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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 23, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK MEADOWS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, 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 1:50 p.m.

ACA'S IMPACT ON HUNGER

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, this Republican leadership brought to the floor a budget resolution that paves the way toward repealing the Affordable Care Act and taking health care away from millions and millions of American families.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act would cause over 30 million Americans to lose coverage, and millions to see an increase in healthcare costs. It would deny those with preexisting conditions access to quality health insurance. It would do away with Medicaid expansion, which is working to cover the most vulnerable people in 31 States and the District of Columbia, and would once again put insurance companies back in charge of our health care.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act would also have a detrimental effect on efforts to end hunger in our communities. Not only do we have a moral imperative to address food insecurity, but we have a financial incentive as well. Health costs attributable to hunger have been estimated at $160 billion annually.

As Catherine D'Amato, president and CEO of The Greater Boston Food Bank, pointed out in a recent piece in The Boston Globe, the community health needs assessments now required by the Affordable Care Act have led health centers across the country—from Massachusetts to Oregon—to develop partnerships with local food banks to address the food insecurity revealed in their assessments.

I am proud that Massachusetts has been a leader in addressing food insecurity and in treating hunger as the public health issue it is. Across the Commonwealth, health centers have used the community health needs assessment to identify challenges in accessing healthy foods for vulnerable populations.

UMass Memorial Medical Center, located in my hometown of Worcester, has identified access to healthy food as a community health need in its two most recent community health needs assessments.

In response to the findings, UMass Memorial worked with the city of Worcester and the Regional Environmental Council to establish an urban agricultural program within an underserved area of the city. The program employs kids from the neighborhood and teaches them how to grow produce.

The Veggie Mobile farmers' market then distributes the local produce to neighbors in food deserts across the city. Residents using SNAP dollars are given extra incentive to purchase the nutritious vegetables from these sites in the form of ''double up bucks''—they receive $2 worth of produce for every dollar spent.

The assessments have also led to the creation of another community garden project within a public housing development, and the creation of a backyard gardening program that teaches local residents how to grow food and eat healthy.

The Worcester County Food Bank has worked to sustain and expand these urban agriculture and anti-hunger measures in the city of Worcester, and has formed the Worcester Food Policy Council to support these efforts.

In western Massachusetts, the community health needs assessment is having similar results. A 2013 community health needs assessment conducted by Holyoke Medical Center identified uncertainty in food access and the presence of food deserts as two priority areas that need to be addressed to improve community health.

In response to these findings and in recognition that hunger is a serious health challenge among residents in western Massachusetts, two dozen organizations formed the region's Task Force to End Hunger.

Out of this effort came a collaboration between The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Holyoke Health Center, and other stakeholders to establish an innovative pilot that will connect food-insecure pediatric patients and their families with nutrition and other social services. The Holyoke Health Center will institute pediatric food insecurity screenings, and hungry families will be referred to the food bank for food assistance, including connections to food pantries and meal sites in their neighborhoods, nutrition

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education, and for help in applying for SNAP benefits.

These families will also be referred to specific social service providers for other resources like stable housing, financial literacy, employment services, and much more.

In the Boston area, as Ms. D'Amato pointed out in The Boston Globe, The Greater Boston Food Bank is partnering with community health centers to screen for food insecurity in their patients, provide toolkits of available food assistance and resources for families, and operate free mobile markets that distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to hundreds and hundreds of people a month.

The community health needs assessment, which came out of the Affordable Care Act, has required collaboration among public health experts and other stakeholders to identify the health challenges of communities across our country. It has forced these groups to look holistically at measures that can be taken to address the most pressing health issues facing families in these areas. It is just one example of the positive impact the Affordable Care Act is having on our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, if we repeal the Affordable Care Act, as my Republican colleagues are trying to do, there is no guarantee that these innovations and collaborations will continue. We need to focus on ending hunger now.

FHA MORTGAGE INSURANCE PREMIUM CUT

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, there is no better sign of a healthy economy than a healthy real estate market. We know this in this country from bitter experience since the real estate and financial collapse of 2008.

In my State in Connecticut, we are barely at a place now where home sales and home equity has even come in a positive direction and climbing back towards what existed back in 2008 when the collapse occurred.

Listening to the President's speech on Friday where he very powerfully talked about the forgotten American, middle class individuals and working people who really felt that they were left behind in terms of the work that happens in this city, he clearly touched a nerve that propelled him to the White House. As I said, it was probably the most powerful part of his message that he delivered on Friday.

I mention that because it was astonishing that within an hour after taking the oath, President Trump signed an executive order rolling back a rate reduction for mortgage insurance for homeowners. What that means is that for many homeowners—particularly first-time home buyers—they need to have mortgage insurance in order to qualify for a mortgage. That ensures that if there is a default, that the mortgage will be paid off. It de-risks the loan so that, again, particularly people who are first-time home buyers can actually buy a house. The Federal Housing Administration, FHA, runs this mortgage insurance program.

Again, there was a rate reduction that was slated to go into effect on January 27, from 0.85 percent down to 0.6 percent. President Trump canceled that reduction.

So what does that mean?

The National Association of Realtors, which is hardly a partisan group, has, in the wake of that order, released numbers that about 750,000 to 800,000 homeowners are going to be adversely affected by losing those savings that are just going to go to the government, by the way. Those mortgage premiums basically are paid into the government. And right now there is a surplus in that account, which is why the rate reduction was slated to go into effect. There is no reason for the government to be overcharging for mortgage insurance, given the healthy balance that exists in that mortgage insurance account.

They also calculate that 30,000 to 40,000 home buyers will not buy a home in 2017 because of that order that was issued on Friday. Again, these are people who—$500 to $1,000, which is going to come out of their pocket in terms of higher payments because of this executive order—are basically going to be priced out of buying a home. The home builders, the realtors, the people who are closest to the market and clearly are not partisan—I mean, I know a lot of these guys in my district, and they are staunch Republicans in many cases—are dumbfounded at the fact that that order, of all things, within the first hours of the new administration, would be a priority for, again, the new Trump administration.

We have work to do in terms of getting this economy turned around, but if you look at home ownership, home construction, buying a house, having a healthy real estate market, that is absolutely the sweet spot of trying to succeed in this country. We do not need to be overcharging Americans for mortgage insurance, which, again, is the gateway for home ownership, particularly at that lower end of the market. Because every time someone buys a house for $200,000 or $250,000 in Connecticut, which is towards the lower end, or even lower in other parts of the country, that frees up existing homeowners either to buy up or to retire or get a condo. When those people are locked out—which raising these mortgage insurance premiums are going to effectively do—we are just stifling the real estate market from recovering. That is a bad start in terms of an administration that says it is about growing America's economy.

I will pledge to my constituents that I am going to do everything I can to reverse that unwise order and help the folks who are out there doing the hard work of selling houses, building houses, hiring people, to accomplish their goal because when they succeed, America succeeds.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Thank You, God, for giving us another day. This prayer is authored by a high school class at St. Anne Episcopal in West Chester, Ohio.

Dear God, we ask You to bless our country during this time of leadership transition. We ask that You guide the people of this land, and all nations, to honor one another, serve the common good, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person. We pray that everyone who rules this country might pursue peace and justice.

We pray for wisdom, humility, and mercy to be in the hearts of our leaders as they make decisions for the welfare of all people. We ask that You allow our world's leaders, and those who have the burden of any power or authority, to execute their actions for the justice of the world and in harmony with Your word.

Please help to guide the President as he takes on his role. Ease his mind so that he is able to do his job. Help him to keep in mind the thoughts of others, to have a listening heart and an open mind, and to remember that he is a representative of all people of this country. Help him to do the will of what is best for the Nation.

