So \$400 million in cash in the hands of the Iranians is a disturbing prospect. Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism and has a finger in many of the world's worst conflicts, particularly in the Middle East. There is a good chance that at least a chunk of that \$400 million will go to funding Iran's illicit activities, from support for Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad to funds for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah.

On top of all of this, there is the fact that every time Iran gets the better end of a bargain, it feels even more free to act aggressively. Recently, Iranian fast boats have been harassing U.S. Navy ships, and warning shots have been fired. It is not a stretch to think that this aggression and boldness

springs from the administration's position of weakness when it comes to Iran.

Teddy Roosevelt used to say: "Speak softly and carry a big stick." President Obama's foreign policy has reversed that. The President talks a big game, but he has no follow-through. To our adversaries, his statements have become no more than empty threats.

Take Syria. The President drew a redline 4 years ago. If Syrian President Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons against his own people, the United States would respond. Well, Assad used chemical weapons, and the United States did nothing. It should shock no one that a recent U.N. investigation found that Assad has continued to use chemical weapons against his citizens. After more than 4 years of inaction from our President and 5 years of civil war, Syrian cities lie in ruins, millions are displaced, and tens of thousands—literally, tens of thousands—have been slaughtered. The world's eyes are now on the tenuous ceasefire in hopes that it may lead to peace talks and permit humanitarian aid to reach those most in need. But we must ask how we got here and what lessons can be learned.

The consequence of empty threats is bolder and stronger enemies. When the United States fails to follow through, we send a message that the United States can be ignored at will. We can see the results in chemical attacks on civilians in Syria, in the belligerent acts of the Iranian Navy, in a defiant North Korea testing nuclear bombs, in China boldly asserting territorial claims and building up reefs in disputed waters, and in Russia annexing Crimea and flexing military and political influence in Ukraine.

In 2008, then-candidate Obama spoke of the need for "tough, direct diplomacy, where the President of the United States isn't afraid to let any petty dictator know where America stands and what we stand for." That is a direct quote from the President back when he was running for President. Well, Presidential candidate Obama was right. That is the kind of diplomacy that we need. But, unfortunately, it has never been the kind of diplomacy actually displayed by President Obama.

In that same speech, then-candidate Obama spoke of the need for "the courage and the conviction to lead the free world." Well, that is something that we need even more today, after 8 years of an administration that has frequently lacked the conviction to lead at all.

Senate Republicans will continue to do what we can in Congress to restore America's leadership and to strengthen our country's security. This includes working to advance the essential National Defense Authorization Act and Defense appropriations measures—the latter of which have been blocked repeatedly in this Chamber by Democrats.

I hope my colleagues across the aisle will work with us. Our Nation is al-

ready in a more dangerous position today, thanks to the foreign policy failures of the Obama administration. If we don't start getting our foreign policy right, the consequences could haunt us for generations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here for the 146th time to wake this Chamber up to the consequence of climate change. The leading edge of consequence is already upon us, and it is threatening the people and economies of all 50 States. Because of the dark influence of the fossil fuel industry, we can't have an honest, bipartisan conversation here in the Senate about climate change. So I travel. I have been to 13 States.

Last month, I visited Utah and met with local business, policy, and science leaders to learn more about the effects of climate change in Utah. Coastal Rhode Island and landlocked Utah may seem worlds apart, but we share a common future under climate change, and both Utahns and Rhode Islanders share a deep connection to our home State's natural environment.

Generations of Rhode Islanders have been drawn to Narragansett Bay and our coasts, and it is not just for love and beauty. In 2013, Rhode Island's ocean economy generated \$2.1 billion and supported more than 41,000 Rhode Island jobs. The Presiding Officer from Alaska can appreciate the importance of an ocean's economy.

Narragansett Bay comes alive in the summer's warmth. But it is mostly frozen water that brings people to the mountains of Utah. With what they call the "greatest snow on Earth," winter blesses Utah. During the last ski season, nearly 4½ million skiers and snowboarders visited the State, generating over \$1.3 billion in spending. According to the Utah Office of Tourism and the University of Utah, almost 1 in 10 jobs in Utah is in tourism. Well, whether it is ski boots or boat shoes, there is no question that significant portions of both Utah's and Rhode Island's economies are tangled in the consequences of climate change.

Rhode Island has already seen winter surface temperatures in Narragansett Bay increase by about 4 degrees Fahrenheit since the 1960s, and the sea level at the Newport Naval Station tide gauge is up almost 10 inches since the 1930s. We are seeing more flooding and erosion along our coast, threatening our shoreside businesses and homes. Fish stocks are shifting in search of cooler waters, upsetting the ecological balance of Narragansett Bay and endangering Rhode Island's traditional fisheries.

Out in Utah, there is not much salt-water fishing going on, but they have their own issues. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, average temperatures have already risen two full degrees Fahrenheit there over the past 100 years. During my visit in early August, the National Weather Service reported that for the first time in the 144 years that they had been measuring, Salt Lake City had five nights in a row with low temperatures over 78 degrees and 21 straight days with high temperatures over 95 degrees. Heat waves can have public health consequences, especially for the young and the elderly, but this warming also has serious implications for Utah's fabled ski industry.

I visited with Ski Utah and with professional skiers from the group Protect Our Winters, folks who make their living out on the slopes. They spoke about the shortened winter seasons and depleting snowpack. Snowy Thanksgivings have historically kicked off the resorts' winter season, but Utah is seeing more and more weeks of rain. Resorts are forced to make snow, but manmade snow can't match nature's "greatest snow on Earth."

In his book "Secrets of the Greatest Snow on Earth," Dr. Jim Steenburgh of the University of Utah summarizes how Utah meteorologists Leigh Sturges and John Horel foresee snow versus rain at major Utah ski resorts under different climate change scenarios. Steenburgh writes:

For a temperature rise of 1 [degree centigrade] (about 1.8 [degrees Fahrenheit]), about 10 percent of the precipitation that currently falls as snow would instead fall as rain at 7,000 feet (roughly the base elevation of Canyons, Park City, and Deer Valley).

At 9,500 feet (midmountain at Snowbird and Alta and upper mountain at Canyons, Park City, and Deer Valley), however, it's only 3 percent.

The numbers get worse, however, with greater warming. For a 4 [degree centigrade] temperature increase (about 7.2 [degrees Fahrenheit]), about 40 percent of the precipitation that currently falls as snow would instead fall as rain at 7,000 feet. At 9,500 feet, it's about 20 percent.

This troubling future led Ski Utah's 14 resorts to get together and send a letter last year to Utah Governor Gary Herbert, asking the State to take action on climate change by implementing the EPA's Clean Power Plan.

Diminishing snowpack in these mountains is not only troubling for the ski and snowboard industry; it also jeopardizes Utah's water supply. Roughly 70 percent of Salt Lake City's drinking water comes from snowpack melt in the spring and summer. Snowpack is Utah's natural reservoir.

Utah is the second driest State in the union, but it has one of the highest average per capita rates of water usage. And Utah's population is growing as well, expected to double by 2050 to around 6 million souls.

Agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater in the State. Over 80 per-

cent of Utah water goes to farmers and ranchers. Abbreviated winters mean less snowfall, which means less snowpack, which means less water for Utah's rivers, lakes, and farms in the summer months.

With increasingly hot, dry summers, Utah is primed for drought. According to the U.S. Drought Portal, as of August 30, over half the State was experiencing "abnormally dry" conditions. Around 5 percent of the State was in "moderate drought." As recently as the summer of 2012, Utah had seen upwards of 30 percent of the State in "extreme drought." USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service says Utah's traditional reservoirs were at just 47 percent of capacity in August, down from only 51 percent of capacity at the same time last year.

I saw firsthand the consequences of Utah's water problem during my visit to the Great Salt Lake. I joined the Nature Conservancy at the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve. We walked out on wooden walkways over the marshes, but there was no need. The ground below was bone dry. The preserve is an important stopover for several million migratory shorebirds, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Now, this is perhaps a small thing, but there is a beautiful bird called Wilson's phalarope that flies a 3,000-mile migration from the Patagonian lowlands in South America. Around a third of the world's population comes to the Great Salt Lake. Its migration of more than 3,000 miles is just one more of God's natural miracles.

Researchers from Utah State University, Salt Lake Community College, and the Utah Divisions of Wildlife Resources and Water Resources found that the lake's volume has fallen by nearly half since the first pioneers reached its shores in 1847. The lake's surface has dropped 11 feet. This has left roughly half of the former lakebed—marked here in white—now dry, and it has driven up the remaining lake area's salinity and its concentration of chemical contaminants. The disappearing lake means less habitat for birds like the Wilson phalarope and for the brine shrimp and the other lake critters that they hunt.

The exposed lake bed contains contaminants of Utah's and this lake's industrial past. The dust containing those contaminants now compromises air quality in Salt Lake City, whipped up from the old lake bed. It also affects the other cities along Utah's Wasatch Front. I met with Utah Moms for Clean Air, who describe the poor air quality in some of the State's largest cities. Given its topography, this region is prone to ground-level ozone in the summer and inversions in the winter. Inversions are layers of air which trap particulate matter in the valley. These contaminants can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems, particularly in children. Due to that, Salt Lake County gets an F from the American Lung Association for both ozone

and particulates. The State as a whole didn't do much better, averaging an F for ozone and D for particulate matter. World-class athletes can't train in that air and world-beating companies don't want to move employees into that air so Utah takes this seriously, and Utahans are taking action.

Utah gets a lot of sunshine, and Utah is a leader in solar energy. I met with some of Utah's clean energy leaders at the Real Salt Lake Major League Soccer stadium, where one of Utah's largest solar panel arrays provides more than 70 percent of that facility's energy needs. Auric Solar, the Utah company that installed the solar panels, has averaged more than 170 percent annual growth since 2010. sPower, another solar company headquartered in Salt Lake City, told me their various projects are installing in total around 3 megawatts of solar generation every day.

On July 13, Salt Lake City mayor Jackie Biskupski signed a joint resolution with her city council, pledging to transition the city to 100 percent renewable energy sources by 2032 and to reduce carbon emissions 80 percent by 2040. That is in Utah.

I also stopped in Park City, UT. Park City has its own goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 through a combination of increased access to renewable energy, efficiency incentives for homeowners, and expanded recycling. Park City is often seen as an affluent resort, but one-quarter of its residents live below the poverty line. Outside of Park City, the rest of Summit County is mostly rural. It was the county and city governments that partnered, along with local power providers, to form the Summit Community Power Works, an effort to encourage energy efficiency improvement along all economic levels in the county.

It is working. They have done things such as retrofit the town's affordable housing units with LED lightbulbs, taking impressive steps to increase efficiency and reduce carbon footprints. They don't have the ability locally to change zoning laws or building codes. In Utah that is all controlled by the State. Offering just the economic benefits of efficiency and limited financial incentives, they are already seeing inspiring results.

I left Utah optimistic. State climatologist Dr. Rob Gillies and the other climate scientists I met with from the University of Utah, Utah State University, and Brigham Young University are eager to see their research on climate change reflected in their State's clean energy goals. In all of my meetings and tours, I was struck by the industriousness and self-reliance demonstrated by Utah's climate and clean energy leaders. They are determined to stave off climate change and provide a healthy future for their children and grandchildren.

We in Congress owe it to them and to Americans in every State working to

preserve a healthy climate to be every bit as serious as they are about the science and just as committed as they are to tackling the greatest environmental challenge of our lifetime. It may mean telling the fossil fuel industry to shove off. They have far too much control of this body. I will tell you this. If the Earth's greatest democracy can't handle one greedy special interest, even if it is the world's biggest greedy special interest, then we will deserve and earn our fate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

FOREIGN POLICY AND THE JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it is always good to hear our friend and colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE and see his chart. I know he has given that speech or something like it many times, and I am tempted to respond to some of the things he said, but I will not because there is something else I want to talk about.

Yesterday I came to the floor to talk about President Obama's domestic policy legacy, and the No. 1 attribute of that is ObamaCare and how ObamaCare failed to deliver on the promises the President and the people who supported it made in terms of bringing down costs, making care available, not disrupting people with coverage they already had and liked.

The verdict is in on ObamaCare. The costs are up, access to care is down, and I have talked about the huge premium increases my constituents in Texas are going to experience because the masters of the universe who dreamed this up simply did not reflect reality or anticipate unintended consequences of their actions.

Today I would like to talk a little bit about President Obama's foreign policy and national security legacy. After almost 8 years of this administration, the main takeaway is, the world is more dangerous and the world is less stable than it was when President Obama took office 8 years ago. As the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, has pointed out, the array of threats confronting us and threatening our national security has never been greater—at least, he said, in his 50 years in the intelligence community.

Last month, I had a chance once again to visit Afghanistan and Iraq. I wanted to go back and get up to speed on exactly what the conditions were, the challenges we were facing there, and meet with our military leaders as well as constituents from Texas. I had a chance to also visit with a number of foreign leaders and of course discuss our ongoing efforts to combat terrorism and help those countries achieve some sort of stability. Obviously, the biggest focus right now is ISIS. The Islamic State is known in

Arabic, I am told, as Daesh, which is more of a pejorative connotation. People resist the Islamic State because they say it is not a state, and indeed what I learned in Mosul and Raqqa, efforts are underway to basically destroy what ISIS now claims is its burgeoning caliphate.

The good news is we have some of the best and brightest patriots in the world working in very difficult places to advance our interests. The bad news is, they are not getting the strategic guidance and leadership we need from the White House. Because of that, success in the region is limited. Because our goals appear to be not actually disrupting and destroying the threat of Islamic radicalism, manifest in the name of ISIS or Al Qaeda, it appears to be more of a containment approach—let's do the best we can to contain it but let the next President and the next Congress worry about it.

We just completed a major offensive against ISIS in Afghanistan, but the Taliban and its ally, the Haqqani Network, are kidnapping Americans and overrunning regional outposts that had been held by the Afghans. One of the biggest problems in Afghanistan, I was reminded once again, is the fact that we have an unreliable partner in Pakistan because what happens is many of the Taliban come from Pakistan, where they have safe haven, and they come over into Afghanistan and attack Afghan security forces and the police and then they go back to this protective hideout in Pakistan.

We know ISIS still holds large swaths of territory in Syria and Iraq. If you look at a map, you actually see a line between Syria and Iraq, but that border has essentially been obliterated. We know ISIS continues to export its terrorist ideology to Europe and the West, where there have been spectacular and deadly attacks either instigated by or inspired by this dangerous ideology.

The strategic and humanitarian crisis in Syria continues unabated, and it is beyond horrible. Now, because of our weakened strategic hand and diminished credibility in the eyes of friend and foe alike, we have apparently been forced to rely on the Russians to negotiate a ceasefire.

Last week, 4 years after President Obama promised that using a chemical weapon would constitute a redline that must not be crossed and that would result in a firmer U.S. response, it was reported that the Syrian Government has once again carried out gas attacks, this time with chlorine. Many were wounded. Two civilians were killed, one including a 13-year-old girl.

Obviously, the threats of redlines that must not be crossed because there were no consequences associated with crossing the redline, obviously Bashar al Assad feels he has impunity to do whatever he wants in order to maintain power because he probably realizes the alternative to doing that is not very good for him.

The line President Obama drew has now been repeatedly crossed by the murderous Assad regime. ISIS is still strong and the war criminal al Assad continues to use those chemical weapons against civilians. We also have seen that when we don't do everything in our power to root out and extinguish a serious jihadist threat abroad—like the one posed by ISIS in Syria and Iraq—that threat can make its way to our shores through ISIS-inspired attacks right here, the most recent one being the Orlando shooter who killed 49 people and wounded many more, who claimed allegiance to the leader of ISIS, al-Baghdadi.

That explains why, according to a recent poll, a majority of voters feel less safe today than they did before 9/11. Unfortunately, on national security issues, President Obama has spent most of his time cutting a deal with the foremost state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, and prioritized our relationship with this enemy over longstanding allies like Israel and Gulf States.

Now, I am afraid, those birds have come home to roost, and we are all paying a terrible price. Unfortunately, the families of the victims of the single biggest terrorist attack on American soil, September 11, 2001, are paying a price too.

We will be hearing more about this, but recently the Senate and the House unanimously passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act. This is bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate by unanimous consent and passed with every single Member of the House of Representatives voting for it just last Friday.

To refresh everyone's memory, this bill would provide victims of terrorism an avenue—really access—to justice to seek restitution from those who fund terrorist attacks on American soil.

Some have said this is fighting terrorism by lawsuit. No, it is not. That is not the goal. The goal is simple justice for those injured and the families who lost loved ones as a result of the largest terrorist attack on American soil on 9/11/2001.

President Obama, for some reason, has said he intends to veto the legislation because he thinks it will somehow interfere with his U.S. diplomatic relations with other countries. All this legislation does is amend a law that has been on the books since the late 1970s, the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. Over time, we have had a number of exceptions carved out to this doctrine of sovereign immunities. All this does is give people an opportunity to make their case in court without being summarily thrown out based on the invocation of this doctrine of sovereign immunities.

It is really inexplicable to me that the President would talk about vetoing this opportunity for the victims of 9/11 and their families to be able to make their case in court, but if he does so, I hope he will do so quickly. We sent the

legislation over to him on Monday, and I hope he does whatever he is going to do. I would love to have him sign the legislation into law, but if he decides to veto it, I hope he does it quickly so we can just as quickly vote to override that veto. There is no reason why we need to make these families wait any longer.

It is worth noting that the Middle East isn't the only region of the country that is more unstable since President Obama took office. Just over the weekend, it was reported that North Korea completed yet another nuclear test—its fifth. According to reports, the warhead that was detonated was about twice as large as what they tested in the beginning of the year in January.

President Obama called the test a threat and that is about all, giving lip-service to two of our strongest allies, Japan and South Korea, but with no visible or tangible commitment to do anything about it. He said our commitment to them was unshakeable, and so it is, but you couldn't tell that by the reaction to this fifth nuclear test by North Korea. But just like our partners in the Middle East, not to mention Europe, these two East Asian allies don't have reason to put much faith in the Obama doctrine, whatever it is, because unfortunately our timidity in supporting our friends and allies emboldens our adversaries, while causing our friends and allies to wonder whether we will keep our commitments to them.

North Korea has accelerated its missile testing. It has already conducted close to two dozen tests this year. Eventually, of course, the concern is that they will be able to mount nuclear warheads onto missiles that could not only hit our allies in the region but also the mainland United States at some point.

Even as enemies of America attempt to grow their arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, this administration is reportedly considering handing a gift to North Korea and other rogue regimes by adopting a no first use policy on nuclear weapons. Why in the world would you tell your adversaries beforehand what your intentions would be? This weakens, of course, the effectiveness of our own nuclear deterrent in furtherance of a fantasy goal of a world without nuclear weapons. I wish that it could be true, but it is a fantasy. The loss of deterrence caused by an announcement like that indeed creates an even more frightening and dangerous world.

Throughout his time in the White House, President Obama has done next to nothing to counter the threat posed by North Korea, and that is dangerous.

President Obama has just a few more months left in the Oval Office. At this point, it would be unrealistic to hope he uses the time to promote a solid foreign policy and national security agenda that reflects the best interest of the American people. Instead, we can only

hope he does no further harm to our national security interests.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Iowa.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, this past weekend we bowed our heads in remembrance of the nearly 3,000 lives we lost on September 11, 2001. The largest attack on U.S. soil since Pearl Harbor changed our lives drastically, but it did not impact America as our enemy had hoped. We did not falter. We bonded together. We fought back. From places such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan, and the Philippines, U.S. troops operating under Operation Enduring Freedom showed those responsible for 9/11 the true power of the United States of America. The plan to fight against Al Qaeda and its hosts was as clear as its name: "Global War on Terrorism."

Through strong American leadership, support from our allies, and working alongside local forces, the United States embedded itself in places where extremism had spread to deny terrorism a safe haven. From combat operations in Afghanistan to advising missions in the Caribbean, there has long been a global and comprehensive plan for our response to 9/11. Since then, the global fight on terrorism has continued to become narrower under our current administration, despite the continued threat of Al Qaeda and the clear expansion of ISIS. Without clear leadership, we are failing to stop the spread of terrorism.

Ignoring over a decade of lessons forged on the battlefield, this administration has not only failed to put together a comprehensive plan to fight Islamic extremism in the Middle East, but they have also dismantled the global effort and allowed groups to come back stronger in other regions of the world. This is especially true in Southeast Asia, a nearly forgotten safe haven for terrorists determined to cause harm. Southeast Asia was used for the initial planning of the horrific attack carried out by Al Qaeda that we all bowed heads for in remembrance this past weekend.

In 1994, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed used the Philippines as a safe haven to target the United States. Today, ISIS appears to be doing the very same thing. The warning signs in Southeast Asia are all too familiar to the ones we witnessed over a decade ago with Al Qaeda in that region. They used its Southeast Asia cells to organize and finance its global network. This included planning and financing for 9/11 and the safe harbor of Al Qaeda operative Ramzi Yousef, who was convicted for organizing the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

Because of this, following the September 11 attacks, U.S. Special Forces were deployed to the southern Philippines in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. With an annual cost of less than one new F-35, the Joint Special Operations Task Force in the Philippines partnered with local forces and trained, advised, and assisted our allies in the fight against Al Qaeda-linked groups.

Up until the mission was officially ended under this administration, operations and efforts to assist Philippine forces in dismantling terror networks were hailed as a success. The threat of terrorism from extremist groups in the Philippines, such as Abu Sayyaf, were largely reduced. But the success from U.S. support in the region has been short-lived. Just as we have been witnessing throughout the globe, previously weak or splintered terrorist networks in Southeast Asia are banding together beneath the flag of ISIS. Yet the administration's plans to defeat ISIS have not changed and a comprehensive global strategy still fails to be defined.

We can not allow Southeast Asia to once again become a safe haven to target America. While it is easy to dismiss the terrorist groups in the region as mere criminal gangs and disorganized rebels, the Philippines lost 44 of its special police in a single battle against groups now linked to ISIS in Southeast Asia last year. In April, 18 Philippine soldiers were killed in a fight quickly claimed by ISIS. Then, in June, ISIS released a call for other fighters to join them after beheading a Canadian hostage. The video proudly displaying the black flag of ISIS states: "If you can't get to Syria, join the mujahedeen in the Philippines." It is truly alarming.

Our efforts to counter ISIS in Asia can assist our broader goals of countering a rising China and dealing with an unstable North Korea.

Just before President Obama traveled on his final trip to Asia this month, I sent a letter urging him to discuss efforts for a new U.S. counterterrorism strategy in the region. Specifically, I asked President Obama to consider leveraging the five new bases recently announced for U.S. personnel in the Philippines to counter the rise of ISIS and to utilize our freedom of navigation patrols in the South China Sea to provide support capabilities. Like many of our efforts under Operation Enduring Freedom, this should be a gift with the support of our allies.

The use of U.S. Special Forces helping train the Filipino forces has a successful track record in the region, but it needs to be real support and real training—a commitment with American leadership—or else it will never have the full support of our allies in Southeast Asia. They have witnessed our failure to appropriately support allies in the Middle East, like the Kurdish Peshmerga. We must correct this building perception of poor American leadership and weak support on the

battlefield. We cannot allow ISIS to use Southeast Asia as Al Qaeda did to plan their next attack on U.S. soil.

Shortly after I sent my letter to President Obama urging him to develop a strategy in Southeast Asia, ISIS claimed another attack, one that took the lives of 10 Filipino civilians. We cannot continue to downplay or ignore this part of the world when it comes to the threat of terrorism.

I stand here today to renew my call for this administration to develop a comprehensive strategy to destroy the enemies abroad who wish to do America harm and those who provide them with a safe haven. As the safe havens Al Qaeda used 15 years ago to target our homeland turned into a staging ground for ISIS, the need to support our allies and address this issue is far too clear.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, this week marks a sad milestone for the U.S. Senate, a milestone of inaction, obstruction, and failure. This week marks 6 months since President Obama nominated Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. President Obama did his job and his constitutional duty, and Judge Garland should have been confirmed by now. He is eminently qualified. He is a dedicated public servant and a respected judge. Instead, Judge Garland hasn't received a hearing. Today marks 182 days since his nomination, and not even a hearing. In the last 40 years, the average time from nomination to confirmation has been 67 days for a Supreme Court nominee no matter which party has controlled the White House and the Senate. We have always done our job. We have always given a President's nominees a hearing and a vote as the Constitution requires.

After my remarks, I will formally introduce a proposal to change the Senate rules to require that any judicial nominee who has been pending for more than 180 days receive a vote. I do not take this decision lightly, but I fear that a line has been crossed. This level of obstruction will only get worse in the years to come. We should not ever be in this situation again. I urge all of my colleagues to consider this proposal fairly and without partisan interests.

I had hoped that the Senate would act on Judge Garland's nomination. I met with him in May. It was a good meeting. We talked about some areas of the law of particular importance to New Mexicans, including campaign finance reform, tribal law, interstate water issues, and other topics. He is well-versed and well-informed, but he is not prejudging any issue. I really enjoyed the opportunity to get to know

him better. He is an exceptional jurist who has dedicated his life to public service. He is a nominee who deserves our respect and a hearing and a vote.

But for several months now, Republicans have argued that President Obama's nominee shouldn't get a vote, that this President shouldn't get the same 4-year term as every other President. They argue that it is better for the Supreme Court to have a vacancy for what is likely to be more than a year. This makes no sense. It is hurting the Court and the American people. It leaves a highly qualified nominee in limbo.

Judge Garland has more Federal judicial experience than any other Supreme Court nominee in history. With many judges, that would be a problem—too many controversial opinions or decisions overturned—but Judge Garland's record is exceptional. He has spent nearly 20 years on the DC Circuit, the court often referred to as the second most powerful in the country. He has participated in over 2,600 merit cases and 327 opinions. He has heard many controversial cases. Yet the Supreme Court has never reversed one of his written opinions. Judge Garland's record demonstrates an incredible ability to build consensus on a wide range of difficult subjects, and his opinions show that he decides cases based on the law and the facts. These are traits which will serve him well as a Supreme Court Justice and, more importantly, which will serve all plaintiffs and defendants who come before him.

Judge Garland's legal career before joining the bench is equally impressive. He was a Federal prosecutor and later served as a high-ranking Justice Department attorney. At Justice, he oversaw major investigations and prosecutions. He led the prosecution of the two Oklahoma City bombers and supervised the prosecution of the Unabomber. He was known for working closely with victims.

But he is more than just an exceptional judge and lawyer; he is a person of high moral character. For the last 18 years, he has tutored students at a local elementary school. He speaks to law students about public service careers. He also regularly speaks about the importance of pro bono services and access to the courts.

Judge Garland is a good American, and he is being treated unfairly. Many Republican Senators are so caught up in the politics that they have even refused to meet him. He is being denied a hearing in the Judiciary Committee, and the majority leader refuses to allow him to receive an up-or-down vote. This is unprecedented obstruction against one of the most qualified Supreme Court nominees in history.

My Republican colleagues will say it is not about Judge Garland. They say President Obama—who still had over 10 months in office at the time he made the nomination—had no right to fill the vacancy. They argue that it is the next President's job. But we are talk-

ing about a vacancy that will have been open for almost a year before the next President takes office. This defies common sense and defies historical precedent.

Sadly, obstruction in the Senate is the new normal. Judge Garland is just the most glaring example. A Supreme Court vacancy gets a lot of attention, but our lower courts have been understaffed for years. Right now there are 12 vacancies on the appellate courts, our district courts have 75 vacancies, and 33 of those are considered judicial emergencies because the court is so shortstaffed.

There are many nominees we could vote on today. Twenty-eight judicial nominees are on the Executive Calendar, voted out of committee with bipartisan support, but Republicans have slowed the confirmation process to a standstill.

Last year Senate Republicans confirmed the fewest judicial nominees in more than 50 years—11 for the entire year—matching the alltime record. Only 18 have been confirmed this Congress. Let's compare that to the last 2 years of the Bush administration. With a Democratic majority, the Senate confirmed 68 judges.

All this gets back to something I have discussed since joining the Senate: the need to end the dysfunction so the Senate can work for the American people again. I pushed for reform of the Senate rules in the last three Congresses. We did change the rules to allow majority votes for executive nominees and judicial nominees to lower courts. That was a historic and much needed change. Without it, the judicial system would be even more overburdened. But even that change does no good if the judges remain blocked.

The majority leader is using the power over the calendar as a stealth filibuster, and that is what is happening in this Congress. The line gets longer and longer of perfectly qualified nominees denied a vote, denied even to be heard. Now a seat on the Supreme Court is empty and the majority leader is actually arguing that it should stay empty for over a year in the hopes that maybe a President Trump will be able to fill all of these vacancies that came up during President Obama's term. This isn't governing; this is an unprecedented power play.

Is it any wonder that the American people are frustrated and fed up with political games, with obstruction in the Senate, with special deals for insiders and campaigns that are being sold to the highest bidder? They see this obstruction as just another example of how our democracy is being eroded.

I believe it is so bad that we need a change in the Senate rules to address our broken judicial confirmation process. My suggestion is very simple: If the Judiciary Committee hasn't held a vote on a nominee within 180 days from the nomination, then he or she is discharged and becomes the pending business of the Senate and gets a cloture

vote. It would be the same for nominees voted out of committee but blocked by the majority leader's inaction. After 180 days, they get their vote.

Let me be clear. If this rule is adopted, 180 days should not become the normal time period to confirm nominees. That is the longest it will take, but there is no reason the Senate shouldn't act quicker, as it has done throughout history.

We need to end the stealth filibuster of this President's nominees. No more burying nominees in committee. No more leaving them to languish on the Executive Calendar. The Senate will have to do its job.

Under my rules reform, Judge Garland would have his vote this week, Senators would do our jobs, and the voters would know where we stand. Many other nominees would finally get their votes. There are currently seven appellate court nominees who have been waiting more than 180 days. There are 30 district court nominees, including 5 judicial emergency districts.

Some critics may argue that the tables will be turned and Democrats will object to a Republican nominee. Well, if a nominee is truly objectionable, then any Senator, Democratic or Republican, should convince the majority of the Senate to vote against confirmation. That is how democracy works.

It is time to get our courts fully staffed so our judicial system can do its work. We have already seen the impact of a Supreme Court with eight members—cases sent back to the lower courts without decisions. The Supreme Court isn't taking cases that are likely to deadlock. These are some of the most important cases for them to decide. When we fail to do our job, the justice system suffers and the public suffers. The old saying is so true: Justice delayed is justice denied.

It is time for Senate Republicans to do their job. The Constitution gives the President the responsibility to nominate Justices on the Supreme Court, and the Senate's job is to consider those nominees. The Constitution doesn't say: Do your job except in an election year.

The President has done his job by nominating Judge Garland. Many Republicans expected him to select a highly controversial nominee—someone to energize the liberal base in an election year—but the President took his responsibility seriously. He selected a widely respected nominee with impeccable credentials, a man who should be easily confirmed. It is time for us to take our responsibility seriously, give Judge Garland the hearing he deserves, and allow the Senate to take an up-or-down vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time from 2 p.m. until 2:25 p.m. be under the control of Senator MANCHIN; further, that the time from 2:25 p.m. until 2:45 p.m. today be reserved as follows: Senator ENZI for 10 minutes and Senators INHOFE and BOXER for 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2848, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (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, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Inhofe) amendment No. 4979, in the nature of a substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FOREIGN STATE-OWNED COMPANIES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have been to the floor several times to call attention to foreign state-owned companies' growing investments in American companies and commercial markets. I come to the Senate floor to discuss this further with my colleagues.

It is becoming increasingly clear that foreign state-owned companies are highly involved in international commerce and competing with companies that are privately owned by shareholders with nothing to do with any government. This trend is part and parcel of globalization. While there are some obvious benefits to globalization, we also need to be aware of the challenges it may bring with it, and I think this is one of them.

To give an example, I have seen this trend at work in the agricultural sector of our economy. ChemChina, a Chinese state-owned company, is currently working on a deal to buy the Swiss-based seed company Syngenta. About one-third of Syngenta's revenue comes from North America—meaning the company is heavily involved with American farmers, including Iowans—and that is why I am interested in this transaction.

I have already been considering the approval aspect of this proposed merg-

er. Senator STABENOW and I asked the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to review thoroughly the proposed Syngenta acquisition with the Department of Agriculture's help. We have raised the issue because, as I have said before, protecting the safety and integrity of our food system is a national security imperative as well as an economic issue.

There is another aspect of this issue I would like to focus on. I would like to consider the flip side of the approval question. As their involvement in international commerce grows, how can we ensure that foreign state-owned companies are held to the same standards and the same requirements as their non-state-owned counterparts or companies that are in the private sector?

First, consider two age-old principles of international law. One is that American courts don't exercise jurisdiction over foreign governments as a matter of comity and respect for equally independent countries. Each is sovereign. This is called the foreign sovereign immunity. The second is that when foreign governments do in fact enter into commerce and then behave like market participants—conducting a state-owned business, for example—they are not entitled to foreign sovereign immunity because they are no longer acting as a sovereign but rather acting like any business. In that case, they should be treated just like any other market participant. This is called the commercial activity exception to the principle of foreign sovereign immunity.

Congress codified both of these age-old principles in the Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act of 1976. All of these principles are well and good, but I am concerned that in some cases they may not have their intended effects in today's global marketplace.

Some foreign state-owned companies have recently used the defense of foreign sovereign immunity—the principle that a foreign government can't be sued in American courts—as a litigation tactic to avoid claims by American consumers and companies that non-state-owned foreign companies would have to answer. In some cases, foreign state-owned corporate parent companies have succeeded in escaping Americans' claims. They have done this by arguing that the entity conducted commercial activities only through a particular subsidiary, not a parent company often closer to the foreign sovereign. Unless a plaintiff, which may be an American company or consumer, is able to show complete control of the subsidiary by the parent company, the parent company is able to get out of court before the plaintiffs even have a chance to make their case.

This results in two problems. First, there is an unequal playing field, where state-owned companies benefit from a defense not available to a non-state-owned company. Second, there is an uphill battle for American companies and consumers seeking to sue state-

owned entities as opposed to non-state-owned entities. When a foreign state-owned entity raises the defense of foreign sovereign immunity, American companies as well as American consumers don't even get a chance to prove their cases.

Consider the example I talked about a few months ago. American plaintiffs brought claims against Chinese manufacturers for much of the drywall used to rebuild the gulf coast after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The drywall in question was manufactured by two Chinese companies, one owned by a German parent and one owned by a Chinese state-owned parent company.

The court considering these plaintiffs' claims had this to say: "In stark contrast to the straightforwardness with which the litigation proceeded against the [German] defendants, the litigation against the Chinese entities has taken a different course." The German non-state-owned parent company appeared in court and participated in a bellwether trial, where plaintiffs were allowed to try to make their cases.

The manufacturer of the Chinese state-owned parent "failed timely to answer or otherwise enter an appearance" in court and didn't do so for a long period of time of at least 2 years. In fact, it waited until the court had already entered a judgment against it. Only then did the Chinese state-owned company finally appear in court. When that company did appear, it argued it was immune from suit in the United States because it was a state-owned company. After approximately 6 years of litigation, it ultimately succeeded in its request for dismissal. In contrast to the German parent company, the plaintiffs didn't have a chance to try to prove their case against the Chinese parent company merely because it happened to be owned by a foreign government. That is a great big problem.

To address these issues, I am proposing a very modest fix to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. This change would extend the jurisdiction of the U.S. courts to state-owned corporate affiliates of foreign state-owned companies insofar as their commercial activities are concerned and only as far as their commercial activities are concerned. It wouldn't create any additional substantive causes of action against these foreign state-owned companies. Instead it would mean only that a foreign state-owned company would have to respond to the claims brought by both American companies and American consumers, just like any other foreign company that isn't owned by a government.

This fix has two main results correcting the problems I just mentioned. First, it levels the playing field between foreign state-owned and foreign private companies by making both subject to suit in the United States on the same footing, as the commercial activity exception originally contemplated. Second, it brings clarity to the sometimes opaque structures of foreign

state-owned enterprises and provides American companies and American consumers the chance to prove their case against these companies just as they would have that opportunity against any private company.

In an age when sovereign-owned entities, with increasingly complex corporate structures, are interacting with American companies and interacting with American consumers more than ever, it is appropriate to reexamine the commercial activity exception and to update that commercial activity exception. We have to make sure it is working as it was designed and as it was historically understood.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, not once in the history of America has the Senate refused to give a hearing and a vote to a Presidential nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court—not once—until this moment, a moment in history on the death of Antonin Scalia and President Obama's meeting his constitutional responsibility to send up a nomination to fill that vacancy.

A decision was made by the Republican majority, led by Senator MCCONNELL, that he would not hold any hearing or vote. It has never happened before. Some will say: Oh, Senator DURBIN, if the shoe were on the other foot—it was, not that long ago. It was the last year of Ronald Reagan's Presidency. He was, in nominal terms, a lameduck. There was a vacancy on the Supreme Court. There was a Democratic majority in the Senate. Ronald Reagan sent the name of Anthony Kennedy, his nominee to the Supreme Court, to the Democratic-controlled Senate.

The Senate not only held a hearing and a vote, but they voted in favor of President Reagan's nominee and sent him to the Supreme Court. But this time, with this vacancy on the Supreme Court, the Republican majority has refused to give this man a hearing for 182 days.

He just visited my office again. He was there 5 months ago. Life is more complicated now because he is the President's nominee. He is still the chief judge of the D.C. Circuit Court. That is one of the most important in the United States. He is recusing himself from cases on the chance that he may get a hearing and may get a vote. He is working on the administrative part of the court, but he is not dealing with decisionmaking and writing opinions. So he is trying to show an abundance of caution and not raise any ethical questions if he is eventually on the Supreme Court.

He is a good man. He is highly competent. The American Bar Association has ruled him "unanimously well qualified." This Senate and many of the Republican Senators have voted for him when he went to the DC Circuit Court. Some have said publicly that he is a qualified person, but they have not said it recently.

One Republican Senator slipped back home at a town meeting and said: Well, I think that Merrick Garland, the President's nominee, at least deserves a hearing. That is what he said: At least he deserves a hearing. The Koch brothers came down on that Republican Senator like a ton of bricks and told him: Be prepared; we are going to run someone against you in the Republican primary. Within 24 hours, that Republican Senator reversed his position and said: No, no hearing for Merrick Garland.

So I think we understand the inspiration for this position. It is certainly not the Constitution we have all sworn to defend. The Constitution is very clear. With a vacancy on the Supreme Court, the President is obligated to send a nomination to fill the vacancy. Why would the Constitution require that? Because you can have some political gamesmanship. A President might decide: Well, I will just keep it vacant. Maybe it is to my political advantage.

The Constitution says: No, Mr. President, send a name. The Constitution goes on to say that the Senate has a responsibility to advise and consent to that nomination. That is where the process has stopped and fallen apart.