We pray to You, O God, for the world's security, safety, and tranquility. Please let there be a guiding light to peace for all people and an end to all war and violence.

In Your name, we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BILIRAKIS 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.

PRAY FOR VICTIMS OF STORM IN GEORGIA

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have the great privilege of representing a beautiful part of this country. Many of you have seen it on the news lately. Cook County is ground zero for the storms that hit this past weekend. We have seven deaths in Cook County, two in Berrien, two in Brooks, four in Dougherty—outside of my district—and we have four lives lost in Mississippi as well.

As I speak to you, the Georgia Forestry Commission is searching for five who are unaccounted for with cadaver dogs. I would ask that you pray for the families who have lost so much, and I would ask that we also pray that they find those who are unaccounted for.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say one thank you as well to the first responders, the volunteers, those from other counties who have provided mutual aid, and the churches who have opened their doors to take care of those who have lost their homes. Thank you.

And I also want to thank Governor Deal and President Trump, both of whom were available yesterday to offer their support and pledge to help our communities rebuild.

WOMEN'S HEALTH ATTACKS

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

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the age of coat hanger medicine has returned.

It may be a new year, a new Congress, a new administration, but Republicans are taking us back to a dangerous past, one where women were maimed and killed by back-alley abortions.

Today, our new President signed an executive order restricting safe abortions for women around the world. And tomorrow, Republicans will vote to block American women from access to full reproductive care.

Our government is about to enter our bedrooms and take the lives and liberty of our women and our families.

With every breath, we must fight back.

CONSTITUENT EXPERIENCES WITH OBAMACARE

(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, last week, I met with a group of my constituents to discuss their experiences with the Affordable Care Act.

Here is what I heard: My deductible went from $2,500 to $6,000, so it wasn't even worth it.

The first year wasn't too bad until I found out I needed a knee replacement, said a constituent who found out her surgery wouldn't be covered because her physician was excluded from her plan's network.

A professor who saw his hours cut after passage of ObamaCare and lost his insurance because it didn't comply with the law's mandates said: I had to get a second job and sometimes a third job, and it made it very difficult.

A local small business owner saw premiums on his group plan increase by as much as $2,500 a month for family coverage and $975 a month for single employee coverage.

There were skyrocketing premiums, unaffordable deductibles, restricted access to physicians, and loss of coverage.

Mr. Speaker, these are real stories from real people in my district who want relief from the Affordable Care Act.

We are working to save patients from this disastrous law and to build a better healthcare system that lowers costs, expands access, and empowers patients.

MORTGAGE INSURANCE HURTS HOMEOWNERS

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I was really disappointed that, on his first day in office, President Trump took action through executive order to make it more difficult for hardworking families to own a home.

With this executive order that the President signed, again, on day one, he canceled a scheduled FHA directive that would have saved American homeowners hundreds of dollars a year.

Under President Obama, millions of Americans were set to receive hundreds of dollars in reduction in those fees, saving on their mortgage payments, saving on their monthly payment.

Under this executive order, not only will Americans with mortgages pay more than they would have, but it will also prevent many Americans from being able to own a home.

In fact, according to the National Association of Realtors, 40,000 American families who could have purchased a home will not have access to that part of the American Dream because of this executive order by President Trump. This has a real impact.

Rather than obsessing about the size of crowds at inaugurations, we ought to focus on this. This is real news.

FLOOD INSURANCE INTEGRITY ACT

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss important legislation I will soon be introducing in this Congress, the Flood Insurance Integrity Act.

Flooding and flood insurance are major issues for Florida and my district. Our community along the coast is prone to experiencing hurricanes and tropical storms on a regular basis. Flood insurance is a must where we live.

But right now, the National Flood Insurance Program bases its flood insurance rates on maps that can be 50 years or older. Many are completely out of date and often inaccurate. It is also one of the reasons that NFIP is over $23 billion in debt.

The Flood Insurance Integrity Act will require an open and transparent annual review of flood maps. It sounds good.

Americans who need flood insurance should be able to trust that their flood insurance premiums accurately reflect their flood risk. It is the least we can do. So that is why this bill seeks to do that.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF DETECTIVE JERRY WALKER

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the memory of Detective Jerry Walker of Little Elm, Texas.

Detective Walker was lost in the line of duty last week when he responded to an emergency call that involved an active shooter. This great loss has cast a shadow of sadness over our close-knit community. This is the first time in the city's history that we have lost an officer in the line of duty.

Detective Walker was a dedicated member of our police force and community. He was a husband, a father, a mentor, and a friend to many. I had the privilege of meeting Detective Walker when he was on duty at one of my townhall meetings in the summer of 2014. His dedication to protecting the residents of Little Elm was evident in all that he did.

Dallas Cowboys' wide receiver Cole Beasley sums up this loss precisely saying: ''We lost a good one.''

Our town of Little Elm continues to mourn the loss of one of our heroes. His service to our community will not be forgotten.

I extend my deepest sympathy to Detective Walker's family and will continue to keep them in my prayers.

EXCESSES OF MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

(Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Bret Baier of Fox News has a new book called, ''Three Days in January.'' It is primarily about President Eisenhower's warnings against the excesses of the military-industrial complex.

Today, we have a military-industrial security complex that is more about money than it is about any realistic threat.

I think President Eisenhower would be shocked at how far we have traveled down the road against which he warned us. Our new President has spoken out against the excessive, exorbitant cost of some of our newest military equipment and weapons systems.

The only way we will ever bring these costs under control is if we stop the revolving door at the Pentagon, where the defense contractors hire all of the retired admirals and generals.

President Eisenhower once said: Heaven help us if we ever have a President who doesn't know as much about the military as he did.

We need more leaders who have the guts to say ''no'' to the excessive spending by the military-industrial complex.

SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK 2017

(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, at the heart of our American values is the belief that each of us, no matter our circumstance, can pursue our own success through hard work. That is how a small town boy like me wound up a businessman in Augusta and now a Member of Congress.

The value of education cannot be underestimated on the path to achieve the American Dream. That is why I proudly support school choice.

Support for school choice is growing. Evidence shows that 70 percent of Americans are in favor.

A great success story is in Dublin, Georgia, located in my district. Parents can choose an elementary school with learning tracks based on a student's individual needs and interest. And those tracks continue through their childhood education.

I am very proud to say that Dublin High School has a 96.3 percent graduation rate.

God created every child to be unique, each with special gifts and ideas that only he or she may have.

Families should have the opportunity to select a K–12 education and environment that is best suited for their children.

EL DORADO FURNITURE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

(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 am proud to rise today to recognize El Dorado Furniture, a family-owned business in my congressional district celebrating its 50th anniversary.

El Dorado was founded by Manuel Capo and his two sons Luis and Carlos within a year of arriving to the United States after fleeing Cuba due to the rise of the evil Castro regime.

They deemed it only appropriate to name their store El Dorado named after the small boat upon which they sailed to freedom to our lovely country.

Today, there are 14 locations throughout Florida, and it is recognized as the largest Hispanic-owned furniture retail business in the country. Not only does this company provide hundreds of jobs, but it also partners with numerous organizations in order to give back to the community and to those in need.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating El Dorado Furniture's 50th anniversary, and congratulate the Capo family, and wish them all the best and continued success in the years ahead.

□ 1415

MEMBERS URGED TO JOIN GERMAN-AMERICAN CAUCUS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight the good work of the Congressional German-American Caucus and to urge new Members of the House to consider joining.

I am cochairman of the caucus with Representative BILL KEATING from Massachusetts. The caucus seeks to highlight the friendship and the alliance between the United States and Germany. We do so through an Oktoberfest networking event and through our support of programs like the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange internship program. The caucus also discusses timely topics, such as trade, security, and foreign affairs, and how they relate to our German counterparts.

Mr. Speaker, German heritage has become widespread in America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Germans are the largest single ethnic group in the United States. Frederick Muhlenberg, a German immigrant and Lutheran pastor from Pennsylvania, whose family also founded Muhlenberg College, was the first Speaker of this House following the signing of the new Constitution.

Our caucus has nearly 100 members in the House, and I urge all of those who are interested in joining to do so today.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILEY WASDEN, JR.

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Wiley Anderson Wasden, Jr., from Savannah, Georgia, who passed away on January 18, 2017, just a few days shy of his 80th birthday.

Born in Millen, Georgia, to his parents, Wiley Senior and Katherine, Mr. Wasden moved to Savannah after graduating from high school in 1953. He then began studies at the University of Georgia, where he joined the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity and ignited his interest in government. Throughout his life, Mr. Wasden continued this interest in government and used it to make the State of Georgia a better place to live, eventually serving as chairman of the Georgia State Republican Party and as a Georgia State senator. Outside of government, Mr. Wasden worked hard for his community. He was a well-respected local Realtor in Savannah while he also served as chairman of the board for Savannah Country Day School.

I am proud today to recognize Mr. Wasden's outstanding life and the positive impact he made on the State of Georgia. He will certainly be missed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1529

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 3 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

POWER AND SECURITY SYSTEMS (PASS) ACT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 511) to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of non-application of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security

or life safety alarms or surveillance systems, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 511

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 ''Power And Security Systems (PASS) Act''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF NONAPPLICATION OF NO-LOAD MODE ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARD TO CERTAIN SECURITY OR LIFE SAFETY ALARM OR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS.

(a) Section 325(u)(3)(D)(ii) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6295(u)(3)(D)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''2015'' each place it appears and inserting ''2021''; and

(2) by striking ''2017'' and inserting ''2023''.

(b) Section 325(u)(3)(E) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6295(u)(3)(E)) is amended—

(1) in clause (ii), by striking ''July 1, 2017,'' and inserting ''the effective date of the amendment under subparagraph (D)(ii)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) TREATMENT IN RULE.—In the rule under subparagraph (D)(ii) and subsequent amendments the Secretary may treat some or all external power supplies designed to be connected to a security or life safety alarm or surveillance system as a separate product class or may extend the nonapplication under clause (ii).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 511. I would note that this is our colleague Mr. WELCH's bill that moved through the regular process through the Committee on Energy and Commerce last year. It received extensive bipartisan support. I am again glad to move this bill today.

External power supplies, EPS, are used with a wide variety of devices, and we have learned from experience that the Federal energy efficiency standards for them are not compatible with some of these applications. In particular, we need an exemption from these rules for security and life safety alarms and surveillance systems. This bill, H.R. 511, the Power And Security Systems (PASS) Act, provides a targeted exemption that allows these critical systems to stay on the market.

Devices like home security alarms or fire detection systems need to be on 24/7, but the 2007 energy law requiring energy efficiency standards for external power supplies did not allow for this. Subsequent legislation created an exemption for external power supplies used with these always-on devices. This exemption will end on July 1 of this year. This bill extends that exemption until 2023.

The result of the bill would be that these important security systems will continue to be available, preserving the jobs of those who make them and certainly the safety of those who use them. As with H.R. 518, the other external power supply bill that we are addressing today, these provisions enjoyed strong bipartisan and bicameral support when they were added to last year's energy bill. They also passed under suspension last year.

I urge my colleagues to once again vote ''yes'' on this measure.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 511, the Power And Security Systems, or PASS, Act. As Chairman UPTON said, this bill will provide an important technical exemption for certain security and life safety products from energy efficiency standards set forth in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

As Mr. UPTON said, a provision in the law increased the energy efficiency requirements for battery chargers and external power supplies, something which this side of the aisle very strongly supported. However, the provision also mistakenly included security and life safety products and required that they be manufactured with a standby mode despite being products that are inherently always on.

Without providing this correction, the security industry will need to spend millions of dollars to comply with an energy standard that will yield no energy savings and could cost jobs, which, of course, was never the original intent of the law.

I am pleased that my colleagues Representatives WELCH and BROOKS have reintroduced the bill, which the House passed last year but the Senate failed to move before the end of the last Congress.

This is a commonsense and consensus fix to a simple problem. The language was developed by both industry and efficiency advocates, with technical assistance from the Department of Energy. It should come as no surprise that this bill enjoys broad support from the security industry and energy efficiency advocates. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. I thank my colleagues for their support, the former chairman of the committee and now chair of the Subcommittee on Energy. He is a very important person over there, and there are no words I could convey that would meet the reputation of Mr. UPTON. I thank him and Ms. DEGETTE very much.

They have said a lot of the specific content of this bill. This is a situation where Congress passed a good law. There was a provision in it that needed to be corrected, and, lo and behold, Congress is correcting that provision. It is about these security devices that obviously can't operate on no-power mode. They have got to be on. When the bad guys come in, we have got to be watching. That is really what this is all about.

It is a combination of the bipartisan commitment that we have had to energy efficiency, especially last year. I do give Mr. UPTON a lot of credit for this. We have had a lot of debates in this Congress about climate change, about the science, and aside from—we don't need to get into that—to embrace as we have in a bipartisan way, there are enormous benefits to efficiency every single place we can find it.

This efficiency bill originally was applying to all these devices to put them in no-load mode. That was cutting down on use of electricity. It was cutting down on carbon emissions. It was saving people money. But the no-load obviously couldn't apply to security devices.

Last year, Mr. POMPEO, when he was a Congressman, supported this, and now that he is going to be our leader in the CIA, he knows you have got to keep that watching device on when the bad guys are lurking around.

We are back this year. One of our first bills to be passed and hopefully signed by the President is the extension of the correction that we made sometime ago. I am delighted to be here with my colleagues in support of this legislation, getting this House of Representatives off to a constructive start.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I just again urge my colleagues to support this good bipartisan bill. I appreciate the kind words always by Mr. WELCH. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 511, the ''Power and Security Systems Act of 2017, which will revise energy conservation standards for devices operating in standby mode.

In the early 1970s, I recall, as many of my colleagues do, the impact to our nation's economy when OPEC nations withheld oil from the United States causing one of the greatest peace-time energy shortages in United States history.

One of the remedial steps taken by the Carter Administration was the promulgation of regulations that required large appliances and equipment that used electricity to default to a power down mode when not in use.

Today, we take for granted that machines power down when not in use, but this one change in energy policy over the last 4o years has saved taxpayers, which includes businesses and private homes, billions of dollars in energy costs.

This was only one policy solution that was used to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil so that energy could go to vital services like fuel for electricity generation, gasoline, heating fuels, and diesel oil.

H.R. 511, the bill before us would extend energy conservation to digital technology that can operate in standby mode.

Most digital device technology manufactures already provide sleep mode on their devices to assist their users in conserving power on cellphones, smartphones, MP3 players, e-book readers, as well as desktop and laptop computers.

Today, 68 percent of U.S. adults own a smartphone, up from 35 percent in 2011, and tablet computer ownership has edged up to 45 percent among adults, according to newly released survey data from the Pew Research Center.

Considering not just smartphones, but all types of mobile phones, Pew notes that cellphones continue to top of the list.

Roughly nine-in-ten American adults or 92 percent own a mobile phone of some kind.

Although these mobile devices are ubiquitous today, the share of adults who own one has risen substantially since 2004.

Smartphone ownership is nearing the saturation point with some groups: 1. 86 percent of those ages 18–29; 2. 83 percent of those ages 30–49; and 3. 87 percent of those living in households earning $75,000 and up annually own smartphones.