So why would the Republican majority in the Senate go out on a limb and take a position that has never been taken before in the history of the United States to deny Merrick Garland a hearing and a vote? Well, because there are certain people in high places who want to see a President named Donald Trump fill this vacancy. They believe he would pick a person closer to their political liking, someone who would serve their economic interests. It is a shame. It is unfortunate. Some would argue it is unconstitutional.

That is where we are, and that is what elections are about. I won't even speculate on the type of person Donald Trump would choose to fill that vacancy. I will leave that for someone else another day. It is really sad to think that a judge of Merrick Garland's quality, of his integrity is being treated so badly.

There was speculation that maybe—just maybe—if Donald Trump lost and Hillary Clinton won, the Republicans would relent and in the closing weeks of this year give him his hearing and his vote. Senator MCCONNELL, just a few days ago said: No, not at all, not on my watch—there won't even be a consideration of this nominee.

It is a sad chapter in the history of the Senate, written for political reasons, at the expense of a man who should have his day at a hearing in sworn testimony to tell us how he

would like to continue to serve this Nation.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. President, there is an industry in the United States of America that is the most heavily federally subsidized private industry in our country. If I asked Members of Congress what that would be, many would say: Oh, it must be a defense contractor; right? Maybe it is some major farm operation. No, it is the for-profit college and university industry—for-profit colleges and universities.

Think of the University of Phoenix, Kaplan University, DeVry, Rasmussen, and those types of schools.

They are in business for profit. They are the most heavily subsidized businesses in America. The students who attend these for-profit colleges and universities receive Federal money in Pell grants, which they give to these for-profit colleges, and then they borrow money from the Federal Government to pay the tuition at these for-profit colleges. These for-profit colleges—many of them—receive more than 90 percent of their revenue directly from the Federal Treasury.

Well, you would think if an industry or a company were that heavily subsidized, they must be doing one great job—wrong. Here are some numbers. These are going to be on the final. So you may want to make a note. Ten percent of students enrolled in postsecondary education go to for-profit colleges and universities—10 percent.

Twenty percent of all the Federal aid to education goes to these schools. That is 10 percent of the kids and 20 percent of the aid money. Why? It is because they charge so much. Their tuition is so high. There are two other numbers that really tell the story—40. Forty percent of all college student loan defaults are students from for-profit colleges and universities. Why? Because they are so burdened with debt that they drop out or they end up graduating with worthless diplomas. The last number I will give you is 72. So 72 percent of the graduates of for-profit colleges and universities—72 percent, on average—earn less than high school dropouts in America. It is the most heavily subsidized private businesses in America and with awful, terrible results: 10 percent of the students, 40 percent of the loan defaults, 72 percent of the graduates not earning as how much as high school dropouts in America.

Last week, another one of those for-profit colleges bit the dust—ITT Tech, with 35 to 40,000 students nationwide, and 750 in Illinois. I would go home to Springfield, IL, and go by the local mall, and I would look up on the side of the mall and see a sign which read “ITT Tech.” I said to myself: I know how this story ends. Some students are going to walk into that mall, and they are going to sign up for a course, and they are going to be disappointed. They are going to end up with a heavy student debt and a virtually worthless diploma. Someday—just someday—that school may go bankrupt or go away.

That day has arrived. What happened to those students? Let me give you one illustration. If you walked into Springfield, IL, to the White Oaks Mall, to the campus of ITT Tech, this for-profit college and university, and signed up for a course in communications or an associate's degree in communication or in computer management, the tuition they charged students in Springfield, IL, for a 2-year degree was \$47,000—\$47,000.

Get in your car at White Oaks Mall in Springfield and drive for 15 minutes to Lincoln Land Community College, where you could get the same degree not for \$47,000 but for \$7,000—\$7,000. The hours that you accumulated would be transferrable to a 4-year school or wherever you wished to go. The hours at ITT Tech were a laughing matter when students tried to transfer.

So the school went down. The Federal Government took a close look at the practices. They found more than a dozen State attorneys general investigating ITT Tech. Why? What did they do wrong? Well, it was obvious what they were doing wrong. They were deceiving these students into coming into these schools and paying the tuition.

Many of them were steering them into loans—college loans—which were not the best for the students. They were paying higher interest rates than they should have paid. So when they started detecting these things in each of the States, the attorneys general decided to start investigating. More than a dozen of them were investigating this one school.

Then the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, here in Washington, DC, did the same and found predatory lending. Higher interest rates were being charged by these schools than should have been for these students and the company was lying to students about their ability to repay them. Then the Securities and Exchange Commission got involved as well and found that this same school was really violating some of the basic rules in terms of disclosures under Federal law.

Well, as these and other problems continued to mount, the Department of Education said to ITT Tech: Stop. We are not going to let you go forward and bring in more students and receive more money from the Federal Government unless you put up a bond—a letter of credit—to guarantee to us that the taxpayers won't be left holding the bag if you go out of business.

ITT Tech said: Before we will do that, we will go out of business. They did. So these students are out there trying to figure out what is next in their lives. It is a heartbreaking situation. For many of them, they at least wasted 1 year or 2 years or more. A lot of them have piled up a lot of debt at a school that has now gone out of business.

I have written every community college in my State and said: Would you reach out to the 750 ITT Tech students in Illinois, sit down with them, see if

they have taken any courses or training of value that can transfer, and put them on the right track in terms of perhaps getting that associate's degree at an affordable cost?

There is another thing that is offered through the Department of Education. Once one of these for-profit schools closes, the students have an option. It's called a Closed School Discharge. They can essentially keep the hours they have earned—the credits they have earned and the debt that was associated with it—or walk away from both.

So students will have to decide. I can't decide for them. Once they have had some counseling at the community colleges, they can make that decision. But here is what ultimately happens. When the students walk away from the debt and the hours they earned at these schools, the losers—the ultimate losers—are the taxpayers of America.

You see, when we pay taxes, it goes into the Federal Treasury. The money out of that Treasury is being loaned to these students to give to these schools. When the students default or if they are forgiven their loans, the Treasury is not paid back. Our tax dollars do not return to the Treasury to be loaned again.

So the taxpayers are the ultimate losers. It raises a very basic question. When is our Federal Government going to wake up to the fact that this for-profit college and university industry is causing great harm to a lot of innocent students across the United States and their families and ultimately to the taxpayers of this country?

Steve Gunderson was a Congressman from Wisconsin. I served with him in the House. He is now the spokesman for this industry. He was quoted in the papers yesterday saying that ITT Tech was being treated unfairly, that they were not given due process, and that this industry was being held to unreasonable standards. I could not disagree more.

What the Obama administration is calling for now is to measure the performance of these for-profit schools and to decide whether they should stay in the business. It is called gainful employment. Here is what it boils down to. If you graduate from a school, if you receive a certificate or diploma that they promised, how much debt did you accumulate? How much is your job paying as you come out of school? Can you reconcile the two? Did you end up with a job that ended up paying enough so you could pay back your loan?

Too few of these students can. Mr. Gunderson now argues that we should not hold the schools to those standards, that we should not be concerned about the amount of debt, and that we shouldn't really ask about what kind of jobs these students end up with. I think we should. I think we owe it to the students and to their families to do just that.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an editorial

from the New York Times that is entitled: "Late to the Fight Against Predator Schools."

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Sept. 8, 2016]

LATE TO THE FIGHT AGAINST PREDATOR SCHOOLS

The federal government's failure over decades to regulate for-profit colleges freed the schools to prey on veterans, minorities and the poor by saddling students with crushing debt and giving them worthless degrees in return. This is all the more outrageous because the schools rely on the federal student aid system for virtually all of their revenue.

The Obama administration has taken steps to get these schools off the federal dole. But regulators need to intervene decisively—and as soon as possible—when evidence of fraudulent conduct emerges. They must also reach out to students who are entitled to have their loans forgiven when a school defrauds them or shuts down while they are enrolled.

Just this week, ITT Technical Institute—one of the nation's largest for-profit operations—announced it was closing, leaving about 35,000 students in the lurch.

ITT blamed the Education Department, which recently barred it from enrolling students using federal funds, citing its accreditation problems and financial instability. The department also demanded that ITT come up with more than \$150 million to cover refunds in case it closed. According to the department, ITT could not do so.

The school has only itself and its business model to blame. In 2011, Senate hearings showed that ITT recruiters were deliberately targeting desperate unemployed people for some of the most expensive programs in the for-profit sector and that many students were taking on high-cost private debt after exhausting federal aid. It also emerged that the company was spending more on marketing than on instruction—a giveaway of what the game was about.

ITT's reputation got worse every time it came under investigation or was hauled into court. In 2014, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Board sued it for pushing students into high-cost private loans that were likely to end up in default. A year later, the Securities and Exchange Commission accused it of fraud and charged it with concealing financial information from investors.

Complaints have also arisen at the state level. This year, Massachusetts charged ITT with falsifying job-placement rates for one of its programs. The death knell finally sounded for ITT this spring when the organization that accredits independent colleges and schools told it that it did not comply with accreditation criteria that were not rigorous to begin with.

The Education Department is at fault for waiting so long to end ITT's use of federal aid. Now it needs to adopt and vigorously enforce recently proposed rules that shield the taxpayers from loss when a school is forced to close.

The most important rule would require schools that show signs of financial instability—like being sued by federal entities or state attorneys general or failing to meet requirements for receiving federal aid—to put aside money for debt relief for students hurt by the school's conduct. The companies and their supporters in Congress want the rule rolled back. But the only way to hold schools accountable is to make the cost of abuse high.

Mr. DURBIN. This editorial says that this should be an eye opener. This

should be an awakening for Congress and for our government. We saw Corinthian go down, another for-profit school. Do you know how much that cost the taxpayers? Over \$1 billion. Now, don't believe for a minute that the CEO of Corinthian or even the CEO of ITT Tech is sending any money back to the Treasury. No way. They are off with their millions of dollars—which, as presidents, they took out of these bogus universities—living a pretty sweet life. They got the money, the school went down the drain, and the students are left holding the bag with the taxpayers. We could lose over \$1 billion on Corinthian. Sadly, ITT Tech could turn into another billion-dollar baby. Which one of these for-profit schools is going to fail next?

One they are looking at closely is called Bridgepoint. Bridgepoint is based out of California, but they did something very interesting. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa had a hearing and told the story of Bridgepoint. Bridgepoint, a for-profit school, bought a Franciscan college in Iowa—a small Catholic girls' college that was going out of business—and they created something called Ashford University. They said: Our campus is in Iowa. This is where we are going to do business.

It turned out it was a fraud on the public. It was the showcase for another for-profit school.

Listen to this. Tom Harkin's investigation found Ashford University had 1 faculty member for every 500 students. They put almost 25 percent of all their revenues into marketing, signing up students, picking up their Pell grants, picking up their college loans, turning it into profits, and paying millions of dollars to their CEO and the officers of their company.

Now they have closed down that campus in Iowa, and they are looking for a home. They need one because now one of the most lucrative businesses of for-profit colleges is the military and veterans. The military provides assistance for Active military members and their families to go to school. These for-profit schools are swarming all over our military bases trying to get these families to sign up and also those who come out of the military with GI bill rights. They have a lot of money to spend—as we want them to spend to improve their lives—and it is these for-profit schools that are crawling all over trying them, trying to get them to be part of it.

Well, they need a base of operations, Bridgepoint does, to continue to receive GI Bill benefits and no State wants them. Iowa has said: No thanks. California, where they are based, has indicated they don't want them either.

So will Bridgepoint be the next? I don't know, but I know there will be another one. There will be more disappointed students. There will be more disappointed taxpayers.

The question that ought to be asked by those who are following this is, What are you doing in the Senate or

the House to deal with this? How are you changing the rules and the law to protect students, their families, and taxpayers? The answer is, we are doing nothing—nothing. That is inexcusable, unacceptable.

I don't know if we will have time this year to take up an issue of this magnitude, but we must. I wish we would, but if we can't, then next year we must.

How many more students are going to face what the students at ITT Tech are facing at this moment? Do we care that the most heavily subsidized private businesses in America are doing such a miserable job for students across the United States? We should.

I sincerely hope my colleagues will join me in this effort. This should be bipartisan. We have a lot of Senators who spend a lot of time zeroing in on whether people are getting an extra 50 bucks a month for food stamps they shouldn't receive. I am against food stamp fraud, but are they not ready to zero in as well on this horrific waste of billions of dollars each year to an industry that is not serving America well?

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I am returning to the floor—and I can hardly believe this number—for my 50th edition of "Waste of the Week." I started this thinking that because we have not been able to secure any kind of long-term reform to our broken financial system, the least we can do is identify those documented wastes, frauds, and abuses that inspectors general, the Congressional Budget Office, and the Government Accountability Office have studied, examined, determined, and reported to us. The least we can do to control out-of-control spending by this Federal Government is to stop this waste, fraud, and abuse to the best extent we can—the least we can do.

When I started this, I thought that, well, I am going to come to the Senate floor once a week and we will see what we can determine. I wasn't sure we would have enough information available to us so that I could come down each week during this cycle. We have been overwhelmed. I could come to the floor every day. We have been overwhelmed by what we have learned and found. It is shocking. It ought to be shocking to the taxpayer when they learn about how we waste their tax dollars. These are people struggling to get the mortgage paid at the end of the month, struggling to get the kids' education paid for, struggling to just keep

their heads above water. They are dutifully paying taxes, which are withheld from their paychecks, sending it to Washington, DC. Then they learn it is wasted, that the abuse that goes on has not been corrected, that the efforts to run an efficient, effective government have simply not been implemented, that we have a government out of control in Washington, and that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing.

So these wastes of the week have been pouring in, and this is No. 50. We thought the goal we wanted to reach would realistically be about \$100 billion. We are way above that, and I will be talking about that in just a moment.

Yet here we are again, and this is a big one, Medicaid: the waste of dollars that have been improperly sent to the wrong people in payments for Medicaid—to the wrong people, to people abusing the system or just simply errors. They were not corrected in the systems that account for whom we are paying, what we are paying them, and when they are getting the money.

I first wish to say I acknowledge that Medicaid is a vital safety net program, depended on by many low-income families and children who have no other health care options. Medicaid recipients rely on HHS to effectively supervise the Medicaid Program and so do the American taxpayers who are footing the bill with their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This is in no way a criticism to take down a program that is necessary to provide needed medical help to low-income people who simply cannot find it any other way.

If we want to maintain the program's integrity, we have to root out the bad actors. We have to root out the abuse and waste of taxpayer dollars or at some point there simply will be a rebellion back that will undermine the necessity of this program.

Most importantly, the Health & Human Services' Cabinet must address the high rate of improper payments that have plagued this program from its very beginning and wasted billions of taxpayer dollars. It seems the problem is getting worse, even though Medicaid has routinely been identified as a high risk for potential waste. Being identified as a high risk, you would think alarm bells would sound and structures would be put in place so we can solve some of these issues and not waste these taxpayers' dollars, give them to the wrong people, or deny others who are qualified and not receiving these payments.

In 2015, Medicaid had the second highest improper payment rate across the entire Federal Government. Over the past 3 years, Medicaid's improper payment rate averaged almost 10 percent each year. Earlier this month, the Department of Health & Human Services put out an alert that Medicaid's improper payment rate for 2016 is expected to increase to 11.5 percent. That is nearly double the rate of improper

payments since 2013. So in just 3 years, the rate of improper payments has doubled.

Instead of correcting the program, instead of moving it in the right direction toward solvency and toward proper administration, it is going in the other direction. That means more and more taxpayer dollars are being simply burned, thrown to the wind. Put it in a fireplace. It is gone. It has gone to the wrong people, they are improper payments, and it is a staggering, staggering number. To put a dollar figure on this, nearly 10 percent of everything that goes out in Medicaid payments—we are talking about \$85.5 billion which will be improperly put out through Medicaid in just 3 years. That is an astonishing amount. Let me repeat that: Having acknowledged there is a serious problem with Medicaid payments and misuse of taxpayer dollars, instead of that being addressed successfully, it has put us in a situation where it is increasing dramatically. Now, in a 3-year period of time, \$85.5 billion has been wasted.

While these \$85.5 billion in improper payments were made, Medicaid enrollment continued to expand as a result of ObamaCare, which means more and more Americans are relying on an increasingly fraudulent system. So we have to ask the question: Why do these improper payments continue to take place? Why is it accelerating? What is happening?

Well, we dug into this. One reason was that a persistent problem lies within the HHS—Health & Human Services—data system for identifying and validating Medicaid and Medicare providers, which HHS directs States to use to help ensure those medical providers receiving payments are actually eligible. The system itself reminds me a lot of ObamaCare. Remember when they rolled out that system? I can't remember the number of billions and hundreds of billions of dollars that had to be spent to fix it when we were assured this was ready to go, all plugged in, and the system collapsed. The taxpayer then had to come in and rescue it with even more hundreds of millions of dollars.

So one problem here lies with the agency itself in terms of implementing the right systems. Bureaucratic mismanagement, which is so prevalent throughout the Federal Government, has enabled providers to obtain Medicaid payments when they aren't even medically licensed in a State or when they do not even practice in the United States. Payments are going to bogus people. Payments are going to people who don't even practice in the United States and qualify for this.

The Government Accountability Office recently examined the addresses listed in HHS's database by some of these providers as their primary place of practice, and it turns out a lot of them are simply fake addresses. Let me put up this first chart that identifies the address of where Medicaid pay-

ments were going. This is a picture of an empty lot. There is no building. There is no place, unless someone has a little tent here or something like that saying: This is my place of practice. Payments are going to this address, and there is nothing there. Everything has been bulldozed. There is nothing there. That was determined by the government, and this is just one example among thousands in terms of how these Medicaid payments are being wasted.

Another listed the address, as we determined, of a fast-food restaurant. I am not going to mention which one it is, but a fast-food restaurant is receiving Medicaid payments. Maybe their food is bad. Maybe someone practices there on a 24-hour basis, sleeps on the floor, and I guess can get a burger for breakfast, a burger for lunch, and a burger for dinner, but it is yet another example.

This fake address was determined by the Government Accountability Office, not by any one of the thousands, tens of thousands of people—maybe hundreds of thousands of people—who work for HHS. One would think they would have something going on within that bureaucracy that would track all this information. Why does this have to go through an inspector general or go through the Government Accountability Office—some agency outside of these agencies such as HHS—to determine this kind of thing? Can't somebody figure that out?

We wonder why the public is frustrated with Washington. We wonder why the public thinks their taxpayer dollars are being misused, and obviously they are. We wonder why we are getting this backlash here in this political year. People are fed up with how the government is so dysfunctional and operates in such a dysfunctional way. They want change, and it looks as though it is going to happen.

Another problem is that criminals understand that poor oversight among the agencies gives them access to Medicaid, which harms patients, such as the case of a pediatric dental company that performed medically unnecessary procedures on children covered by Medicaid. It is bad enough that somebody puts a false address in and receives Medicaid payments in a fraudulent way, but it is outrageous—it is outrageous—that professional people, many of them with doctors' degrees, are using this as a basis to receive Medicaid payments by subjecting children to procedures that are not necessary. This case was a dental company that performed medically unnecessary procedures on children covered by Medicaid. These children went through significant physical pain, such as having a baby root canal. And there is no telling how many other patients have been harmed by providers who should have been prohibited from participating in Medicaid.

Yes, the \$85.5 billion in improper payments is a big deal, but it is also a big deal that Federal agencies are not

doing their jobs and allowing billions of dollars to be squandered. HHS has the tools already at its disposal to prevent these improper payments, such as verifying the locations of physicians' offices and making sure providers are licensed.

My colleagues and I also must remain vigilant and ensure that HHS is fully utilizing its resources to crack down on improper payments and bad actors within Medicaid. We are elected. It is our responsibility to come here and make sure we are doing everything we possibly can to make these agencies cost effective and efficient, so we do not have to come down here every week to talk about some bureaucratic nightmare where taxpayer dollars have been wasted.

Initially, I said our goal was \$100 billion. We are way past that now. We are at \$200-some billion. And with this, we add another \$85.5 billion. Our chart can't accommodate it. We thought we would end up here; then we went to \$200 billion. This is just within this one cycle of Congress, and now we have to add to our chart. We are going to have to get a new chart because we are way up here now. We went way over our chart. The grand total of wasted taxpayer dollars is \$326 billion. That is not small change, Mr. President. That is hard-earned tax dollars.

Think what we could do to lower our debt. Think what we could do to provide for better education, better health care research, dealing with Zika with the CDC, paving roads, providing services, protecting our national security, helping our veterans. Think what we could do with \$326 billion of wasted money. And this is just a fraction.

The public understands. We expose this information to them. Do we then blame the public for being furious with the dysfunction that exists in Washington, DC? I think they are going to go to the polls in November and express how they feel.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Aloha, Mr. President.

REMEMBERING MARK TAKAI

Mr. President, I rise in memory of our friend and our colleague, Congressman Mark Takai. In June, Mark passed away after a courageous fight with pancreatic cancer. He leaves behind a legacy as a champion swimmer, a National Guard officer, and a public servant. Most importantly, Mark was a family man and friend to many.

Over the years, I have affectionately called Mark my younger brother. Mark was elected to the Hawaii State legislature in 1994, the same year I won my race to be our State's Lieutenant Governor. I came to count on Mark as one of my closest allies throughout my time in State government and here in Congress. I will continue to be a champion for the causes he believed in, particularly the fight to keep the promises we made to our Nation's veterans.

Mark always remembered personal details and would go the extra mile to give back to others. Knowing how much we all missed food from home, he hosted potlucks for his staff and others in the delegation. They often included one of my favorites—his mother Naomi's famous beef stew. Whenever his mother made a batch of her famous stew, Mark, always thoughtful, made sure he saved some for me. In return, when I made Portuguese bean soup and Korean kimchi, he got some too.

Mark embodied the aloha spirit of kindness and generosity and would bring a bit of Hawaii wherever he went. Last year, Mark and I traveled with dozens of our colleagues from both the House and Senate to Selma, AL, for a march commemorating the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday," the civil rights march led by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

When Dr. King marched from Selma to Montgomery in 1965, he and other march leaders wore a white carnation lei from Reverend Abraham Akaka, the brother of Senator Daniel Akaka. Dr. King and Reverend Akaka had met and become friends the year before, and Reverend Akaka sent the lei from Hawaii to Alabama to stand in peace and solidarity with the civil rights marchers.

Mark decided to replicate that gesture of harmony and unity by giving a lei from Hawaii to all our colleagues from the House and Senate who joined in the commemorative march. He enlisted me in this goal. Over 100 lei were ordered and shipped to us in Selma. But there was a glitch. The lei were to arrive by plane and by truck, but arrive they did not. In fact, Mark and I had absolutely no idea where the boxes and boxes of lei were in transit from the west coast to where we were.

At that point, frustrated, I looked at Mark and said: You are the National Guard guy. You know logistics. I am trusting you to get this done. Mark was on the phone day and night. We have pictures of him with his phone practically glued to his ear. Others later recounted that they wondered what he was doing with this phone for 2 days while all kinds of other commemorative march events were occurring.

Well, all of Mark's work paid off, and the lei were delivered safely. That Saturday we presented a white carnation lei to civil rights leader JOHN LEWIS. They were just like the ones that Reverend King and the other leaders had worn 50 years before. Together, we marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with our first African-American President, Hawaii's keiki o ka aina, President Obama.

As we celebrate Mark's life in the Capitol today, I recall his memorial services that took place in Honolulu last month. As we finished singing "Over the Rainbow" at the State Capitol rotunda in Honolulu—we were outside—the sun suddenly broke through and shown brightly on a large photo of

Mark placed at the service. Mark was literally glowing. The photo was taken just after he was elected to the U.S. House, and you could see in his smile how joyful and happy he was. Later that day, during our services, a rainbow appeared over Pearl City, his hometown that he represented for decades in the State legislature. These are what we call in Hawaii "chicken skin moments"—moments where Mark's presence was very much felt.

Mark, you will be missed, but we will carry on your fight for what we believe is right, while treating each other with kindness and always aloha.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DONNELLY. 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. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today we are debating the water resources development bill that contains crucial provisions to improve and rebuild some of our locks, dams, ports, and flood control systems across the United States. It also authorizes valuable habitat restoration programs like the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Those are all incredibly important issues and are worthy of our investment. Today, however, I wish to discuss an issue that is far too often overlooked by those of us in Congress: wastewater infrastructure.

Today when we talk about infrastructure, it translates into the critical structures we see every day—roads, bridges, locks, dams, airports. What is too often neglected in this conversation, however, is water infrastructure, which is just as critical to keeping our communities clean and livable and attracting investment and growth.

We all want clean water, particularly our local communities that are committed to working toward that goal. Unfortunately, too many of our cities and towns are in a situation where the Federal Government is demanding significant investments to prevent wastewater runoffs, while providing virtually no support to help meet those mandated goals.

I believe we should have high standards for our wastewater infrastructure, but those federally mandated standards should be achievable and met with a commitment to help make the necessary investments to protect the health and safety of our communities.

The truth is, unless we get serious about investing in all American infrastructure, including wastewater, we are hurting the very communities these regulations were initially intended to help.

This water resources bill includes some responses to the difficulties our communities are facing in preventing sewer overflows. We have established a

technical assistance program for small and medium treatment waterworks, and our communities will now have more opportunities to develop integrated plans for dealing with multiple clean water requirements and have greater certainty when working with EPA to develop financially responsible investments in wastewater control systems. The bill also reauthorizes a grant program for cities that are addressing their combined sewer overflow, sanitary sewer overflows, and storm water discharge responsibilities.

The bill only authorizes, however, \$250 million for wastewater grants all of next year. That is a sizeable investment but not nearly adequate to help communities respond to the financial challenges they are facing. To put that \$250 million in perspective, local governments reported spending an average of approximately \$320 million per day—per day—on water and wastewater services and infrastructure in 2013. That means this bill will authorize grants for an entire year at an amount that is only 75 percent of what local governments spend in 1 day.

In my hometown of South Bend, IN, the city may need to spend up to \$1 billion to address its obligations to eliminate sewer overflows. The solution may include deep rock tunneling, with tunnels so deep they might as well build a subway system while they are down there and with a price tag so high, the required investments break down to \$10,000 per resident—in a town with a per capita income of \$19,000 per resident a year. It is not just one town, though; Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Evansville, Richmond, and others—these Hoosier communities are forced into consent decrees and are required to make significant investments with essentially no help from Congress, which made the rules in the first place.

I know we are operating in a time of budget constraints, but wastewater infrastructure investment is a problem. It is a problem Congress has failed to adequately address for far too long. That is why I have introduced an amendment that doubles the authorized funding for grants to local communities to respond to wastewater challenges. Even that is a modest investment, but we need to work together to find a way to do more.

I know that Chairman INHOFE—a former mayor of Tulsa—understands the challenges facing our cities, and local communities across the country are experiencing the same difficulties funding these improvements. Senator BOXER is such a tireless advocate on behalf of the communities in her home State, and I know she is interested in being as helpful as possible as well.

This bill makes improvements for our communities, and I appreciate that, but I am eagerly looking forward to finding ways to do more.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCAIN. 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. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of debate only until 2:25 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, events that are taking place in Syria and in the Middle East in general but in Syria and around the world show an incredibly dangerous deterioration of American national security, of our standing in the world, and can have consequences that are far-reaching and very damaging to the United States of America.

Yesterday the Washington Post—not known as a rightwing conservative periodical—had an editorial entitled “Whether or not the Syrian cease-fire sticks, Putin wins.” It begins by talking about the circumstances concerning what happened with this so-called agreement, which, according to the New York Times today, has been objected to by the Secretary of Defense and other members of his own administration. The Washington Post editorial says:

When Russia launched its direct military intervention in Syria a year ago, President Obama predicted its only result would be a quagmire. Instead, the agreement struck by Secretary of State John F. Kerry on Friday with his Russian counterpart offers Mr. Putin everything he sought. The Assad regime, which was tottering a year ago, will be entrenched and its opposition dealt a powerful blow. The United States will meanwhile grant Mr. Putin’s long-standing demand that it join with Russia in targeting groups deemed to be terrorists.

I might add that when the Russians came in, the first people they attacked were the moderate people whom we trained, armed, and equipped, slaughtering them.

If serious political negotiations on Syria’s future ever take place—an unlikely prospect, at least in the Obama administration’s remaining months—the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian backers will hold a commanding position.

In exchange for these sweeping concessions, which essentially abandon Mr. Obama’s onetime goal of freeing Syria from Mr. Assad and make the United States a junior partner of Russia in the Middle East’s most important ongoing conflict, Mr. Kerry promises that humanitarian lifelines will be opened into the besieged city of Aleppo and other areas subjected to surrender-or-starve tactics. The Syrian air force will supposedly be banned from dropping “barrel bombs,” chlorine and other munitions on many areas where rebels are based—though there seem to be loopholes in the deal, and its text has not been made public.

I might add that the text has not been made available to the Congress of the United States or the American people.

It goes on to say:

If that really happens, and lives are saved, that will be a positive benefit. Perhaps it’s the only one available to a U.S. policy that swears off, as doomed to failure, the same limited military measures that Russia has employed with success. But Mr. Putin and Mr. Assad have agreed to multiple previous truces, in Syria and, in Mr. Putin’s case, Ukraine—and violated all of them. Their reward has been to gain territory and strengthen their strategic positions, while receiving from the United States not sanction but more concessions and proposals for new deals. If the regimes observe their promises in this case, it may be because the time to exploit this U.S. administration—which has retreated from its red lines, allowed Russia to restore itself as a Middle East power and betrayed those Syrians who hoped to rid themselves of a blood-drenched dictator—is finally running out.

In other words, there may be a time when Vladimir Putin and Bashar Assad decide on an actual cease-fire, which has been violated time after time. After they have gained sufficient control, after they have driven any of the moderate forces out of the major regions of Syria—and for all intents and purposes, thanks to Hezbollah; the Iranian Revolutionary Guard; Russia; and more Iranian involvement by people like Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard; Hezbollah from Lebanon—they will have gained enough control over Syria that they will be satisfied with what they have and then will seek a cease-fire.

This is one of the most disgraceful chapters in American history. Look at the map of Syria and Iraq in the Middle East in 2009 when Barack Obama became President of the United States and look at a map today. When Barack Obama came to power in 2009, Al Qaeda was defeated. The situation was under complete control thanks to the sacrifice of an enormous amount of American blood and treasure.

When my colleagues and the liberal media and others criticize what happened in Iraq and what a colossal failure it was, maybe there is an argument about going in. There can be no intellectual honesty unless you mention the fact that we had it under control. Al Qaeda was defeated. The casualties were down. All we needed to do was keep a residual force there to maintain control. Instead, the President of the United States decides to take everybody out, and the rest is history. Al Qaeda moves to Syria, Al Qaeda becomes ISIS, and the rest is history.

Why is it that the liberal media and my friends on the other side of the aisle who continue to talk about how Iraq was such a disaster fail to mention that thanks to GEN David Petraeus and brave young Americans who sacrificed time after time, we had it won? And the reason given for pulling everybody out was that we couldn’t get a Status of Forces Agreement ratified by

the Iraqi Parliament. We now have 4,500 permanent and thousands who are rotating in and out. Where is the Status of Forces Agreement with the Iraqi Parliament? Wasn't that the reason given by these experienced and talented members of the President's National Security Council, experts on—I believe science fiction was one of them, and others who have never heard a shot fired in anger and have no experience in the military of any kind? They are the ones who said we can't stay because we haven't got the Status of Forces Agreement, so we pulled out, and Al Qaeda rotated to Syria and became ISIS and now we have a caliphate. We may be able to finally destroy them, although this is the classic of incrementalism—50 troops here, 20 troops there, 50 more here, a gradual escalation in targets. Still, I have been told one-third or maybe as many as half of our aircraft that went out and flew on a mission returned without having fired a weapon or having dropped a bomb, and everything is run from those experienced tacticians and leaders at the National Security Council.

Here we are now, after Hezbollah, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the Russians came in, and the President declared a “quagmire,” we now have a ceasefire that, according to our view and others, Putin wins. By the way, there is also a New York Times story that shows there are severe divisions within the administration as to whether this was a good idea.

I draw my colleague's attention to this morning's Wall Street Journal. Syria's Regime is pressing a systematic effort to alter the country's demographics and tighten Assad's grip on power, U.N. officials and opposition figures said.

How do they do that? They surround an area, starve them out, and barrel bomb them. Barrel bombs are horrible weapons, my friends. They barrel bomb them and kill a whole bunch of them and then they declare a ceasefire and let them leave and take over that particular area. One of the most brutal and inhumane types of warfare is being practiced by Bashar al-Assad as we speak.

There are a lot of things going on in the world, which apparently includes the dictator in the Philippines now saying he is going to buy Russian and Chinese equipment and throw Americans out of the Philippines. The Philippine leader, Duterte, is seeking arms from Russia and China, signaling a shift in its alliance with the United States. The Chinese continue their aggressive behavior in the South China Sea, and of course we are now seeing the other Middle Eastern countries deciding they have to go their own way because the United States of America cannot be relied on for assistance as the situation continues to deteriorate.

I ask my colleague and friend from South Carolina for his comments about the deteriorating situation and this

latest “agreement.” I don't know what number that agreement is, by the way, but it certainly isn't the first nor the second nor third that has been reached in the hopes that somehow—and each time greater and greater concessions are made to Bashar al-Assad and now acknowledgment of the Russians as our senior partner.

I just ask my colleague: Are we supposed to enter into some kind of alliance with Vladimir Putin in this conflict in Syria? Vladimir Putin dismembered Ukraine, bombed the people we armed, trained, and equipped when they first went into Syria—I don't know how many were slaughtered—put enormous pressures on the Baltic countries, and has occupied parts of Georgia. Does anybody on Earth believe our new partners will insist that Bashar al-Assad leave Syria?

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with everything my friend said. Here is our dilemma. There are two forces inside of Syria that are a threat to us, the region, and the people in Syria—ISIL, al-Nusra, and the other radical Sunni groups are certainly a threat to the United States. Raqqa, which is the capital of the ISIL's caliphate, is in Syria. They planned the attacks in Paris and Europe out of Raqqa, and they communicate with sleeper cells throughout the world. Thousands of westerners have gone to Syria for training under ISIL's control. The bottom line is, it is in our interest to destroy this caliphate because the next 9/11-type attack is being planned in Syria. If you take the land away from ISIL, then you are doing a lot of damage to them, and they become a terrorist organization rather than a terrorist army. The plan to destroy ISIL is beyond ill-conceived.

I had dinner last night with the Turkish Ambassador. What is the ground force we are relying upon to go take Raqqa away from ISIL? You are clearly not going to win the war from the air. We have done a lot of damage, but the air campaign will not destroy the caliphate. Somebody has to go in on the ground and actually liberate Raqqa, take Mosul back, and all the other stuff.

Inside Syria, the main fighting force is a Kurdish force called the YPG. The Kurdish force inside Syria is the mortal enemy of Turkey. On two occasions, you have seen where Turkey used military force against the coalition we are training to destroy ISIL because in the eyes of Turkey, substituting ISIL for YPG Kurds is not a good trade.

Most Members of the body—I don't know if you are following this, but you should. The whole goal is not to destroy ISIL. It is to do as much damage to ISIL as possible and pass this problem on to the next President. For a couple of years, Senator McCAIN and I have made the argument that the liberating force—if it is made up of Kurds—is doomed to fail. The Arabs in the region are going to have a hard time turning over more of Syria to the YPG

Kurds, and it is a nonstarter for Turkey. This ceasefire is brought on by the fact that Aleppo is Hell on Earth.

The administration's goal was to destroy ISIL and replace Assad. Assad will be in power and Obama will be gone, and this failure of the Obama administration to act effectively has changed the balance of power. Four years ago, Senator McCAIN and I and others argued to help the Free Syrian Army while it was intact. The entire national security team of President Obama advised him to aggressively train the Free Syrian Army to take Assad out because he is a puppet of Iran. The one thing I can tell you is, no Arab country in the region is going to recognize Assad as the legitimate leader of Syria because his main benefactors are the Iranians, their mortal enemy.

Instead of helping the Free Syrian Army, President Obama blinked and took a pass. That vacuum was filled. Hezbollah sent in 5,000 fighters. They are also a puppet of Iran. Their Hezbollah militia, which is supported by the Iranians, came to Assad's aid as we backed off of helping the Free Syrian Army, and then Russia came in for Assad. So now the Russian President has been bombing forces trained by the American President, and we are not doing a damned thing about it.

All of the training we provided to the Free Syrian Army has been basically neutered by the fact that Russia and Iran are now firmly in Assad's camp. When we were trying to train Syrians to go take out ISIL, we also wanted them to take the fight to Assad. Obama's refusal to do anything about Assad has created a vacuum. Very few Syrians are going to go fight ISIL and not turn their attention to the “Butcher of Damascus,” the person who has killed 250,000 to 400,000 of their family.

This whole Syrian strategy is flawed. The ceasefire is an opportunity for Assad and Russia to retrench. Here is what will happen. We are going to have a ceasefire. Hopefully, some of the humanitarian aid will get to Aleppo, but as Senator McCAIN said, when it is all said and done, they are going to gobble up more territory. This idea of the United States partnering with Russia to go after the al-Nusra group, which has changed its name, to me, is very dangerous. Our military is very reluctant to share with the Russian military targeting and how we know where people are. Sharing information with the Russians is very dangerous to do in Syria because their goal is not to just destroy radical Islamic groups, their goal is to keep their puppet Assad in power.

This whole idea of a joint operation center, where the United States and Russia will focus their attention on al-Nusra elements, is doomed to fail because in the eyes of Assad, everybody who opposes him is a terrorist. All the people we are training to liberate Syria from Assad, in the eyes of Assad, are no different than ISIL. So to expect

Assad and Russia to limit their military activity to radical Islamic groups and not go after the opposition in general defies the past.

Russia has dropped more bombs on people we have trained than they have on ISIL. Russia has hit more targets aligned with opposition to Assad than they have al-Nusra targets. Why? Russia is using their military might to give Assad military superiority and at the same time helping on the margins with radical Islam.

The biggest mistake of all was to not help the Free Syrian Army when they were intact and allow Russia and Iran to fill this vacuum. I will say this to anybody on the other side who believes this strategy is going to result in Assad leaving, you are completely out to lunch. Why would Assad leave when he is winning? Why would Assad leave when Russia and Iran are firmly in his camp? Why would Assad leave when the Russians can bomb the people the Americans are training to take Assad out and America will do nothing about it?

This whole idea that there is some plan coming that will replace Assad is a complete fantasy. This ceasefire is not going to bring about the results we all would hope for, which is the destruction of ISIL and the removal of the "Butcher of Damascus," Assad, who is an enemy of the Syrian people, who helped send fighters into Iraq to kill American soldiers as we were trying to help Iraqis, who is a puppet of Iran and a proxy of Russia.