These facts highlight the importance of energy conservation for mobile communication users.

The battery life for these devices is limited and without power they are of no use to the user.

This bill will help users remain connected as long as possible because the energy consumption on their cellphones and other digital devices will be minimized when they are not in use.

Energy conservation will also assist consumers during times when power outages may occur due to weather or other electricity disruption.

The longer power life for cellphones will benefit consumers by reducing the amount of electricity needed to recharge their personal devices.

This bill will also benefit businesses that often have many computers that when in use can consume electricity if left on after business hours—especially over weekends.

For these reasons, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 511.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 511.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FAIR RATEPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICIENCY STANDARDS ACT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 587) to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 587

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 ''Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act'' or the ''Fair RATES Act''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.

Subsection (d) of section 205 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''Any absence of action by the Commission that allows a change to take effect under this section, including the Commission allowing the sixty days' notice herein provided to expire without Commission action, shall be treated as an order issued by the Commission accepting such change for purposes of section 313.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as I complimented Mr. WELCH, I want to thank Mr. KENNEDY for his leadership on this bill. I would note that we passed this bill through regular order again in the last Congress, passed with bipartisan support. It is appropriate that we bring it up early this year. Again, this is another bipartisan bill. We must allow the public to have administrative process relief in those cases where FERC does not actually issue an order, and this legislation will do just that. I urge passage of the bill.

The Federal Power Act sets forth processes to set rates for electricity, including opportunities for the public to protest a rate change filed with FERC. New rates take effect if FERC approves them or if FERC fails to issue an order approving or denying the filed rate within 60 days.

The failure to approve or deny a rate may result from agency delay or, in some limited cases, from a vote that results in a deadlocked Commission, for example, a 2–2 vote. In such cases, the rates become effective by operation of law, even when these rates were not approved by a majority of Commissioners.

The Federal Power Act, of course, provides administrative redress for members of the public to protest Commission rate decisions. However, if these rates become effective by operation of law, for example, that 2–2 deadlock, the administrative processes are not available to the public because FERC did not actually issue an order for the public to protest. The public literally gets shut out.

I don't want to speak for the gentleman from Massachusetts, but I think some of his constituents recently experienced this firsthand. As a result of that and of the hard work by Mr. KENNEDY and of his staff and certainly of the committee staff on both sides of the aisle, the legislation was drafted. We considered it in committee during the 114th Congress, where it passed on a voice vote. We have it on the floor today.

I urge all Members to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for allowing me to discuss the Fair RATES Act, H.R. 587, and for bringing it to the floor today for a vote. I also want to thank the subcommittee chairman, Mr. UPTON, his staff, and, of course, during his tenure as chairman of the full committee, his staff, along with the staff of Mr. PALLONE and the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittees.

We have worked on this legislation for now several years. It did pass unanimously, as Chairman UPTON indicated, on a bipartisan passage last year. I am grateful for his acknowledgment of that effort between our teams and that it is on the floor so early in this Congress.

Because many of my colleagues have heard me speak about this at length and patiently listened as I dove too far into the weeds about forward capacity auctions, I am hoping to keep this part short and am happy to answer any questions that anyone may have. As the chairman alluded to, New England holds an energy capacity auction to ensure that we have sufficient energy supply to meet consumer demand.

Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, during an auction where there was a shortfall, those capacity payments tripled, skyrocketing from about $1 billion to $3 billion. That rate increase hasn't even reached our constituents yet, but this June, a significant portion of their bills will triple due to that auction.

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviewed that rate increase, they were down to four Commissioners, and they deadlocked 2–2. One Democratic Commissioner and one Republican Commissioner raised concerns about whether those rates were just and reasonable for consumers. Because of the deadlock, those rates took effect by operation of law without any action from FERC. With no official decision from the agency, there was no

decision to appeal, leaving my constituents completely voiceless.

Mr. Speaker, in 2 weeks, our region will hold that same annual auction, once again determining rates that will be passed along to families and businesses in my district 3 years down the road. Once again, FERC is understaffed, without a full complement of Commissioners to consider the new rate filings.

Although the situation may sound complex and unique to New England, there is not a corner of this country that is immune from the unpredictability of American energy markets and the resulting burden our consumers and businesses are forced to bear as a result. That is why I urge my colleagues to pass this bill and enact a simple fix to a very complex problem.

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

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a new member of the committee but an old hand in Congress.

□ 1545

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 587, the Fair RATES Act.

This bill would amend the Federal Power Act so that those who are adversely affected by inaction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on utility rate changes will have the right to a rehearing. Under current law, a court challenge to a FERC order may only be brought about petitioning the Commission for a rehearing.

But if the panel is deadlocked and no order is issued by FERC on a utility rate increase, affected parties cannot bring an action because there was no final order. Meanwhile, the utility rate increase moves forward without the ability of affected parties to be heard.

Under the Fair RATES Act, FERC's inaction on a utility's notice of a rate increase within 60 days will be treated as an order accepting the change. Affected parties will then be able to petition for a rehearing on the utility rate change.

This bill will ensure that consumers and other affected parties are able to have their concerns heard by Federal regulators. The Fair RATES Act will hold Federal regulators accountable to ensure utility rate increases are reasonable by increasing transparency in the process.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to echo my support for this important piece of legislation.

This bill was passed last year on a bipartisan basis on a voice vote, in fact, but it was never taken up in the other body. This is becoming kind of a theme today. But, as Mr. KENNEDY pointed out, if we can't move this through Congress in the next few weeks, families and small businesses may be left with electric bills that they cannot afford. So what we are really doing today is we are cleaning up some of the leftover important legislation from the last Congress that really needs to pass.

Mr. UPTON and I worked hard, along with Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. WELCH and many other Members, on the 21st Century Cures bill last Congress. It was one of the last bills we passed on a bipartisan basis. I am happy that the Energy and Commerce Committee is getting a running start today in passing some of our key bipartisan legislation from last Congress, and I am hoping that this will be a bellwether for the rest of this Congress that we will continue in the grand tradition of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. And I hope that the Senate will work quickly so that we can send this important bill to the President's desk and we can stop those unanticipated rate increases.

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

I will stand on the remarks I have already made, and I urge quick passage of the legislation.

I, again, want to extend my gratitude and thanks to Chairman UPTON and his team for all of their work, both last Congress and this one.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I would just like to reference the kind remarks by my friend, the gentlewoman from Colorado. This is the start of the next Congress. We are certainly looking forward to governing in a bipartisan way. That is what our committee has done for hundreds of bills in the last number of years. I look forward to that continued partnership. I know Chairman WALDEN on the full committee looks forward to doing that as well.

This is just the first step, literally one of the first days, obviously, in the new Trump administration, but we look forward to working with the Senate to get this bill to the new administration and get it signed into law, showing, again, the bipartisan support.

I want to compliment my friend, my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), for his good work on this. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 587, the "Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act" (Fair RATES Act), which amends the Federal Power Act to permit administrative and judicial review of any rate change filed by a public utility that takes effect without the approval of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The need for this change became evident in the wake of a New England Forward Capacity Market Auction in 2014, which occurred at a time when FERC only had 4 Commissioners.

When the New England Forward Capacity Market Auction issue was addressed by FERC, the Commissioners split evenly over the question of whether the auction results were just and reasonable.

Since FERC did not disapprove the auction results, wholesale electricity prices in New England increased dramatically; and

So, while rates went up, none of the affected parties could challenge the decision or resulting rate increase, and, therefore, no rehearing or judicial review was possible.

H.R. 587 provides those who want to challenge similar rulings or non-decisions by FERC the ability to challenge the decision administratively or in the courts.

The bill ensures that stakeholders have recourse when a non-decision by FERC has very real consequences for consumers, producers and others.

This bill would also improve the process by which FERC votes are reconsidered.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 587.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 587.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADVANCED NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 590) to foster civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and enhance the licensing and commercial deployment of such technologies.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 590

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 ''Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Nuclear energy generates approximately 20 percent of the total electricity and approximately 60 percent of the carbon-free electricity of the United States.

(2) Nuclear power plants operate consistently at a 90 percent capacity factor, and provide consumers and businesses with reliable and affordable electricity.

(3) Nuclear power plants generate billions of dollars in national economic activity through nationwide procurements and provide thousands of Americans with high paying jobs contributing substantially to the local economies in communities where they operate.

(4) The United States commercial nuclear industry must continue to lead the international civilian nuclear marketplace, because it is one of our most powerful national security tools, guaranteeing the safe, secure, and exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy.

(5) Maintaining the Nation's nuclear fleet of commercial light water reactors and expanding the use of new advanced reactor designs would support continued production of reliable baseload electricity and maintain United States global leadership in nuclear power.

(6) Nuclear fusion technology also has the potential to generate electricity with significantly increased safety performance and no radioactive waste.

(7) The development of advanced reactor designs would benefit from a performance-based, risk-informed, efficient, and cost-effective regulatory framework with defined milestones and the opportunity for applicants to demonstrate progress through Nuclear Regulatory Commission approval.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADVANCED NUCLEAR REACTOR.—The term ''advanced nuclear reactor'' means—

(A) a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear fission reactors, which may include inherent safety features, lower waste yields, greater fuel utilization, superior reliability, resistance to proliferation, and increased thermal efficiency; or

(B) a nuclear fusion reactor.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Energy.

(3) LICENSING.—The term ''licensing'' means NRC activities related to reviewing applications for licenses, permits, and design certifications, and requests for any other regulatory approval for nuclear reactors within the responsibilities of the NRC under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954.

(4) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term ''National Laboratory'' has the meaning given that term in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801).

(5) NRC.—The term ''NRC'' means the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

SEC. 4. AGENCY COORDINATION.

The NRC and the Department shall enter into the a memorandum of understanding regarding the following topics:

(1) TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.—Ensuring that the Department has sufficient technical expertise to support the civilian nuclear industry's timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of safe, innovative advanced reactor technology and the NRC has sufficient technical expertise to support the evaluation of applications for licenses, permits, and design certifications, and other requests for regulatory approval for advanced reactors.

(2) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The use of computers and software codes to calculate the behavior and performance of advanced reactors based on mathematical models of their physical behavior.

(3) FACILITIES.—Ensuring that the Department maintains and develops the facilities to enable the civilian nuclear industry's timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of safe, innovative reactor technology and ensuring that the NRC has access to such facilities, as needed.

SEC. 5. ADVANCED REACTOR REGULATORY FRAMEWORK.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the NRC shall transmit to Congress a plan for developing an efficient, risk-informed, technology-neutral framework for advanced reactor licensing. The plan shall evaluate the following subjects, consistent with the NRC's role in protecting public health and safety and common defense and security:

(1) The unique aspects of advanced reactor licensing and any associated legal, regulatory, and policy issues the NRC will need to address to develop a framework for licensing advanced reactors.

(2) Options for licensing advanced reactors under existing NRC regulations in title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, a proposed new regulatory framework, or a combination of these approaches.

(3) Options to expedite and streamline the licensing of advanced reactors, including opportunities to minimize the time from application submittal to final NRC licensing decision and minimize the delays that may result from any necessary amendments or supplements to applications.

(4) Options to expand the incorporation of consensus-based codes and standards into the advanced reactor regulatory framework to minimize time to completion and provide flexibility in implementation.

(5) Options to make the advanced reactor licensing framework more predictable. This evaluation should consider opportunities to improve the process by which application review milestones are established and maintained.

(6) Options to allow applicants to use phased review processes under which the NRC issues approvals that do not require the NRC to re-review previously approved information. This evaluation shall consider the NRC's ability to review and conditionally approve partial applications, early design information, and submittals that contain design criteria and processes to be used to develop information to support a later phase of the design review.

(7) The extent to which NRC action or modification of policy is needed to implement any part of the plan required by this subsection.

(8) The role of licensing advanced reactors within NRC long-term strategic resource planning, staffing, and funding levels.

(9) Options to provide cost-sharing financial structures for license applicants in a phased licensing process.

(b) COORDINATION AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT REQUIRED.—In developing the plan required by subsection (a), the NRC shall seek input from the Department, the nuclear industry, and other public stakeholders.

(c) COST AND SCHEDULE ESTIMATE.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include proposed cost estimates, budgets, and specific milestones for implementing the advanced reactor regulatory framework by September 30, 2019.

(d) DESIGN CERTIFICATION STATUS.—In the NRC's first budget request after the acceptance of any design certification application for an advanced nuclear reactor, and annually thereafter, the NRC shall provide the status of performance metrics and milestone schedules. The budget request shall include a plan to correct or recover from any milestone schedule delays, including delays because of NRC's inability to commit resources for its review of the design certification applications.

SEC. 6. USER FEES AND ANNUAL CHARGES.

Section 6101(c)(2)(A) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 2214(c)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (iii);

(2) by striking the period at the end of clause (iv) and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) for fiscal years ending before October 1, 2020, amounts appropriated to the Commission for activities related to the development of regulatory infrastructure for advanced nuclear reactor technologies.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 590, the Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017.

This is a bipartisan bill. It passed in the last Congress as well. It was cosponsored and led by Congressmen LATTA and MCNERNEY. And it will help American innovators and entrepreneurs develop and license advanced nuclear technologies. The U.S. will require reliable, baseload, and affordable energy in decades to come, and nuclear power has to remain an integral part of our electricity generation portfolio.

Unfortunately, an outdated and rigid regulatory regime will stifle new nuclear technology development. This bill will help modernize the regulatory framework for the 21st century to be adaptive, technology inclusive, and certainly predictable.

Advanced nuclear technologies may provide breakthroughs in safety and efficiency over the existing fleet of nuclear power plants. Absent the proper regulatory framework, our nuclear scientists and industry will look to other parts of the world to construct game-changing nuclear technologies. So the U.S. has to remain a global leader to create and maintain highly-paying and highly-skilled jobs right here at home.

This bill is a step towards ensuring that the NRC has the necessary expertise and the resources to be able to review and license new technologies and reactor designs, while appropriately collaborating with the Department of Energy's nuclear energy research programs and the private sector. With the Federal Government, national labs, universities, and private industry all working together towards a common goal, the future of nuclear industry energy is certainly bright.

In the last Congress, as I mentioned at the beginning, this legislation passed unanimously out of the Energy and Commerce Committee and passed the House by a voice vote. I am pleased to support this legislation again, as part of our efforts to address burdensome regs that stifle economic growth and new technologies. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2017.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing concerning H.R. 590, the ''Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017,'' which was introduced on January 20, 2017.

H.R. 590 contains provisions within the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Rule X jurisdiction. In order to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will forego action on the bill. This is being done on the basis of our mutual understanding that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with respect to the appointment of conferees, or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2017.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for your letter concerning H.R. 590, Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017.

As you noted, H.R. 590 contains provisions within the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Rule X jurisdiction. I appreciate your willingness to forego action on the bill in order to expedite this bill for floor consideration. I agree that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with respect to the appointment of conferees, or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I will place a copy of your letter and this response into the Congressional Record during the Floor consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 590, the Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017, introduced by Representatives LATTA and MCNERNEY.

This bill would enhance coordination between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy by requiring them to enter into a memorandum of understanding on issues related to advanced nuclear reactor technology.