To the administration, most people are not paying any attention. You are literally getting away with national security malpractice because most people are not paying much attention, and there is a war over there involving people we can't relate to. All I can tell you is, you should be worried about what is going on in Syria because it will affect us here at home. We are about to give yet another Arab capital to the Iranians. This will be the fourth Arab capital that Iran has basically had to fight their control over, and that is not good for our interests because our Arab allies will be put in a spot one day where they will have to fight back.

If you want to create a bigger war in the Middle East, we are on track to do it. We are about to create a conflict for our Turkish allies and the people we are trying to liberate—Raqqa from ISIL inside of Syria. In the effort of destroying ISIL, we have created a nightmare for Turkey. In the effort of destroying ISIL, we are giving Assad a pass, which is nightmare for Jordan and Lebanon and all of our Arab allies.

In other words, in our effort to destroy ISIL, we are empowering Iran. In our effort to destroy ISIL, we are making Russia more effective in the Middle East than they have been since the early 1970s. In our effort to destroy ISIL, we have created an imbalance of power in the Middle East that will come back to haunt us. The bottom line is, Obama and his administration

wanted this nuclear deal with the Iranians so much that he would not challenge their proxy in Syria. They want cooperation with the Russians so much when it comes to Iran and other issues, they will not challenge Russian aggression inside Syria.

Here is what will come back to bite us all. In the future, nobody in the Middle East will rely upon us. Every Arab government I have talked to has asked: Where has America gone? Why should we join with you? You are an unreliable ally. The stain on our honor is very great. All those young Syrian men who were brought to the fight and trained to fight ISIL and get rid Assad, many of them have been killed by Assad and Russia and we haven't done a damned thing about it.

What are the consequences of this? It is going to be harder for people to work with us in the future, and it is going to be easier for our enemies to peel off people in the region. The vacuum we are creating today will grow over time.

I hope the next President, whomever he or she will be, will revisit our strategy in Syria because it is on a collision course.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I wish to add to my colleague's assessment when he said that 400,000 people were killed.

Mr. GRAHAM. All with families.

Mr. MCCAIN. All with families—barrel bombs, poison gas. By the way, there has been a recurrence of poison gas. Six million people are now refugees and it is putting an enormous strain on Europe. We can look around the world and see where all of this weakness is reflected, whether it be in Syria or whether it be in Iran, which threatened two American surveillance planes as they flew over the Straits of Hormuz—Philippines leaders seeking arms from the Russians and the Chinese, Chinese continued aggression in the South China Sea, and the list goes on and on.

In summary, I agree with the editorial in the Washington Post yesterday: "Whether or not the Syrian ceasefire sticks, Putin wins."

This election is going to be a very important one.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from West Virginia.

MINERS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues on a bipartisan bill that we have been working on, one of the most important pieces of legislation that we have before us today.

Basically, 16,000 retired miners and their widows are counting on this to be done. If we don't do it by the end of the year, 16,000 miners will lose their health care benefits at the end of this year. Another 3,500 miners will lose

their health care at the end of March of next year, and another 3,500 will lose it by July. So 23,000 miners' lives are at stake.

This is a piece of legislation that fulfills a commitment and a promise we made starting back in 1946, 1950, 1974, 1990, 1992, 1993, and 2006. So basically, we as a government, we as lawmakers here have understood the value of the coal that has been produced by the Coal Miners of America and the United Mine Workers and this is to fulfill the promise that we made back in 1946 for what they have done from the start of the century—in the early 1900s—providing energy in a very difficult and tough way and then, basically, being able to guarantee a pension and a retirement plan to keep this country moving forward. That is what this is about. If we don't fulfill this promise to the people who have given us the life we have and the superpower status and the freedoms we enjoy, then I would say God help us all.

I am joined by some of my colleagues who understand these people, understand how wonderful they are and the hard work they have provided—the mine workers all over this country. I wish to turn to my good friend from Ohio, Senator BROWN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia, and I thank our colleague Senator CAPITO.

Last week I joined Senator MANCHIN, Senator CAPITO, and others to speak to hundreds of coal miners rallying on the lawn right outside the Capitol. It was an oppressively hot day, yet the heat and humidity seemed to bother them not at all. They are used to working in mines and working in some of the hardest and least safe conditions in this country.

One of the things that most impressed me at the beginning of this rally was when President Cecil Roberts, the president of the UMWA, stood up and asked at the beginning of his remarks: How many of you are veterans? A huge number of miners put their hands up. He then asked about family members and World War II veterans. We think about these mine workers. Some stayed in the mines and continued to mine coal, to win our wars and to power our defense plants and to power our homes and our commercial establishments and everything else. So many of them went off to war. As if we don't owe them for the work they have done in the mines and the promises that Senator MANCHIN mentioned, we also owe so many of them for serving our country the way they did.

This is about retirement security. In my State alone, 6,800 Ohioans are covered and will be betrayed if we don't do our work, if the Senate doesn't do its job. If Congress fails to act, thousands of retired miners could lose their health care this year, and the pension plans could fail as early as 2017. This is retirement security that miners

worked for, security they fought for, security that many of them sacrificed their own health for.

One of the things that Senator MANCHIN and Senator CAPITO and I understand—and that, frankly, a whole lot of Senators don't—is that when unions bargain and sit down at the bargaining table, they often—almost always—give up raises today for retirement security in the future. We call these legacy costs. During the auto rescue, I heard a number of my colleagues complain about the legacy costs that afflicted, in their words, the United Auto Workers. It is the same thing here. These are workers who rather than take more pay now they said: We will forgo some of these raises, and we will put this money toward guaranteeing and ensuring our futures. So then they aren't wards of the State. They are not living off taxpayers. They are living off their own wealth that they created and invested so they would have health insurance and so they would have pensions when they retire. That is good for the country, not bad for the country. But a number of anti-union Members in this Senate—and I would say in the House, where Senator CAPITO and I used to serve—don't really understand that they have earned this health care and they have earned these retirement payments that have been promised to them. These workers have more than held up their end of the bargain.

I want to tell a couple of stories and then turn it over to Senator CAPITO. As do the two West Virginia Senators—they have more mine workers in their State than I do, but it is a major part of our State and a major part of the southeast quadrant of Ohio.

I have talked to some of these workers, Ohioans like Norm Skinner, Dave Dilly, and Babe Erdos. I first met Norm in March. I have known Babe Erdos for years.

I appreciate the work Senator WARNER has done. He is joining us now as well.

Norm is a veteran who started working as a miner for what became Peabody Coal 40 years ago. He worked 22 years. He retired in September of 1994. For every one of those years he earned and he contributed to his retiree health care plan and his pension plan. Sixty percent of his colleagues, he told me, at the mine have died of cancer because of the chemicals. Norm has been lucky. But after putting in decades in that mine, he is in danger of losing that health care that he worked for.

We know how to fix this. This block, if you will, seems to be down at the end of the hall in the majority leader's office. Because of the work of Senator CAPITO, Senator MANCHIN, Senator WARNER, and others, we would get a strong majority of Members of the Senate to pass this if we could get it up for a floor vote.

We must mark this bill up in the committee that Senator WARNER and I sit on—the Finance Committee. We

were supposed to vote this week. For whatever reason, it was pushed back to next week. Senator MANCHIN and I have talked about how we hope this isn't a slow walk to delay it through the end of the year. The Senate has not been in session much this year, and we are not doing the work we should.

This is absolutely mandatory. The Senate Finance Committee should move on it next week. Senator CASEY is on that committee. He is also supporting it. It is time we do it.

I thank Senator MANCHIN, Senator CAPITO, and Senator WARNER for their work on such an important issue for our country.

Mr. MANCHIN. I thank Senator BROWN.

At this time I wish to call on my colleague, Senator CAPITO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I wish to thank my fellow Senator from the State of West Virginia for his lead on this, and I am happy to be his primary cosponsor. I wish to thank Senator BROWN as well. He brings a lot of passion. I got to follow him the other day at the rally. He is a hard act to follow. Senator WARNER, certainly your State of Virginia and the southwest portion right there—you are lucky enough to be really close to West Virginia—are going to feel a lot of this.

I think Senator BROWN really stated it when he spoke about the rally that we saw last week. It was a very hot day. There were thousands of miners and families there, and we all went for the show of hands. Senator PORTMAN is here now. Let's have a show of hands from those from Ohio and from West Virginia. It was really spread throughout the eastern part of the country. It wasn't just one State or the other. Everyone that I shook hands with I asked: Is this personally affecting you? It was amazing to me that most of the people I talked to, it personally affected them. Many of them are retired. They are not spring chickens, as a lot of us are not. They were willing to weather a really long bus ride, a really hot day to stand arm in arm in brotherhood and sisterhood for something that we all believe in and on which we are approaching a critical deadline.

So as I said before, these are the workers who power our Nation and who work hard. My kids have gone to school with their grandchildren. We go to church with many of them. In a small State like ours, Senator MANCHIN and I certainly know many of the folks and the faces that we saw that day and the ones that are affected by this.

We can't leave them in the lurch. This is where we are. We hear the statistics—22,000. Some of the statistics are a little bit different, but they could be losing their health care here in the next three months. The pension plan that provides benefits to over 90,000 current retirees could become insolvent.

We have a fix. Senator PORTMAN and I have talked a lot about this because

we have those adjoining parts of our States that are very much affected, and we have worked hard to bring this fix and get it to the point where we think we are assured that the vote will come through the Finance Committee, on which Senator PORTMAN serves.

So I look forward to that. Even though it disappointingly was pushed back a week, we still are fighting the fight.

The war on coal in our State has resulted in thousands of lost jobs. Six of our counties are in a deep depression. We were at a local hearing in Morgantown where our State economist said that six of our counties are in a very severe depression. A lot of these counties are where a lot of these folks live. For these counties and communities across our State, the situation, if we don't do something, is going to get even worse.

This is not a partisan issue. We have Republicans and Democrats here. I would say it is more of a regional issue than a partisan issue. We are working with Chairman HATCH to get this bill marked up in the Finance Committee, and, hopefully, that will get us the next step that we need, which is the big step and which is to get it across the floor here in the halls of the Senate.

So with the hard-working men and women of Appalachia, with the leadership that Senator MANCHIN has shown on this, and with many of us here working together in the many different ways that we can affect the votes of our colleagues—somebody said to me: What is going to make the difference? You are on that side of the aisle where maybe there are a lot of folks that can't see why we should vote for this. What I would implore them to do is to look at the human faces of the people who are affected here. These are people, most of whom have worked hard their whole lives. Many of them have health issues—severe health issues. Many of them are living on limited resources. This really just kind of kicks the stool out from under their entire family.

So I join with everybody here today to make that real difference that we need to make, and we will keep the fight going here as we move through the next several weeks and months.

Thank you.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague and friend. This has been a bipartisan piece of legislation, and we just need a little bit more help. I think we are going to get there.

Let me just paint the picture very quickly for everybody of what we are talking about—the energy for this young country in the early 1900s. The energy was needed to build the country. Then we had the industrial revolution, if you will. Then we had World War I, and then we had World War II and we needed the domestic energy in order to defend ourselves. From 1900 to 1946, these were people who were down in the mines. They would work hard, and they would provide the resources

we needed to win the wars, to build the industrial revolution, and to build the middle class. They got no pensions, no benefits.

Here is one personal story. In 1927, there was a young man who had four children, and his wife was expecting her fifth. It was Christmastime 1927. Have you ever heard the words of the song: "Sixteen tons, what do you get, another day older and deeper in debt." Tennessee Ford wrote that song. "I owe my soul to the company store." That was the fact. That was the absolute truth. From the paycheck at the end of the week, there was nothing left. They owed their soul to the company store. There was no money to take care of their family, no pension, no retirement plan, no health care as far as giving you the health care that you and your family would need to stay healthy.

This is what happened. A person—a young man in 1927—was talking to other people saying: We have to do something. We can't continue to carry on like this. We can't live this way. We can't take care of our family and ourselves. We are not getting ahead at all. That night, Christmas Eve, he was thrown out of his house. All of his furniture was thrown into the middle of the road—everything. Four kids and an expectant mother were thrown out.

That person's name was Joe Manchin, Sr. When you think about the commitment they made to our country, and the effort—that was my grandfather. You think about what they were willing to do, and they sacrificed everything for this country. We did not get a piece of legislation until 1946. Harry S. Truman—President Harry S. Truman signed an agreement, the Krug-Lewis agreement, because it was so important after the war to keep the economy going.

Without the miners that were providing the product, the coal that fired this Nation, we would not be a superpower today. We would not. People forget that. I think it sets the stage of who we are and what we are fighting for. This is a commitment we owe. This is a responsibility that we have.

I thank all of my colleagues who are here, all of my colleagues who are supporting this. We have 46 Democrats supporting this, and we have a minimum of 8, possibly more, of our Republican friends who are supporting it also. We need a few more. That is what we were asking for. We think we will be able to get that help and get that commitment for the markup. I wish it would have been done this week. It wasn't.

With that, I want to recognize my good friend from Virginia, the former Governor. We served together.

He worked in the coal fields. We have met many times in the coal fields. A coal miner is usually a veteran. These are the greatest people, the most patriotic people that you have ever met. They mine the coal that made the steel that built the country we have today. They give their blood, sweat, tears, and hard work.

With that, I want to turn it over to my good friend from Virginia who knows these people all so well, Senator WARNER.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I want to start by echoing what Senator BROWN and Senator CAPITO and others have said and thank my friend from West Virginia for continuing to wage this fight. It feels a little bit like déjà vu all over again. We have been down here time and time and time again to simply reinforce the case that the Senator from West Virginia just went through in terms of history.

I think it is sometimes interesting that—I'm sure that the Senator from West Virginia did it earlier than I, but it was the early 1990s, the first time I went underground to see the working conditions of miners across this country. Even though the advances in technology in the 20th century and 21st century still endure, it is hard work. It is gritty work. Many of the miners who have spent years working underground come out with black lung and other illnesses. Their life expectancy is much shorter than so many other jobs.

The Senator from West Virginia has already gone through at some length the historic commitment to these miners. It started with President Truman. It was renewed a number of times, Democrats and Republicans alike.

Through this past year—again because of the Senator from West Virginia and those of us who tried to help—his State has the most, probably Kentucky has the second most, and Virginia has about 10,000 folks who are affected. We did finally force—and I want to thank the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN. We did have a hearing. Families came in. All they said to us was: Keep your promise. The United States of America said: We are going to honor this commitment to make sure that your pension benefits and your health care benefits are honored.

The remarkable thing here—and many folks, including myself, are greatly concerned about our debt and deficit. So how are we going to pay for this? We have even identified a source of funding that is industry generated. So any of the typical "well, maybe not now" or "what if" or "how did this happen"—all of those issues have been addressed.

The Finance Committee held a hearing on the Miners Protection Act. Miners from Southwest Virginia came in, a couple of folks from Grundy, a couple of folks from Wise, which is very close to the State of West Virginia, close to Ohio—folks whose lives were going to be dramatically affected if these health care benefits and pension benefits are taken away.

Disproportionately, as the Senator from West Virginia has repeatedly said, the vast majority of those individuals, candidly, are not former miners, but they are the widows. So many folks have passed that the widows now de-

pend upon these benefits in many ways. They are still the lifeblood of the communities that have been hard hit by the changing nature of power generation, by government regulation, by a host of other things.

Last week, on that incredibly warm day, my good friend the Senator from Ohio and I were there, speaking to miners from all across the region and others who were supportive of the cause. The question I got as I walked through the crowd was: Are you guys going to keep your word? It was not Democrat, Republican—not particulars of the bill.

Are you going to keep your word that this country made to the coal miners and their beneficiaries that their pension and health care benefits are going to be honored?

So we are going to be tested on this, at least in terms of the next step. As a member of the Finance Committee, my hope and expectations have been—and my friend, the Senator from Ohio, a member of the Finance Committee, and in this case we have the support of the chairman and the ranking member—that we would mark up this legislation, that we would not add all kinds of extraneous other things that would take us off course or take us down into some other briar patch but that we would honor this commitment on the UMW health and pension benefits.

Well, as things often happen here, it got delayed. But I for one don't believe, even if we get our CR done and get Zika done, that the Finance Committee should leave town without having this markup. That commitment was made earlier in the year. I went through a whole group of folks, not just from Virginia, but from West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Kentucky and said: Yes, I believe we are going to at least get the next step done and get this bill marked up out of the Finance Committee. And then it should be not just reported out of the Finance Committee but actually acted on here on the floor of the Senate.

We have all come and gone through the facts and the details on the variety of times that we have spoken about this issue on the floor. My appeal to my friends the chair and ranking member of the Finance Committee is that this date of September 21 does not slip again. I know in that committee markup we will have the votes. We need to get that bill reported out. We need to get it acted on before the end of the year because, as the Senator from West Virginia has so relentlessly continued to make the point, this is not something that we can kick the can on anymore. People start losing these benefits that their lives depend on at the end of calendar year 2016.

So I say to my friend from West Virginia and my friend the Senator from Ohio that we are in this together. It is bipartisan. There are not enough bipartisan things that are done here. I thank my friend from West Virginia for being relentless on this issue. I thank my friend the Senator from Ohio—sometimes it is an issue that looks as if it

is stacking up more on one side than the other—for his leadership on this as well.

I tell you, I think we owe it to those miners and families who depend upon these benefits to keep our word, keep the word we told them we were going to keep back when we held the hearing, keep the word that all of us said to the miners and others who rallied last week in the middle of that heat. If we do our job next Wednesday, we will be able to keep our word, bring this bill to the floor, and get it passed.

So with that, I thank the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I appreciate so much the Senator's support. He knows the miners so well because we joined—his Southwest Virginia miners and my West Virginia miners work very well together. With that being said, we are very proud of our neighbors and friends from Ohio. Senator PORTMAN has been here, and he knows the mine workers of the Southeast, where most of them have congregated and where they really mine the coal, along with Southwest Virginia. We are very proud of that.

So we appreciate Senator PORTMAN's being part of this colloquy.

Mr. PORTMAN. Well, first, I want to thank my colleague from West Virginia for holding this colloquy today. I enjoyed listening to Senator CAPITO, his colleague from West Virginia, talk about it, and I know Senator BROWN was here. Senator WARNER, from Virginia, was out there at the rally just before me. I get to follow him again.

What I said the other day when we were at the rally was that this is not a partisan issue. This is one where you have Republicans and Democrats coming together to identify a real problem: 100,000 miners having their pensions endangered and 20,000 miners potentially losing their health care at the end of this year.

That is a really urgent problem for them. He did a good job today of talking about some of these issues. I loved when Senator MANCHIN talked about the fact that this country was built on an energy economy that included coal. I will tell you, we have mined 4 billion tons of coal in Ohio. We are still a State and a country that depends on coal for our electricity. In Ohio, it is about 58 percent of us who turn on a light when we go home and get our electricity from coal.

So it is incredibly important for our economy and has built this country, in effect. It has given us in Ohio the ability, frankly, to attract a lot of industry because we have had relatively low energy prices, stable energy prices.

This is about telling these miners who for years and years have been doing the hard work, playing by the rules, doing exactly what they are supposed to do that we are not going to let them down. That is all this is about. It is just not fair to pull the plug after all of those years.

As was noted earlier, having talked to a lot of these miners, some of them

are in poor health. Part of the reason they are in poor health is that they were in the coal mines for many years. There are higher rates of cancer, for instance, among some of these miners. There are a lot of widows because some of the spouses have moved on.

This is about keeping true to our commitment and our promise. I do think that we are going to have this committee vote a week from today. I am told it was pushed back from today to a week from today because the Congressional Budget Office had not done the score yet of what this costs.

OK. That is fine. But let's be darn sure that we do not leave town to go back in October without addressing this issue. That is something I am going to insist on, as will my other colleagues that I have heard from today. I got a commitment on this. I got a commitment from the leadership, from the chairman, who I know is good to his commitments. We ought to be darn sure that we do the right thing for these miners. We had a hearing on it. We had people come forward and talk about the specifics of it.

I will tell you, I know some people have differences of opinion on the fiscal impact of this. As a person who is a fiscal conservative and proud of that, I will tell you the alternative to this is that these plans could potentially go insolvent and the PBGC, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, which is the government program that backs all these up, would then be in deep trouble because this is the second biggest multiemployer plan that could be in trouble. That could result in taxpayers having to pick up the tab in a much more significant way.

The actuaries have looked at our plan. They believe this will enable us to get through this period of time where we have a tough issue with so many companies going bankrupt. The Senator from West Virginia, Mr. MANCHIN, and I have talked about the underlying problem here, which is that there are a lot of people who are trying to do away with coal.

The so-called war on coal is leading to some of these bankruptcies of these companies and some of these pension problems. That is part of the issue, too. So the Federal Government also has played a role here. We need to recognize that as well.

I am going to thank my colleagues for coming to the floor today. I want to say that we look forward to the opportunity to debate and discuss this issue in committee a week from today to get a strong vote. Let's make it a strong bipartisan vote. Let's be sure that it comes to this floor with that kind of support and goes over to the House, and we can get something done to help those people who worked hard and played by the rules and deserve now for us in the Congress to look after them.

I thank my colleague.

I yield back.

Mr. MANCHIN. I thank my friend from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN. Let me

just say in wrapping up that there has been concern and there is talk about—you know, we are concerned about the United Mine Workers, which are all union miners, and nonunion miners. I am concerned about all miners, but the agreement, if you think back to 1946, was about anybody and everybody who worked in the mines and belonged to the United Mine Workers of America. That is the agreement that was made to stop a strike from happening, to basically get people back to work and keep the country moving forward. We ratified that again. We ratified it in 1974, 1990, 1992, 1993, and 2006. It has the handstamp of basically the President of the United States. I am saying that if we can't keep that commitment, if we will not fulfill that promise—and people think everybody is basically saying: Well, we are going to subsidize this. It is a Federal Government guarantee. It was a guarantee that the coal that was mined—that the mine operators would pay into the pension plan. Then, through bankruptcy court, that evaporated.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed 1 additional minute to finish.

Mr. ENZI. It has already exceeded the time it was supposed to go.

Mr. MANCHIN. I ask unanimous consent that I have 1 additional minute to wrap up.

Mr. ENZI. Go ahead.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Thank you, my friend.

With that being said, you can see it is bipartisan. We are asking for that. We have had a commitment. We have been gone for 9 weeks. The only thing we are asking for—before we leave on the 21st, this has to be brought out of the Finance Committee. That is what we are asking for; that is what was promised. I hope that all of my colleagues will fulfill that promise that was made to all of us and to the 16,000—to the 102,000 miners who have been depending on this.

With that, thank you all. I appreciate it very much. I hope this body will rise to the occasion to take care of the people they made the promise to, the United Mine Workers of America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I am going to return the discussion to the legislation that is actually on the floor at the moment, and that is the Water Resources Development Act. It is a necessary update for Corps projects and for water quality systems, and I applaud the chairman and the ranking member for working in a bipartisan manner to ensure its passage. However, the amendment's inclusion of direct spending for Flint and other public drinking water supply systems doesn't comply with the Budget Committee's rules of enforcement. It would provide \$100 million in drinking water State revolving funds, it would provide \$70 million in water infrastructure loans, and

it would provide an additional \$100 million for lead exposure programs. The Flint provisions will also result in \$53 million in revenue loss from increased utilization of tax-exempt bonds to finance water infrastructure projects.

The sponsors have sought to offset this new spending by prohibiting new loans after 2020 under the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing—ATVM—Program. This program was originally created in 2008 and was designated as an emergency. When Congress determines that an expenditure is an emergency, we make a conscious decision to spend above the limits of the budget. We tell the American taxpayer that these dollars are necessary to respond to sudden and unforeseen circumstances. In the case of the ATVM, Senators argued that the emergency designation was necessary to respond to the precipitous drop in auto sales caused by the 2008 credit crisis and subsequent recession.

Because advanced technology vehicles manufacturing dollars were originally provided under an emergency designation, budget rules will not allow the cancellation of future ATVM funds to be used as an offset. Phrased simply, if ATVM money didn't count going out, it cannot count coming in.

What we are talking about is dollars that might go out after 2020. In our budget process, we are going to have to refrain from trying to spend future money in the present. It just won't work.

The Government Accountability Office has recommended that Congress rescind all or part of the remaining credit subsidy due to the lack of demand for new ATVM loans, and Congress ought to do that. The remaining dollars in the ATVM Program should not be spent. That was a 2008 crisis, not a 2016 crisis and definitely not a 2020 crisis. But to use the emergency ATVM money 8 years later to increase unrelated spending represents a failure of Congress to act as good stewards of taxpayer money and is not compliant with our budget rules.

Congress must use restraint when designating expenditures as emergencies. If we don't, future lawmakers will simply designate everything as an emergency to escape the budget limits and then, years down the road, reprogram the funds for an entirely different nonemergency purpose. The Senate must be judicious with its use of emergency-designated funds or risk diluting the meaningfulness of the designation altogether.

The CBO has estimated that under Senate scoring rules, the substitute amendment increases the on-budget deficit by \$299 million over the 2016–2026 period. As such, it exceeds the 2017 enforceable Senate pay-as-you-go levels.

I do have a motion that I will be making at the appropriate time, but in order for other discussion to happen, I reserve the remainder of my time and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first, let me say that I agree with my friend from Wyoming that we must not allow bills to move forward that are not fully paid for, but this is not the case for the substitute. What we are talking about right now is the Inhofe-Boxer substitute, which would become S. 2848. But let me be clear. The substitute, S. 2848, does not add to the debt or the deficit, which CBO has verified.

The issue with this point of order involves a disagreement between the Senate Budget Committee rules and the CBO as it relates to the ATVM spending offset used. While CBO gives us credit for rescinding it, the Budget Committee does not.

The fact is that when we reported this bill out of committee in April, CBO verified that the rescission of spending authority for the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Program generates \$300 million in real savings to the U.S. Treasury. In this substitute, we are taking those funds from a program that many believe is wasteful and unnecessary and we redirect the funds toward a crisis across the Nation that involves failing and outdated critical infrastructure, which we address in this bill.

Another issue is that the Budget Committee is concerned that the substitute is not budget neutral over 5 years based on how ATVM loan authority is rescinded. However, over a 10-year budget window, CBO says we actually reduce the deficit.

The Budget Committee does not want to count the rescission of an unnecessary ATVM program as real money because of how it was authorized, but the fact remains that it is real money and will be used to offset other spending if not used now—or at some other time—for this urgent and real need.

After the 90-to-1 cloture vote yesterday to end debate on this bill and a voice vote to adopt this fully paid for substitute, I urge Members to waive this budget point of order, which I will make at the appropriate time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, parliamentary request: Is this the proper time for me to make the motion? Has everyone finished with debating?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I would mention that the Congressional Budget Office has prepared a revised cost estimate for the committee-reported S. 2848, and I have a copy of the letter here, which says that CBO estimates that the net changes in outlays and revenues that are subject to pay-as-you-go procedures would increase budget deficits by \$294 million over the 2016–2026 period. As such, the pending measure, substitute amendment No. 4979, would violate the Senate pay-go rule and increase the on-budget deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016–2026. Therefore, I raise a point of order

against this measure pursuant to section 201(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of amendment No. 4979, as amended, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I yield back all time from our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 85, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 139 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Franken	Nelson
Baldwin	Gardner	Paul
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoehn	Sanders
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cassidy	Lankford	Stabenow
Cochran	Leahy	Sullivan
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Toomey
Cotton	McCaskill	Udall
Crapo	McConnell	Vitter
Cruz	Menendez	Warner
Daines	Merkley	Warren
Donnelly	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Fischer	Murray	

NAYS—12

Barrasso	Corker	Flake
Coats	Enzi	Isakson

Lee Sasse Sessions
Perdue Scott Tillis

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94,
nays 3, as follows:

Senator MIKE ROUNDS, the former Governor of South Dakota. He is a great businessman, and he resides in South Dakota, which is also the home of Ellsworth Air Force Base.

NOT VOTING—3

[Rollcall Vote No. 140 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Ayotte Kaine Kirk
The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 85, the nays are 12. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to and the point of order falls.

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Baldwin	Franken	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Blunt	Grassley	Reid
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Boxer	Heitkamp	Rounds
Brown	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hirono	Sanders
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	King	Shaheen
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Shelby
Coats	Lankford	Stabenow
Cochran	Leahy	Sullivan
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Thune
Corker	McCain	Tillis
Cornyn	McCaskill	Toomey
Cotton	McConnell	Udall
Crapo	Menendez	Vitter
Cruz	Merkley	Warner
Daines	Mikulski	Warren
Donnelly	Moran	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murkowski	Wicker
Enzi	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Murray	
Feinstein	Nelson	

Senator CORY GARDNER of Colorado serves on the Foreign Relations Committee. I served with CORY in the U.S. House. Of course, Colorado is proudly home to the U.S. Air Force Academy as well as NORTHCOM and NORAD.

VOICE ON AMENDMENT NO. 4979, AS AMENDED
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on amendment No. 4979, as amended, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. MCCONNELL, for the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE.

Senator DAVID PERDUE of Georgia. Senator PERDUE has over 40 years of business experience, including being a CEO. Of course, Georgia is home to many military operations but is the home of Fort Benning as well.

Is there further debate?
Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as amended.

Senator SHELLEY CAPITO of West Virginia, the first woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate from West Virginia. I also served with SHELLEY in the U.S. House. West Virginia is proudly the home of McLaughlin Air National Guard Base.

The amendment (No. 4979), as amended, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 523, S. 2848, a bill 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, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn, Orrin G. Hatch, Shelley Moore Capito, Thom Tillis, Dan Sullivan, Mike Rounds, Marco Rubio, Cory Gardner, Dean Heller, Pat Roberts, David Vitter, Roy Blunt, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Steve Daines.

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 Calendar No. 523, S. 2848, a bill 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, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

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 New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

NAYS—3

Flake	Lee	Sasse
Ayotte	Kaine	Kirk

NOT VOTING—3

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 3.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Montana.
Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my freshmen colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, just yesterday I joined a colloquy with my freshmen Republican Members on the importance of our national security, the importance of our troops, the importance of the threats that are currently facing our Nation. I was honored to be on the floor with my fellow freshmen Members, including Senators ROUNDS, CAPITO, SULLIVAN, LANKFORD, and GARDNER. Today, Senators ERNST and PERDUE will also join us.

I wish to take this opportunity to talk about the Republican freshmen class and describe who we are. We were all elected just about 2 years ago, in the fall of 2014. While each one does much more than these brief descriptions, I thought it might be important to share this: Senator JONI ERNST from Iowa is a retired lieutenant colonel in the Army National Guard, where Iowa, of course, is home to Camp Dodge National Guard Base. Senator ERNST was the first woman to serve in the U.S. Senate as well as see combat. Senator DAN SULLIVAN of Alaska, lieutenant colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Senator SULLIVAN is a marine. My dad is also a marine. Of course, Alaska is home to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

We are all new to the Senate, and I can tell you we are scratching our heads trying to understand why this institution is not funding the Department of Defense. Here are the facts: The Department of Defense appropriations passed the U.S. House of Representatives in June on a bipartisan vote of 282 to 138. Forty-eight Democrats were part of that vote in the affirmative. I sit on the Appropriations Committee of the U.S. Senate. We passed the Defense appropriations bill out of the Appropriations Committee on May 26. There are 16 Republicans and 14 Democrats on that committee, for a total of 30, and it passed 30 to 0. It was a shutout. Not one member on either side of the aisle opposed funding the Defense appropriations bill.

I ask my colleagues, what has changed? The other side has filibustered our troops a total of six times in the last year and a half.

Senator CAPITO raised a very good and simple question yesterday: Why? This past Friday, I visited Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, MT, home of 4,000 airmen in my home State, and I thought the same thing. Here we are having a 9/11 remembrance ceremony there in the beautiful chapel on Malmstrom Air Force Base. Here we are in the middle of Malmstrom Air Force Base that protects us and has responsibilities for 147 intercontinental ballistic missiles. Why can't my colleagues on the other side of the aisle vote to support the troops who keep us safe?

I can tell my colleagues one thing for certain. The world is a very dangerous place, and the defense of our country

relies on properly and promptly funding the Department of Defense. Usually, the Defense appropriations is one of the easiest appropriations to get passed. It is the layup, if you will, that this body can do. I can tell my colleagues one thing. Our enemies aren't waiting around for Democrats to drop their political games. Why can't they support a bill that was voted out of committee unanimously on a bipartisan basis? Why can't they work with us to pass this very important bill that would provide the necessary funding for our military? What has changed?

I think I might have figured it out, and it is not a good answer. It is about political credit. The other side does not want to fund our military because they don't want the Republicans to take credit for funding our troops. That can't be, can it? I hope this body, the U.S. Senate—the great deliberative body of Congress—has not become a place where we hold up a noncontroversial bill that funds our troops because one side is playing politics.

I am very honored to have Senator JONI ERNST of Iowa join me. Senator ERNST is a great American. Senator ERNST is an officer, retired from the U.S. military; the first woman who has served in both the U.S. Senate and has been in combat.

It is an honor to stand with Senator ERNST on behalf of our troops, and I am looking forward to her comments.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I thank the Senator very much. It is an honor to join my freshmen colleagues on the floor of the U.S. Senate to talk about our failing national security strategy.

This past weekend, we all bowed our heads in remembrance of the nearly 3,000 brave souls we lost on September 11, 2001. The response to those horrific attacks was not as our Islamic extremist enemies had hoped. America did not falter. We bonded together and we fought back. We fought back.

The response to 9/11 was a comprehensive one, with an object as clear as its name—the global war on terror. From places like Sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan, and the Philippines, U.S. troops operating under Operation Enduring Freedom showed those responsible for 9/11 the true power of the United States of America. From combat operations in Somalia to advising missions in South America, there has long been a global and a comprehensive strategy to our response to 9/11. There was American leadership.

Today, the administration has dismantled that global strategy. There is no leadership. Their failure to develop a strategy in 2011 for the troop withdrawal in Iraq and their continued fight for lower troop numbers in Afghanistan, those are just a couple of examples that are the tip of the iceberg.

One of the most alarming things in this administration—one of the most alarming things they have done is not only ignore threats but also fuel those threats, just as they did with the Iran

nuclear deal. The nuclear deal that this administration brokered with Iran is putting taxpayer dollars into the pockets of the largest State sponsor of terrorism.

Let's look at some of the recent headlines that are centered on Iran.

CNN: "Iran continues to seek illicit nuclear technology." That is from CNN.

Reuters: "Iran test-fired ballistic missiles," which is against international law.

The Wall Street Journal: "Iran begins construction on second nuclear power plant."

The New York Times: "Russia sends bombers to Syria using base in Iran."

And how about this alarming headline from the Wall Street Journal: "The U.S. sent another \$1.3 billion to Iran after hostages were released."

Yet we continue to allow this. We are allowing this.

Just last weekend, Iran threatened to shoot down our Navy aircraft in the region. These are our men and women, and Iran is threatening to shoot them down. What is next, folks? These actions will only continue because this administration yields to their demands. From the start, I have spoken out against this deal with Iran, which not only threatens our safety but the safety of our ally Israel. It threatens us here at home as well.

As we remembered the victims of 9/11 this past weekend, I was reminded of Iran's link to Al Qaeda, the ones who carried out that horrific attack on our homeland 15 years ago. In 2011, the Treasury Department officially accused Iran. This is our Treasury Department. They accused Iran, as the Wall Street Journal report put it, "of forging an alliance with Al Qaeda in a pact that allows the terrorist group to use Iranian soil as a transit point for moving money, arms, and fighters to its bases in Pakistan and Afghanistan."

It is astounding that despite all of this, we continue to broker a deal with Iran. Before more of these dangerous acts continue, we should scrap this ill-advised deal and hold Iran accountable for all of their actions.

I say to Senator DAINES, I am very, very proud that my Republican colleagues are joining me here on the floor today to recognize that our country needs leadership. We need leadership. I look forward to the thoughts from my friend on the Armed Services Committee, the Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. DAINES. I say thank you to Senator ERNST. As I listened to Senator ERNST, I was struck by the fact that here to my right I have Lieutenant Colonel ERNST, who proudly served in the Iowa Army National Guard, and to my left I have Lieutenant Colonel DAN SULLIVAN, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, the Senator from Alaska.

So it is really an honor to be here between veterans who are speaking on behalf of our veterans about what is

going on here in Washington and how broken it is. It is my honor now to introduce Senator MIKE ROUNDS. MIKE was the Governor of South Dakota. So he had the Guard reporting to him as the Governor. Montana and South Dakota share a fence line, as we say, Senator ROUNDS. So my good friend and my neighbor from South Dakota, Senator ROUNDS, thanks for joining us.

Mr. ROUNDS. First of all, let me just thank you for putting together this discussion today. Let me thank both the Senator from Alaska and the Senator from Iowa for their service to our country, although the Senator from Iowa is clearly too young to have retired already.

I did have the opportunity and the true privilege of serving as the Governor of South Dakota and of working with a number of members of the National Guard—in fact, not only Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, SD, but also the 114th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard, out of Sioux Falls. Both have participated in the defense of our country time and again.

Today, let me just add a little bit of my thoughts in terms of what is going on here in the Senate today. I speak of it not in terms of partisan issues but rather as statements of fact and finding a way to identify them and finding ways in which we can actually take our system, make it better than what it is today, and try to discover what it is that makes this system down here so difficult to work through in times in which we should find solid support for such items as a Defense appropriations bill.

South Dakotans have heard me say time and again that the No. 1 responsibility of the Federal Government is the defense of our country. Unless that responsibility is fulfilled, our freedoms are in jeopardy. Yet, six times—six times—this body has been blocked by Senate Democrats from considering legislation to fund the Department of Defense. That is funding necessary for our troops to accomplish their missions.

It sounds partisan, but it is simply a fact. Democrats have made a conscious decision to block even debate of this appropriations bill on the floor of the Senate. Yet, as we noted yesterday during our colloquy yesterday, the Defense appropriations bill is not a partisan bill. In fact, it passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously. There was not a single vote against it—Democrat and Republican alike sending it out, saying it is a good bill.

It is largely free of budget gimmicks, and it is in line with the budget that we agreed to last December. I have said since taking office that we must get back to what we call regular order when it comes to the budget process, by passing not only the Defense appropriations bill, but I think we should be passing all of the appropriations bills one by one—not as one single huge bill but as 12 separate appropriations bills

in which we get the opportunity, with a 60-vote agreement, to debate the merits of each bill separately on the floor.

Leader McCONNELL, to his credit, set aside 12 separate weeks to bring those bills down in order to accomplish this. We have not gotten the job done. It is an important tool, I think. If we were to go through these 12 bills, it is the one way in which we can actually fine-tune part of the Federal budget.

But I guess there is another issue that should be discussed as well. Even if we did all 12 bills in the Senate—or in the House—we would be talking only about funding defense and nondefense discretionary funding—nothing about the mandatory payments that our Federal Government is expected to put together.

Right now, even if we pass all 12 bills, the only part of the budget that we talk about is \$1.15 trillion out of a \$4 trillion national budget on an annual basis. How do you fix a \$550 billion deficit if all you are going to talk about is 25 percent of the budget in the first place?

Yet what we are talking about is trying to balance that budget—half of which goes to defense—on the backs of the young men and women who stand up for our country. That is not right, yet, that is what sequestration does.

Now, all of my colleagues on the floor of the Senate today with me, in addition to many of the others—both Republican and Democrat—are united in an effort to try to attack this crisis. You see, here is the deal. The Congressional Budget Office has already projected that within 10 years, 99 percent of all of the Federal revenue coming in—gas tax money, personal income tax money, corporate income tax money—is going to go back out in two categories: interest on the Federal debt and mandatory payments on mandatory programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

There will be nothing left for defense, nothing left for roads and bridges, nothing left for research, nothing left for education. That crisis, which occurs in 10 years, is not a crisis then; it is a crisis now. How do we address that if we can't even start with the one item that we all seem to agree on, and that is funding our troops? That is the reason why we are here today.

We need to start someplace. So as freshmen, we are down here to say enough is enough. We want to change the way that the Senate operates. We are prepared to stand down here and to tell everybody else that there is a better way to do it. Back in South Dakota, when you send off young men who are in the National Guard, you send them off and you wish them the best. You really mean it. Their moms and their dads are there. You tell them that you will do everything you can to see that they come home safe.

We have that same obligation here in the Senate. You see, I don't want our forces to go to war and have it be a fair fight. What I want is for our forces to

go to war with absolute certainty that they will crush whoever is in the way, that they will come in with the best strategic plan, that they will come in with the best intelligence, with the best equipment, and with all of the necessary supplies that they need.

They put their lives on the line. We should not be sitting here today trying to leverage—Republicans or Democrats—what we think is more important, rather than simply agreeing as Americans that this is the most important thing that we do. We defend our country. That is what we get sent here for in the first place. That is what we all committed to do.

Yet we find ourselves today in a position where, once again and for six times, our friends on the other side of the aisle have decided it is politically expedient to get other things done, that they are going to withhold what has been in the past a bipartisan agreement to fund our troops on a regular basis and in a timely fashion. This has to stop.

If we are going to talk about the bigger picture of fixing these budgets and talk about all of the other items that should be voted on every single year—not just the defense and nondefense discretionary items but the mandatory payments as well—we ought to at least start with something that we all agree on.

Either side, Republicans or Democrats, will say that they care about our troops. I believe them. But let's put that into action. Let's actually step forward before we leave on this break and make darn sure that our troops are taken care of and that it is no longer a partisan issue or being held as a chit to try to get something else done within the Senate.

With that, I appreciate the fact that the Senator put this together. Once again, thank you to our other Members who are members of the Armed Services Committee. I am very, very proud to be a part of this very, very special body, but it is time we got back to work and that we recognize that the crisis 10 years from now should be addressed now and not in 10 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this issue. I look forward to listening to my other colleagues today as well. Thank you.

Mr. DAINES. I say to Senator ROUNDS, thank you.

We have heard from a lieutenant colonel, Senator ERNST. We have heard from a former Governor, Senator ROUNDS.

I say to Senator ROUNDS, I could see the passion. This is not just in our head, it is in our heart. You looked in the eyes of the troops. You have wished them the very best as they deployed—going into harm's way to protect our freedoms in this country—as the Governor of South Dakota. I am honored to stand here today with you and to push this institution to fulfill its duty on behalf of our men and women who serve in the Armed Forces and are performing their duty.

Speaking of executive leadership, I am honored now to ask Senator PERDUE of Georgia to share his thoughts on this. Senator PERDUE served 40 years in the private sector, rising to the highest level in the corporate world, to CEO. He brings that business experience, that focus on results, that accountability that Washington, DC, so desperately needs.

Senator PERDUE has the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, one of the two submarine bases that support the sea leg of our nuclear triad. In Montana, we have the ICBMs, the land leg. Senator PERDUE has the sea leg, one of the three legs of that very important deterrent that we have, a nuclear deterrent.

I say to Senator PERDUE, thank you for joining us today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. I say to Senator DAINES, I am honored to be here with the other freshmen. I am humbled by the emotion that I have heard here in the last half hour. I am humbled to be a part of this freshman class. By the way, we all ran on this issue. We ran on the fact that government was not functioning, that it was dysfunctional. What we see today and why we are here on the floor of the Senate today is to talk about that dysfunction.

Let me just share a few highlights of what I have seen in the press in the last few weeks:

“Obama administration again underestimates Islamic State as Afghan affiliate grows into threat.”

“DC transit police officer charged with aiding ISIS.”

“ISIS increasingly using women and children to terrorize France.”

“Five US troops wounded in combat with ISIS in Afghanistan.”

“Vladimir Putin's rumblings raise new fears of Ukraine conflict.”

“Russia holds biggest military drill yet in Crimea.”

“Iran escalates high seas harassment of US Navy.”

“Iran threatens to destroy Israel with 100,000 missiles.”

“North Korea conducts fifth nuclear test, claims it has made warheads with ‘higher strike power.’”

“South Korea prepares for ‘worst case scenario’ with North Korea.”

These are just a few samples of headlines in the last few weeks alone. What we see right now going on in the Senate is gridlock—the gridlock that is creating the backlash that we are seeing in the Presidential race right now.

People back home know Washington is dysfunctional and that it is not working. But right now we have a situation where the Democrats are blocking these Defense appropriations. Yet again, the Senate has reentered this period of dysfunction. The world is more dangerous than it has been at any time in my lifetime.

I am a product of the nuclear age, the Cold War. I grew up in a military town, and at one point we had B-52s there. I

remember the Cuban missile crisis, where KC-135s, B-52s, and C-141s were flying out of there in support of the blockade over Cuba. Yet, today I believe the world is more dangerous than it has ever been.

Right now we face a global security crisis. I believe it is on several levels.

First, there is the rise of aggressiveness in Russia and China, partly caused by our own intransigence, by creating power vacuums around the world and encouraging misbehavior.

Second, right now I believe ISIS is a product of our own creation in many ways. The early removal of our troops from Iraq created a vacuum into which ISIS has grown. They needed territory to validate their caliphate, and they got that.

We now face nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea.

We have a cyber war going on today. I personally believe we have been invaded, which means that today we are at war with nation states around the world. Right now, two brigades are being stood up in my home State, in Augusta, GA, Fort Gordon. Two cyber warrior brigades are being stood up right now—2 of 31 brigades in our U.S. Army. I am proud of those people. They are going to stand up to this threat, but it is real.

Lastly, we have an arms race in space that nobody is talking about.

In my lifetime, I have never seen the symmetric threats and the asymmetric threats that we face in our country today. Ensuring the safety of our men and women in uniform—those who protect our freedom around the world—should never be open to political games, least of all now in the face of all these myriad threats, but obviously Senate Democrats in this body don't feel that way.

Since I came to the Senate, our colleagues across the aisle—many friends—have blocked funding for our military six times. Six times in my tenure here, Democratic Members of this body have put their partisan games before funding in support of our troops, and that is after the appropriations—as you just heard, 30 to 0—14 Democrats and 16 Republicans got together in a room, argued their differences, and came to a bipartisan agreement. Isn't that what we were sent here to do? That is what they did. They passed this bill in committee. There is no debate here; everybody in this body wants this bill. I just don't understand why they are now holding it hostage for other partisan political games they are playing right now.

One of only 6 reasons 13 Colonies came together in the first place was to provide for the national defense. Yet, some 200 years later, in the midst of a global security crisis, Congress can't even get that done. We can't fund our government and fund our military without drama. What message does this send to our men and women in uniform around the world? Can you imagine? They can't even depend on us here

in this body to fund the needs they have every day. This is a total breakdown in the system.

Democrats are endangering our men and women in uniform, and they are not doing their job. I am outraged by this. Georgians back home are outraged. People around the country are outraged by this. Is anyone surprised that less than 20 percent of Americans trust the Federal Government? I am not surprised at all.

As I have said before, Democrats claim they want to support our military. They tell us all their heart-wrenching stories. Some of them have children in uniform. They call for action, and yet they are the ones blocking this bill and blocking us from debating this on the floor of the Senate. I don't understand that.

At a time when we should be united in the face of global threats, the brinksmanship and gridlock permeating in this body are quite simply disgraceful.

America must lead again. It must lead in the world. I have traveled the world a lot, as the Presiding Officer has, in the last year and a half, and the No. 1 request I get from heads of state we talk with is America needs to lead again. They are not asking for us to be the police anymore; they just need us to lead to common solutions against these same threats that threaten their countries just as they threaten ours.

We have to lead again, but to do that, we have to have a strong foreign policy. To have a strong foreign policy, we have to have a strong defense. To have a strong defense, we have to have a strong economy. We know about the debt crisis. We can't fix our military without having a strong economy and solving this debt crisis.

One of the biggest complaints I hear when we are doing continuing resolutions—and that is what we do when we don't do our job, by the way—is that it really hurts the military's ability to plan and to train. They can't look forward, they are so worried about getting funding today. And I have seen those shortfalls around the world, as the Presiding Officer has. That is what it has come to.

My colleagues across the aisle believe their political gain in this Presidential election season is more important than our men and women in uniform and more important than protecting our country. This is not a partisan comment, this is fact.

I am an outsider of this process, and I have to tell you that I feel the same outrage the people back home feel. We can no longer take our security for granted, we can no longer take our military for granted, and we can no longer take our men and women in uniform for granted.

I firmly believe our Founders would be outraged by what is going on right now. Senator William Pew was the very first person in 1789 who stood in my seat right here. In the Senate room just down the hall, William Pew—iron-

ic as it is, a direct descendent of his was on my staff when I ran for this office. But I think that man would be absolutely apoplectic about us not funding our military. Can you imagine somebody who put their life on the line back then looking at what we are doing right now, the nonsense we have going on?

The stakes are too high for this nonsense to continue. Democrats must drop this obstructionism. It is time for Washington to fund our military, pass the Defense appropriations bill, and move on to fund our government.

Senator DAINES, I can't thank you enough for arranging this colloquy today and for what we did yesterday.

I know Senator SULLIVAN is on the floor to speak. His leadership in this regard has been very encouraging to me as well.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DAINES. I say to Senator PERDUE, thank you. Your clear eyes in bringing that clear-headed perspective and 40 years of experience in the private sector are so badly needed here. I am grateful for your love for our country and your experience here and fighting on behalf of our veterans in Washington, DC.

The Senator mentioned that the world is more dangerous than it has ever been before. I was flying back home to Montana late Thursday night, flying Delta Air Lines through Minneapolis back to Great Falls, MT, to be at Malmstrom Air Force Base, with the airmen there, on Friday. We often have Wi-Fi on planes today. I was watching my Twitter feed, and I saw the reports of the 5.0 quake that was reported in North Korea because they had conducted their fifth test—their most powerful test yet of an atomic bomb.

Six weeks ago I was in Israel. We talked about Iran, spoke about nuclear threats and existential threats to the world. We spoke to the Israeli leadership, to Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israeli intelligence, about the threat from Iran. We crawled in the terror tunnels that came out of Gaza that Hamas had built—Hamas largely funded by Iran. We stood on the northern border of Israel staring into Lebanon at 100,000-plus rockets from Hezbollah pointed at Israel today that are primarily funded by Iran.

I agree with Senator PERDUE—the world is more dangerous today than it was on September 11, 2001, when you look at the threats and, as he pointed out, the cyber threats as well.

I am very privileged and honored to stand with Senator DAN SULLIVAN of Alaska. My father is a marine. He served with the 58th Rifle Company out of Billings, MT. To have a lieutenant colonel of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, Lieutenant Colonel SULLIVAN—Senator SULLIVAN, it is an honor to have you with us here today. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I say to Senator DAINES, I again thank you for your

leadership. All of my colleagues, the Presiding Officer, you, the other colleagues we have seen on the floor—your leadership has been outstanding, my good friend from Montana.

It begs the question. Why have we, the Republican freshman class—really for weeks, we have all been coming to the Senate floor to talk about what is happening. We have been coming to the Senate floor to counter the minority leader's decision to filibuster our troops, as Senator ROUNDS mentioned, six times. There is no other bill in the Senate, since we have become Senators, that the minority leader wants to focus on and filibuster than the bill that funds our troops. It is pretty remarkable. I think it is a disgrace.

So we are here because we want to bring attention to this issue. What is happening here? Sometimes it can be confusing.

We have the press that sits above the Presiding Officer's chair, and they watch what is going on. We want them to report this. We want the American people to know what is happening here because it doesn't matter where you are from, what State you are in, what party you are affiliated with in terms of politics, if you knew your Senator from your State was filibustering the spending that supports our troops when they are in combat all around the world right now, you would probably be very disappointed. You would think it was a story the press would want to write about, but they haven't yet, but we are trying because it is a very important issue. I believe the American people really care about this issue. That is why we are here.

I will tell you another reason why we are on the floor, why we have spent hours and weeks coming to this floor and talking about this issue, because there is someone else who cares about this issue—the men and women in the U.S. military. They really care about this issue.

I know there is this kind of sense in the Senate—when these votes are taken late at night and there are filibusters and procedural issues, I think a lot of my colleagues think that the troops don't know what is going on, that somehow they don't know the minority leader of the Senate and his colleagues have filibustered the funding for their mission and their welfare and their training six times in the last year and a half. But the troops do know that. They know it. They read about it. I guarantee you they are concerned about it. I think in some ways they think it is demoralizing, as Senator PERDUE mentioned. It doesn't give the military leadership the chance to plan long term.

Another reason we are on the floor—you know it—is we need to let our troops know we have their back. There might be somebody in this body who thinks filibustering spending for our troops six times is a policy they can be supportive of. Again, I don't know why the minority leader is doing this. I cer-

tainly don't know why my colleagues on the other side are blindly following him. But we need to be on the floor to let the troops know, when they watch this, when they hear about this and it confuses them, that we have their back. We don't think this is appropriate.

Yesterday when a number of us were on the floor, we talked about what we are asking—what the President, the Secretary of Defense, and our generals are asking our men and women in uniform to do. They are all over the world keeping us safe—in Iraq, in Syria, in the South China Sea, in Europe. Many of the initiatives undertaken by the President in terms of our troops in these places—many of us are supportive of them, but this is a lot that they are responsible for. They are doing so much. You come back to this body, what is this body doing? Filibustering spending for our troops. They are certainly doing their job; it is time the minority leader let us do our job to fund them.

Recently, of all the different things they are supposed to be doing, we learned about something new that they might be doing. In a deal recently negotiated by Secretary Kerry, the men and women in the U.S. military might possibly soon be conducting joint airstrikes and sharing intelligence with the Russians. There was a New York Times article today that makes it clear that our military leaders are very, very skeptical of this deal. So it is another thing we might be asking them to do—share intelligence and conduct joint operations with a country we shouldn't be trusting, particularly in terms of military terms.

I will quote from the New York Times today. The result of this deal potentially—and by the way, the State Department has not yet allowed us to see the terms of it. We haven't been able to see it. It kind of sounds like that other deal Secretary Kerry negotiated, the Iran nuclear deal.

This is from the New York Times:

The result is that at a time when the United States and Russia are at their most combative posture since the end of the Cold War, the American military is suddenly being told that it may, in a week, have to start sharing intelligence with one of its biggest adversaries to jointly target Islamic State and Nusra Front forces in Syria.

This is from Gen. Philip Breedlove, the recent NATO Commander, who is very well-respected and who just stepped down.

I remain skeptical about anything to do with the Russians. There are a lot of concerns about putting us out there with this kind of agreement.

So that is again what we might be asking our military to do soon, yet we are not going to fund them.

The Washington Post today, in an editorial about this deal—titled “Either way, Putin wins”—made it clear this is a deal that is not in our interest. Yet that is what our military might be asked to do. But we will not

fund them, and the minority leader continues to filibuster.

Mr. President, one of the things we have been asking of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle is to come down here and explain why they are doing this—why, for weeks—six times in a year, year and a half. Why?

To the credit of the Senator from Illinois, yesterday he actually did come down. Senator DURBIN did. He kind of had to because we made a unanimous consent request to move this funding forward, so somebody actually had to come down and say no and do a little explaining. But at least he did. For those who saw it, the explanation fell way short. It was kind of DC mumbo jumbo, process bureaucratese. It was not convincing at all—at all. So it would be good if they could come down and explain it a little better than the Senator from Illinois did. But at least he gave it a shot.

Here is what we know. We need to fund our troops now. They are working so hard for us. It is the right thing to do. The American people want it, our troops need it, and it is our solemn responsibility and our duty in the Senate.

I thank Senator DAINES again for his leadership on this. This is a critically important issue, regardless of whether the media picks it up. We are going to continue to highlight it because it is an outrage that the No. 1 bill filibustered by the minority leader for the last year and a half in the Senate is the bill to fund our troops. It is an outrage.

I thank my colleague again for his leadership.

Mr. DAINES. I thank Senator SULLIVAN. I am not sure whether to call him Senator SULLIVAN or United States Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel SULLIVAN, but his humility as a soldier, as someone who served in the United States Marine Corps leads me to brag about him. He is bringing the voice of the troops, as he is one—a reservist—to the floor of the Senate. He is a voice for those whose voices are not being heard right now. We are making that clear today, and I thank him again for bringing that voice to the floor.

I also think about Senator SULLIVAN when he talks about Russia. It is one thing being a Montanan and speaking about Russia, but when you are an Alaskan speaking about Russia—well, Alaska is on the doorstep of a resurgent Russia. I know this threat is particularly meaningful to him as an Alaskan, and he is proud of the men and women from Alaska who serve regarding that threat.

I am now looking forward to hearing from Senator GARDNER. I think we are going to have Senator SULLIVAN preside over the Senate so Senator GARDNER can come and share his thoughts.

Senator GARDNER is a dear friend. He also resides in a Rocky Mountain State. He is from Colorado, and I am from Montana. We share a love of the West and our beautiful States. I have

been so impressed with Senator GARDNER's leadership as a freshman here in Washington, DC. We served together in the House, and then we came to the Senate. Senator GARDNER has been a leader on the threat of North Korea and helped to pass a bill with strong bipartisan support as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee.

I am grateful for his leadership and what he is doing for our country in coming to the floor today and speaking on behalf of our troops. I thank him.

(Mr. SULLIVAN assumed the Chair.)

Mr. GARDNER. I thank Senator DAINES for organizing this discussion again today, as he did the discussion we had yesterday. And I thank our colleague from Alaska for his leadership on this matter for a number of weeks as we have discussed why this funding bill for our troops, which pays our troops, gives our troops a pay raise, and is critical mission support, is being filibustered. Six times it has been blocked by a partisan minority that actually supported this measure out of the Committee on Appropriations unanimously.

I thank my colleague for bringing attention to this very important discussion as we end the fiscal year and continue providing the men and women in uniform with the resources they need to defend themselves, protect themselves, and defend this Nation's homeland.

This is incredibly important, not just for Colorado. Yes, Colorado is home to 49,000 Guard and Reserve members and uniformed military members. It is home to a number of defense installations across the front range of Colorado.

My colleague mentioned the important part of the triad that is in Montana. We also share a number of those ICBMs located in Eastern Colorado—a critical part of that triad, which is our deterrent, our efforts to make sure we have the ability to address threats to this Nation. The Senator from Montana mentioned the detonation of a nuclear weapon by Kim Jong Un. He wants nothing more than the ability to place a miniaturized warhead on top of a missile and use it against the United States. These are real threats. These are not made-up problems. These aren't just hypothetical issues. These are real threats.

We heard on the floor today from Lt. Col. DAN SULLIVAN, who has served this Nation in the armed forces; we heard from LTC JONI ERNST, who served this Nation; we heard from Governor ROUNDS, his unique perspective; and we have heard over the last couple of days and weeks from a number of people with a variety of backgrounds about the need to fund our troops and to pass this bill. We heard from a Governor who had called up members of the South Dakota National Guard and who has gone to ceremonies for National Guard members who are going overseas—Active Duty—and who has gone to funerals of people in South Dakota

whom they lost. So this is a very important debate we are having right now.

There seems to be a key question that is not being asked, and that key question stems from that 30-to-0 vote out of the Committee on Appropriations for this bill, with Republicans and Democrats alike voting for this bill. There were 30 people who voted for this bill. There was no one in opposition. Yet we cannot get this bill to the floor. There is a partisan obstruction, a tactic known as the filibuster, that is being employed against it to stop this from even being debated. We are not talking about being amended; it is not even being debated because they are afraid, for whatever reason, to bring this bill to the floor.

I guess the people of this country ought to be asking every Member of this Chamber—Members on the Democratic side of the aisle and Members on the Republican side of the aisle, anybody: Do you oppose this bill? It is a simple question that ought to be asked of every Member of this body: Do you oppose the Defense appropriations bill? Give the number of the bill.

The fact is, this bill passed 30 to 0 out of the Committee on Appropriations. When we asked for unanimous consent yesterday to move to the debate of the bill, we heard a glowing endorsement of the bill. We heard our colleagues on the other side of the aisle state how supportive they were of this legislation and the policies it contained. That is why they voted for the bill. So the question is, Do they oppose the bill? Let's get people in the Senate on record. Do they oppose the bill?

Right now, we know of no one who opposes the bill. So the next question ought to be: Why are you blocking it? If they do not oppose the bill—if people don't oppose the bill—then why are they blocking it? The answer clearly isn't policy because they support the policy. The answer isn't funding because they support the funding. The answer isn't that they oppose it because it funds the troops because they support funding the troops. So there must be another reason, right? Well, the reason is simply politics at its worst. The reason is a leadership decision to obstruct this bill—to obstruct the passage of legislation that would fund our troops.

Again, in the objection to our unanimous consent request to proceed to this bill, we heard from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are voting to obstruct the bill that, look, they agree with the bill. They agree with it. They agree with it. We just need different timing, we should wait until all the other bills are in place, or we should do it as one big package—basically ceding to this body that we should never do stand-alone appropriations bills, that we have to do everything as one big, massive chunk of omnibus appropriations or continuing resolutions.

You know, I don't think I could get away with this at home. If I told our

12-year-old daughter at home that she needs to take the trash out, and her response to me is: Look, I agree with you. I agree the trash should be taken out. I agree that trash can is too full. But then she doesn't do it. That is a problem. That doesn't tell me she agrees the trash can is too full. That tells me she agrees to ignore the wishes of her dad—in that case. And that is the same analogy that can be used here.

Mow the lawn. Our son is a little too young for that. If my wife told me to go out and mow the lawn, and I said: You know what, I agree. The grass is too long. It needs to be mowed. I agree with you. But if the lawn never gets mowed, all my neighbors in that whole town know the grass is too tall and that I didn't do my job.

That is the same thing that is happening in the Senate. People can say they agree all they want with the funding for this bill, but when they vote to obstruct it, when they vote to shoot it down, when they fail to vote to bring it up for debate, I guess the only way you can consider that is that it is in opposition to the efforts to fund our troops.

Filibustering the Defense appropriations bill endangers our military's ability to respond to the threats they face every day, and they face significant threats. Let's just take a look at Iran alone. We only need to look at the recent uptick in unsafe encounters that have been widely reported in newspapers around the country between American sailors in the Persian Gulf and the Iranian Guard vessels in the Persian Gulf to see what happens when our enemies sense weakness.

In 2016, there have been 31 unsafe encounters between the U.S. Navy and Iranian vessels in the Persian Gulf. In all of 2015—the entire year—there were only 25 unsafe encounters in the Persian Gulf. Yet this year, in August and September, we have seen 31, far outnumbering what we saw in the entirety of last year.

Less than 2 weeks ago, seven Iranian fast attack boats were involved in an unsafe encounter with the USS *Firebolt*, with one Iranian craft coming to a stop in front of the American ship. That provocative maneuver brought the Iranian boat within 100 yards of the *Firebolt*, a coastal patrol boat that carries a crew of about 30. This was unsafe, unprofessional, and could have led to a collision.

Less than 3 weeks ago, the USS *Squall* had to fire three warning shots. They fired three warning shots when an Iranian Guard vessel came within 200 yards of it. GEN Joseph Votel, the Commander of the United States Central Command, has said the attacks are "concerning," and he went on to say that he believes the "unsafe, unprofessional" behavior is an attempt by Iran to "exert their influence and authority in the region."

So while this administration is paying Iran billions of dollars—while they are giving that money, billions of dollars, to Iran, the same country that

held American sailors hostage and that is performing unsafe, provocative maneuvers in the Persian Gulf—this body, the Senate, as a result of a partisan minority, is holding the DOD appropriations bill hostage. They are denying critical funds to those American sailors at the same time we are giving money to the army, the navy of those who would hold our own sailors hostage. They are doing this through the money—the billions of dollars—being given to the Iranian regime.

Now remember, this bill isn't a partisan product. This bill is the result of extreme bipartisan collaboration—input from leaders of the Department of Defense, strategists, people who know what they are talking about, and people on the Committee on Armed Services, such as the Presiding Officer of the Senate who served in the Armed Forces. This is a product that had 30 people voting for it—Republicans and Democrats. It is a bipartisan product, yet it is being blocked every time we try to bring the bill up.

If the Presiding Officer were on the floor with us now, I would ask him if he thinks that is a rational reason he could explain to the men and women in his unit. Could he say: Look, the Senate has said they support the bill, but they refuse to pass the bill. Would they say: OK. I understand. I get that. That is not the reaction he would receive.

When we look at the needs of the commanders to have certainty in their funding, it is real. They need passage of this bill. We can't wait until the last minute and cobble it together, put it together with a bunch of other bills, fund it for a couple of weeks and then do it again and again and again in an uncertain manner.

Secretary James said a full-year continuing resolution could underfund the Air Force by nearly \$1.3 billion and would cause many issues to their systems.

Delaying the annual appropriations bill could limit our ability to take our fight to the enemies because the enemies are certainly taking their fight to us. Production of the Joint Direct Attack Munition—the JDAM—currently being used in the fight against ISIL would be cut in the short term under a continuing resolution. Upgrades could be cut to the fleets of the MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aircraft, C-130 cargo transports, and both B-52 and B-2 bombers. Yet that is what our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are insisting by blocking this bipartisan legislation.

So to my colleague from Montana and the Presiding Officer from Alaska, I thank them for continuing to shine a light on this.

I hope the American people will ask this question to all of us: Do you support this bill? If you do, why do you refuse to pass the bill?

It is a simple question, and it is a simple answer. Politics don't cut it. The American people deserve results.

So I thank the Senator from Montana for his leadership on this. It is an

honor to serve with him as we continue to highlight this failure of the Senate to move beyond petty partisan politics.

Mr. DAINES. I thank Senator GARDNER for those great thoughts.

This struck me: What if the Members of Congress were dependent upon the members of the U.S. military to vote on whether we got our paychecks or not? Maybe we ought to turn around the tables. Maybe we should halt paying this body until our troops get the assurance that they are going to get paid. Let's put the accountability right back on this institution.

I thank the Senator for standing up on behalf of the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States of America military.

I spent 28 years in business before I came to Capitol Hill. I spent one term in the House, and now this is my first term in the Senate. When I came here with my freshman class in January 2015, we came in here with our loved ones. Our friends and family were up in the Gallery, near where we stand here and sit here today. About 30 feet from where I am standing right here, we all stood on that step, and the Vice President, right there, administered an oath to us. We raised our right hand and took the oath. In that oath that I was honored to give that day after I was elected by the people of Montana, I swore and said: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So help me God."

What has happened? We all took that same oath. It is time we started acting like it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AIR TRAVEL TO AND FROM CUBA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I wish to cover something that happened today. A revelation was just made a few hours ago at a hearing in the House. I will give the history of this.

As we all know, after the President's opening toward Cuba, there was increased travel to Cuba, now including the opening of commercial travel to the island from the United States.

Back in May, the Assistant Secretary for Policy at the Department of Homeland Security told the House Homeland Security Committee that new scheduled air service from the United States to Cuba, and vice versa, was not going to start until air marshals were allowed to be onboard those flights.

In August, the TSA provided the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, as well as re-

porters, a statement . . . [and they said] that the United States and Cuba had "entered into an aviation security agreement that sets forth the legal framework for the deployment" of air marshals "on board certain flights to and from Cuba."

Today, at a hearing in the House, "a top TSA official divulged [for the first time] . . . that Cuba has yet to agree to allow U.S. air marshals aboard scheduled airline flights between the two countries—meaning there have been no air marshals on board thus far, despite" the fact that the administration said there would be. So, basically, what we have here is an outright lie.

Last month, to great fanfare, the Obama Administration announced that an agreement had been reached that there was going to be air marshals on commercial flights to and from Cuba, and today they confirmed that they weren't telling the truth. There was no agreement finalized. On most, if not all, of these flights there are no air marshals. This is endangering U.S. passengers.

This is a startling admission from the administration, and it is a startling admission by the TSA to the American people that they lied. They told us these flights would not begin until they had reached an agreement with the Cuban Government to have air marshals and other security measures in place. Today, only because they were asked—only because they were asked—did they admit that this is not happening.

It was incumbent upon the TSA to lock down a Federal air marshal agreement before these flights started taking off to begin with. That is what they told us they were going to do. That is what they said or implied was happening. Unless that question had been specifically asked today at that hearing, we would not have known about this.

My friends, this is the latest example of an administration that is so intent on burnishing its legacy, on getting credit for this opening, that they are willing to throw everything else out the window. They already are ignoring the human rights violations.

We have one of the leading human rights dissidents in Cuba on the verge of death because of a hunger strike, and this administration hasn't said a word about it. They don't do anything about it. They don't highlight that case. Instead, they are all celebrating and popping corks of champagne on these new flights, which they told us were going to be safe because they were going to have air marshals. Today, because they were specifically asked, we find out that it is not true. This is outrageous. The TSA under the Obama administration has lied to us about the status of the security.

Last week, I filed a bill that would stop all commercial flights to Cuba until this agreement is in place, until adequate security is in place. Now we know for a fact that adequate security is not in place. These flights should be

suspended until such time as this agreement is signed.

I want us to think about what this means if it doesn't happen—what it means is these are now flights that are vulnerable. There is a reason why we have air marshals on flights. It is because of the experience of 9/11, of which we just commemorated the anniversary on Sunday. We now have flights 90 miles from our shores that could theoretically be commandeered, and we could have a repeat of that, particularly in South Florida, which is just minutes away from the airport in Havana. This is just unacceptable.

Forget about how we feel about Cuba policy for a moment. They have lied to the American people. They have lied to this Congress, and they were only caught today because they were specifically asked about the status of this. This puts us in incredible danger.

By the way, it is important for everyone to remember that years ago there were no metal detectors even at airports. They started putting metal detectors at airports 30 years or 35 years ago because of hijackings to Cuba. There is a reason.

So now here we have this situation where theoretically some terrorist could travel from any country in the world into Cuba and then try to come into the United States, commandeer an aircraft, and I don't need to say what could happen next. I think this is an incredibly dangerous situation.

I think we need to unite across parties, across the aisle, and, basically, say: No matter how you feel about Cuba policy, we all agree that travel to Cuba should be safe—no less safe than travel to the Bahamas, no less safe than travel to the Dominican Republic, no less safe than travel to Mexico. Why are we allowing the Cuban Government to conduct flights without the same conditions we have on allies of the United States? Cuba is not an ally of the United States.

The Cuban Government hosts intelligence facilities for both the Chinese and the Russians. The Cuban Government harbors fugitives from American justice. The Cuban Government helped North Korea evade U.N. sanctions on missile technology and weapons. Yet we have allies in this hemisphere who have to comply with all of this, but not Cuba. This is absurd.

The TSA has lied. It leaves this Nation vulnerable. Those commercial flights need to be immediately suspended until such time as these security measures are put in place. This is something that just broke hours ago, and I hope we can come together here and actually deal with it, irrespective of how we may feel about the issue of Cuba.

ZIKA VIRUS FUNDING

Mr. President, the Governor of Florida was here yesterday and again today to discuss Zika funding. I met with him personally yesterday, and we met with the majority leader earlier today to reiterate again its importance.

Let me reiterate again the statistics. There are now, on the mainland of the United States, almost 3,000 cases. In combination with U.S. territories—meaning, primarily, the island of Puerto Rico—there are now close to 16,000 cases. In my home State of Florida alone, we are up to 799 cases, and 70 of those cases are locally transmitted, meaning that they were not Zika infections acquired abroad. They were either sexually transmitted or transmitted by a mosquito in the State of Florida. As to infections involving pregnant women in Florida, there are 86. That is combined, both travel and local transmission. It has taken this Congress far too long to act.

Now, I believe the good news is that, given the conversations that are still ongoing, we are on the verge of getting something done on the fight against Zika. I remind everyone that the Senate did act on this issue back in May in a bipartisan way, and I would take this moment to point out that my colleague, Senator NELSON from Florida, has been great to work with on this and multiple issues—but on this in particular. I thank him for his partnership and hard work in this regard. I enjoy our partnership on many issues involving the State of Florida, including the water bill before the Senate, but on this issue of Zika in particular. But it is time for the rest of us to come together in the interest of our people.

I know that right now all the headlines are about the impact this is having on Florida. But make no mistake, Zika is a national problem, and it requires a Federal response including funding to develop a vaccine that will eradicate this virus. So I do appreciate Governor Scott's efforts at the State level to combat Zika. It is long past time that this Congress follows suit.

This is, by the way, Governor Scott's second visit to Washington to address Zika. I am not aware of any other Governor who has come up here for the same purpose. But I can assure you that if we fail to seize the chance to pass funding, we are going to see more Governors and more Americans from every State and territory beating down the doors here in Washington fairly soon. As I said earlier, there are almost 20,000 Americans that have now been infected, and I think it would be a tragic and terrible mistake to ignore their plight. We have a chance here to help to prevent even more people from getting infected, but to do so we have to act now.

I want to point to one of the aspects of this issue that isn't talked about enough. We already understand the risk of microcephaly and what it means for unborn children. We understand the risk it poses to people in general. But I want to talk a little bit today about the economic impact of it. We can imagine that, as Zika outbreaks are being reported around the world and for the first time ever the CDC is actually designating areas of the continental United States as travel

advisory areas that perhaps people should avoid, it begins to have an economic impact. I also don't need to remind people—although, maybe I should—how important tourism is to the State of Florida. The evidence that this is having an impact on our economy is now far more than just anecdotal. I will quote extensively from an article in the Miami Herald a few days ago.

In August, leisure airfare prices fell 17 percent year-over-year at Miami International Airport and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, according to an analysis by Harrell Associates. Fares for top routes at the nation's other airports rose 4 percent over the same time period.

So other airports saw a 4-percent increase in fares, and leisure airfare fell by 17 percent. People may think that this is good news for the consumer. But this is reflective of something—that demand is down and that the number of people wanting to travel there is down. This is not travel in general, because across to other airports it was up 4 percent. But in two airports in South Florida, it was down by 17 percent. That is evidence that this is having an impact on travel, both business and leisure.

Here is more evidence: “And hotel bookings in greater downtown Miami fell by nearly 3 percent in the first three weeks of August compared to last year. . . .”

As someone raised by parents who worked in the tourism sector—primarily in hotels—if these numbers and trends continue, not only are these hotels going to get hurt, but the people working there are going to get hurt.

There is a reason why this is happening. I will go to a couple more business aspects that we would think would go beyond simple tourism, just so we know this is not just about hotels and airports.

There is a Bay Harbor Islands-based company that does wedding planning called Forever Events. The owners said that a couple from California spent several months planning a destination wedding in Miami and then cancelled it. Instead, they are getting married in California.

A nanny service that provides baby-sitting for families staying at hotels and resorts, often because they are in town to celebrate weddings, said the cancellations started coming as soon as the first travel-related cases were discovered in February. They said that families told them that because their wives were pregnant, they were too nervous to travel to Miami.

Business has plummeted by about 25 percent, she said, hurting her staff. Phones have gone quiet. . . . “We used to get calls every couple of weeks for a mom coming in town having her baby and now we haven't gotten any in months. . . . No calls at all.”

The rationale behind all this, perhaps, is a Kaiser Family Foundation poll conducted in August, which found that “48 percent of Americans would be uncomfortable traveling to Zika infection areas within the U.S., including Miami.”

So, again, this is not just something that is having an impact on our health care system, which is dramatic in and of itself, but it is having an economic impact as well, which is why it is so inexcusable that we didn't address this in April. We couldn't get final passage on this in May. I know the Senate did its part. It has gotten tangled up in all this election-year politics.

All I would say to my colleagues is, we fight about so many things around here. We have so many issues we could have a debate over. There are some significant differences between our political parties. In election years, they become more pronounced. Let's have debates about those issues, but at least when it comes to public health and safety, can't we say that on this issue, we are not going to play politics. Let's put this issue aside and let's not entangle it in all the political stuff that is going on because in the end, this does not discriminate. This is an issue that affects anyone and everyone, potentially.

That is what I hope is going to happen. We have taken far too long. Can you imagine going back at the end of next week or at the end of this month and explaining to people, not just in Florida but in America, that Congress once again couldn't get anything done on this?

I would ask both sides to show a tremendous amount of flexibility. I know there are ongoing conversations now behind the scenes to get some resolution on this. There are so many other issues we could have an argument over. On this one, let's just come together; let's provide the funding.

It is already less than what the President asked for, and I believe we will need more in the future. Let us come together, once and for all, and let's get this done in the Senate, and then let's work on encouraging our colleagues in the House to do the same so we have at least some good news to tell the American people at the end of this month. No. 1, your government didn't shut down; and, No. 2, Congress has finally provided funds, not just to help States and localities deal with Zika, not just to help health care facilities treat people with Zika, and not just to help people prevent Zika but to continue the research to develop a vaccine because once we have a vaccine, then I think this issue becomes very different. Then we have an answer with permanency to it. That is where I hope we are headed. That is why I encourage my colleagues to continue to work on it. Let's get this done once and for all. It is the right thing to do for America. It is the right thing to do for our people.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today we have made important progress on a piece of legislation that we refer to with another one of those funny sounding names. In this case, it is WRDA. It is spelled W-R-D-A. That stands for the Water Resources Development Act.

The average American who might tune into C-SPAN today probably has no idea what it means when we use its nickname. Frankly, they are likely confused with a lot of the other strange acronyms we use in Washington as well, but the truth is, the things this WRDA bill will accomplish will have a big effect on the everyday lives of a lot of Americans. Many of them will be things that happen behind the scenes.

There are many important functions of the Federal Government that require years of planning and action by Congress. We as private citizens oftentimes sort of take them for granted. Hearing your local Senator or Member of Congress talk about critical dredging projects might sound boring, but if ships carrying groceries into our country's ports can't reach their destination, the prices continue to rise; in some cases, by a whole lot. That means families struggling to put food on their tables must figure out how to stretch their strained budget even further.

For the neediest among us, that ship reaching its port isn't just a policy decision made in our Nation's capital, it is the difference between a hungry child and a healthy one, but it takes a lot more work to keep our children healthy.

In April of 2014, news broke of a horrendous drinking water crisis in Flint, MI. Our networks and our newspapers were flooded with images of families holding up jugs of discolored water that came from their kitchen sinks and from their bathtubs. It was like we were watching a nightmare unfold overnight, but in reality it was years in the making.