This is a worthy goal, as the chairman said, and is a commonsense way for the Federal Government to support the advanced nuclear power industry. Advanced nuclear technologies have the potential to generate power more safely and with less nuclear waste, which is why I believe the Federal Government should be supporting advancements in nuclear technology.

The bill also requires NRC to develop an advanced reactor regulatory framework to evaluate options to expedite advanced reactor licensing and to make it more predictable. NRC would have 1 year from the date of enactment to submit this plan to Congress. In developing the plan, NRC must also seek input from interested stakeholders, which I believe to be a crucial part of this process.

Nuclear energy must play a continued role in our country's clean energy future to enable us to reach our goals set forth in the Paris climate agreement. I believe the Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act will enable the Federal Government to more efficiently evaluate and support these promising nuclear technologies, which can put us on a path towards greater reductions in carbon emissions.

I commend both Representatives LATTA and MCNERNEY for introducing this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe we have any further speakers on this, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 590, the Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017.

This bill would require the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to work together to further the development of advanced nuclear technology. By directing the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to enter into a memorandum of understanding, this bill will reduce bureaucratic barriers to advanced nuclear technology research and development.

Growing a closer partnership between the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will help to chart an energy independence path for our Nation as we seek new possibilities and alternatives to power our way to a better future. Energy independence is critical to both our national security and to the continued growth of our economy.

There has been a considerable amount of research and development that has gone into nuclear energy, and it accounts for 60 percent of the clean energy produced in the United States. This legislation will knock down those walls to innovation and will provide an opportunity to develop advanced reactor designs that could be vital to our energy infrastructure.

I applaud my good friend, Mr. LATTA, for his leadership on this issue, and the Energy and Commerce Committee for their work on this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to again support this legislating on a bipartisan basis, and I thank all of my colleagues for speaking in support of it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 590.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 518) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 518

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 ''EPS Improvement Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. APPLICATION OF ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARDS TO CERTAIN EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLIES.

(a) DEFINITION OF EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—Section 321(36)(A) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(36)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph designation and all that follows through ''The term'' and inserting the following:

''(A) EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term 'external power supply' does not include a power supply circuit, driver, or device that is designed exclusively to be connected to, and power—

''(I) light-emitting diodes providing illumination;

''(II) organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination; or

''(III) ceiling fans using direct current motors.''.

(b) STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—Section 340(2)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6311(2)(B)) is amended by striking clause (v) and inserting the following:

''(v) electric lights and lighting power supply circuits;''.

(2) ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARD FOR CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.—Section 342 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—If the Secretary, acting pursuant to section 341(b), includes as covered equipment solid state lighting power supply circuits, drivers, or devices described in section 321(36)(A)(ii), the Secretary may prescribe under this part, not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a test procedure has been prescribed, an energy conservation standard for such equipment.''.

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—

(1) Section 321(6)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(6)(B)) is amended by striking ''(19)'' and inserting ''(20)''.

(2) Section 324 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294) is amended by striking ''(19)'' each place it appears in each of subsections (a)(3), (b)(1)(B), (b)(3), and (b)(5) and inserting ''(20)''.

(3) Section 325(1) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6295(1)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (19)'' each place it appears and inserting ''paragraph (20)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise certainly in support of H.R. 518.

Regulations are based on the state of technology at the time that they are developed and may have the unintended consequences of hindering new advances in products. Such has been the case with the Department of Energy's efficiency standards for external power suppliers, EPS. As the regs on the books now stand, it is not legally possible to make certain types of light-emitting diode—LED—devices, as well as some kinds of ceiling fans.

So this bill, H.R. 518, the EPS Improvement Act, provides a carefully tailored solution to the problem. And I want to thank two Members, Republican and Democrat, Mr. GUTHRIE and Ms. DEGETTE, for their good work on behalf of both the manufacturers, as well as the users, of these products.

The bill carves out an exception for these devices while giving DOE the option of setting separate efficiency standards that are more suited to them.

This bill has been thoroughly vetted—yes, it has. It was included in last year's energy package. And although that bill didn't make it to the finish line for unrelated reasons, language virtually identical to that in H.R. 518 enjoyed very strong bipartisan and certain bicameral support.

□ 1600

In addition, the bill passed the House on suspension last year as well, but failed to make it on the Senate calendar.

For the sake of the manufacturing jobs that are associated with these products as well as the consumers and small businesses that rely on them, I would urge all of my colleagues to support and vote for H.R. 518.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today to urge the passage of H.R. 518, the EPS Improvement Act.

Last session of Congress, I cosponsored this bill with our former colleague Congresswoman Ellmers, and this year, Representatives GUTHRIE, MATSUI, and DENT are joining me in this effort to strengthen the standards used to keep LED lighting safe and efficient.

By ensuring that our country's energy conservation standards are up to date with the latest developments in high-tech lighting, we can remove obstacles to innovation without sacrificing safety. And as we heard from the chairman, if there has ever been a bill in Congress that was vetted, it was this one.

We have been working on this bill for some years now, and, frankly, what it is doing is it is truly addressing unintended consequences that happened due to the Energy Policy Act of 2005. That act defined external power supplies in a way that just simply did not anticipate the rapid growth and use of LED and OLED light sources during the decade that followed.

Now, these lights are really energy efficient. They are up to 80 percent more efficient than traditional lights like fluorescent and incandescent lights, and 90 percent of the energy in LEDs is committed to illumination, while only 5 percent is heat; so it is no wonder they have become so popular in the last 10 years. Unfortunately, in the 2005 act, the standards did not allow for these types of lighting as their use continues to constitute an ever-growing share of our energy consumption.

What this bill does is it clarifies the definition of ''external power supplies'' and it amends the conditions under which the Energy Department can undertake a rulemaking process in the future. The bill will facilitate the continued growth of LED lighting, and it will help lower energy prices for businesses and households both in my home State of Colorado and across America.

Clean energy truly is the future. It can be safe, efficient, and affordable for all when it is properly regulated, and that is exactly what this legislation does.

I urge everybody to support this act, and I hope that the Senate will pass it this year. We are getting a good, early start.

Mr. Speaker, I have no one else to speak on this bill, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on this side of the aisle either.

I would urge my colleagues on both sides to again vote for this bill. Let's hope that the Senate can get it on their plate and get it to the President for him to sign into law.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R., 518.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION PROCESS REFORM ACT OF 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 290) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 290

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 ''Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION PROCESS REFORM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 13. TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY.

''(a) INITIAL RULEMAKING AND INQUIRY.—

''(1) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall complete a rulemaking proceeding and adopt procedural changes to its rules to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decisionmaking.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR RULEMAKING.—The rules adopted under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) set minimum comment periods for comment and reply comment, subject to a determination by the Commission that good cause exists for departing from such minimum comment periods, for—

''(i) significant regulatory actions, as defined in Executive Order No. 12866; and

''(ii) all other rulemaking proceedings;

''(B) establish policies concerning the submission of extensive new comments, data, or reports towards the end of the comment period;

''(C) establish policies regarding treatment of comments, ex parte communications, and data or reports (including statistical reports and reports to Congress) submitted after the comment period to ensure that the public has adequate notice of and opportunity to respond to such submissions before the Commission relies on such submissions in any order, decision, report, or action;

''(D) establish procedures for, not later than 14 days after the end of each quarter of a calendar year (or more frequently, as the Commission considers appropriate), publishing on the Internet website of the Commission and submitting to Congress a report that contains—

''(i) the status of open rulemaking proceedings and proposed orders, decisions, reports, or actions on circulation for review by the Commissioners, including which Commissioners have not cast a vote on an order,

decision, report, or action that has been on circulation for more than 60 days;