For decades, cities across this country have struggled to fund proper maintenance of their drinking water infrastructure. In Flint, officials repeatedly cut corners, with little regard for public health concerns, in order to avoid investing in a high-quality water system. Let's think about this. Really, what is more important than an investment in making sure our kids aren't drinking water that slowly stunts the growth of their brains and the development of their brains?

Unfortunately, while the national spotlight has focused on Flint, aging water infrastructure is a growing problem faced by way too many of our communities across this country. This year, the Guardian newspaper found that over the past decade, water departments in at least 33 large cities have chosen to test their water with methods that would underestimate the lead levels in their drinking water—underestimate.

Philadelphia, which is half an hour up the road from my home State and

hometown of Wilmington, DE, has been accused of having some of the worst testing procedures of any city in the United States.

Congress banned lead water pipes some 30 years ago, but many of our pipes are older than that. In fact, we don't even know the full extent of the problem. Estimates of lead pipes still in use range from 3 to 10 million. That means some parts of our drinking water infrastructure are poisoning unsuspecting families across this Nation of ours.

We are doing good bipartisan work today by moving forward on authorizing programs that will begin to tackle not all but many of these issues, but in truth this is only the tip of the iceberg. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates it must spend nearly \$400 billion between now and 2030. Think about that, \$400 billion between now and 2030 in order to keep our drinking water safe. It is not only pipes that we have to maintain to ensure that our water supply is clean and that we have enough of it.

For example, the Delaware River Basin supplies drinking water for more than 15 million people. People don't just depend on this water for drinking. This river houses the catches our fishermen and fisherwomen depend on for their livelihood. This river serves as a shipping route to direct goods to and from our local businesses. It facilitates tourism that ripples through local economies up and down the eastern seaboard.

Today we have made important strides toward improving coordinated protection and restoration of the Delaware River Basin on which so many rely. With this legislation, we are also taking important steps to strengthen our coastal areas, which are the first line of defense against extreme weather and sea level rise.

For communities near the ocean in Delaware, a severe storm isn't just a day off from work or from school. It has the potential to wreak havoc on our cities and our towns, potentially destroying local businesses and causing irreparable damage to families' homes, as well as to our transportation infrastructure or water and wastewater treatment systems as well.

State and local governments that are already strapped for resources are then forced to scramble to help their residents rebuild. Instead of trying to patch the damage after every storm, maybe we ought to prepare ahead of time to make our coastlines more resilient. That will keep people safer and also save us a lot of money in the long term.

I learned this from my grandmother: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and no place is this saying truer than with regard to maintaining our local critical infrastructure. Too often we in Congress neglect our responsibility to invest in the

things that make life possible and better. We shy away from reminding people that things worth having are worth paying for.

We weren't elected to take the easy way out. That isn't what we come here for. We were elected to make the tough choices required of leaders. I am proud of the bipartisan work that has been done today to help make sure parents can feel confident about the glass of water they will give their kids to drink at the supper table tomorrow or the week after that.

I am proud we are taking action to address some of the often ignored businesses of running a nation like ours. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me to continue this good work. Let's remind the American people that with a little determination, with a little more dedication, we can accomplish the responsibilities which they entrust to us.

Mr. President, I see we have been joined by a friend from Arkansas. I am going to yield the floor to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, while I was traveling around Arkansas during our in-state work period, one of the top issues I heard about from my constituents was national security. It remains at the forefront of the minds of Arkansans. I am sure my colleagues heard the same thing during their time at home.

The message I received was one of concern—concern with how the administration's terrible Iran deal is flushing the regime with cash and allowing Tehran to continue its nuclear activities while rebuilding its arsenal and belligerently bullying the United States and our allies. They are concerned that North Korea is ramping up its nuclear program to try to get the same sweetheart deal, and they are concerned the threat from ISIS continues to grow despite the President's attempt to convince the public that radical Islamic terror is not a problem.

Let's start with Iran. Earlier this week, Iran threatened to shoot down two U.S. Navy surveillance aircraft for flying "too close to Iranian airspace." Yes, the country the Obama administration bent over backward to appease threatened us once again. This is the latest in a long line of provocations directed by Iran toward the United States.

Last month, Iran harassed our warships in the Persian Gulf on at least five occasions. Iran's belligerence has been matched by the nation's pursuit of weapons, all of which has been enabled by the terrible nuclear deal President Obama brokered—a deal Iran has zero intentions of abiding by.

Earlier this month, the regime in Tehran deployed a Russian-supplied surface-to-air-missile defense system around its Fordow underground uranium enrichment facility. This potent missile defense system was part of an

\$800 million deal Russia signed with Iran in 2007. That deal has been voluntarily put on hold because of a 2010 U.N. Security Council resolution, but that hold was lifted after President Obama's weak Iran deal signaled to Russia that it is acceptable to sell weapons to Iran.

This news is shocking given that President Obama said his deal halts enrichment at Fordow. If that is the case, why does Iran need this potent defense system to protect its scientific facility? Where did Iran get the money for this system? The Obama administration and its negotiating partners agreed in secret to allow Iran to evade some restrictions in the nuclear agreement. This reprieve was grand in order to give Iran more time to meet the deadline for it to start getting relief from economic sanctions. For all of these concessions, what exactly did the international community get out of the deal? Certainly not peace of mind. Meanwhile, Iran gets concession after concession to build a peaceful nuclear program that no one outside the White House believes will remain that way, but outside the White House walls, the rogue actors of the world have a different perspective. What they see is a meal ticket—a way to get out of sanctions without having to end the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Case in point, North Korea. They have seen the windfall Iran has received for agreeing to the President's deal and appear to be angling for a windfall of their own, which is why North Korea defied U.N. resolutions and detonated its fifth and largest nuclear weapon last week. After carrying out the test, North Korea boasted that the warhead could be used to counter the American threat. Make no mistake, North Korea wants its own deal and will continue to try to provoke the United States.

Will President Obama cave in to North Korea's demands in the same manner in which he did with Iran? We certainly should not be granting sanctions relief to North Korea nor should we be doing so for Iran. In fact, we should be ratcheting up sanctions. We have passed legislation to do that for North Korea already. The chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has a bill to make that happen for Iran as well. I am cosponsoring that bill and hope we can move it forward in the Senate.

While Iran and North Korea step up the posturing, ISIS just released a gruesome new propaganda video showing dozens of captured prisoners hung from meat hooks inside a Syrian slaughterhouse. The video then shows ISIS members slitting the throats of these prisoners. The brutality of these terrorists, which President Obama once referred to as the JV team, is shocking and revolting. The President has never presented a strategy to Congress for eliminating ISIS, and our sporadic airstrikes have done little to stop the terrorist group from pressing forward to strengthen its global reach.

As these events play out, Senate Democrats continue to block vital funding for our troops and our country's security and keep it from moving forward. This is why national security was the main concern I heard about during the in-state work period and I continue to hear about now. The anxiety and unease created by this administration's failed foreign policy weighs heavy on the American people. We must change course.

With that, 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. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, after one of the longest recesses in modern history, Congress returned last week to Washington. Unfortunately, it seems that some of our colleagues have been more interested in continuing to play politics with the health and welfare of the American people than in getting the job done.

Nearly 19,000 Americans have been infected by the Zika virus, including hundreds of pregnant women. Yet Congress has failed to pass an emergency funding bill to address the Zika crisis, and as I discussed on the floor earlier this afternoon, thousands of retired mineworkers, many of them suffering from serious illnesses, are still waiting for us to work on the bipartisan Miners Protection Act.

This afternoon, I would like to focus on another area where unfortunately the Senate has failed to do its job—an important job that is part of our constitutional requirements—which is to make sure we end this unprecedented obstruction regarding the vacancy on the Supreme Court. It has now been a record-breaking 182 days since President Obama nominated Judge Merrick Garland, and yet 182 days later, the Supreme Court is still forced to function one Justice short. It is an example of Washington dysfunction at its absolute worst.

The Senate confirmed Supreme Court Justices during Presidential election years at least 17 times, so there is no reason this should be a partisan issue. Until recently, both parties have recognized the Senate's constitutional responsibility to advise and consent on the President's nominations to the Supreme Court.

President Reagan himself said: "Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body."

The truth is, Judge Garland's qualifications and dedication to public service are beyond reproach.

Again, today, as I did earlier this year, I am strongly urging my colleagues to do the job we were elected to

do. Let's go ahead and vote on Judge Garland. If you don't want to support him, that is your right, but let's give him that hearing and take on that vote.

Let's make sure we take on the very important health care crisis around Zika. Let's make sure we don't leave the American people hanging in terms of a continuing resolution. Let's pass that and make sure the government stays funded.

Again, it is time for us to get to work. It is time for the Senate to do its job so we can make sure that when we go back to our constituents—as we continue with the final weeks before the election—we can look them in the eye and say: We have done our duty.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I have been coming every week and speaking about an epidemic we have across our country. The State of West Virginia has been hit hard. I know Utah has been hit hard. There has not been a State that has been spared. This opioid epidemic, this prescription drug abuse is ravaging our country and a whole generation of our people.

We have come to a crisis point. In West Virginia, drug overdose deaths have soared by more than 700 percent since 1988. We lost 600 West Virginians to opioids last year alone—600—more than any other cause of death in my State. Of the 628 drug overdose deaths in the State in 2014, most were linked to prescription drugs. These are legal drugs.

Now, 199 were oxycodone related, with 133 attributed to hydrocodone. We have a situation where basically people ask: How did we get to this point? We have products that are being made by reputable companies that we depend on for lifesaving medication every day. So you have a reputable company. We have the Food and Drug Administration, the FDA, which basically is our guardian, if you will. It is the gatekeeper of whether things we are consuming are good for us and will not be harmful. Then you have your doctor, the most trusted person next to a member of your family, telling you and prescribing what you should take to make you better.

So we have a runaway epidemic on our hands. We have to get this genie back into the bottle. West Virginia had the highest rate of prescription drug overdose deaths by any State last year—31 per 100,000 people—31 people out of 100,000 people died. The next closest State was New Mexico at 25

deaths per 100,000. In West Virginia, providers wrote—I want you to listen to this figure. It is almost unbelievable. In West Virginia, providers wrote 138 painkiller prescriptions for every 100 people. I want to repeat that. They wrote—that means our doctors—prescribed 138 prescriptions for every 100 people. Now, that is impossible. You would think that is absolutely abusive. It is.

Between 2007 and 2012, drug wholesalers shipped—this is an unbelievable amount—they shipped more than 200 million pain pills to West Virginia. The population of my State is 1,850,000, give or take. So with a little over 1,850,000 people, the drug wholesalers shipped 200 million pain pills to my State of West Virginia—40 million per year.

This number does not include shipments from the two largest drug wholesalers. Every day in our country, 51 Americans die from opioid abuse, legal prescription drugs. National drug abuse facts. Drug overdose was the leading cause of injury death in 2013. Among people 25 to 64 years old, drug overdoses caused more deaths than motor vehicle crashes.

There were 41,982 drug overdose deaths in the United States in 2013. Of these, 22,767 or 51.8 percent were related to prescription drug overdose. These are legal prescription drugs. Drug misuse and abuse caused about 2.5 million emergency room visits in 2011. Of these, more than 1.4 million of these emergency room visits were related to prescription drugs. Again, legal prescription drugs.

Among those emergency room visits, 420,000 visits related to opioid analgesics. Nearly 2 million Americans age 12 or older either abuse or were dependent upon opioids in 2013. Of the 2.8 million people who used an illicit drug for the first time in 2013, 20 percent began with a nonmedical use of a prescription drug—nonmedical—including pain relievers, tranquilizers, and stimulants.

The United States makes up only 4.6 percent of the world's population—4.6 percent. We are 330 million. Over 7 billion people live on Mother Earth. We make up less than 5 percent of the population. Yet we consume—the United States of America—80 percent of its opioids and 99 percent of the world's hydrocodone—99 percent of the world's hydrocodone.

Opioid abuse has jumped 287 percent in 11 years. In 2013, health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for painkillers, enough for every American to have a bottle of pills. Think about that—enough for every American to have a bottle of opioid pain pills. Misuse and abuse of prescription drugs cost the country an estimated \$53.4 billion per year in lost productivity, medical costs, and criminal justice costs.

If you talk to anybody, any of the law enforcement officers in your hometown, your home community, your State, they will tell you, 8 out of 10—a minimum of 8 out of 10 of the crimes that are reported that they go out on

are drug-induced. Currently, 1 in 10 Americans with a substance abuse disorder receives treatment. So only 10 percent are getting treatment. So many people over the years believed—and I was one of them 20 years ago—believed if you fool with any types of drugs, you are committing a crime, and we are going to put you in jail.

Well, we put you in jail, but we just did not cure anybody. It didn't get any better. So we better try something different. It has been proven that addiction is an illness, and an illness needs treatment. There is no treatment. Only 1 in 10 can find it. Since 1999, we have lost almost 200,000 Americans—200,000—to prescription opioid abuse.

If we lost 200,000 in any other arena, I will guarantee you we would go into action. We would find a way to stop this, but we have not done a thing about this. In October, President Obama came to Charles Town, WV, to talk to people on the frontlines of the epidemic. Following the visit, he called for emergency funding to combat the opioid crisis. Now we have Presidential candidates talking about prescription drug abuse. Earlier this year, Secretary Clinton was in West Virginia talking about ways we can work together to prevent and treat prescription drug abuse.

The FDA began making changes to the way it approves opioid medications. The CDC, the Centers for Disease Control, released much needed guidelines for the prescribing of opioids for managing chronic pain. We need a serious culture change in America, and I mean a serious culture change, to get to the root of the problem. We need to change the approval of opioid drugs at the FDA.

We can't have the Food and Drug Administration that is responsible for us getting products that are supposed to be good for us to consume not knowing what the effects may be. I keep telling them—I ask: Why do you continue to approve new opioid painkillers coming on the market? Why? Don't we have enough? If you do approve something new, don't you think something ought to be removed rather than just keeping more products on the market?

I am going to read a letter. I read letters because I have always said that this is a silent killer. The silent killer of drug abuse, of prescription drug abuse, is, if it is in your family, we don't want to talk about it. It is my son or my daughter, it is my mom or my uncle, it is my aunt, we will take care of it. We will keep it within ourselves.

So it is a silent killer because nobody talks about it. Nobody knew what was going on. Nobody knew the heartache and all of the absolutely devastating tragedies families were going through. They thought they could take care of it because we did not know it was an illness. We did not know it needs treatment. They did not have a place to turn. Most families don't have the resources to send them to the treatment centers. They are very expensive.

So we have asked people to start speaking out. I am getting letters from all over the country. I am going to read Samantha Frashier's letter. They are giving me names now. It is not anonymous. It used to be anonymous, "Don't use my name." They want you to know. They want you to know and put a real face with a real name and a real person:

I will start this off by saying, I am not from West Virginia. I live in Ohio. But I felt like I could still share my story.

My dad's family is from West Virginia and I have seen the devastation of the opiate epidemic there. It is just as bad here in Cincinnati and all of the suburbs surrounding it.

I grew up in Mason, Ohio, and had a good life. We weren't rich, but we weren't poor. My parents did everything they could to take care of me and my brother.

I was very involved with the youth group in high school and just an all-around happy person. I went to a Christian university and just started drinking a lot.

That went on for a few years, and by the time I was 21, I started using pills recreationally. Stupid choice. That was in 2008 and heroin was just starting to creep in everywhere.

I used for 5 years, every day. Once I started, it was like I made a decision I could never quit, that I would use forever. I was such an evil, manipulative liar and thief. I ruined every relationship I ever had.

Finally, I got in trouble. I went on a small car chase, (stupid, I know) and was booked into jail on 11 charges, which resulted in 2 felonies, and I was sent to Monday Correctional Institute in Dayton, Ohio. It was there that I was taught the skills I needed to survive. I had to dig deep and really figure out who I was and what issues I need to really work on.

I also received letters from women at church I didn't even know. I corresponded with them over the months. These women made me feel a sense of being surrounded, even though I was in a lockdown facility.

I spent 5 months there, got a job, became a manager and ran a failing pizza restaurant. About 10 months after being released, I found out I was pregnant with identical twin boys. I had some complications with my pregnancy and was on bed rest and still dealing with issues. My boys are 7 months old now. My boyfriend and I are both almost 3 years clean, and we are blessed enough to find someone to rent a house to us.

I am currently involved in starting a non-profit recovery home here in Warren County, Ohio, called "The Next." We will help women after they detox with a recovery home.

The other part of my story is that I have also watched my family become crippled by this disease of addiction. My brother recently was using drugs. We couldn't find him help anywhere. Waiting lists, insurance copays for thousands of dollars, flying to different states, nothing local. He ended up getting in trouble and he now has a felony.

My aunt has already lost one son to a heroin overdose and 3 weeks ago we sat in the hospital with her daughter, holding her down because she had alcohol poisoning, and she was intubated and on a breathing machine.

The pain, the hurt, I see it in everyone's eyes. I can't imagine what that is like. I look at my boys and pray that I will do everything I can to steer them away. It's in their genes and they have to be careful.

My heart is big and I have spent nights crying over this. My friend Pete's funeral is next week. He died of a heroin overdose. Every few weeks, someone dies, or they are sent to jail and get no help, get released, or

go to prison and don't get help and spend their time with other people who don't want to change. They get released eventually and have no skills.

Everyone is set up for failure. This is affecting every single person in this community, and I know it is like this in so many other places.

I hope to hear of a dollar amount attached to the CARA act, and that there are changes. We need recovery homes, rehab, different laws to encourage getting help, helping those in prison that want to change to provide a reachable opportunity.

It is 100 percent possible to get clean. I want everyone to know it is possible to share the hope that a successful life is achievable. I have a huge passion to change things and to help that change. I have sent letters, e-mails, web messages to all the Congressmen, judges, prosecutors, City of Mason, Mason Police Department, and Warren County. I am doing whatever part I can.

This is killing so many young lives, and mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons, everyone, and they need to change.

This is a letter—and I want to answer this by saying we are trying. I have a piece of legislation that I have drafted. This piece of legislation is going to have permanent funding that will go directly to treatment centers—directly—100 percent to treatment centers around this country.

What it does is it asks to be charged one penny per milligram—one penny per milligram—for every opioid produced and sold in America. That will raise about \$1.5 to \$2 billion. So I would say to all of my colleagues and friends who are afraid that, oh, this is a new tax—this is a treatment center. This is a way to get people clean again. This is what we are asking people to sign on to.

I will guarantee you there will not be one family—Democratic or Republican—that would vote against you if you can help save their child and give them a place to go to get clean. This is so important.

I thank you for allowing me to speak today, taking the time to read this letter, and allowing us to share this letter with so many people because it is personal. You can now put a face, a story, and a family behind it, and that is what we all should be doing.

It is no longer the silent killer. It is still a killer, but people are speaking out. They asking for help. That help comes right here in the Halls of the Senate and the Halls of Congress. We can make a difference in America and save a whole generation.

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.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate 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.

RECOGNIZING THE UNITED STATES CHESS TEAM

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of the U.S. Chess Olympiad team. Widely considered to be the pinnacle of international chess, Chess Olympiad is a biennial competition organized by the World Chess Federation where teams from all over the world gather to compete. This year, over 175 nations and territories in attendance were represented at the Olympiad.

For the first time since 1976, the U.S. team emerged from a talented and crowded field to claim victory and cement its spot at the top of the chess world. The team was led by U.S. champion Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana, who won a bronze medal in the individual competition, and boasted a strong lineup featuring 3 of the top 10 players in the world. Grandmaster Caruana, Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura, Grandmaster Wesley So, Grandmaster Ray Robson, Grandmaster Samuel Shankland, team captain International Master John Donaldson, and coach Grandmaster Aleksandr Lenderman dedicating themselves to becoming the best in the world, and represented the United States with honor and pride at the 42nd Chess Olympiad.

I am proud to say that Fabiano Caruana has partnered with the Liberty Science Center in my home State of New Jersey to bring chess to a new generation of students across the State. As the visiting grandmaster and "Chess Rules!" ambassador, Caruana works with the Liberty Science Center to improve children's concentration, critical thinking, memory, and analytic skills in a fun and engaging way through the game of chess. I am pleased that Grandmaster Caruana's first stop upon returning to the U.S. will be an event at Liberty Science Center to celebrate the U.S. victory and continue the important work that he has been doing.

Let me conclude by again congratulating the U.S. Chess Olympiad team, and wishing all of its members continued success in the future.

Thank you.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN N. LIMBAUGH, JR.

• Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr., of Cape Girardeau, MO, for his service and dedication to the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Judge Limbaugh is completing his final term as president of the society

after a distinguished tenure leading the board of trustees. He is the first leader in the society's 118-year history to serve two terms as president. It has been my pleasure to work with him as a member of the board of trustees.

Judge Limbaugh's election as president of the State Historical Society of Missouri 6 years ago follows in the footsteps of his grandfather, Rush H. Limbaugh I, who served as vice president of the society during the 1940s.

Judge Limbaugh has been a guiding force in expanding the society's network of research centers to Cape Girardeau and Springfield. In addition, he facilitated an agreement with the University of Missouri that gave the State Historical Society "sole responsibility" for the management of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

Judge Limbaugh successfully launched the Center for Missouri Studies, an educational initiative to advance the study of Missouri's history and culture with competitive, interdisciplinary fellowships. He worked unwaveringly to ensure passage of a bill in the Missouri General Assembly to finance the construction of the Center in Columbia, MO, which was agreed to in 2015. The building project begins a new era for the State Historical Society of Missouri and greatly enhances the Society's mission to collect, preserve, publish, and showcase material that features all of Missouri's unique history.

The leadership and dedication that Judge Limbaugh, Jr., demonstrates as president of the society is the same leadership and dedication he demonstrates in his personal and public life. He studied at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, and went on to earn his master of laws in judicial process degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. He was elected prosecuting attorney of Cape Girardeau County in 1978 at the age of 26, after beginning his legal career with the family firm of Limbaugh, Limbaugh, and Russell. After serving a 4-year term, he returned to private practice until 1987, when he was appointed circuit judge for the 32nd Judicial Circuit. Judge Limbaugh held this position until he was appointed to the Missouri Supreme Court in 1992.

Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr., served for 16 years as a judge on the Supreme Court of Missouri, including a 2-year term as chief justice. He was recognized among his colleagues for his sound interpretation of the law and compassion for his fellow Missourians. In 2007, Limbaugh was nominated by President George W. Bush to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate with unanimous consent on June 10, 2008.

The judge's tireless dedication to public service has been recognized by the American College of Trial Lawyers, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, the Adoption and Foster Care Coalition of

Missouri, the National Eagle Scout Association, Professional Blackmen's Club of Southeast Missouri, and Rotary International.

He is the author of numerous historical works, including "The Antebellum History of Centenary Church of Cape Girardeau."

I am confident Judge Limbaugh will always continue to study Missouri's vibrant history and heritage and share his knowledge with individuals and groups across the great State.

In October, Judge Limbaugh will be awarded the Missouri Historical Society's Distinguished Service Award and Medallion for his significant and lasting contributions to preserving Missouri's history and fostering recognition for Missouri's distinct role in our Nation's history.

Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr., has played a major role in the success of the State Historical Society of Missouri. His legacy will continue to impact future generations through the programs and partnerships he helped put in place. I am grateful for his friendship, and I thank him for his service to the country, citizens of Missouri, and the State Historical Society of Missouri.●

REMEMBERING LASKER "LAS" BELL, SR.

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of Lasker "Las" Bell, Sr., an iconic radio and television personality who brought music into the hearts and minds of people living in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, who passed away on September 12, 2016.

Bell was born in Homer, LA, and spent much of his childhood as a sharecropper, working alongside his maternal grandparents, who raised him. In 1944, he moved to Camden, AR, which became his home.

He honorably served his country as a corporal in the U.S. Army. When he was discharged in 1952, he returned to Camden where he put his vision to become a radio and television host into motion.

In 1967, Bell turned his passion for music into a hosting gig at KJWH in El Dorado. He continued that momentum and turned the excitement for soul music in the region into the "Las Bell Variety Show." By 1970, it was a weekly staple on the airwaves that helped define a generation of people in the region. He aimed to offer African Americans the same opportunity as the nationwide hit show "American Bandstand."

He broke barriers as the first Black interviewer for Channel 10 News and continued to pursue his other hosting responsibilities, adding a gospel show to the radio.

Bell's commitment to the community led him to serve on and establish civic organizations to help make a difference. His service includes founding the Elks Club in Camden and serving

on the Bi-racial Committee for the Camden schools. He was appointed to the Human Resources Commission by Governor David Pryor and reappointed by Governor Frank White.

As a faithful follower of Christ, Bell shared the stories of Jesus. His friends remember his smile that would brighten anyone's day.

I want to offer my prayers and sincere condolences to Las's loved ones on their loss. I thank him for his lifelong passion for entertainment and sharing that with Arkansans and the region.●

RECOGNIZING BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA TROOP 1 OF IDAHO

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Boy Scouts of America Troop 1 of Meridian, ID, on the troop's approaching 100th anniversary.

Troop 1's former scoutmaster Richard Weight reports that research indicates that the troop was formed on or before July 20, 1917, in Meridian and was in continuous operation until 1942 when wartime needs made operation of the troop impossible. In 1944, the troop rechartered and has been in continuous operation since. Troop 1 has taken part in service projects and efforts to have a positive effect on the community.

I have been involved in scouting for almost my entire life. I am proud of the young men who have demonstrated a commitment to the principles of scouting and the communities that support them. I commend the scouts and supporters of Troop 1 for advancing leadership and informative opportunities for area youth who gain invaluable experience while contributing to bettering our communities. The many benefits from scouting activities are made possible through the significant commitment of those who are actively involved with the troop.

Congratulations to Idaho's Boy Scouts of America Troop 1 on this remarkable milestone. Thank you for your efforts to build up our communities and expand opportunities for future leaders.●

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BRUCE BLOUNT

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of LTG John Bruce Blount, United States Army, Retired, who passed away peacefully on August 23, 2016, surrounded by his loving family. He was 88.

Lieutenant General Blount was born in Pawtucket, RI, on April 22, 1928, the son of Joseph Hagen Blount and Loretta Moody Blount. He played basketball in high school and set a school record that still stands today, scoring 66 points in a single game. During his collegiate years at the University of Rhode Island, John excelled in sports, scoring more than 1,000 points in basketball and serving as captain of both the basketball and baseball teams. He was selected for the All Yanks Conference and the All East Team and was

named ROTC cadet colonel in his senior year.

As a distinguished military graduate, in June of 1950, John was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U. S. Army Infantry. On June 17, 1950, he married Joan Adele Garrett of Belmont, MA.

Lieutenant General Blount's long career was distinguished as he rose through the ranks of the U.S. Army, with distinguished combat tours in Korea and Vietnam. Among the many highlights of his career were his testimony at the Army-McCarthy hearings and his command of Fort Jackson, SC, one of the U. S. Army's most important and strategic training centers.

John was promoted to brigadier general on September 1, 1974. He was promoted to major general in October of 1977, and on June 30, 1983, John was promoted to lieutenant general and became chief of staff of the Allied Forces South, a large NATO command consisting of units from five countries, including Greece, Italy, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Upon completion of this appointment, John retired from active service in Columbia, SC, near Fort Jackson, but did not discontinue his service to the Army that he loved. From 1985 to 1988, he served as director of defense study programs at the University of South Carolina. From 1988 to 1994, he served as chairman of the Army Retiree Council. For many years, he served as national vice president of the Association of the U. S. Army and as the retiree representative on the board of directors of the Army Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Association and headed the National Military Retirees Golf Tournament at Myrtle Beach, SC. He also served as the president of the South Carolina Korean Veterans War Memorial Committee and was instrumental in establishing the memorial in downtown Columbia, SC.

In recognition of his integrity, exemplary leadership, and outstanding service, the University of Rhode Island proudly conferred upon Lieutenant General Blount the honorary degree of doctor of laws in June 2000.

Lieutenant General Blount is a highly decorated soldier whose awards include the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Silver Star and Purple Heart earned in Vietnam and Korea, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Korean Campaign Service Medal with Four Campaign Stars, Vietnam Service Medal with Four Campaign Stars, and others too numerous to mention. In a rare distinction, he was twice awarded the Order of the Palmetto, the highest civilian honor in South Carolina, first by Governor James Edwards and again by Governor Carroll Campbell.

Lieutenant General Blount is survived by his wife and beloved partner of 66 years, Joan Adele Garrett Blount; by his children, Gail Leslie Blount of south Florida, Carol Linell Blount of

Columbia, John Bruce Blount, Jr., of Washington DC, and Garrett Christopher Blount and his wife, Martha Ivey Blount, of Chicago; and by his grandchildren, John Bruce Blount III, Elizabeth Blount, Christopher Blount, Frances Blount, and Caroline Blount.

Mr. President, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in saluting Lieutenant General Blount's many contributions and sacrifices made in the defense of our great Nation. A true American hero, LTG John Bruce Blount will be sorely missed.●

TRIBUTE TO KITTY PIERCY

● Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I wish to state my congratulations to Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy on her retirement after 12 years of service.

Throughout my time in public office, I have worked with Mayor Piercy at countless events and meetings covering a range of important issues. In my experience with Mayor Piercy, I have been particularly impressed by her work to save our environment with a new sustainability commission and local ordinance to cut carbon emissions, to fight for women and families, to revitalize downtown Eugene, and to move forward through a difficult recession.

Whether it be serving as a grassroots activist, the House Democratic Leader in the Oregon State Legislature, a board member for the Lauren Hill Center for individuals with mental illnesses, or the public affairs director for Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southern Oregon, Mayor Piercy has always been a fierce advocate for vulnerable community members in need.

When elected mayor of Eugene in 2004, Mayor Piercy took her commitment to her community to a new level—especially through her work on environmental justice. She was a key leader on the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, working with 800 mayors across the country to push for changes at the congressional level. At the beginning of her time in office, she led an 18-month initiative to examine how Eugene could support the growth of businesses that create sustainable products or those that adopt more sustainable practices. Thanks to Mayor Piercy's commitment to environmental issues, Eugene has decreased its city carbon emissions by 10 percent.

Throughout her time in office, Mayor Piercy acted on her concern for children and families by serving as chair of the Lane County Commission on Children and Families and the Oregon Commission for Child Care. With these groups, she worked to strengthen families through early intervention and prevention services, as well as advised the Governor and legislature on the importance of high quality child care to Oregon's families and its economy. Mayor Piercy has also been a tireless advocate for homeless youth as a member of the State Commission for Chil-

dren and Families, linking local efforts with those at the State level and advocating with the Oregon Coalition for Runaway and Homeless Youth for an effective State response to the many homeless youth in our State.

We need more leaders like Mayor Kitty Piercy in office. I thank Mayor Piercy for her hard work and dedication to public service and wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TERMINATING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396 OF FEBRUARY 7, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE, AND REVOKING EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396—PM 54

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order that terminates the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, and revokes that Executive Order.

The President issued Executive Order 13396 to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which had resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and attacks against international peacekeeping forces leading to fatalities. In Executive Order 13396, the President addressed that threat by blocking the property and interests in property of, among others, persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to constitute a threat to the peace and national reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, to be responsible for serious violations of international law in Côte d'Ivoire, or to have supplied arms to Côte d'Ivoire. Executive Order 13396 also implemented United States sanctions obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1572 and subsequent resolutions.

I have determined that the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire that gave rise to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 has improved significantly as a result of the progress achieved in the stabilization of Côte d'Ivoire, including the successful conduct of the October 2015 presidential election, progress on the management of arms and related materiel, and the combating of illicit trafficking of natural resources. With these advancements, and with the United Nations Security Council's termination of sanctions obligations on April 28, 2016, in UNSCR 2283, there is no further need for the blocking of assets and other sanctions measures imposed by Executive Order 13396. For these reasons I have determined that it is necessary to terminate the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 and revoke that order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 14, 2016.

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO END THE SUSPENSION OF BURMA AS A BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY UNDER THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) PROGRAM, AND TO DESIGNATE BURMA AS A LEAST-DEVELOPED BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY FOR PURPOSES OF THE GSP PROGRAM—PM 55

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am writing to inform you of my intent to end the suspension of preferential treatment for Burma as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, and to designate Burma as a least-developed beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program. I have carefully considered the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2462(c)). After considering the criteria set forth in section 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP beneficiary developing countries in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) of the United States. After considering the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP least-developed beneficiary developing countries in the HTS.

I submit this notice in accordance with section 502(f)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(1)).

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 14, 2016.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:50 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3590. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in the income threshold used in determining the deduction for medical care.

H.R. 5587. An act to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

H.R. 5985. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, September 14, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1579. An act to enhance and integrate Native American tourism, empower Native American communities, increase coordination and collaboration between Federal tourism assets, and expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the United States.

H.R. 3969. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Laughlin, Nevada, as the "Master Chief Petty Officer Jesse Dean VA Clinic".

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 3318. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 3326. A bill to give States the authority to provide temporary access to affordable private health insurance options outside of Obamacare exchanges.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, September 14, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1579. An act to enhance the integrated Native American tourism, empower Native American communities, increase coordination and collaboration between Federal tourism assets, and expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the United States.

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. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 3321. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to empower the States to set the maximum annual percentage rates applicable to consumer credit transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 3322. A bill to provide an exemption to the individual mandate to maintain health coverage for certain individuals residing in service areas with no health insurance issuers offering plans on an Exchange, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 3323. A bill to improve the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 3324. A bill to amend the Fair Housing Act to establish that certain conduct, in or around a dwelling, shall be considered to be severe or pervasive for purposes of determining whether a certain type of sexual harassment has occurred under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 3325. A bill to promote sustainable economic development in Burma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. PERDUE, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 3326. A bill to give States the authority to provide temporary access to affordable private health insurance options outside of Obamacare exchanges; read the first time.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 3327. A bill to require sponsoring Senators to pay the printing costs of ceremonial and commemorative Senate resolutions; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. KING, Mr. UDALL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 3328. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PERDUE (for himself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 3329. A bill to ensure transparent enforcement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 3330. A bill to reduce the benefits of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who are medical professionals and were convicted of violent crimes against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 3331. A bill to exempt health insurance of residents of the United States territories from the annual fee on health insurance providers; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr.

BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KING, Ms. WARREN, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 559. A resolution designating the week of September 12, 2016, as "National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 134

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 134, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marijuana, and for other purposes.

S. 488

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 488, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs.

S. 1996

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1996, a bill to streamline the employer reporting process and strengthen the eligibility verification process for the premium assistance tax credit and cost-sharing subsidy.

S. 2217

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2217, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

S. 2311

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2415

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2415, a bill to implement integrity measures to strengthen the EB-5 Re-

gional Center Program in order to promote and reform foreign capital investment and job creation in American communities.

S. 2725

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2725, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2748

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2748, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 2763

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2763, a bill to provide the victims of Holocaust-era persecution and their heirs a fair opportunity to recover works of art confiscated or misappropriated by the Nazis.

S. 2765

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2765, a bill to provide for the overall health and well-being of young people, including the promotion of comprehensive sexual health and healthy relationships, the reduction of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, and the prevention of dating violence and sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 2786

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2786, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program.

S. 2957

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2957, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the first manned landing on the Moon.

S. 2962

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from

Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2962, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 3065

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3065, a bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to invest in funding prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home, to ensure that children in foster care are placed in the least restrictive, most family-like, and appropriate settings, and for other purposes.

S. 3090

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3090, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a demonstration program to provide integrated care for Medicare beneficiaries with end-stage renal disease, and for other purposes.

S. 3111

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3111, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the 7.5 percent threshold for the medical expense deduction for individuals age 65 or older.

S. 3132

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3132, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide service dogs to certain veterans with severe post-traumatic stress disorder.

S. 3170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3170, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 3213

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3213, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for transparency of payments made from the Judgment Fund.

S. 3237

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3237, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 3267

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as

cosponsors of S. 3267, a bill to protect against threats posed by Iran to the United States and allies of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 3270

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3270, a bill to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases.

S. 3285

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3285, a bill to prohibit the President from using funds appropriated under section 1304 of title 31, United States Code, to make payments to Iran, to impose sanctions with respect to Iranian persons that hold or detain United States citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 3314

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 3314, a bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the Smithsonian American Latino Museum, and for other purposes.

S. 3315

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3315, a bill to authorize the modification or augmentation of the Second Division Memorial, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 35

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 35, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of Labor relating to "Interpretation of the 'Advice' Exemption in Section 203(c) of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act".

S. RES. 199

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 199, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding establishing a National Strategic Agenda.

S. RES. 556

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 556, a resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of September 12 through September 16, 2016, as "National Family Service Learning Week".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 3323. A bill to improve the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have mentioned before that I have been paying attention to foreign state-owned companies' growing investments in American companies and commercial markets. I would like to spend a few minutes discussing that issue today.

It is becoming increasingly clear that foreign state-owned companies are highly involved in international commerce and competing with companies that are privately owned by shareholders, not governments. This trend is part and parcel of globalization. While there are some obvious benefits to globalization, we also need to be aware of the challenges it may bring with it, and I think this is one of those.

To give one example, I have seen this trend at work in the agricultural sector. ChemChina, a Chinese state-owned company, is currently working on a deal to buy the Swiss-based seed company, Syngenta. About a third of Syngenta's revenue comes from North America—meaning the company is heavily involved with American farmers, including Iowans—and that's why I'm interested in the transaction.

I have already been considering the approval aspect of this proposed merger. Senator STABENOW and I asked the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to review thoroughly the proposed Syngenta acquisition with the Department of Agriculture's help. We raised the issue because, as I have said before, protecting the safety and integrity of our food system is a national security imperative.

Now there is another aspect of this issue I would like to focus on today. Consider this the flip-side of the approval question. As their involvement in international commerce grows, how can we ensure that foreign state-owned companies are held to the same standards and requirements as their non-state-owned counterparts.

First consider two age-old principles of international law. One is that American courts don't exercise jurisdiction over foreign governments as a matter of comity and respect for equally independent sovereigns. This is called "foreign sovereign immunity." The second is that when foreign governments do in fact enter into commerce and behave like market participants—conducting a state-owned business, for example—they are not entitled to foreign sovereign immunity because they are no longer acting as a sovereign, but rather as a business. In that case they should be treated just like any other market participant. This is called the "commercial activity exception" to the principle of foreign sovereign immunity. Congress codified both of these age-old principles in the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976.

These principles are well and good, but I am concerned that, in some cases,

they may not have their intended effects in today's global marketplace.

Some foreign state-owned companies have recently used the defense of foreign sovereign immunity—the principle that a foreign government can't be sued in American courts—as a litigation tactic to avoid claims by American consumers and companies that non-state-owned foreign companies would have to answer. In some cases, foreign state-owned corporate parent companies have succeeded in escaping Americans' claims. They have done this by arguing that the entity conducted commercial activities only through a particular subsidiary—not a parent company often closer to the foreign sovereign. Unless a plaintiff—which may be an American company or consumer—is able to show complete control of the subsidiary by the parent company, the parent company is able to get out of court before the plaintiffs can even try to make their case.

This results in two problems. First, there's an unequal playing field where state-owned foreign companies benefit from a defense not available to non-state-owned companies. Second, there is an uphill battle for American companies and consumers seeking to sue state-owned entities as opposed to non-state-owned entities. When a foreign state-owned entity raises the defense of foreign sovereign immunity, American companies and consumers don't even get the chance to prove their case.

Consider the example I talked about a few months ago. American plaintiffs brought claims against Chinese manufacturers of much of the drywall used to rebuild the Gulf Coast after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The drywall in question was manufactured by two Chinese companies—one owned by a German parent and one owned by a Chinese state-owned parent company.

The court considering these plaintiffs' claims had this to say: "In stark contrast to the straight forwardness with which the . . . litigation proceeded against the [German] defendants, the litigation against the Chinese entities has taken a different course." The German, non-state-owned parent company appeared in court and participated in a bellwether trial where plaintiffs were allowed to try to make out their cases.

The manufacturer with a Chinese state-owned parent "failed timely to answer or otherwise enter an appearance" in court—and didn't do so for nearly two years. In fact, it waited until the court had already entered a judgment against it. Only then did the Chinese state-owned company finally appear in court. When it did, it argued, that it was immune from suit in the United States because it was a state-owned company. After approximately 6 years of litigation, it ultimately succeeded in its request for dismissal. In contrast to the German parent company, the plaintiffs didn't have a chance to try to prove up their case against the Chinese parent company

merely because it happened to be owned by a foreign government. I think that is a problem.

To address these issues I am proposing a modest fix to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. This change would extend the jurisdiction of United States courts to state-owned corporate affiliates of foreign state-owned companies insofar as their commercial activities are concerned. It wouldn't create any additional substantive causes of action against these foreign state-owned companies. Instead, it would mean only that a foreign state-owned company would have to respond to the claims brought by American companies and consumers, just like any other foreign company that isn't owned by a government.

The fix has two main results—correcting the problems I just mentioned. First, it levels the playing field between foreign state-owned and foreign private companies by making both subject to suit in the United States on the same footing, as the “commercial activity exception” originally contemplated. Second, it brings clarity to the sometimes opaque structure of foreign state-owned enterprises and provides American companies and consumers the chance to prove their case against these companies just as against private companies.

In an age when sovereign owned entities, with increasingly complex structures, are interacting with American companies and consumers more than ever it is appropriate to re-examine the “commercial activity” exception and to update it. We have to make sure it is working as it was designed and historically understood.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. PERDUE, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 3326. A bill to give States the authority to provide temporary access to affordable private health insurance options outside of Obamacare exchanges; read the first time.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am here to talk about another issue that is also a real emergency. Later today, I will introduce, with other Senators, the State Flexibility to Provide Affordable Health Options Act. This bill addresses a real emergency. It provides immediate relief to families who use their ObamaCare subsidies to buy insurance on failing ObamaCare exchanges for the 2017 health care plan year.

Here is an example. If you are a single mother in Memphis who gets an ObamaCare subsidy to buy health insurance for your family, you might have read that Tennessee's insurance commissioner says your rates may be more than 60 percent higher for the same health insurance policy for next year, 2017.

You may be eligible for an ObamaCare subsidy. This could soften

the blow of some premium increases, but there is also a good chance the insurance you currently have may be gone by this November, 2 months from now, when you sign up for your insurance for next year, 2017. You will have to figure out how to stretch your subsidy dollars as your options shrink. Maybe the new plan options don't include your doctor in their network so you will have to pay higher copays for your office visits. Maybe you need to buy a new plan altogether with new doctors. You can spend the new year trying to move all your records from your child's old doctor to your child's new doctor, if you can get an appointment.

This legislation will do two things for you and the nearly 11 million Americans who buy health insurance for themselves or their families on ObamaCare exchanges. No. 1, it gives States with a failing ObamaCare exchange the authority to allow residents to use their ObamaCare subsidy to purchase any health care plan of their choice, even those off the exchange for the 2017 plan year.

This opportunity would be available in every single State. It will give Governors the opportunity to step in if he or she determines this emergency relief is “necessary to ensure that residents of the state have access to an adequate number of affordable private health insurance options in the individual or small group markets.”

This bill means, the mother in Memphis can shop around for a health insurance policy that meets her family's needs but is unavailable on the exchange in Tennessee. When she goes to pay for it, she can use the ObamaCare subsidy currently limited to exchange plans.

The second thing this bill does is this. If a State chooses to use this authority to allow residents to use subsidies outside the exchange, the legislation will waive the ObamaCare law's requirement that you must buy a specific health care plan or pay a fine of as much as \$2,000 for a family of four next year. In other words, if that mother cannot find affordable insurance options that meet her family's needs, meaning a plan that covers the right doctors and services on the ObamaCare exchange, then she doesn't have to waste her money or the taxpayer's money on a plan she does not want or does not need. She will not be threatened with paying a fine if she doesn't. The individual mandate and its penalty will be lifted.

Without this emergency bill, she is locked into a failing exchange. The only place her subsidy works is the exchange, and in the words of Tennessee's insurance commissioner last week, Tennessee's exchange is “very near collapse.”

ObamaCare is unraveling at an alarming rate. In November, Americans in nearly one-third of the Nation's counties will have only one insurance carrier to choose from, when they have

to buy health insurance on their regional ObamaCare exchange. Most Americans on the exchanges will face higher rates.

In my home State of Tennessee, residents will see their rates increase between 44 and 62 percent, on the average, next year. So even for a healthy, 40-year-old, nonsmoking Tennessean with the lowest price silver plan on Tennessee's exchange, premiums increased last year to \$262 a month. Next year it is \$333 a month.

Tennessee had to take extreme measures to allow these increases because insurance companies told the State: If you don't let us file for rate increases, we will have to leave. If that happened, Tennesseans might have had only one insurer to choose from. That is what is happening in States all over the country as ObamaCare plans and rates get locked in for next year.

According to the consulting firm Avalere Health, Americans buying insurance in one-third of ObamaCare exchange regions next year may have only one insurer to choose from. People buying on an ObamaCare exchange will have only one insurance carrier to choose from in the following States: Alaska, Alabama, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Wyoming, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

The same Kaiser Family Foundation report found that in a growing number of States, States that have multiple insurers offering plans statewide will have only one insurer selling policies in a majority of counties. Tennessee is one of those States.

Last year, Tennesseans could choose ObamaCare plans between at least 2 insurers in all 95 counties in our State. For next year, 2017, it is estimated that 60 percent of Tennessee's counties will have only one insurer offering ObamaCare plans. North Carolina is experiencing the same thing. Next year, 90 percent of the counties in North Carolina are estimated to have only one insurer offering ObamaCare plans, up from 23 percent last year.

There is a similar picture in West Virginia, Utah, South Carolina, Nevada, Arizona, Mississippi, Missouri, and Florida. Just last week, the Concord Monitor in New Hampshire published an article with this headline: “Maine health insurance cooperative leaves N.H. market, reeling from losses.” That is their headline.

The story goes on to describe how this health insurance plan will no longer be operating in New Hampshire after experiencing over \$10 million in losses in the ObamaCare exchange over just the first two quarters of this year alone.

That move leaves more than 11,000 individuals in the Granite State looking for new health care plans.

The bill I am introducing will not fix ObamaCare for Americans. It is not a permanent solution, but it does give the mom in Memphis a real solution for next year, for 2017. It lets her know we are on her side and we have not forgotten her and her family as we seek to

repeal ObamaCare and replace it with step-by-step reforms that transform the health care delivery system by putting patients in charge, giving them more choices, and reducing the cost of health care so more people can afford it, which is precisely the alternative Republicans offered in 2008, 2009, and 2010, when ObamaCare was debated and voted in.

It also highlights the big structural change we will need to make in the near future to avoid a near collapse of our Nation's health insurance market.

Americans get their insurance, our insurance, through many different places, some from Medicare, some from Medicaid, and most from their employers, but nearly 11 million buy their insurance through the exchanges.

If the ObamaCare policyholder isn't bearing the cost of the higher premiums I just described, then you—the taxpayer—will because a large portion of ObamaCare premiums are subsidized with tax dollars. There is no excuse for having a failing insurance market where taxpayers are paying most of the bill and costs are so out of control that we may soon have a situation where no insurance company is willing to sell insurance on an ObamaCare exchange.

Where does that leave these 11 million Americans? ObamaCare and its one-size-fits all takeover of health care robs States of their abilities to provide access to affordable health care plans in a way that makes sense for their State populations and economies.

ObamaCare was supposed to create a marketplace where people would have more access to affordable, private health insurance plans. Robust, private, market competition was supposed to spur innovative insurance design and help drive down costs. But just the opposite has happened, as those stuck in ObamaCare are facing fewer and more expensive options.

Long term, Americans should have the freedom to make their own choices about their families' health care needs.

But short-term, in November, nearly 11 million Americans need freedom from the ObamaCare exchanges. And this legislation that I will introduce later today with other Senators will provide that immediately.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 559—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2016, AS “NATIONAL DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS RECOGNITION WEEK”

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KING, Ms. WARREN, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 559

Whereas direct support professionals, including direct care workers, personal assist-

ants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals, are key to providing publicly funded, long-term support and services for millions of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals provide essential support to help keep individuals with disabilities connected to their families, friends, and communities so as to avoid more costly institutional care;

Whereas direct support professionals support individuals with disabilities by helping those individuals make person-centered choices that lead to meaningful, productive lives;

Whereas direct support professionals must build close, respectful, and trusted relationships with individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals provide a broad range of individualized support to individuals with disabilities, including—

- (1) assisting with the preparation of meals;
- (2) helping with medication;
- (3) assisting with bathing, dressing, and other aspects of daily living;
- (4) assisting with access to their environment;
- (5) providing transportation to school, work, religious, and recreational activities; and
- (6) helping with general daily affairs, such as assisting with financial matters, medical appointments, and personal interests;

Whereas the participation of direct support professionals in medical care planning is critical to the successful transition of individuals from medical events to post-acute care and long-term support and services;

Whereas there is a documented critical and increasing shortage of direct support professionals throughout the United States;

Whereas direct support professionals are a critical element in supporting individuals who are receiving health care services for severe chronic health conditions and individuals with functional limitations;

Whereas many direct support professionals are the primary financial providers for their families;

Whereas direct support professionals are hardworking, taxpaying citizens who provide an important service to people with disabilities in the United States, yet many continue to earn low wages, receive inadequate benefits, and have limited opportunities for advancement, resulting in high turnover and vacancy rates that adversely affect the quality of support, safety, and health of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States, in *Olmstead v. L.C.* by Zimring, 527 U.S. 581 (June 22, 1999)—

(1) recognized the importance of the deinstitutionalization of, and community-based services for, individuals with disabilities; and

(2) held that, under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S. 12101 et seq.), a State must provide community-based services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities if—

(A) the community-based services are appropriate;

(B) the affected person does not oppose receiving the community-based services; and

(C) the community-based services can be reasonably accommodated after the community has taken into account the resources available to the State and the needs of other individuals with disabilities in the State; and

Whereas, in 2016, the majority of direct support professionals are employed in home- and community-based settings and that trend will increase over the next decade: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 12, 2016, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”;

(2) recognizes and appreciates the contribution, dedication, and vital role of direct support professionals in enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities of all ages;

(3) commends direct support professionals for being integral to the provision of long-term support and services for individuals with disabilities; and

(4) finds that the successful implementation of the public policies affecting individuals with disabilities in the United States depends on the dedication of direct support professionals.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5067. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5042 proposed by Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) to the amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5068. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5069. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5070. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5071. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5072. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5073. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2848, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 5067. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5042 proposed by Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) to the amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 210, strike lines 12 through 18 and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out the project for flood damage reduction, bank stabilization, and sediment and erosion control known as the “Yazoo Basin, Mississippi, Mississippi Delta Headwater Project, MS”, authorized by title I of Public Law 98-8 (97 Stat. 22), as amended, shall not be limited to watersheds referenced in reports accompanying appropriations bills for previous fiscal years.

(b) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary may operate and maintain those features of the project described in subsection (a) completed before the date of enactment of this Act in accordance with section 103(e)(2) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2213(e)(2)).

SA 5068. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. SURPLUS WATER STORAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall not charge a fee for surplus water under a contract entered into pursuant to section 6 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (33 U.S.C. 708) (commonly known as the “Flood Control Act of 1944”) if the contract is for surplus water stored in the Lake Cumberland Watershed, Kentucky and Tennessee.

(b) TERMINATION.—The limitation under subsection (a) shall expire on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—Nothing in this section—

(1) affects the authority of the Secretary under section 2695 of title 10, United States Code, to accept funds or to cover the administrative expenses relating to certain real property transactions;

(2) affects the application of section 6 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (33 U.S.C. 708) (commonly known as the “Flood Control Act of 1944”) or the Water Supply Act of 1958 (43 U.S.C. 390b) to surplus water stored outside of the Lake Cumberland Watershed, Kentucky and Tennessee; or

(3) affects the authority of the Secretary to accept funds under section 216(c) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (33 U.S.C. 2321a).

SA 5069. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 7206 and insert the following:

SEC. 7206. CHESAPEAKE BAY GRASS SURVEY.

Section 117(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1267(i)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ANNUAL SURVEY.—The Administrator shall carry out an annual survey of sea grasses in the Chesapeake Bay.”.

SA 5070. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VIII, add the following:
SEC. 80. PROTECTION OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary or the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may not enter into an agreement related to resolving a dispute or claim with an individual that would restrict in any way the individual from speaking to members of Congress or their staff on any topic not otherwise prohibited from disclosure by Federal law or required by executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs.

SA 5071. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4979 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mrs. BOXER)) to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 1009 and insert the following:

SEC. 1009. GAO REVIEW AND REPORT.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review, and submit to Congress a report on the implementation and effectiveness of the projects carried out under section 219 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-580; 106 Stat. 4835).

SA 5072. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. REVIEW OF CERTAIN COST ALLOCATIONS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall review the cost allocations applicable to the repair of Boca Reservoir in accordance with the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 (43 U.S.C. 506 et seq.) and submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report regarding how the cost allocations are consistent with the purposes for which Boca Reservoir is currently being operated as re-

quired by the Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Rights Settlement Act (Public Law 101-618; 104 Stat. 3294) and the Truckee River Operating Agreement.

SA 5073. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill 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, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. REVIEW OF CERTAIN COST ALLOCATIONS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall review the cost allocations applicable to the repair of Boca Reservoir in accordance with the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 (43 U.S.C. 506 et seq.) and submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report regarding how the cost allocations are consistent with the purposes for which Boca Reservoir is currently being operated as required by the Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Rights Settlement Act (Public Law 101-618; 104 Stat. 3294) and the Truckee River Operating Agreement.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “NATO Expansion: Examining the Accession of Montenegro.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR-418 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “The Future of the VA: Examining the Commission on Care Report and VA's Response.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, AGENCY ACTION, FEDERAL RIGHTS AND FEDERAL COURTS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal

Courts be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Protection Internet Freedom: Implications of Ending U.S. Oversight of the Internet.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE, TRANSNATIONAL CRIME, CIVILIAN SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GLOBAL WOMEN'S ISSUES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Protecting Girls: Global Efforts to End Child Marriage.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 14, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Maximizing Your Social Security Benefits: What You Need to Know.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted to Sara Bauer of my staff for the duration of today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS RECOGNITION WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 559, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 559) designating the week of September 12, 2016, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my Senate colleagues to join me in designating the week of September 12, 2016, as National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week. Direct support professionals—also known as DSPs—provide an invaluable service by caring for the most vulner-

able among us, including seniors, people living with disabilities, and the chronically ill. Through the efforts of this essential health care workforce, these individuals are able to live, work, and fully participate in their communities.

As our population continues to grow and age, the demand for DSPs and other home- and community-based services will increase commensurately to address evolving health care needs. Studies show that approximately 12 million Americans currently need long-term services and supports LTSS, and about half of these individuals are over the age of 65. It is reasonable to expect that about one-half of seniors 65 years and older will develop a serious disability which requires LTSS. Although many will require care for an average of 2 years, one in seven seniors is expected to have care needs lasting for 5 years or more. During this time, most individuals prefer to be cared for in the comfort of their own homes, with the assistance of family caregivers and a multidisciplinary health care team.

Direct support professionals are often considered to be the backbone of the health care provider team, ensuring that patients adhere to treatment plans and attend doctors' appointments and helping them navigate daily life. In our country, we are incredibly fortunate to have millions of service-oriented Americans who are willing to rise to the task of becoming a direct support professional. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment of DSPs is projected to grow by an average of 26 percent from 2014 to 2024, compared to a 7 percent average growth rate for all occupations during that period. Unfortunately, direct support professionals are often forced to leave the jobs they love due to low wages and excessive, difficult work hours. Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we work to ensure that these hard-working individuals have the income and emotional support they need and deserve.

For these reasons, I am proud my colleagues Senators COLLINS, PORTMAN, BROWN, BLUMENTHAL, MENENDEZ, GRASSLEY, MARKEY, KING, WARREN, and AYOTTE have joined me in introducing a resolution designating the week of September 12 as National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week. This time allows us the opportunity to celebrate DSPs' important work and renew our commitment to support this vital workforce. All Americans are entitled to equality, access, and choice, particularly in regards to comprehensive health care for underserved communities. Any concerted effort to improve care for our Nation's seniors, the disabled, and chronically ill must fully engage direct support professionals, community-based organizations, and every level of government.

DSPs are highly skilled, knowledgeable, and compassionate. The quality of home- and community-based services and overall patient experience

truly lies in their hands. As we consider this year's National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week, let us continue this bipartisan momentum to enhance our health care workforce and advance comprehensive health care for those in need.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 559) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 3326

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3326) to give States the authority to provide temporary access to affordable private health insurance options outside of Obamacare exchanges.

Mr. McCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 107-12, the reappointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: Trevor Whipple of Vermont.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, September 15; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 2848, as amended, postcloture; further, that the time following leader remarks until

11:30 a.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, all postcloture time with respect to S. 2848, as amended, expire at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:33 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 15, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 9, 2016

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, as the lead sponsor of the House companion to this legislation, I would also like to address two technical items in the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act that deserve clarification.

The first issue deals with Section 4 of JASTA. Section 4 amends the Anti-Terrorism Act to create a cause of action for aiding and abetting terrorism. It is a narrowly crafted provision aimed at any "person," as defined in section 1 of title 1 of the U.S. Code. After the Senate passed JASTA, one commentator speculated that the definition of "person" in this section was too limited and would not permit such a cause of action against a foreign government. This would be an inaccurate interpretation of the text. Section 3 of JASTA expressly authorized jurisdiction for claims made under section 2333 of title 18 and made clear that such claims would be permitted against foreign states in any case in which the new jurisdictional exception of JASTA, proposed section 1605B, might apply. This language should be interpreted as controlling. This point should be obvious given the underlying purpose and structure of JASTA, but I wanted to make it emphatically clear here.

The second item addresses Section 5 of JASTA, the provision authorizing a stay of actions in appropriate circumstances. When the Senate passed JASTA on May 17, Senator CHARLES SCHUMER emphasized that, should the government pursue a stay pursuant to this provision, it should be prepared to provide substantial evidence of good faith negotiations to the court such as details about those involved in the discussions and their authority to reach a resolution, where and when the discussions occurred, and a timeline for resolving the matter.

I agree with Senator SCHUMER that these factors are important, but I also understand the concept of "good faith" to include additional requirements that the court should consider. First, we expect that good faith settlement discussions will include appropriate representatives of the plaintiffs in any litigation, such as the lead counsel designated by the court or otherwise. Second, as the court evaluates whether good faith discussions are ongoing, it should also remember that those discussions are designed to achieve a fair and equitable resolution of the disputes, taking fully into account the gravity of the harm and scope of the claims in issue, the length of the pendency of the claims, and other relevant factors. In other words, the purpose of negotiations is not simply to come to a settlement, but to come to a fair and equitable one.

Third and finally, given the realities of international terrorism and the sometimes murky relationship between private and state parties, any discussions occurring pursuant to a stay may properly encompass the resolution of claims against private parties, so as to enable a comprehensive resolution of disputes arising under JASTA that implicate foreign relations.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5620) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, it is with great reluctance that I rise in opposition to H.R. 5620. I am disappointed that my Republican colleagues have missed the opportunity to pass legislation that immediately reforms the Department of Veterans Affairs' disability claim appeals backlog. Instead they are determined to push through a bill that they know deprives VA employees, many of whom are veterans, of due process and abridges their constitutional rights.

Our veterans deserve better than the current disability appeals claim backlog system which currently has almost half a million claims. It is a system that has not been updated since the 1930s. My colleague, Representative DINA TITUS, has introduced legislation that would decrease wait times and save the VA over \$2.6 billion. Without this legislation our veterans may soon have to wait over a decade for their appeal to process. That is unacceptable. I fully support Representative TITUS's comprehensive solution to provide our veterans with expeditious and accurate service and I am pleased that it is included in this bill.

However, I cannot support Sections 2 through 8 and 10 of H.R. 5620 which are partisan and unconstitutional attempts by Republicans to punish VA employees. Republicans claim that their goal is to help veterans but they seemingly ignore that one-third of VA employees are veterans themselves. They have tried to pass this so-called 'administrative reform' before and faced the same constitutional challenges. It is incomprehensible that Republicans are wasting taxpayer time and resources pushing through this legislation.

While accountability and reform at the VA are necessary, constitutional rights cannot be abrogated or dismissed simply because Re-

publicans do not think that particular right is important. I am fully supportive of Ranking Member TAKANO's amendment which adds accountability at the VA but still protects the rights of VA employees. Republicans cannot claim that Democrats are against accountability because numerous amendments to H.R. 5620 adding accountability measures were introduced by Democrats, were unopposed by Republicans and passed with bipartisan support on the House floor.

I sincerely hope my Republican colleagues will introduce bipartisan legislation that they know can pass to give our veterans the service they deserve.

RECOGNITION OF THE SACRAMENTO STAND DOWN ASSOCIATION

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sacramento chapter of Stand Down on celebrating their 25th anniversary. This organization and its volunteers have served the veterans of the Sacramento region selflessly for many years and it is my pleasure to recognize them today.

In military history, a "stand down" was a refuge for soldiers fighting on the front lines. It was a place for them to rest, recover, and receive medical care. These times gave the exhausted troops safe space to recuperate. Today, the Stand Down programs do the same for our homeless veterans.

The Sacramento chapter of Stand Down has hosted a gathering for many years. There, homeless veterans can receive medical and dental care, showers, haircuts, and a hot meal. Several federal agencies, like the Social Security Administration and the Veterans Administration, are onsite to provide critical services. Veterans can renew their identification and adjudicate minor legal disputes through an onsite court.

The Stand Down program has proven to be incredibly effective, with many veterans who have gone through the program returning as volunteers. These volunteers know what it's like to be a homeless veteran, and are happy to help their fellow veterans get the leg up they need.

The Sacramento Stand Down Association has, over the past twenty-five years, spent countless hours providing meals, services, and a safe place for the homeless veterans of our region. As a doctor who has helped care for veterans, I've witnessed how much these men and women have sacrificed. I am proud to recognize the service of the Sacramento Stand Down Association, and wish them many more years of continued success.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN HONOR OF JYM GANAHL

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the storied meteorological career of Jym Ganahl. For five decades, Jym has served his friends and neighbors as their meteorologist. His accurate and educational forecasts helped to warn us of impending inclement weather as well as plan our day's activities.

Beginning his career in 1966 with KWWL-TV in Waterloo, Iowa, Jym quickly became a valuable asset in the news room. In 1978, Jym joined WCMH-TV in Columbus, Ohio, and has since become a staple in our community. For nearly four decades we have tuned in to hear Jym's report, and generations have grown up hoping Jym would give them the good news that a snow storm was imminent and school would be canceled.

In addition to his talent as a meteorologist, Jym is also a valuable mentor to aspiring young men and women. His guidance and tutelage helped many achieve their goals. Unfortunately, the hands of time do not stop and central Ohio witnessed Jym's last forecast on September 4, 2016. Although we will still be seeing him on television during his WCMH tailgate-party broadcasts during football season, the weather forecast will not be the same without his humor and knowledge. I have enjoyed working with Jym Ganahl over the years and I congratulate him on his 50-year career as meteorologist. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING MILLER COUNTY,
MISSOURI UPON ITS DESIGNATION
AS A PURPLE HEART
COUNTY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the designation of Miller County, Missouri as a Purple Heart County and its inclusion as a part of the Purple Heart Trail.

The Purple Heart Trail is a system of roads and monuments throughout the United States that pay tribute to veterans that have been awarded the Purple Heart. The system was established in 1992 by the Military Order of the Purple Heart. As a Purple Heart County, signs along Miller County roadways will now provide a visual reminder of those who have paid the price for others to live and travel freely throughout our country.

The Purple Heart was established by George Washington to honor members of the military that have been wounded or killed in service to their country. As a lifelong resident of Miller County, I am proud to live in a place that prioritizes honoring those who have paid the price to secure our liberty. Our nation owes so much to the brave men and women that have placed their lives on the line for our nation's future. The Purple Heart Trail is an important reminder of that debt of gratitude shared by all Americans.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Miller County on this important designation, and in thanking all Purple Heart recipients and veterans for their service to our country.

IN MEMORY OF RAY THORN

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, Ray Karl Thorn was born March 20, 1946 and passed away August 27, 2016. A loving husband, father, and grandfather, he was a ray of sunshine to all who knew him.

As a community leader, Ray was one of the founding members of the Friends of Colorado Lagoon (FOCL). He was instrumental in the successful litigation that saved the lagoon from a flawed storm drain project, which would have precluded any restoration.

He then led the group's pivot towards collaboration and relationship building, creating the strong partnerships that FOCL still enjoys with the city, port, and regional groups. He was FOCL president for five critical years during the time when the group was fighting to convince the city and regional leaders that restoring the lagoon's historic open waterway was essential to the community and environment.

His relationships with the City of Long Beach Parks, Recreation, and Marine directors gave FOCL credibility and helped the group move forward when there were many projects competing for funding. In later years Ray continued to serve as a board member and leader for FOCL as the group successfully restored vital wetland habitat, helped transform the lagoon from having the worst water quality in Long Beach to the best, and educated the public about the importance of wetlands. The final vision of the lagoon as a clean jewel of Long Beach would not have been possible without Ray's efforts.

Born in Tooele, Utah to Roe and Lydia Thorn, he was the fourth of five children. Ray grew up in Springville, Utah and graduated from Springville High School. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Sociology and a Master's Degree from BYU in Organizational Behavior.

It was also at BYU that Ray met his future wife Becky Asher. Their marriage of 44 years was a positive example for many that knew them because of their devotion to each other and their commitment to creating and maintaining a strong marriage. Their only daughter, Nicole Thorn, was born in 1979 and their grandson, Leif, was born to Nicole Thorn and Steve Stern in 2010. Ray spent much of his time with them, for they were a source of joy in his life.

Ray loved the outdoors and was a beautiful downhill and avid cross country skier. He loved spending time in the mountains, on the beaches, hiking, bike riding, and rollerblading. Ray loved animals and enjoyed evenings throwing the Frisbee or ball for his dogs and teaching them new tricks. He was devoted to his wife and family and cherished the vacations, road trips, and camping trips they took together. He loved adventures: walking on thin ice to see under-ice whirlpools, rafting in a lake during a lightning storm, driving through

rivers, sneaking into places to find the best sledding hill, and off-roading for the fun of it.

He was an excellent communicator both in his work and personal life, bringing people together and making them feel valued and understood. As an Organizational Behavior Consultant, Ray worked for over 40 years with business, governmental, and educational institutions. He assisted leaders, teams, and organizations to improve their culture, norms, and working relationships.

Ray had a gift for helping people communicate. He coached them to better understand each other, to enhance their levels of trust and openness, and to engage in productive problem solving. As a coach, trainer, and team builder, he assisted thousands of leaders from multiple organizations across the country and abroad. He led them to respect and utilize their differences in order to compliment rather than compete with one another, freeing them to create and maintain supportive teamwork.

Ray is survived by his wife Becky Thorn, his daughter Nicole Thorn, his grandson Leif Thorn-Stern, his son-in-law Steve Stern, and his sister Maris Grotegut.

He will be dearly missed by all who knew him.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SARAH E.
D'ERRICO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sarah E. D'Errico, 42, who passed away on July 6, 2016. Sarah was born on February 25, 1974 in Columbus, Ohio, the daughter of Walter and Karen Lee Kingry Matheny.

Sarah graduated from Westland High School in 1992 and went on to attend The Ohio State University, then eventually graduate Summa Cum Laude from Youngstown State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education. She went on to work for Delphi Packard Electric, and then for the Trumbull County Educational Service Center, where she taught for their Trumbull Virtual Learning Academy.

Sarah enjoyed being involved with the community and contributed her time in many ways. She belonged to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Niles, and was a parish school instructor and festival volunteer, and a Girl Scout Troop Leader. She also loved to fish, scuba dive, kayak, go on family vacations, entertain, and craft. Above all else, she loved spending time with her husband and children.

Sarah will be deeply missed by her family. She leaves behind her parents, her husband James D'Errico, whom she married June 25, 2004, her daughter Alysse Marie D'Errico, her son Gavin Joseph D'Errico, her two brothers Andrew Matheny and Adam Matheny, her maternal grandmother Evelyn Kingry and her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Sam and Joyce D'Errico.

IN HONOR OF VINZ KOLLER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable public service of Vinz Koller, who has worked tirelessly to strengthen and improve the American democratic process, both nationally and in Monterey County, California. As an immigrant who chose to be an American, Vinz embodies the core civic values of our nation's citizenship. Those of us who have had the great good fortune to have known Vinz over the years have all been touched by his tremendous integrity and boundless determination. So it is my pleasure to join with my Monterey County Democratic Party friends in recognizing Vinz for his invaluable support for strengthening democracy.

Vinz came to Monterey County to study at the Monterey Institute of International Studies after earning a BA in political science and English from the University of Zurich in Switzerland. Professionally, he is Director of Training and Technical Assistance at Social Policy Research Associates and is in frequent demand as trainer and facilitator on a wide range of workforce development related topics for the U.S. Department of Labor and state and local agencies. Vinz likes to hike the Big Sur coastline, paddle on the bay in his kayak, climb Sierra peaks on skis or ride the bike trails at the former Fort Ord. He is a passionate bread baker and for ten seasons has been singing in the Carmel Bach Festival chorus.

Vinz played an active role in the 2004 presidential campaign at the Democratic National Committee in Washington, DC, as well as Arizona and Oregon. This experience energized Vinz to improve the community level Democratic Party infrastructure in his home community. In 2004 and 2005, he was a vital member of the "Boots Camp" team that designed an ambitious new strategy that would establish the Monterey County Democrats as one of most effective central committees in California.

Later, Vinz set up a countywide precinct program for the Monterey County Democrats, managed the 2008 presidential and 2012 special election campaigns, and is currently working the 2016 campaign. Vinz chaired the Monterey County Democratic Central Committee from 2006 to 2016. In that capacity he led the way in executing and refining strategy as the local Democratic party helped elect a list of great Democratic candidates, train hundreds of volunteers, and establish a culture of excellence and integrity, which in turn has been instrumental in attracting many new members. He is currently the Campaign Coordinator for the Monterey County Democrats and Chair of the Democratic 27th Assembly District Committee and is on the Executive Board of the California Democratic Party.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the whole House in thanking Vinz for his dedicated civic involvement. The strength of our Republic depends on the tireless efforts of the women and men like Vinz who make our democracy vibrant and representative.

RECOGNIZING DEB NEYMAN FOR RECEIVING A PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF ALTOONA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Deb Neyman, one of the winners of the 23rd annual Personal Achievement Award from the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona. This award is given to encourage and recognize those who have made an outstanding effort to deal with or overcome a disability. This year, Deb has earned that distinction.

Deb suffered a stroke in June of 2015 that affected her speech and body. It wasn't long after, in July of 2015, that she then suffered a second stroke. In August of 2015 she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and underwent surgery for a Hysterectomy in September of the same year. At only 47-years-old and working as an educator, with two school-age children living at home, Deb faced a tragic sequence of events that would have stunned even the bravest among us. Yet, through all of these troubles, Deb, with the boundless support of her husband, has approached her situation with a positive and cheerful attitude.

Today, she has made an amazing recovery with the strong support of her friends and family, and has regained much of her previous routine, even managing to return to educating for the Glendale School District.

I am humbled to recognize the truly impressive recovery Deb has made. Her strength and positivity in the face of such adversity is remarkable. As such, it is my pleasure to wish Deb the best as she continues to reclaim her health and life.

CONGRATULATING BOB MARIANO
ON RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honor an innovator, entrepreneur, and business leader from the 6th District of Illinois. Bob Mariano has dedicated the last 49 years of his life to the grocery industry and on September 1st, he retired. After an iconic run as a leader in grocery retailing in Chicagoland, Bob has earned his rest and relaxation.

Bob started his career in the grocery industry in 1967. At the ripe age of 17, he worked as a part-time deli clerk at Dominick's Finer Foods. He rose through the ranks, holding various roles including Senior Vice President, before being named President and CEO of Dominick's in 1995. Bob led Dominick's through an initial public offering in 1996 and its eventual sale in 1998.

In 2010, equipped with years of expertise, Bob started a new venture—he opened his own grocery store. The first Mariano's opened in 2010 in Arlington Heights, bringing a new model of affordable, upscale groceries with a focus on in-store restaurants, sushi offerings,

and other freshly prepared amenities. Since then Mariano's has had a mercurial rise, adding another 36 stores in just six short years. None of that would have been possible without Bob's expertise and vision. It is no surprise that other leaders in the grocery field praise his work. Chairman and CEO of the Kroger Co., Rodney McMullen, which recently bought Mariano's, stated, "Bob is an innovator and his legacy in the grocery industry will be celebrated for many years to come. More importantly, Bob is a great friend to all of us here".

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues please join me in congratulating Bob Mariano on an accomplished career and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

CALEB JAMES KOKER REMARKS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Sergeant Caleb James Koker for his many accomplishments in his service to the U.S. Army National Guard in Marion, IL. Caleb is a Fairfield, IL native who attends Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Caleb has a remarkable service record. He finished at the top of his class in all of his military training, and he also proved to be a proficient marksman by passing his M4 rifle training with a perfect score of 40/40. Caleb then joined Unit HHC2-130 INF of the U.S. Army National Guard in Marion, where he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant at only 20 years old. That made Caleb the youngest soldier to be promoted to the rank of Sergeant in the history of his unit. Since then, Caleb has gone on to earn three Army Achievement Medals while serving in his unit.

The fact that Caleb has balanced a distinguished service career with a stellar academic career makes his accomplishments even more impressive. He has maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout his undergraduate education at SIUC, and he will travel to Pennsylvania to train as a Multitrans System Operator in the next few weeks. Caleb will earn a degree in Criminal Justice when he graduates from SIUC this December, and he will enlist as an active duty member of the U.S. Army upon graduation. After that, Caleb plans to continue to serve our country by pursuing a career in Federal Law Enforcement.

I offer my congratulations to Sergeant Caleb Koker for his accomplishments while serving in the U.S. Army National Guard and while pursuing his college degree, and I wish him the best of luck as he continues to serve our country with pride.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Vote Number 492 through 504, I am not recorded because I was absent from the U.S. House of Representatives. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner.

On Roll Call Number 492 had I been present, I would have voted NO.
 On Roll Call Number 493 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 494 had I been present, I would have voted NO.
 On Roll Call Number 495 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 496 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 497 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 498 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 499 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 500 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 501 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 502 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 503 had I been present, I would have voted YES.
 On Roll Call Number 504 had I been present, I would have voted YES.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT
 OF SMITHS STATION MAYOR
 LAFAYE DELLINGER

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Mayor LaFaye Dellinger, who is retiring as Smiths Station Mayor after 15 years of service.

LaFaye Dellinger graduated from Smiths Station High School and has proudly served as the first mayor of Smiths Station for the past 15 years.

During her tenure, she established strong relationships with the surrounding municipalities including Fort Henning, Georgia and pioneered the partnership between the City of Smiths Station and Lee County to make the Smiths Station Sports Complex a reality.

She was instrumental in obtaining the current City Hall and is past President of the Ruritan Community Club. Mrs. Dellinger is a loving wife and mother.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing my friend Mayor Dellinger and wishing her well in her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO CHELSEY JEAN HOOD
 RUSSELL

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize the tragic passing of Chelsey Jean Hood Russell from Denver, Colorado. I've been fortunate to know Chelsey and her family for many years, and had a close relationship with her late father Don Hood, a Vietnam War hero who passed away in 2012. Chelsey Jean Hood Russell, 35, passed away on August 23, 2016, on Lake Powell in Utah.

She was born on February 24, 1981, in Denver, Colorado to Trisha and Donald Hood. She was soon joined by her younger brother, Cayman, who was her best friend and confidant for life. Chelsey earned both her B.S.B.A. and her law degree from the University of Denver.

Chelsey was an associate attorney at the law firm Welborn Sullivan Meck & Tooley, specializing in mineral title examination and oil and gas regulatory matters. Chelsey was an outstanding legal talent gifted with a creative mind, was instrumental in building the firm's highly successful oil and gas regulatory practice, and possessed an exceptional ability to make her clients feel respected and appreciated. She was recently elected Secretary of the Colorado Bar Association's Natural Resources and Energy Law Executive Council and spoke regularly on oil and gas regulatory matters.

Those who knew her best characterized Chelsey by her extraordinary strength of both willpower and athleticism. She gave birth to her daughter just three days before taking—and acing—the Colorado bar exam. Her lifelong goal was to run a marathon in every state, and she recently achieved her personal record in the Revel Run marathon in Morrison, Colorado. Last summer, she ran both the Leadville 50 and the Leadville 100, running 50 and then 100 miles (for good measure) from elevations of 9,200 to 12,600 feet. In addition to a lifelong love of running, Chelsey passionately pursued climbing, cycling, and swimming, and was an avid backpacker and camper.

Even more notable than Chelsey's athletic achievements was her compassionate heart. Chelsey was dedicated to her many friendships and always thought of others before herself. She gave back through numerous charitable causes, and in particular supported the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Chelsey attended Mile Hi Church and had a deep and abiding spiritual practice that carried her through many difficult times.

In spite of her countless achievements and staggering moral strength, Chelsey was truly defined by a singular role: she was the most loving mother in the world to her two children, Hayden Elaine, 5, and Harvey Donald, 2. Leading by example, she instilled in her children a love for outdoor adventures; a commitment to hard work; the importance of family and friendship above all else; and a strong sense of passion, fearlessness, and love of life. Chelsey's life was cut tragically short when she displayed the ultimate act of motherly love: at the end of a wonderful family vacation on Lake Powell she suffered an acute cardiac event while helping her young son, who had fallen in the water. She will always be remembered as a true hero.