''(ii) for the petitions, applications, complaints, and other requests for action by the Commission that were pending at the Commission on the last day of such quarter (or more frequent period, as the case may be)—

''(I) the number of such requests, broken down by the bureau primarily responsible for action and, for each bureau, the type of request (such as a petition, application, or complaint); and

''(II) information regarding the amount of time for which such requests have been pending, broken down as described in subclause (I); and

''(iii) a list of the congressional investigations of the Commission that were pending on the last day of such quarter (or more frequent period, as the case may be) and the cost of such investigations, individually and in the aggregate;

''(E) establish deadlines (relative to the date of filing) for—

''(i) in the case of a petition for a declaratory ruling under section 1.2 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, issuing a public notice of such petition;

''(ii) in the case of a petition for rulemaking under section 1.401 of such title, issuing a public notice of such petition; and

''(iii) in the case of a petition for reconsideration under section 1.106 or 1.429 of such title or an application for review under section 1.115 of such title, issuing a public notice of a decision on the petition or application by the Commission or under delegated authority (as the case may be);

''(F) establish guidelines (relative to the date of filing) for the disposition of petitions filed under section 1.2 of such title;

''(G) establish procedures for the inclusion of the specific language of the proposed rule or the proposed amendment of an existing rule in a notice of proposed rulemaking; and

''(H) require notices of proposed rulemaking and orders adopting a rule or amending an existing rule that—

''(i) create (or propose to create) a program activity to contain performance measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the program activity; and

''(ii) substantially change (or propose to substantially change) a program activity to contain—

''(I) performance measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the program activity as changed (or proposed to be changed); or

''(II) a finding that existing performance measures will effectively evaluate the program activity as changed (or proposed to be changed).

''(3) INQUIRY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall complete an inquiry to seek public comment on whether and how the Commission should—

''(A) establish procedures for allowing a bipartisan majority of Commissioners to place an order, decision, report, or action on the agenda of an open meeting;

''(B) establish procedures for informing all Commissioners of a reasonable number of options available to the Commission for resolving a petition, complaint, application, rulemaking, or other proceeding;

''(C) establish procedures for ensuring that all Commissioners have adequate time, prior to being required to decide a petition, complaint, application, rulemaking, or other proceeding (including at a meeting held pursuant to section 5(d)), to review the proposed Commission decision document, including the specific language of any proposed rule or any proposed amendment of an existing rule;

''(D) establish procedures for publishing the text of agenda items to be voted on at an open meeting in advance of such meeting so that the public has the opportunity to read the text before a vote is taken;

''(E) establish deadlines (relative to the date of filing) for disposition of applications for a license under section 1.913 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations;

''(F) assign resources needed in order to meet the deadlines described in subparagraph (E), including whether the Commission's ability to meet such deadlines would be enhanced by assessing a fee from applicants for such a license; and

''(G) except as otherwise provided in section 4(p), publish each order, decision, report, or action not later than 30 days after the date of the adoption of such order, decision, report, or action.

''(4) DATA FOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Commission shall develop a performance measure or proposed performance measure required by this subsection to rely, where possible, on data already collected by the Commission.

''(5) GAO AUDIT.—Not less frequently than every 6 months, the Comptroller General of the United States shall audit the cost estimates provided by the Commission under paragraph (2)(D)(iii) during the preceding 6-month period.

''(b) PERIODIC REVIEW.—On the date that is 5 years after the completion of the rulemaking proceeding under subsection (a)(1), and every 5 years thereafter, the Commission shall initiate a new rulemaking proceeding to continue to consider such procedural changes to its rules as may be in the public interest to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decisionmaking.

''(c) NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 552b of title 5, United States Code, a bipartisan majority of Commissioners may hold a meeting that is closed to the public to discuss official business if—

''(A) a vote or any other agency action is not taken at such meeting;

''(B) each person present at such meeting is a Commissioner, an employee of the Commission, a member of a joint board or conference established under section 410, or a person on the staff of such a joint board or conference or of a member of such a joint board or conference; and

''(C) an attorney from the Office of General Counsel of the Commission is present at such meeting.

''(2) DISCLOSURE OF NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—Not later than 2 business days after the conclusion of a meeting held under paragraph (1), the Commission shall publish a disclosure of such meeting, including—

''(A) a list of the persons who attended such meeting; and

''(B) a summary of the matters discussed at such meeting, except for such matters as the Commission determines may be withheld under section 552b(c) of title 5, United States Code.

''(3) PRESERVATION OF OPEN MEETINGS REQUIREMENTS FOR AGENCY ACTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall limit the applicability of section 552b of title 5, United States Code, with respect to a meeting of Commissioners other than that described in paragraph (1).

''(d) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION ON COMMISSION'S WEBSITE.—The Commission shall provide direct access from the homepage of its website to—

''(1) detailed information regarding—

''(A) the budget of the Commission for the current fiscal year;

''(B) the appropriations for the Commission for such fiscal year; and

''(C) the total number of full-time equivalent employees of the Commission; and

''(2) the performance plan most recently made available by the Commission under section 1115(b) of title 31, United States Code.

''(e) INTERNET PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN FCC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—The chairman of the Commission shall—

''(1) publish on the Internet website of the Commission any policies or procedures of the Commission that—

''(A) are established by the chairman; and

''(B) relate to the functioning of the Commission or the handling of the agenda of the Commission; and

''(2) update such publication not later than 48 hours after the chairman makes changes to any such policies or procedures.

''(f) FEDERAL REGISTER PUBLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any document adopted by the Commission that the Commission is required, under any provision of law, to publish in the Federal Register, the Commission shall, not later than the date described in paragraph (2), complete all Commission actions necessary for such document to be so published.

''(2) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date described in this paragraph is the earlier of—

''(A) the day that is 45 days after the date of the release of the document; or

''(B) the day by which such actions must be completed to comply with any deadline under any other provision of law.

''(3) NO EFFECT ON DEADLINES FOR PUBLICATION IN OTHER FORM.—In the case of a deadline that does not specify that the form of publication is publication in the Federal Register, the Commission may comply with such deadline by publishing the document in another form. Such other form of publication does not relieve the Commission of any Federal Register publication requirement applicable to such document, including the requirement of paragraph (1).

''(g) CONSUMER COMPLAINT DATABASE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In evaluating and processing consumer complaints, the Commission shall present information about such complaints in a publicly available, searchable database on its website that—

''(A) facilitates easy use by consumers; and

''(B) to the extent practicable, is sortable and accessible by—

''(i) the date of the filing of the complaint;

''(ii) the topic of the complaint;

''(iii) the party complained of; and

''(iv) other elements that the Commission considers in the public interest.

''(2) DUPLICATIVE COMPLAINTS.—In the case of multiple complaints arising from the same alleged misconduct, the Commission shall be required to include only information concerning one such complaint in the database described in paragraph (1).

''(h) FORM OF PUBLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In complying with a requirement of this section to publish a document, the Commission shall publish such document on its website, in addition to publishing such document in any other form that the Commission is required to use or is permitted to and chooses to use.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The Commission shall by rule establish procedures for redacting documents required to be published by this section so that the published versions of such documents do not contain—

''(A) information the publication of which would be detrimental to national security, homeland security, law enforcement, or public safety; or

''(B) information that is proprietary or confidential.

''(i) TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO PERFORMANCE IN MEETING FOIA REQUIREMENTS.—The Commission shall take additional steps to inform the public about its performance and efficiency in meeting the disclosure and

other requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), including by doing the following:

''(1) Publishing on the Commission's website the Commission's logs for tracking, responding to, and managing requests submitted under such section, including the Commission's fee estimates, fee categories, and fee request determinations.