Chelsey is survived by her mother, Trisha; her brother, Cayman; her children, Hayden and Harvey; her niece, Zoi; and countless friends who loved her dearly.

It is a true honor to have the opportunity to memorialize Chelsey Jean Hood Russell on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives today. She lived fully and died courageously, and it is my hope that we can all learn from the beautiful example she set in her 35 years of life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STERLING
 MCPHERSON

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sterling McPherson who passed away on Sunday, September 4, 2016 at the age of 82. Sterling was born on January 24, 1934 in Cairo, Illinois, the son of John and Rose Courtney McPherson.

While living in Cairo, Sterling played baseball in the Negro leagues. After moving to Warren, Ohio Sterling managed Danny's Bar, Delmar Lounge, and Mac's A.C. Club baseball teams, as well as the Escapades baseball team. He worked as a foreman for Albee Homes for 20 years and the City of Niles Water Department for 20 years. I was lucky to have Sterling as a member of my Congressional staff for 10 years where he proved to be a dedicated public servant.

Sterling will be deeply missed by his family. He leaves behind his loving wife of nearly 59 years, Reaby Bowling. They raised several children together including their daughters Roslyn (William) Williams of Warren, Darlene McPherson of Warren, Charlene (Eddie) Roberson of Warren; his sons, Sterling (Tracy) McPherson of Las Vegas, Londell McPherson of Las Vegas, Robert McPherson of Warren; and his stepson, Fred (Michelle) Bowling of Harrisburg, Pa.; and a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

Sterling was preceded in death by his parents, his son Richard, his stepson James, his brothers Robert and John and his sister, Ella.

Losses like these are never easy, but we can all take solace in the fact that Sterling touched the hearts of many whether it was through baseball or public service. I miss him and I know that his memory will live on through all of us that knew him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

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

Roll Call Number 501 NAY
 Roll Call Number 502 NAY
 Roll Call Number 503 YEA
 Roll Call Number 504 YEA

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BROWN

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, a long-time friend of mine and my family, County Commissioner Mike Brown, has recently left office after two-terms on the Knox County Commission.

Not only did Commissioner Brown serve with great honor and distinction on the County

Commission, he has served the community in many other ways throughout his life.

I am sure that he will continue to help many people in retirement, because Mike Brown has always had a heart for service. But I can assure everyone that our Nation would be much stronger if we had more citizens like Mike Brown.

I would like to call to the attention of my Colleagues the South Knox Shopper News which ran as a part of the Knoxville News Sentinel.

SOUTH KNOX SHOPPER NEWS

“BROWN CALLS RETIREMENT ‘BITTERSWEET’”

(By Betsy Pickle)

County Commissioner Mike Brown has a lot of years invested in Knox County—about 227 of them.

Brown is a member of one of the First Families of Tennessee. His Virginia-born Brown ancestors received a land grant of about 600 acres in the Stock Creek area around 1789—well before John Sevier became a neighbor. At the time, the land wasn't even in Knox County; it was part of Hawkins County.

So retiring after two terms on the commission has been “bittersweet” for the former insurance agent. Last Wednesday, on the day his service officially ended, Brown said he'd already done some county business in the morning, and he wasn't going to call it quits until 5 p.m. rolled around.

Brown himself grew up on Stock Creek Road with his younger sister, Pat, and brother, Tom, both now deceased. He went to Bonny Kate School when it was “four classrooms, a lunchroom and two paths down the hill to the little brown buildings.”

He remembers spending time at his grandparents' place, where he now lives with wife Jan. About 42 acres of the original property remains in the family's possession.

Taking care of the land is a passion of Brown, who's out tending to his Muscatine vines when a Shopper reporter arrives. He drives his Kubota four-wheeler out to his barn for a photo session. It's his “favorite toy.”

“I got it five years ago,” the 76-year-old says “I wish I'd had it 10 years before that; my back and body would be in better shape.”

Tooting—pun intended—around his “Country Cadillac” is his “golf.”

“This is my relaxation. I throw my tools in the back and I go around, and there's always something to do. I'll just piddle all day long, and I'm in seventh heaven.”

He loves fixing things—and plowing rows through his blackberry field. But he's not a farmer—or gardener.

“I don't have a green thumb. My grandma did; my sister did. Jan does. She's pretty good.”

Aside from 11 years working in furniture sales in the Midwest, Brown has always lived close to home. He loves the land, and he loves its history. That's what drew him to help start what's now called the South-Doyle Neighborhood Association in 1973. He and D.J. Krahwinkel are the only two left from the original group.

“It kind of died out for a while,” he says. “Any time a situation came up, I was the only one for years and years that went down to the County Commission or MPC to fight for the community.”

A little over 20 years ago, some neighbors started talking about reforming the group, and Brown was ready for them. It was then that he met Carson Dailey, his successor as Ninth District commissioner.

“Being on the commission has been kind of a continuance of this community work because now you're not only working for you

district, but you're working for the entire county with legislative decisions,” he says. “I have learned a lot about how government works, why it works that way.

“I've met some wonderful people. We have a great bunch of leaders in the Knox County government from mayor on down.”

Brown says there's been an entirely new attitude on the commission since the infamous Black Wednesday, when the (then) 19 commissioners met to appoint the replacement officeholders and slipped term-limited politicians back into jobs. Commissioners now zealously adhere to Sunshine laws and avoid any appearance of violating them.

During the private and public service, he's proudest of having gotten a scenic highway designation for Gov. John Sevier Highway, keeping the road as uncluttered as possible; helping to organize Knox County's 225th anniversary celebration; and working to get the Safety Center established.

“I'd hoped we would have been able to get something inked before I went out of the office, but it's close.”

Even though he's off duty officially, Brown doesn't expect to end his service to the community.

“I enjoy helping people.”

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER NEYMAN FOR RECEIVING A PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD FROM THE HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF ALTOONA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Christopher Neyman, a winner of the Patient Advocate Award from the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona.

Chris's wife, Deb, suffered a catastrophic sequence of events in 2015, when she had two strokes and was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Throughout this immensely challenging time, Chris managed to care for his wife's every need while also caring for their two children, Tommy and Martha Jean.

With Chris's unrelenting support, Deb has made a miraculous recovery, and has even returned to many of her previous activities, such as teaching at the Glendale Area School District. According to many of those involved in Deb's treatment and care, Chris was an endless supply of support and motivation throughout Deb's recovery.

While his wife's positivity and impressive efforts to recover are worth celebrating in their own right, there can be no doubt that Chris has provided exemplary care. Given his admirable actions in support of his wife and family through a time of tremendous hardship, Chris is unquestionably deserving of this recognition. As such, it is my honor to help celebrate his having received this award.

HONORING THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY CANCER

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor those who have been touched by cancer and those lost to the disease.

Almost every family in America has been impacted by cancer, one of the great public health challenges of our time.

I am glad to honor my late mother, Hazel Payne, who lost her battle to brain cancer when I was four years old. And my late father, Congressman Donald Payne, Sr., who lost his battle to colorectal cancer four and a half years ago.

The best way we can honor those touched by cancer is to make the disease a national priority.

Today, we have a real opportunity to accelerate advances in cancer prevention, detection, and treatment, and to decrease the number of people suffering from this disease.

Congress should increase funding to the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute for life-saving research and advancement.

If we're going to win the fight against cancer, we need to provide the resources necessary to develop new treatments, and we need to accelerate research that is under way.

Organizations like the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, which held its annual Lights of Hope ceremony in Washington, D.C. last night, deserve our gratitude for their tireless efforts against cancer.

Only by coming together in this fight will we find a cure.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PAY EQUITY FOR ALL ACT OF 2016

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Pay Equity for All Act of 2016, a bill that will help eliminate the gender and racial pay gap by prohibiting employers from asking job applicants for their salary history before making a job or salary offer. Representatives ROSA DELAURO, JERROLD NADLER, and JACKIE SPEIER are original cosponsors of the bill. Even though many employers may not intentionally discriminate against applicants or employees based on gender, race or ethnicity, setting wages based on salary history can reinforce the wage gap. Members of historically disadvantaged groups often start out their careers with unfair and artificially low wages compared to their white male counterparts, and the disparities are compounded from job to job throughout their careers.

Our bill will ensure that applicants' salaries are based on their skills and merit, not on a potentially problematic salary history, by assessing penalties against employers who ask applicants for their salary history during the interview process or as a condition of employment. It would also provide job applicants and employees with a private right of action against employers who violate these provisions.

Although the wage gap has decreased for some women, it still persists for women and men of color with similar skill sets. There is much work to be done to address the wage gap for everyone, and our bill is just one step toward that goal.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAY AREA HOUSTON ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership (BAHEP).

For these past 40 years, BAHEP has been an indispensable ally in building economic prosperity in Houston and across southeast Texas. What began as a special project of the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce in 1976, to promote business opportunities in greater Houston, has become a champion for economic development across southeast Texas. The passion and business acumen of BAHEP's member community these past 40 years will continue to fuel BAHEP's success for the next 40 years and beyond.

BAHEP has played an indispensable role in attracting and mobilizing the businesses and industries of southeast Texas. From their 2002 role in defining Johnson Space Center (JSC) as the home of manned spaceflight, to their assistance with the recovery after Hurricane Ike in 2008, BAHEP has both shaped and reshaped southeast Texas.

Under Bob Mitchell's leadership, BAHEP has launched new initiatives and expanded their advocacy on behalf of Houston's chemical, shipping, medical, aerospace and space industries, and the workforce on which those industries rely. Most recently, in 2015, BAHEP worked with the Houston Airport System to successfully petition the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to designate Ellington Airport as Texas' second spaceport.

It is my distinct honor to recognize and celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership. I look forward to seeing what heights of technological progress and economic prosperity this incredible coalition of job creators will foster in the next 40 years and beyond.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SUMMIT COUNTY EXECUTIVE RUSSELL M. PRY

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Summit County Executive Russell "Russ" M. Pry, who passed away on July 31, 2016 following a courageous battle with cancer.

Russ was born on May 30, 1958 to Helen Lucille (Morris) and Donald Pry and grew up in Mogadore, Ohio. His maternal grandmother, Elsie Morris, played a major role in his upbringing and her strong union and Democratic influence molded his values and lifelong desire to help people.

Russ was a successful attorney, two-time Mogadore Village Councilmember, Chair of the Summit County Democratic Party, member of the Summit County Board of Elections and for the last nine years of his life, the Summit

County Executive. More importantly, Russ was a leader, an advocate, a conciliator, and a friend. Russ gave willingly to many people throughout his life and worked in each position during his career to make people's lives richer and our community a better place. He was loyal, faithful and devoted to his friends and always was available with solid advice, a gentle word and a sympathetic ear.

As the Summit County Executive, Russ will be remembered by his many achievements, which include assisting and honoring the men and women of the military, creating and keeping jobs in Summit County, successfully guiding the County through difficult economic times, making Summit County government more efficient and effective and for beginning new programs aimed to help those in the community of greatest need.

Russ was a history buff, an avid reader, crossword puzzle ace and a Jeopardy whiz. He knew everything about our U.S. presidents and often grilled his friends and staff on American History trivia. Russ also enjoyed winding down his day with a cocktail at Rockne's, which he affectionately called his "West Office."

We have lost a brother, a great friend, a loyal Democrat, an incredibly smart man and genuine good guy who worked hard to make his community a better place. Rest in peace, Russ.

RECOGNIZING NEW LENOX'S PROUD AMERICAN DAYS MILITARY TRIBUTE

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight New Lenox's Park District's Proud American Days Military Tribute. Since 1984, the New Lenox Community Park District has been steadfastly dedicated to the commitments and sacrifices of our nation's service members. What started out as a small gathering is now one of the largest programs attended in the area.

New Lenox's motto reads, "The Home of Proud Americans" and they certainly live up to that slogan. On Sunday, July 31, 2016, more than two hundred people, including veterans, paid homage to those who have sacrificed so much to protect our great nation. These brave Americans endured so much so that we can enjoy the freedoms we have today and for that, we owe them our eternal gratitude.

During the tribute this year, the following veterans were recognized:

Machinist's Mate Second Class Robert Beazley, United States Navy

Master Sergeant Edward Dima, United States Air Force

Gunner's Mate Third Class Leonard Kapocius, United States Navy

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to submit these names for all to see, and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring all of our nation's veterans.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN MARK TAKAI

HON. RAUL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Congressman Mark Takai, a friend and colleague who was taken from this institution far too early. Mark worked until his last days to represent the constituents of Hawaii's First Congressional District. Congress and the American people will dearly miss his relentlessness to better his state and country.

As a dedicated member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and from his seats on the House Armed Services and Small Business Committees, Mark saw it as a personal duty to speak up for those who had no voice. Mark was instrumental in efforts to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March of 1965 and Purple Hearts to Filipino veterans of World War II. He also gathered over one hundred Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to support a measure to provide benefits to veterans exposed to radioactive fallout while serving in the Marshall Islands during the late 1970s. Even though the distance was great between Capitol Hill and Honolulu, Mark was determined to use any opportunity he could, including a short weekend between first and last votes in Washington, to spend time with his family and serve his constituents.

The House Democratic Caucus has lost an incredible champion and friend in Mark Takai, and we are deeply saddened by a sudden end to a young life cut short. May Mark's lovely wife, Sami, his two beautiful children, Matthew and Kaila, and the incredible people of the State of Hawaii find peace and comfort in the days ahead.

RECOVERY MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, every year people all over the country acknowledge National Recovery Month. National Recovery Month recognizes the many thousands of individuals who have successfully recovered from substance use and abuse.

There are millions of people at 12 step classes, Alcoholics Anonymous, and other recovery programs meeting every hour of the day and every day of the week.

It reminds me of what Henry David Thoreau said, "I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man [person] to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor".

National Recovery Month helps to bring awareness and substantial change in our nation and in our communities.

While we are thankful for the success, we must do more. The statistics are stunning.

Prince's death from an opiate overdose in April 2016 made national headlines. His death is one of many thousands that died from overdose of prescribed drugs and illegal substances like heroin.

The Center for Disease Control reported that from 2001 to 2014, there was a, 6-fold increase in the total number of heroin deaths.

3.4-fold increase in the total number of cocaine deaths.

42 percent increase in the total number of pain relievers deaths.

2.8-fold increase in the total number of opioid deaths.

In 2014, experts said that an astounding 900,000 adults and adolescents ages 12 and older used heroin.

It is evident . . . Heroin kills. Cocaine kills. Over the counter opiates and prescribed medications can kill.

We have the support to do something about it.

A Pew Research Center national survey found that 67 percent of Americans support providing treatment for those who use illegal drugs such as heroin and cocaine.

Public opinion in local communities shifted to the extent that voters will support using taxpayer dollars for drug treatment. In Cook County Illinois, 76 percent of the electorate overwhelmingly supported a substance use treatment referendum. Voters support Treatment on Demand.

While National Recovery Month means something different for the researcher, for the policy maker, community groups and for people in the neighborhoods.

For the individuals in recovery, National Recovery Month is very personal.

More than a decade ago, we kicked-off the first recovery walk in Cook County. We joined with communities, government, faith-based groups, providers and especially people in recovery. The 13th Annual Recovery Walk will kick-off on September 24, in Union Park.

I urge my colleagues and people all over America to join me in applauding people in recovery for your conscious efforts to remain sober and for being an inspiration for others who sincerely desire to follow in your footsteps.

I urge my colleagues to support legislation which will transform the lives of individuals from addicts to contributing people in recovery.

RECOGNIZING MS. LEETTA C. BEATTY FOR RECEIVING A PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF ALTOONA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Leetta C. Beatty, one of the winners of the 23rd annual Personal Achievement Award from the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona. This award is given to encourage and recognize those who have made an outstanding effort to deal with or overcome a disability. This year, Ms. Beatty has earned that distinction.

Ms. Beatty suffered a stroke-like incident in April 2016. Since the fateful day of her injury, Leetta has made great gains in her recovery. According to those involved in her rehabilita-

tion efforts, Leetta is known for maintaining her sense of humor throughout the recovery process. She has also been described as hard-working and very cooperative with her healthcare providers and caregivers. Furthermore, she has continued to approach her rehabilitation with high motivation, exemplifying the power of a positive mindset.

I am honored to help celebrate Leetta's impressive efforts and promising recovery, as I believe that her dedicated and positive attitude is something many of us can learn from as we attempt to overcome the hardships in our lives. Furthermore, I am happy to recognize Leetta for her perseverance, and I wish her the best as she continues on the road to full recovery.

BURMA NEEDS CHANGE FOR SANCTIONS RELIEF

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the situation in Burma is still terrible for many of the people there, particularly the ethnic minorities. While the Administration is moving quickly to remove sanctions, our government should slow down and assess what real, sustainable change has actually occurred—many of the same people who were part of the dictatorship are still in power. While there have been some positive changes, ethnic minorities are still being brutally attacked by the Burma Army. Any assessment of Burma's steps toward democracy and human rights climate must take this into account.

I encourage my colleagues to read the message from Kristine Gould and Larry Dohrs of U.S. Campaign for Burma.

U.S. SHOULD MANDATE CHANGE IN EXCHANGE FOR SANCTIONS RELIEF

It is time for the United States to stop agonizing about economic sanctions against Burma. However, the answer is not simply to remove all sanctions, but to keep targeted sanctions in place while providing a constructive pathway forward to later eliminate those remaining as Burma continues its process of democratic reform.

While there has been significant progress toward such reform—particularly since the November 2015 elections that brought the National League for Democracy into power—it is not complete, and significant challenges must be overcome before a genuine, federal, democratic Union—as well as true peace—can be established.

The Obama administration started to restructure sanctions against Burma in May 2012, when it relaxed a prohibition on new investment, relieved stringent visa bans and allowed exportation of most financial services. In general, three classes of sanctions remain:

1. Export of financial services and provision of security services to individuals and organizations related to the Ministry of Defense, state and non-state armed groups, and businesses that are more than 50 percent owned by military organizations.

2. Import of jadeite and rubies or their finished products.

Investment and business dealings with individuals and organizations identified as Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons, commonly referred to as the SDN list.

Armed conflict between Burma's defense services and the country's ethnic armed organizations continues. Even during the recently convened 21st Century Panglong Conference, the government and the Burma Army refused to issue a temporary ceasefire, and battles raged on in Kachin and northern Shan states while stakeholders discussed peace in Naypyidaw.

Exploitation of natural resources continues, with both private individuals and elements of the armed forces profiting significantly from the unrestricted exportation of jade and other natural resources. The military-drafted 2008 Constitution gives the Burma Army significant political power, regardless of the 2015 election results and its clear message from voters that the armed forces should step aside from politics.

Perhaps most significantly, human rights violations by the armed forces and security services organizations continue unabated. Until these issues and challenges are resolved, the United States should keep targeted sanctions in place, as most recently reaffirmed by the U.S. Congress in May 2016.

Just last month, a Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) parliamentarian proposed that Burma's government should attempt to pressure the United States to lift sanctions. The USDP was formed in 2010 by elements of the former military junta, and it ruled the country under former President U Thein Sein from March 2011 to March 2016.

While the proposal was defeated by a vote of 219 to 151, its discussion by lawmakers indicates the importance and value of lifting sanctions. The key here is not to offer blanket relief but to establish a clear pathway forward to eliminate sanctions tied to reform objectives:

1. As long as the Burma Army continues its attacks on ethnic armies and human rights violations, the United States should continue restricting export of defense services, including sales of defense articles and military-to-military assistance.

The armed forces receive more than 20 percent of the country's annual budget, and control two enormous business conglomerates (the Myanmar Economic Corporation and the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings), which are not accountable to the government. While these assets continue to support attacks against the people and perpetuate gross human rights abuses, the United States should not provide military equipment.

The United States has already initiated limited high-level military-to-military contacts focusing on the role of the nation's military forces under a democratic government, the terms of the Geneva Convention and the military's role in protecting its citizens.

This should continue, and the United States should relax funding restrictions that interfere with scheduling and executing these events. However, participation in International Military Education and Training, Joint Chiefs of Staff exercise programs, and other developmental programs must hinge on ending the country's armed conflict and developing a military force that is accountable to an elected civilian government.

2. The Tom Lantos Block Burma JADE Act of 2008 must stay in place until the government cleans up its jadeite and ruby mining practices. An October 2015 report by the London-based NGO Global Witness titled "Jade: Myanmar's Big State Secret" described a US\$31 billion jade industry controlled by a network of military elites, drug lords and cronies companies.

Entire mountains in Kachin State housing some of the world's largest jade deposits have disappeared, with only minimal tax revenue and profits reaching Burma's citizens.

Only after the government reforms this massive theft of natural resources should the United States consider the rescension of the JADE Act.

3. The United States should review and update the SDN list, as there are individuals and organizations on this list that have demonstrated that they are committed to the reform process. This may prove challenging to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, as there is no definitive and prescriptive legal guidance for removing individuals and organizations from the SDN list.

However, there are individuals and organizations that continue to profit from their past relationships with the military junta, access to confiscated property, the questionable "ownership" of natural resources, or the narcotics trade, which significantly hampers economic reform and equitable distribution of profits from the country's natural resources. It is up to the United States to clean up its own administrative system and determine who needs to remain on the SDN list.

Advanced reporting on State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to the United States later this month already indicates that the United States is considering further easing or lifting of sanctions. Above all, the United States should ensure that it protects all of Burma's citizens in the ongoing reform process by mandating change in exchange for sanctions relief. The United States should avoid a mere emotional gain associated with rewarding Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for incomplete reform.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

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

Roll Call Number 496: Yea.
Roll Call Number 497: Yea.
Roll Call Number 498: Nay.
Roll Call Number 499: Nay.
Roll Call Number 500: Nay.

HONORING TAMIKA CATCHINGS FOR HER ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER WITH THE INDIANA FEVER

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tamika Catchings, an Indiana Basketball Hall of Famer and four-time Olympic gold medalist. Catchings is a 15-year veteran of WNBA's Indiana Fever, an inspirational leader in our Hoosier community, and a strong advocate for kids everywhere to achieve their dreams.

Tamika's athletic prowess debuted early, while in high school she completed the first ever quintuple-double which is 25 points, 18 rebounds, 11 assists, 10 steals, and 10 blocks in one game. This feat has only ever been performed twice. In college, Tamika played under the legendary Pat Summit for the University of Tennessee Lady Vols. During her time with the Lady Vols Tamika was named a

College National Champion and a four-time All American. Following college, she entered the WNBA draft where the Indiana Fever drafted her as their first-round pick.

It has been a pleasure to watch the WNBA's Indiana Fever grow from a fledgling team during my time on the Fever's Advisory Board to the flourishing program it is today. Tamika has spent her entire career with the Fever and she has certainly been a key driver of growth and success for the team. She led them to their first WNBA Championship in 2012, where she was named MVP. Tamika was the 2002 season's rookie of the year. She's a 10-time WNBA All-Star, a five-time WNBA Defensive Player of the Year, and a 2011 league MVP. WNBA fans placed her in the Top 15 WNBA players in history while her fellow players echoed these sentiments and elected her to serve as President of the WNBA Player Association for the 2012 season. As well as playing for Indiana's Fever, this summer Tamika competed in the 2016 Olympics and as a member of Team USA, earned her fourth Olympic gold medal. She truly is one of the greatest female basketball players of all time.

Tamika has been recognized not only as an exemplary player for the Fever, but as an invaluable contributor to women's basketball overall. She was recently selected to be the first woman to receive the National Civil Rights Museum Sports Legacy Award. The Women's Blue Chip Basketball League at their 10th Year Anniversary in 2015 awarded Tamika as a Trailblazer; she was one of ten female basketball icons to receive this award. And she is a two-time Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award winner.

Off the court, Tamika is passionate about helping others, especially young people. In her recently released autobiography, *Catch a Star: Shining Through Adversity to Become a Champion*, Tamika discusses her childhood struggles with bullying as well as her profound hearing loss. Through her determination to overcome these challenges, Tamika succeeded to change the course of her destiny through hard work and her love of basketball. *Catch a Star* is her story of triumph, and through her own journey Tamika recognized that she could make a difference in the lives of others. Twelve years ago, she founded the Catch the Stars Foundation, which aims to empower youth to achieve their dreams by promoting literacy, fitness, and mentoring. Catch the Stars Foundation works with youth throughout Indianapolis, specifically supporting and assisting under-served and low to moderate income communities throughout our city.

On behalf of all Hoosiers, I'd like to congratulate Tamika on her success on and off the court, and wish her and her new husband, Parnell, the best as she begins the next incredible chapter of her life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM "BILL" JOHN LYDEN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of William "Bill" John Lyden, 86, who passed away on Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2016, at the Salem Regional Medical Center.

Bill was born on Oct. 16, 1929, in Youngstown, Ohio. The son of the late William E. and Margaret Kane Lyden, Bill was a member of St. Jude Catholic Church in Columbiana and was a veteran of the U.S. Army, having served during the Korean War. He was a member of the Benjamin Firestone Post No. 290, American Legion and the Salem Elks No. 305. He began his career as a journeyman electrician LU 64 IBEW in 1954, and worked his way up to business manager by 1967. During this time, Bill also served as president of the Western Reserve Building Council from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. While working, he served his community by holding a position as trustee from 1975 to 1989 with Youngstown State University. He was an avid YSU fan and was proud to have served as chairman of the board from 1977 to 1978.

Bill enjoyed golfing and wintering in Florida. Mostly, he just enjoyed life. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Howells Lyden, whom he married on April 5, 1986; two daughters, Deborah Caracozza of Struthers and Kathleen Lyden of Sarasota, Fla.; a son, Terrence (Tina) Lyden of Dublin, Ohio; a stepdaughter, Jennifer (Robert) Turner of Milford; a stepson, Robert (Patience) Gow of Frisco, Texas; and three brothers, John (Margaret) Lyden of Poland, Dennis (Norma) Lyden of Boardman, and Edward (Joyce Ramsey) Lyden of Boardman. Also surviving is Bill's former wife, Virginia Miliisky Lyden of Poland; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and six stepgrandchildren. He was preceded in death by a brother, Timothy Lyden in 1990.

Losses like these are never easy, but we can all take solace in the fact that Pat led a long and fulfilling life. He will live on in the memory of his beautiful family.

IN RECOGNITION OF CONSTITUTION DAY

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Constitution Day. Each year, we celebrate Constitution Day on September 17th, in honor of the signing of the document over two centuries ago on September 17, 1787. This holiday provides our nation with the opportunity to discuss, critically examine, and celebrate one of the most important documents in American history.

The strength of America lies in its people and the establishment of laws by their fellow citizens. The United States Constitution serves as the foundation of our government and provides our people with the rule of law over tyranny and lawlessness. It is an inspiration that the founders of our great country were able to prescribe for our fledgling nation the principles and rules that continue to guide us and to be a beacon of democracy and freedom worldwide.

Honoring and celebrating this great document provides us with the opportunity to reflect and study an important piece of American history. Congress first established Constitution and Citizenship Day in 1952, and in 2007 the act was expanded to prescribe educational programs and lessons to all institutions which receive funding from the Department of Education.

Therefore, I encourage all Americans, especially those who are educators of our young, to set aside some classroom time this month to examine the Constitution in both celebration, and in review, as well as to promote a greater understanding of how the Constitution has contributed to making our country the great nation it is today.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FLOOD
PREVENTION ACT OF 2016

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Flood Prevention Act of 2016. The bill would amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) to include the District of Columbia in the definition of "coastal state." Our bill would correct what appears to be an oversight, in the omission of the District of Columbia, making the District eligible to receive federal funding and giving the District oversight for federally issued permits/facilities/and actions that affect the coastal waters of the District.

In an effort to reduce coastal flood risk, Congress has authorized a number of programs to help states and territories respond to floods and mitigate risk through resiliency projects. Among these programs, the CZMA provides planning and technical services to assist states in protecting, restoring, and developing coastal communities and resources. Once the federal government approves a state's coastal management plan, the state becomes eligible for grants. Federal actions must be consistent with the state plans.

Even though the District of Columbia has substantial coastal flood risks, D.C. is omitted from the list of eligible states and territories in the CZMA. The CZMA was passed in 1972—before the District achieved home rule. Under Section 304 of the CZMA, "coastal state[s]" include the states and the U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, and American Samoa). Absent from this definition is the District of Columbia, even though the District of Columbia is under threat from rising sea levels. Because the territories are included in the definition of "coastal states," it appears that D.C.'s omission is a mistake that only Congress can correct.

Scientists have predicted that the tides on the Atlantic Coast could rise two to four feet by the year 2100, causing as much as \$7 billion worth of property in the District to be routinely under threat by floodwaters. This damage not only includes private homes and businesses, but the National Mall, federal buildings, and three military bases located in the District. The Anacostia and Potomac rivers are both tidally influenced, showing tangible salt water effects (and fish) and are part of an "intertidal-zone" existing between high and low maritime tides. In addition, the Maryland and Virginia coastal zones each include the tidal Potomac River, with Maryland's zone ending at the District line. Because of these factors, the District of Columbia should be eligible for CZMA grants just like the states and territories.

I urge support for this bill.

RECOGNIZING MR. RON
OLSZEWSKI FOR RECEIVING A
PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD FROM THE
HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION
HOSPITAL OF ALTOONA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Ron Olszewski, one of the winners of the 23rd annual Personal Achievement Award from the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona. This award is given to encourage and recognize those who have made an outstanding effort to deal with or overcome a disability. This year, Mr. Olszewski has earned that distinction.

Mr. Olszewski suffered a stroke in May of 2016. Fortunately, his wife, Rose, was able to recognize Ron's symptoms and ensured his delivery to the hospital. From there, Ron bravely underwent multiple tests and procedures, and treatment. Following his transfer to the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona, Ron continued to face adversity with a surprisingly calm demeanor. Thanks to his network of support and positive attitude, Ron has made impressive progress in his rehabilitation, and in so doing has inspired all those around him.

It is my honor to congratulate Ron on his remarkable efforts and promising improvements, as I believe that it is through role models like him that we learn that we can overcome our hardships. Furthermore, I am happy to recognize him for his perseverance, and I wish him the best as he continues to overcome this adversity.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE NA-
TIONAL TECHNICAL ASSOCIA-
TION 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on November 12, 1925, nine African American engineers, scientists, and architects met at the Wabash YMCA in Chicago and began plans to form the first national minority multidisciplinary technical organization. They founded the National Technical Association (NTA) to serve the minority community and this nation through technical leadership, technical innovation and research, and science education.

The following year, on August 26, 1926, NTA was incorporated in the state of Illinois. It was the only formally organized minority technical voice from 1926 until the early 1970s. NTA worked alongside other African American community organizations such as the NAACP, the Urban League, and the National Association of Black Professional Women to provide the technical perspective on issues facing minority communities.

NTA members have served as advisors to U.S. Presidents on technical matters starting

with President Herbert Hoover, whose presidential term coincided with that of the first NTA President, Charles S. Duke, 1929 through 1934. Duke met with Hoover in 1931 at a time when the President refused to meet with all other Black leaders. Under the leadership of Duke, NTA members advocated for years and helped to win support for better housing and housing assistance at the local and federal levels for minorities who were living in run-down, over-crowded tenements. Many of the NTA architects and engineers designed and built the resulting housing developments.

NTA members were among the first African Americans to obtain advanced degrees in science and engineering and many helped to develop science and engineering curricula and degree programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Many NTA Members were scientists and engineers on the Manhattan Project, the nation's first big science project.

NTA members have pioneered scientific research breakthroughs and created technical innovations that have improved the quality of life of all Americans. This elite group includes entrepreneurs, top government administrators, corporate leaders, and exceptional senior scientists and engineers working in outer space exploration, energy research and development, environmental protection, climate change, computer science, and cybersecurity.

NTA members have been elected to the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering; selected as fellows of major technical societies across all fields of science and engineering, and been honored with the nation's highest technical awards, including as inductees in the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

NTA serves as a beacon of light and hope to minority youth and encourages them to follow their dreams and pursue technical studies and careers. It guides students to seek technical excellence and become technical innovators who will help secure the American economic future.

NTA is playing a pivotal role in uniting the collective voices of a multi-cultural coalition of minority technical organizations to promote the diversification of the technical workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the National Technical Association for 90 years of vision and technical leadership provided to our nation. I am excited to join in the celebrations and encourage our nation to pay tribute to NTA and its membership on this historic occasion. Because of NTA, our nation is stronger technically, and the future of minority participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics is forever brighter.

MRS. RITA KAY

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to Mrs. Rita Kay, who recently turned 100 years old on September 4, 2016.

Rita was born in Manhattan on September 4, 1916 to her parents Anna Squazzo Mullen and John Mullen. At 18 years old, Rita and her soon-to-be husband, John James Kay,

won the first Harvest Moon Ball dance contest for the Lindy Hop in Madison Square Garden. Four years later, in 1939, they would go on to become husband and wife. Shortly after getting married, they moved to Queens, NY and became the parents of two children: Patricia Ann Kay and John Andrew Kay.

In 1982, Rita moved to Huntington, NY after living in Paumanack Village in Greenlawn, NY for 30 years. While at Paumanack Village, Rita taught line dancing from 1986, at the age of 70, until 2010, at the age of 94. Rita's classes drew many village and non-village residents alike who faithfully attended her Tuesday afternoon line dancing classes for over 20 years. Only a person with Rita's charisma and passion for life could manage to keep up this type of schedule and activity at such an advanced age.

Rita, along with her family, which includes her five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, recently celebrated her 100th birthday. I would like to thank Rita for her years of dedication and service to her family and community. What she has managed to accomplish during her lifetime cannot be summarized in a few words; however it is important we honor these types of individuals as best we can. People like Rita are a rare breed and they help make not only our country, but our world a better place.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF EDDIE DEBARTOLO JR.

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Eddie DeBartolo Jr., who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame on September 6, 2016. DeBartolo was known for building a winning organization with the 49ers and was credited by Hall of Fame quarterback Steve Young for working to create the strongest relationships between players and owners throughout the NFL. In addition to his teams averaging 13 wins from 1981 through 98 his teams would win 13 division championships, five Lombardi Trophies, and win league championships in the 1981, '84, '88, '89, and '94 seasons.

Eddie is not only known for building great football programs, but he is also known for his love and compassion for players, family, and his community. When his moment came to speak during his induction ceremony DeBartolo had no intentions to bask in the accomplishments that granted him access into the hall of fame, but instead he spent 27 minutes focusing on the players, staff, family, friends, and others who gave him the strength and courage to reach the pinnacle of the pro football world. He understood that success was not only just on the owners and players, but everyone on the staff from the equipment managers and groundskeepers who worked hard every day all the way to the owner's box.

Eddie is a man who sees deeper than the game of football itself, saying "We weren't just a family on Sundays, we were a family every single day." So again, I would like to congratulate Eddie on this well-deserved recognition. He makes Ohio proud.

TRIBUTE TO ARNIE F. BRYANT

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to Arnie F. Bryant—a loving family man and community leader whom I and others called friend. This year marks the eighth anniversary of Arnie's homegoing on April 8, 2008. His family will honor him this month with a trip to Washington, DC. Arnie was a fierce supporter of President Barack Obama and encouraged political discussions via his radio program, View Points from the Other Side. Unfortunately, Arnie was called home before he could witness the historic election and inauguration of our 44th President. Today, I join with his family to celebrate Arnie and the tremendous contributions he made to his communities in his short 49 years of life.

Arnie was one of the most dedicated, committed, and caring individuals that I have ever known. Arnie was a respected leader who worked tirelessly to make society a better place. After attending Farragut and Proviso East high schools, Arnie served his country by joining the Army. Arnie remained active for 20 years.

Arnie's tribute by the Proviso Insider referenced him as "Proviso Township's most popular social and political activist." From a young age, Arnie engaged in community affairs, working to strengthen his community through his compassion, intelligence, commitment, and kindness. He served as the President of the Proviso National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for many years. His passion for learning evidenced itself in his role as President of the Bellwood Library Board. His position as a Proviso Township Trustee reflected his willingness to do the hard work of governing, just another example of his willingness to invest his time to help others.

Those who knew Arnie can testify to his absolute and profound commitment to his family. His love for his wife, Gladis, and his children, Brittany and Frank, buoyed him and those around him. Arnie was a spiritual man. He accepted Christ as a member of the Proviso Missionary Baptist Church. As an adult, he was an active member of New Horizon Missionary Baptist Church.

Arnie Bryant was a great individual who deserves our commemoration, respect and gratitude. I join with the community in expressing our sadness for his loss and celebrating his life and legacy.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH CAÑON CITY

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the First United Methodist Church in Cañon City. This week Cañon City will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the First United Methodist Church, an anchor to the Cañon City community since its founding in 1866.

First United Methodist was the first church dedicated south of Denver in Colorado. The

church's mission throughout its history has been "to be a reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ through prayer, praise, and the proclamation of God's Word."

This intergenerational church has for 150 years endeavored to meet "the needs of every man, woman, and child, so they are free to experience the life-changing reality of Jesus Christ with no strings attached."

The beautiful church building stands today at the corner of 8th and Main Streets with 37 stained glass windows honoring leaders and former pastors who have served the community of Cañon City. First United Methodist has also served as a gathering place for countless activities—including a special presentation by Hellen Keller in 1914. I admire the church's commitment to mission work both locally, nationally, and worldwide since their founding. They offered food and clothing to settlers in Cañon City, spearheaded the Crusade for Christ initiative following World War II—ministering and providing assistance to war torn countries, and to this day they continue to serve by offering a free community meal on the third Saturday of each month with fellowship in Christ's name.

While many things have changed in the last century and a half, the First United Methodist Church has remained faithful to its calling to serve God and the citizens of Cañon City.

It is my great pleasure to recognize the First United Methodist Church in Cañon City on their sesquicentennial celebration today before the United States House of Representatives.

TYSON-MAY FAMILY REUNION/
PITT COUNTY, NC

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, growing up in Farmville, North Carolina, I learned as a young person of the Tyson-May family and its history. The family has met annually since its formation on November 25, 1932 and has maintained its unity through the many years. I have often and proudly been a guest at their reunions.

The many contributions made by the two families to our country is immeasurable. Members have done much for our state and nation by providing dedicated leaders in every profession. Members have always been known for their integrity and high standards of conduct.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit a letter from a Tyson-May family member, John B. Lewis, Jr., who is a former North Carolina Court of Appeals judge. He is inviting the United Kingdom's Prime Minister Theresa May and Mr. Philip May to become honorary members of his family. There is much excitement in the family that, by marriage, the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is named May.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016.

Hon. THERESA B. MAY and MR. PHILIP MAY,
London, England.

MY DEAR PRIME MINISTER AND MR. MAY: As a member of the Tyson-May Families Reunion of Pitt County, North Carolina, I will, with your permission, move that you become Honorary Members of our family. The family is composed of the descendants of the children of Benjamin May and Mary Tyson who wed in 1750.

Many of our members have achieved and maintained high and enviable standards of conduct and we believe you qualify with the best.

We gather annually since November 25, 1932 to celebrate God's blessing of family harmony and unity. There are no dues and we are not autograph collectors . . . we are simply proud of our family and wish to include you in this honorary capacity.

Sincerely,

JOHN B. LEWIS Jr., *Esquire*.

RECOGNIZING DR. MARIO POON FOR RECEIVING A PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF ALTOONA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Mario Poon, one of the winners of the 23rd annual Personal Achievement Award from the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona. This award is given to encourage and recognize those who have made an outstanding effort to deal with or overcome a disability. This year, Dr. Poon has earned that distinction.

Dr. Poon has been serving the community as a Cardiologist for the past 23 years. In this capacity, Dr. Poon is known for his tireless efforts to care for his patients. However, an unfortunate stroke landed him at the HealthSouth Rehab Hospital in July 2015. Dr. Poon began his rehabilitation requiring extensive assistance with activities like speaking and standing. But with hard work, he earned the freedom to return home.

Once transitioning to outpatient status, Dr. Poon maintained a great attitude and work ethic, as he focused on recovery. Along with his tenacious efforts, Dr. Poon has had the support and care of his wife, Amy, family, and friends. These factors have enabled him to regain his ability to walk without any devices. As such, he is back to traveling with his wife while still maintaining a commitment to his wellness program.

It is my pleasure to congratulate Dr. Poon on his successful progress. His accomplishments are a testament to us all that with hard work and persistence, we can overcome any hardship. I honor him for his perseverance, and I wish him the best as he continues to overcome this setback.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on September 12, 2016, I was not present for roll call vote 496. If I had been present for this vote, I would have voted: Aye on roll call vote 496.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from votes in the House September 12 through 13, 2016, due to prior family commitments. Had I been present, I would have voted: Roll Call Number 496: Yea; Roll Call Number 497: Yea; Roll Call Number 498: Yea; Roll Call Number 499: Yea; Roll Call Number 500: Yea; Roll Call Number 501: Aye; Roll Call Number 502: Yea; Roll Call Number 503: Yea; Roll Call Number 504: Yea.

TRUCKERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, modern day slavery is happening all around us, and it occurs in the form of human trafficking. Victims are sold into sex slavery, drugged, beaten, threatened and forced to engage in horrifying acts at the demand of their captors. While many Americans are aware that human trafficking occurs, most think it exists primarily in faraway countries. This assumption however, is wildly mistaken. Many of us do not realize that in this nation, and in our very own backyards, individuals are held against their will, their bodies sold repeatedly day in and day out. In every state, city and suburb traffickers prey upon the most vulnerable and chain them to a life of unimaginable misery. As Americans, we cannot turn a blind eye to this fact any more.

Human trafficking victims are constantly moved around by their traffickers, whether that's across our borders or around the country. This movement helps them evade law enforcement and increase profits by shuffling victims from buyer to buyer. With traffickers constantly on the road, who could possibly find and rescue these victims? Kylla Lanier asked herself that exact question several years ago when she set out to battle the scourge of human trafficking. It seemed insurmountable. Trafficking was everywhere, but then again she thought, so were truckers.

Kylla, her mother and three sisters went on to pioneer the anti-trafficking group, Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT). At 3.5 million strong, American truckers are an ideal ally in the war against trafficking. They have eyes and ears everywhere, from 12-lane freeways to dark back alleyways. The idea is simple. TAT trains truckers to spot potential trafficking operations or victims and report to a 24-hour hotline. These tips have already freed hundreds of trafficking victims, and as TAT continues to educate more truckers, we expect that number to rise. Due to the simplicity and success of this strategy, many trucking schools now teach trafficking prevention as part of their core curriculum.

I wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of Kylla and her family, as well as those of all the truckers who have joined this fight against trafficking. We should all learn from this success story, but truckers cannot do this alone. We

have a long road ahead of us in order to eradicate our country of modern day slavery. We must continue to raise awareness across all fields and in all parts of our society. The only way to defeat the evil of human trafficking is by banding together and working as one.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted: Roll Call Number 496, "yea."

CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF JOSEPHINE COVELLI

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary woman. Josephine Covelli will celebrate a 90th birthday on September 30th, 2016. Josephine, or "Jo" as she is known to her family and friends, has been a fixture in her community for many years. Her passionate service has extended to the Trumbull Mobile Meals program, children's rehabilitation in Warren, Ohio as well as the Hibiscus House in Stuart. Beyond that Josephine has been heavily involved with her time, as well as through generous financial contributions in all children's services at Blessed Sacrament and JFK.

Along with service to her community, Jo knows how to relax. She has won more awards than anyone else in the history of the Trumbull County Country Club and has been highlighted in the papers for winning more tournaments than anyone else in the Valley—including two wins in the Amateur Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA).

Josephine is loved by her family and all those who are lucky enough to know her. In addition to thanking her for her service to our community, I would like to wish her the most wonderful 90th birthday surrounded by family and friends. We are a better community because of the great work of Josephine Covelli.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 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 \$19,484,660,626,765.52. We've added \$8,857,783,577,852.44 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.

GENERAL LEAVE STATEMENT

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on September 13, 2016, on Roll Call Number 498 on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 859, Providing for consideration of H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 859.

On September 13, 2016, on Roll Call Number 499 on agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 859, Providing for consideration of H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 859.

On September 13, 2016, on Roll Call Number 500 on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 858, providing for consideration of H.R. 3590, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in the income threshold used in determining the deduction for medical care, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 858.

On September 13, 2016 on Roll Call Number 501 on agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 858, providing for consideration of H.R. 3590, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in the income threshold used in determining the deduction for medical care, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 858.

On September 13, 2016 on Roll Call Number 502 on passage of H.R. 3590, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in the income threshold used in determining the deduction for medical care, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on agreeing to H.R. 3590.

On September 13, 2016 on Roll Call Number 503 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 5587, Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 5587.

On September 13, 2016 on Roll Call Number 504 on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 729, Expressing support for the expeditious consideration and finalization of a new, robust, and long-term Memorandum of Understanding on military assistance to Israel between the United States Government and the Government of Israel, I am not recorded. Had I been present, as a cosponsor of H. Res. 729, I would have voted YES on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 729.

WELCOME CHARLES JOSEPH DELL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate my former

Chief of Staff Eric Dell and his wife, Torry, on the birth of their son. Charles Joseph Dell was born at 10:21 a.m. on Wednesday, August 17, 2016, at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Virginia. Charles weighed six pounds and eight ounces and measured 19 and 1/4 inches long. He is the second child for the happy couple and the younger brother of Noah Isaac Dell and I look forward to watching him grow as he is raised by talented parents who will be dedicated to his well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Charles's grandparents, Ouida Dell of Ridgeland, South Carolina, and Joseph and Mary Lyons of Aiken, South Carolina. Congratulations to the entire Dell and Lyons families as they welcome their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

TRIBUTE TO GENE FREESE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gene Freese of Atlantic, Iowa for his 50 years of dedicated service to the Atlantic Fire Department. Atlantic Fire Chief Mark McNees noted that Gene is a very active member of the department, going to trainings, responding to the required percentage of fire calls, and keeping current his Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification.

Gene Freese joined the Atlantic Fire Department because he "likes being a part of things, being active, and doing things for the community." He has been instrumental in conducting fire prevention programs for school students, educating countless youth and simultaneously helping educate his fellow firefighters. Gene said he appreciates all of the recognition, but acknowledges "it takes more than one person." He explained that firefighters do not seek out recognition for what they are, but instead, "they're just doing their job."

Mr. Speaker, Gene Freese has made a difference by helping and serving others. It is with great honor that I recognize him today. I know that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring his accomplishments. I thank him for his service to the Atlantic Fire Department and the City of Atlantic, Iowa and wish him continued success in the future.

FLORIDA CITY GOVERNMENT
WEEK**HON. GWEN GRAHAM**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

Whereas, city government is the government closest to most citizens, and the one with the most direct daily impact upon its residents; and

Whereas, city government is administered for and by its citizens, and is dependent upon public commitment to and understanding of its many responsibilities; and

Whereas, city government officials and employees share the responsibility to pass along their understanding of this level of government and the importance of volunteerism; and

Whereas, Florida City Government Week is a very important time to recognize the important role played by city government in our lives; and

Whereas, this week offers an important opportunity to spread the word to all the citizens of Florida that they can shape and influence this branch of government and also shape their communities through volunteer efforts; and

Whereas, the Florida League of Cities and its member cities have joined together to teach students and other citizens about municipal government through a variety of different projects, volunteer opportunities and information; and

Whereas, Florida City Government Week offers an important opportunity to convey to all the citizens of Florida that they can shape and influence government through their civic involvement and positively impact lives by volunteering.

Now, therefore, I, Congresswoman GWEN GRAHAM, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing October 16–22, 2016 as City Government Week in Florida and I encourage our citizens to help celebrate this week by learning more about city government, and all levels of government, and by volunteering in their respective communities.

TRIBUTE TO MCINTYRE REAL
ESTATE AND AUCTION**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate McIntyre Real Estate and Auction of Shenandoah, Iowa, which is celebrating 70 years in business. McIntyre Real Estate and Auction was started in 1946 by Jesse McIntyre when he returned home from World War II.

Jessie McIntyre's daughter, Janell, is the current owner of the business. She joined the business in 1985 and purchased the business in 2000. Janell McIntyre and her staff continue to provide dedicated and professional real estate services throughout SW Iowa. That strong family tradition began with Jesse McIntyre and his lifelong commitment to his community. Although Jesse passed away in 2012, his successful business continues today.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Janell McIntyre and the staff at McIntyre Real Estate for their many years of dedicated and devoted service to Shenandoah, Iowa and the surrounding areas. Janell and her staff make a difference by helping and serving others. It is with great honor that I recognize them today. I know that my colleagues in the House join me in honoring their accomplishments and wish them and their family and staff continued success in the future.

TRIBUTE TO JON PARSONS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jon Parsons of Atlantic, Iowa, on his recent retirement as a Lieutenant with the Atlantic Police Department after 30 years of service. Jon began his career with the Oskaloosa, Iowa Police Department and moved to Atlantic in 1987.

Jon is originally from Audubon, Iowa and knew while attending high school he wanted to be in law enforcement. After high school, Jon Parsons enlisted in the U.S. Army and joined the military police. He served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserves from 1980 to 1999, serving valiantly with the troops of the Desert Storm operation. Jon's military experience helped him plan his future in civilian law enforcement. His favorite part of law enforcement is "to serve and to protect." Jon said he will definitely miss the people he has worked with, but he is looking forward to a new career.

Mr. Speaker, Jon Parsons made a difference by helping and serving others. It is with great honor that I recognize him today. I know that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring his accomplishments. I thank him for his service to the City of Atlantic, Iowa, and to our nation. We gratefully wish him all the best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO JUANITA AND WENDELL ACHENBAUGH

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Juanita and Wendell Achenbaugh of Henderson, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on June 20, 2016.

Juanita and Wendell's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 65th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 65th year together and I wish them many more. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

TRIBUTE TO VERA AND BOB ALLEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Vera and Bob

Allen of Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on June 18, 2016 at East Side Christian Church in Council Bluffs.

Vera and Bob's lifelong commitment to each other and their children, Tami and Randy, six grandchildren and six great grandchildren, truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 60th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 60th year together and I wish them many more. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

TRIBUTE TO DONNA AND WES DOUGHMAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Donna and Wes Doughman of Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on June 24, 2016.

Donna and Wes' lifelong commitment to each other, and to their children, Michelle, Wes, and Kim, and their eleven grandchildren, truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

TRIBUTE TO VIVIAN GOLLY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mrs. Vivian Golly on the occasion of her 100th birthday on June 28, 2016.

Vivian was born in Zearing, Iowa and graduated from Zearing High School in 1933. She married Ernest Golly in 1935 and they had three children, Jo, Louis and Robert. Ernest and Vivian settled in Corning, Iowa. Vivian worked for 15 years as a house mother for deaf children and learned sign language. She attributes hard work and healthy habits for her longevity.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent Vivian Golly in the United States Congress and it is my pleasure to wish her a very happy 100th birthday. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating

Vivian on reaching this incredible milestone, and wishing her even more health and happiness in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO MARIE POOL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mrs. Marie Pool on the occasion of her 101st birthday on March, 15, 2016.

Marie was born on a farm near Williamson, Iowa and spent her youth helping on the farm and milking cows. She attended country school and Bridgewater High School. She married Virgil Pool in 1933 and they had three children, Donnie, Betty and Peggy. Marie quilted and loved to dance. Now, she lives at Greenfield Rehabilitation and Health Care Center in Greenfield, Iowa and enjoys bingo and ice cream socials. She attributes clean living and hard work to her longevity.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent Marie Pool in the United States Congress and it is my pleasure to wish her a very happy 101st birthday. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Marie on reaching this incredible milestone, and wishing her even more health and happiness in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO FRIEDA PORTER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mrs. Frieda Porter on the occasion of her 100th birthday on March 23, 2016.

Frieda Porter was born near Fontanelle, Iowa and attended Fontanelle schools. She married Max Porter in 1938 and they had three children, Becky, Randy and Pat. Frieda was active in the community and was an Avon representative for many years. She also taught Sunday school at the Greenfield Lutheran Church over the years. She loved to travel many places with family members throughout the years. Frieda attributes a healthy life, attendance at church and her belief in God to her long and happy life.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent Frieda Porter in the United States Congress and it is my pleasure to wish her a very happy 100th birthday. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Frieda on reaching this incredible milestone and wishing her even more health and happiness in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO MALISSA BAUER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Malissa (Missy) Bauer, from Madison

County Health Care System in Winterset, Iowa. Ms. Bauer was awarded the 2016 DAISY Award.

The award is given to a nurse from each of their network's facilities and congratulates their excellent work. She was nominated by fellow staff members and patient families. DAISY Foundation awards are given in memory of J. Patrick Barnes. He was given loving and skilled care by the nurses who cared for him before he died, and the primary mission of the foundation is now to recognize good nurses throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Missy for her award and for providing excellent patient care in Iowa's 3rd district. I am proud to represent her and all the members of the Madison County Health Care System in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in congratulating Missy Bauer and wishing her well and continued success in the future.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 19

5 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To receive a closed briefing on assessing the recent North Korea nuclear event, missile tests, and regional dynamics.

SVC-217

SEPTEMBER 20

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of General John E. Hyten, USAF, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Strategic Command, Department of Defense.

SH-216

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Wells Fargo's unauthorized accounts and the regulatory response.

SD-538

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of W. Stuart Symington, of Missouri, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Andrew Robert Young, of California, to be Ambassador to Burkina Faso, and Joseph R. Donovan Jr., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia, all of the Department of State.

SD-419

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine laboratory testing in the era of precision medicine.

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine consolidation and competition in the United States seed and agrochemical industry.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Christopher Coons, of Delaware, and Ronald H. Johnson, of Wisconsin, both to be a Representative of the United States of America to the Seventy-first Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and Sung Y. Kim, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines, Rena Bitter, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Kamala Shirin Lakhdir, of Connecticut, to be Ambassador to Malaysia, all of the Department of State.

SD-419

SEPTEMBER 21

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 2873, 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, S. 2932, to amend the Controlled Sub-

stances Act with respect to the provision of emergency medical services, an original bill entitled, "Career and Technical Education Act of 2016", and the nominations of Thomas G. Kotarac, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Railroad Retirement Board, and Constance Smith Barker, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

SD-430

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Agriculture and the current state of the farm economy.

SR-328A

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SR-253

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

To hold hearings to examine combatting the opioid epidemic, focusing on a review of anti-abuse efforts by Federal authorities and private insurers.

SD-342

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance

To hold hearings to examine terror financing risks of America's \$1.7 billion cash payments to Iran.

SD-538

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine prioritizing public health, focusing on the Food and Drug Administration's role in the generic drug marketplace.

SD-192

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the proposed revisions to the Fish and Wildlife Service mitigation policy.

SD-406

SEPTEMBER 22

3 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine agency regulatory guidance.

SD-342

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5681–S5728

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 3321–3331, and S. Res. 559. **Pages S5721–22**

Measures Passed:

National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 559, designating the week of September 12, 2016, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”.

Page S5727

Measures Considered:

Water Resources Development Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of 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, taking action on the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S5694–S5718**

Adopted:

McConnell (for Inhofe) Amendment No. 4979, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S5707**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 85 yeas to 12 nays (Vote No. 139), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to waive all applicable sections of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and applicable budget resolutions, with respect to McConnell (for Inhofe) Amendment No. 4979. Subsequently, the point of order that the amendment was in violation of the Senate PAYGO rule, was not sustained, and thus the point of order fell. **Pages S5706–07**

By 94 yeas to 3 nays (Vote No. 140), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S5707**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill, as amended, post-cloture, at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, September 15, 2016; that the time fol-

lowing Leader remarks until 11:30 a.m., be equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees; and that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, all post-cloture time with respect to the bill, as amended, expire at 11:30 a.m. **Pages S5727–28**

Appointments:

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: The Chair announced, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 107–12, the reappointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: Trevor Whipple of Vermont. **Page S5727**

Messages from the President: Senate received the following messages from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order terminating the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to Cote d’Ivoire, and revoking Executive Order 13396; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–54) **Pages S5720–21**

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the notification of the President’s intent to end the suspension of Burma as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, and to designate Burma as a least-developed beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program; which was referred to the Committee on Finance. (PM–55) **Page S5721**

Messages from the House: **Page S5721**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S5687, S5721**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S5721**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S5721**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5722–23**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S5723–25**

Additional Statements: **Pages S5718–20**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S5725–26**

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Pages S5726–27

Privileges of the Floor:

Page S5727

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—140)

Pages S5706–07

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:33 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5727–28.)

Committee Meetings*(Committees not listed did not meet)***NUCLEAR POWER**

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development concluded a hearing to examine the future of nuclear power, after receiving testimony from Senator Whitehouse; former Senator Judd Gregg, Nuclear Matters; Ernest J. Moniz, Secretary of Energy; and Jay Faison, ClearPath Foundation, Washington, D.C.

CBO OVERSIGHT

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Congressional Budget Office, including the CBO's work since May 2015 and plans for the future, after receiving testimony from Keith Hall, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

GLOBAL EFFORTS TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues concluded a hearing to examine protecting girls, focusing on global efforts to end child marriage, after receiving testimony from Anne C. Richard, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population Refugees and Migration, and Catherine M. Russell, Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, both of the Department of State; Lakshmi Sundaram, Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage, London, United Kingdom; and Suzanne Petroni, International Center for Research on Women, Washington, D.C.

NATO ACCESSION OF MONTENEGRO

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine North Atlantic Treaty Organization expansion, focusing on the accession of Montenegro, after receiving testimony from Hoyt Yee, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and

Eurasian Affairs; and Michael R. Carpenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 2796, to repeal certain obsolete laws relating to Indians, with an amendment.

INDIAN AFFAIRS LEGISLATION

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 2636, to amend the Act of June 18, 1934, to require mandatory approval of applications for land to be taken into trust if the land is wholly within a reservation, S. 3216, to repeal the Act entitled "An Act to confer jurisdiction on the State of Iowa over offenses committed by or against Indians on the Sac and Fox Indian Reservation", S. 3222, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to assess sanitation and safety conditions at Bureau of Indian Affairs facilities that were constructed to provide treaty tribes access to traditional fishing grounds and expend funds on construction of facilities and structures to improve those conditions, and S. 3300, to approve the settlement of water rights claims of the Hualapai Tribe and certain allottees in the State of Arizona, to authorize construction of a water project relating to those water rights claims, after receiving testimony from Lawrence S. Roberts, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs; Damon Clarke, Hualapai Tribe, Peach Springs, Arizona; Lavern Jefferson, Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa, Tama; W. Ron Allen, National Congress of American Indians, Washington, D.C.; and Paul Lumley, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Portland, Oregon.

INTERNET OVERSIGHT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts concluded a hearing to examine protecting Internet freedom, focusing on the implications of ending United States oversight of the Internet, after receiving testimony from Lawrence E. Strickling, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, National Telecommunications and Information Administration; Goran Marby, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, Los Angeles, California; Berin M. Szoka, Tech Freedom, Jonathan Zuck, ACT The App Association, J. Beckwith Burr, Neustar, Inc., Steve DelBianco, NetChoice, and Paul Rosenzweig, Red Branch Consulting, PLLC, all of Washington, D.C.; Dawn Grove, Karsten Manufacturing Corporation, Phoenix, Arizona; and John C. Horton, LegitScript, Portland, Oregon.

FUTURE OF THE VA

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the future of the Department of Veterans Affairs, focusing on examining the Commission on Care report and the VA's response, after receiving testimony from Robert A. McDonald, Secretary of Veterans Affairs; Nancy M. Schlichting, Chairperson, and Thomas E. Harvey, Member, both of the Commission on Care; and Jeff Steele, The American Legion, Joy J. Ilem, Disabled American Veterans, Lauren Augustine, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Commander Rene A. Campos, USN (Ret.), Military Officers Association of America, Carlos Fuentes, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the

United States, and Rick Weidman, Vietnam Veterans of America, all of Washington, D.C.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine maximizing Social Security benefits, after receiving testimony from Charles Jeszeck, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Division, Government Accountability Office; Virginia Reno, Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy, Social Security Administration; Bill Meyer, Social Security Solutions, Inc., Leawood, Kansas; and Sita Nataraj Slavov, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 15 public bills, H.R. 6020–6034 and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 867–869 were introduced. **Pages H5500–01**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5501–02**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Collins (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5439**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:27 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H5448**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Dr. Phillip L. Pointer, Sr., St. Mark Baptist Church, Little Rock, AR. **Page H5448**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a recorded vote of 252 ayes to 145 noes with two answering "present", Roll No. 507. **Pages H5461–62**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:21 p.m. and reconvened at 3 p.m. **Page H5463**

Regulatory Integrity Act of 2016: The House passed H.R. 5226, to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, by a recorded vote of 250 ayes to 171 noes, Roll No. 510. **Pages H5470–79**

Rejected the Kildee motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to

the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 185 ayes to 238 noes, Roll No. 509.

Pages H5476–78

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–63 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. **Pages H5473–74**

Agreed to:

Fleming amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–744) that adds a requirement that proposed regulations that duplicate or overlap with other existing regulations must be disclosed;

Pages H5474–75

McKinley amendment (No. 3 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–744) that restricts employees or officers of an Executive Agency from using private email accounts when discussing a pending agency regulatory action with the public; and **Pages H5475–76**

Boustany amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–744) that requires the results of a Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) or a similar cost-benefit analysis, as well as the formula and data for the analysis to be included in the details disclosed by the agency on either regulations.gov or on the executive agency's website (by a recorded vote of 241 ayes to 154 noes, Roll No. 508). **Pages H5474, H5476**

H. Res. 863, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 5351) and (H.R. 5226) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 238 ayes to 171 noes, Roll No. 506, after the previous question was ordered by a recorded vote of 232 ayes to 172 noes, Roll No. 505. **Pages H5453–61**

VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016: The House passed H.R. 5620, to

amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, by a yea-and-nay vote of 310 yeas to 116 nays, Roll No. 519. Consideration began yesterday, September 13th. **Pages H5463–70, H5479–86**

Rejected the Titus motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 185 yeas to 239 noes, Roll No. 518. **Pages H5484–85**

Agreed to:

Ben Ray Luján (NM) amendment (No. 14 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that directs the VA to produce a report on the number of part-time active duty military physicians in VA health facilities, the hiring process for part-time active duty military physicians, the hiring process for part-time civilian physicians in, and the steps the VA is taking to recruit active duty military physicians for part-time employment in VA health facilities; **Pages H5463–64**

O'Rourke amendment (No. 16 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that provides the VA with the authority to offer physicians conditional job offers two years earlier and increases the VA's recruiting outreach efforts to academic affiliate institutions; **Pages H5464–65**

O'Rourke amendment (No. 17 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that provides the VA with the authority to share a patient's electronic health record with VA community-based providers, while maintaining HIPPA protections; **Page H5465**

O'Rourke amendment (No. 18 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct annual surveys of veterans on experiences obtaining hospital care and medical services from medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs; **Pages H5465–66**

Miller (FL) amendment (No. 22 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that inserts the legislative text of H.R. 658 which requires a V.A. Regional Office carry out claim adjudication within 125 days with 98% accuracy; Regional Offices must submit a three step report every time it fails to meet its 125 day goal with explanation, reasoning and solutions for improvement. It will also contain a description of additional resources necessary for the office to reach its goals, from staffing to policy changes, and an action plan to enable the office to meet its goal; **Pages H5469–70**

Takano amendment (No. 15 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that extends the Department of Veterans Affairs authority for the performance of medical disability evaluations by contract physicians by one year (by a recorded vote of 426 yeas with none voting "no", Roll No. 514); **Pages H5464, H5481–82**

Takano amendment (No. 19 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that enables any person who is entitled to retired pay for nonregular (reserve) service or who, but for age, would be so entitled to be honored as a veteran; a person shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of such recognition (by a recorded vote of 421 yeas to 1 no, Roll No. 515); **Pages H5466–67, H5482**

Takano amendment (No. 20 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that allows the Secretary of the VA to furnish rehabilitative equipment to Veterans entitled to prosthetic appliances, and modify non-rehabilitative equipment owned by the Veteran to meet that purpose, if the Veteran elects. Rehabilitative equipment includes recreational sports equipment that provides an adaptation or accommodation for the Veteran (by a recorded vote of 421 yeas with none voting "no", Roll No. 516); and **Pages H5467, H5482–83**

Duffy amendment (No. 21 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that allows the VA to also use hearing aid specialists, who are more available, and are qualified to fit, program, adjust, and repair hearing aids (by a recorded vote of 423 yeas to 1 no, Roll No. 517). **Pages H5467–69, H5483–84**

Rejected:

Walz amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that was debated on September 13th that sought to strike sections 2 through 8 and section 10 (by a recorded vote of 173 yeas to 250 noes, Roll No. 511); **Pages H5479–80**

Takano amendment (No. 3 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that was debated on September 13th that sought to replace Section 3 with a new provision allowing the Secretary to suspend without pay any VA employee whose performance or misconduct threatens public health or safety, including the health and safety of veterans; and may remove a suspended employee after such investigation and review as the Secretary considers necessary, if the Secretary determines removal is in the interests of public health and safety (by a recorded vote of 184 yeas to 240 noes, Roll No. 512); and **Page H5480**

Kuster amendment (No. 5 printed in H. Rept. 114–742) that was debated on September 13th that sought to replace Section 7 with S. 2921 Section 113, which contains an improved process to expedite the removal or demotion of a member of the Senior Executive Service (by a recorded vote 183 yeas to 236 noes, Roll No. 513). **Pages H5480–81**

H. Res. 859, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5620) was agreed to yesterday, September 13th.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, September 15th. **Page H5486**

Presidential Messages: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that he had issued an Executive Order that terminates the national emergency with respect to Côte d'Ivoire declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, and revokes that Executive Order—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–163). **Page H5462**

Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress of the suspension of preferential treatment for Burma as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, and designated Burma as a least-developed beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program—referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–164). **Page H5463**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H5453.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and fourteen recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5460–61, H5461, H5462, H5476, H5478, H5478–79, H5479–80, H5480, H5480–81, H5481–82, H5482, H5482–83, H5483–84, H5485, and H5485–86. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES; AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL TRADE WITH CUBA

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 470, the “Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Land Adjustment Act of 2015”; H.R. 845, the “National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act”; and H.R. 5883, the “Technical and Clarifying Amendments to the Packers and Stockyards Act of 2016”; and a hearing entitled “American Agricultural Trade with Cuba”. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 845 and H.R. 5883. H.R. 470 was ordered reported, without amendment. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

NEXT GENERATION AIR SPACE CONTROL—ENSURING AIR FORCE COMPLIANCE BY JANUARY 1, 2020

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled “Next Generation Air Space Control—Ensuring Air Force Compliance by January 1, 2020”. Testimony was heard from Major General Michael E.

Fortney, Vice Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command; Major General Timothy Fay, USAF, Director of Strategic Plans, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements; Brigadier General Jon Thomas, USAF, Director of Strategic Plans, Requirements and Programs, Headquarters Air Mobility Command; and Brigadier General David Nahom, USAF, Deputy Director, Plans and Programs, Headquarters Air Combat Command.

GROWING RISKS TO THE BUDGET AND THE ECONOMY

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Growing Risks to the Budget and the Economy”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 5963, the “Supporting Youth Opportunity and Preventing Delinquency Act of 2016”. H.R. 5963 was ordered reported, as amended.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT ON SHAKY GROUND: OUTLOOK AND OVERSIGHT

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health; and Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, held a joint hearing entitled “The Affordable Care Act on Shaky Ground: Outlook and Oversight”. Testimony was heard from Seto J. Bagdoyan, Director, Forensic Audits and Investigative Service, Government Accountability Office; Gloria L. Jarmon, Deputy Inspector General for Audit Services, Office of Audit Services, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; and Andy Slavitt, Acting Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

DISRUPTER SERIES: ADVANCED ROBOTICS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing entitled “Disrupter Series: Advanced Robotics”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 5931, the “Prohibiting Future Ransom Payments to Iran Act”. H.R. 5931 was ordered reported, as amended.

ERITREA: A NEGLECTED REGIONAL THREAT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled “Eritrea: A Neglected Regional Threat”. Testimony was

heard from Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State; and public witnesses.

TURKEY AFTER THE JULY COUP ATTEMPT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing entitled “Turkey After the July Coup Attempt”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

NORTH KOREA’S PERPETUAL PROVOCATIONS: ANOTHER DANGEROUS, ESCALATORY NUCLEAR TEST

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled “North Korea’s Perpetual Provocations: Another Dangerous, Escalatory Nuclear Test”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SHUTTING DOWN TERRORIST PATHWAYS INTO AMERICA

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Shutting Down Terrorist Pathways into America”. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Homeland Security officials: Francis X. Taylor, Under Secretary, Office of Intelligence and Analysis; Leon Rodriguez, Director, Citizenship and Immigration Services; Huban Gowadia, Deputy Administrator, Transportation Security Administration; Kevin McAleenan, Deputy Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection; and Daniel D. Ragsdale, Deputy Director, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 5982, the “Midnight Rules Relief Act of 2016”. H.R. 5982 was ordered reported, without amendment.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on H.R. 5780, the “Utah Public Lands Initiative Act”. Testimony was heard from Rebecca Benally, Commissioner, San Juan County, Monticello, Utah; Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management; Dave Ure, Director, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, Salt Lake City, Utah; Leslie Weldon, Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT’S PREMIUM INCREASES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Examining the Affordable Care Act’s Premium Increases”. Testi-

mony was heard from Mandy Cohen, M.D., Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

RADICALIZATION IN THE U.S. AND THE RISE OF TERRORISM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, held a joint hearing entitled “Radicalization in the U.S. and the Rise of Terrorism”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MEMBERS’ DAY HEARING ON PROPOSED RULES CHANGES FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS

Committee on Rules: Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House held a hearing entitled “Members’ Day Hearing on Proposed Rules Changes for the 115th Congress”. Testimony was heard from Chairman Nunes, and Representatives Griffith, Bordallo, Cárdenas, Posey, and Rooney of Florida.

AFFIRMING CONGRESS’ CONSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES: SUBPOENA AUTHORITY AND RECOURSE FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH LAWFULLY ISSUED SUBPOENAS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Affirming Congress’ Constitutional Oversight Responsibilities: Subpoena Authority and Recourse for Failure to Comply with Lawfully Issued Subpoenas”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

IRS PUTS SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH AUDIT WRINGER

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “IRS Puts Small Businesses through Audit Wringer”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a markup on General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions; H.R. 5011, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 300 Fannin Street in Shreveport, Louisiana, as the “Tom Stagg Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; H.R. 5147, the “Bathrooms Accessible in Every Situation (BABIES) Act”; H.R. 5873, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 511 East San Antonio Avenue in El Paso, Texas, as the “R.E. Thomason Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; H.R.

5957, the “Federal Aviation Administration Veteran Transition Improvement Act of 2016”; H.R. 5977, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to provide to the appropriate committees of Congress advance notice of certain announcements, and for other purposes; H.R. 5978, the “Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Amendments Act of 2016”; S. 546, the “RESPONSE Act of 2016”; and other matters cleared for consideration. The following legislation was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 5978, H.R. 5011, H.R. 5147, and S. 546. The following legislation was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 5957, H.R. 5977, and H.R. 5873. The General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions were approved.

AN EXAMINATION OF VA’S MISUSE OF EMPLOYEE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “An Examination of VA’s Misuse of Employee Settlement Agreements”. Testimony was heard from Leigh Bradley, General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Eric Bachman, Deputy Special Counsel for Litigation and Legal Affairs, Office of Special Counsel.

EXPLORING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION TO CREATE EFFICIENCIES, HIGHER QUALITY, AND BETTER ACCESS FOR BENEFICIARIES IN HEALTH CARE

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled “Exploring the Use of Technology and Innovation to Create Efficiencies, Higher Quality, and Better Access for Beneficiaries in Health Care”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 3957, the “Emergency Citrus Disease Response Act”; H.R. 5946, the “United States Appreciation for Olympians and Paralympians Act”; H.R. 5719, the “Empowering Employees through Stock Ownership Act”; and H.R. 2285, the “Prevent Trafficking in Cultural Property Act”. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 3957, H.R. 5946, H.R. 5719, and H.R. 2285.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Christopher James Brummer, of the District of Columbia, and Brian D. Quintenz, of the District of Columbia, both to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, 10 a.m., SR-328A.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the long-term budgetary challenges facing the military services and innovative solutions for maintaining our military superiority, 9:30 a.m., SD-G50.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SR-253.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine Afghanistan, focusing on United States policy and international commitments, 9:45 a.m., SD-419.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine reviewing the civil nuclear agreement with Norway, 2:15 p.m., SD-419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the state of health insurance markets, 10 a.m., SD-342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine S. 2763, to provide the victims of Holocaust-era persecution and their heirs a fair opportunity to recover works of art confiscated or misappropriated by the Nazis, S. 3155, to amend chapter 97 of title 28, United States Code, to clarify the exception to foreign sovereign immunity set forth in section 1605(a)(3) of such title, S. 3270, to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system’s response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases, and the nominations of Lucy Haeran Koh, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, and Florence Y. Pan, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, 10 a.m., SD-226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine the Federal response and resources for Louisiana flood victims, 10:30 a.m., SR-428A.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH-219.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled “The Department of Energy’s Role in Advancing the National, Economic, and Energy Security of the United States”, 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, markup on H. Res. 220, condemning the Government of Iran’s state-sponsored persecution of its Baha’i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights, 9:30 a.m., 2255 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, markup on H. Res. 851, expressing profound concern about the ongoing political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, urging the release of political prisoners, and calling for respect of constitutional and democratic processes; and H.R. 5708, the “Nicaragua Investment Conditionality Act of 2016”; and hearing entitled “Nicaragua’s Democratic Collapse”, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, markup on the “Modernizing Government Technology Act of 2016”; the “GAO Task and Delivery Order Protest Authority Act of 2016”; the “Transportation Benefits Expansion Act”; the “Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2016”; H.R. 2532, the “EASY Savings Act of 2015”; H.R. 3779, to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on documents sent by mail by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; H.R. 5625, the “Modernizing Government Travel Act”; H.R. 5920, the “Whistleblower Protections for Contractors Act”; H.R. 5785, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for an annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers; H.R. 5790, the “Federal Bureau of Investigation Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2016”; H.R. 5150, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3031 Veterans Road West in Staten Island, New York, as the “Leonard Montalto Post Office Building”; H.R. 5309, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 401 McElroy Drive in Oxford, Mississippi, as the “Army

First Lieutenant Donald C. Carwile Post Office Building”; H.R. 5591, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 810 N US Highway 83 in Zapata, Texas, as the “Zapata Veterans Post Office”; H.R. 5676, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6300 N. Northwest Highway in Chicago, Illinois, as the “Officer Joseph P. Cali Post Office Building”; H.R. 5798, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1101 Davis Street in Evanston, Illinois, as the “Abner J. Mikva Post Office Building”; and H.R. 5889, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Chalan Kanoa VLG in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, as the “Segundo T. Sablan and CNMI Fallen Military Heroes Post Office Building”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled “A Solution in Search of a Problem: EPA’s Methane Regulations”, 9 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled “A Review of Recently Completed United States Army Corps of Engineers Chief’s Reports”, 9:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, business meeting on consideration of a Committee Report entitled “Review of Unauthorized Disclosures by Former NSA Contractor Edward Snowden”, 9 a.m., HVC-304. This meeting will be closed.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, September 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 2848, Water Resources Development Act, as amended, post-cloture, and vote on passage of the bill at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Following disposition of S. 2848, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 5325, Legislative Branch Appropriations Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, September 15

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration H.R. 5351—To prohibit the transfer of any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Consideration of a privileged resolution impeaching John Andrew Koskinen, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue.

HOUSE

Babin, Brian, Tex., E1270
 Bera, Ami, Calif., E1265
 Brooks, Susan W., Ind., E1272
 Coffman, Mike, Colo., E1268, E1272, E1275
 Davis, Danny K., Ill., E1270, E1274
 Duckworth, Tammy, Ill., E1276
 Duncan, John J., Jr., Tenn., E1268
 Farr, Sam, Calif., E1267
 Foster, Bill, Ill., E1270
 Graham, Gwen, Fla., E1276
 Grijalva, Raúl M., Ariz., E1270
 Quintana, Frank C., N.H., E1267

Guthrie, Brett, Ky., E1275
 Johnson, Eddie Bernice, Tex., E1273
 Jones, Walter B., N.C., E1274
 King, Peter T., N.Y., E1265
 Lamborn, Doug, Colo., E1274
 Larson, John B., Conn., E1275
 Lowenthal, Alan S., Calif., E1266
 Luetkemeyer, Blaine, Mo., E1266
 Norton, Eleanor Holmes, The District of Columbia, E1269, E1273
 Payne, Donald M., Jr., N.J., E1269
 Pitts, Joseph R., Pa., E1271
 Poe, Ted, Tex., E1275
 Rogers, Mike, Ala., E1268

Roskam, Peter J., Ill., E1267
 Ryan, Tim, Ohio, E1266, E1268, E1270, E1272, E1274, E1275
 Schakowsky, Janice D., Ill., E1275
 Schiff, Adam B., Calif., E1268, E1272
 Shimkus, John, Ill., E1267
 Shuster, Bill, Pa., E1267, E1269, E1271, E1273, E1275
 Tiberi, Patrick J., Ohio, E1266
 Van Hollen, Chris, Md., E1265
 Wilson, Joe, S.C., E1276
 Young, David, Iowa, E1276, E1276, E1277, E1277, E1277, E1277, E1277, E1277, E1277
 Zeldin, Lee M., N.Y., E1273



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