''(2) Releasing to the public all decisions made by the Commission (including decisions made by the Commission's Bureaus and Offices) granting or denying requests filed under such section, including any such decisions pertaining to the estimate and application of fees assessed under such section.

''(3) Publishing on the Commission's website electronic copies of documents released under such section.

''(4) Presenting information about the Commission's handling of requests under such section in the Commission's annual budget estimates submitted to Congress and the Commission's annual performance and financial reports. Such information shall include the number of requests under such section the Commission received in the most recent fiscal year, the number of such requests granted and denied, a comparison of the Commission's processing of such requests over at least the previous 3 fiscal years, and a comparison of the Commission's results with the most recent average for the United States Government as published on www.foia.gov.

''(j) PROMPT RELEASE OF STATISTICAL REPORTS AND REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than January 15th of each year, the Commission shall identify, catalog, and publish an anticipated release schedule for all statistical reports and reports to Congress that are regularly or intermittently released by the Commission and will be released during such year.

''(k) ANNUAL SCORECARD REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For the 1-year period beginning on January 1st of each year, the Commission shall prepare a report on the performance of the Commission in conducting its proceedings and meeting the deadlines established under subsection (a)(2)(E) and the guidelines established under subsection (a)(2)(F).

''(2) CONTENTS.—Each report required by paragraph (1) shall contain detailed statistics on such performance, including, with respect to each Bureau of the Commission—

''(A) with respect to each type of filing specified in subsection (a)(2)(E) or (a)(2)(F)—

''(i) the number of filings that were pending on the last day of the period covered by such report;

''(ii) the number of filings described in clause (i) for which each applicable deadline or guideline established under such subsection was not met and the average length of time such filings have been pending; and

''(iii) for filings that were resolved during such period, the average time between initiation and resolution and the percentage for which each applicable deadline or guideline established under such subsection was met;

''(B) with respect to proceedings before an administrative law judge—

''(i) the number of such proceedings completed during such period; and

''(ii) the number of such proceedings pending on the last day of such period; and

''(C) the number of independent studies or analyses published by the Commission during such period.

''(3) PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION.—The Commission shall publish and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate each report required by paragraph (1) not later than the date that is 30 days after the last day of the period covered by such report.

''(l) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) AMENDMENT.—The term 'amendment' includes, when used with respect to an existing rule, the deletion of such rule.

''(2) BIPARTISAN MAJORITY.—The term 'bipartisan majority' means, when used with respect to a group of Commissioners, that such group—

''(A) is a group of three or more Commissioners; and

''(B) includes, for each political party of which any Commissioner is a member, at least one Commissioner who is a member of such political party, and, if any Commissioner has no political party affiliation, at least one unaffiliated Commissioner.

''(3) PERFORMANCE MEASURE.—The term 'performance measure' means an objective and quantifiable outcome measure or output measure (as such terms are defined in section 1115 of title 31, United States Code).

''(4) PROGRAM ACTIVITY.—The term 'program activity' has the meaning given such term in section 1115 of title 31, United States Code, except that such term also includes any annual collection or distribution or related series of collections or distributions by the Commission of an amount that is greater than or equal to $100,000,000.

''(5) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—The terms 'agency action', 'ex parte communication', and 'rule' have the meanings given such terms in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATES AND IMPLEMENTING RULES.—

(1) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(A) NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—Subsection (c) of section 13 of the Communications Act of 1934, as added by subsection (a), shall apply beginning on the first date on which all of the procedural changes to the rules of the Federal Communications Commission required by subsection (a)(1) of such section have taken effect.

(B) REPORT RELEASE SCHEDULES.—Subsection (j) of such section 13 shall apply with respect to 2018 and any year thereafter.

(C) ANNUAL SCORECARD REPORTS.—Subsection (k) of such section 13 shall apply with respect to 2017 and any year thereafter.

(D) INTERNET PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN FCC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Subsection (e) of such section 13 shall apply beginning on the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) RULES.—Except as otherwise provided in such section 13, the Federal Communications Commission shall promulgate any rules necessary to carry out such section not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. CATEGORIZATION OF TCPA INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS IN QUARTERLY REPORT.

In compiling its quarterly report with respect to informal consumer inquiries and complaints, the Federal Communications Commission may not categorize an inquiry or complaint with respect to section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227) as being a wireline inquiry or complaint or a wireless inquiry or complaint unless the party whose conduct is the subject of the inquiry or complaint is a wireline carrier or a wireless carrier, respectively.

SEC. 4. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall relieve the Federal Communications Commission from any obligations under title 5, United States Code, except where otherwise expressly provided.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION OF ANTIDEFICIENCY ACT TO UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROGRAM.

Section 302 of Public Law 108–494 (118 Stat. 3998) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2017'' each place it appears and inserting ''December 31, 2021''.

SEC. 6. REPORT ON IMPROVING SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN FCC PROCEEDINGS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission, in consultation with the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) actions that the Commission will take to improve the participation of small businesses in the proceedings of the Commission; and

(2) recommendations for any legislation that the Commission considers appropriate to improve such participation.

SEC. 7. TIMELY AVAILABILITY OF ITEMS ADOPTED BY VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 4 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 154) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(p) In the case of any item that is adopted by vote of the Commission, the Commission shall publish on the Internet website of the Commission the text of such item not later than 24 hours after the Secretary of the Commission has received dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to an item that is adopted after the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

I am pleased to support H.R. 290, a bill to reform the FCC, sponsored by the chair of the full Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has a unique history. It has been passed out of the House not once or twice, but four times already in the last three Congresses. The last three times this bill has come to the floor, it has passed on suspension with full bipartisan support. That support speaks to the deep necessity for fundamental reform of the Federal Communications Commission.

As Members of Congress, we hear from constituents whose applications at the FCC are left to languish unresolved while consumers and businesses let opportunities slip by because they haven't received approval yet from a Federal Government agency. It is even worse when the FCC, under its public interest mandate, decides to put its

thumb on the scale in favor of one technology sector or another, often without providing reasonable evidence that its intervention is necessary and appropriate.

While I have faith that Chairman Pai will bring about real reform at the FCC, without legislative changes, I am afraid that this type of jury-rigged rulemaking will return under a future administration. That is why I have supported this bill each time it has made its way through our committee and each time it has come to the House floor. I believe that strong process can restore the agency's integrity and rein it back in the interest of the stakeholders and the society that it should serve.

The bill requires the FCC to conduct a notice and comment rulemaking in order to adopt clear rules to guide its own process. By giving the FCC flexibility when setting procedures and deadlines, we are not hamstringing the agency; rather, we are providing them with goals to meet and allowing them to determine the best way to meet those goals.

We are asking the FCC to consider and adopt rules for itself that would provide clear deadlines on starting and stopping comments, clear deadlines for resolving petitions filed by the public, clear notice of status to those affected by petitions and rules, and clear schedules of statistical reports.

The bill also requires the FCC to consider publication of Commission documents to be considered at an open meeting and to consider whether cost-benefit analysis just might improve their rulemakings. This legislation also changes the existing Sunshine Act to allow for greater collaboration between Commissioners.

There was fine bipartisan work that went into these bills, and I thank my Democratic colleagues for working with us to improve the agency.

This country is blessed with the most creative and competitive technology industry in the world. The agency charged with overseeing this robust and dynamic sector should be open and transparent and foster continued growth, and I believe this bill will help in achieving that goal.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 290, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was the same bill that passed the House last Congress and is the result of lengthy negotiations in the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology to come to a bipartisan agreement that all can support. This agreement requires the FCC to make certain procedural rule changes and requires an inquiry into other process changes.

The bill includes the FCC Collaboration Act, a bill that allows for more than two FCC Commissioners to discuss official business as long as certain safeguards are in place. This bill should help the Commissioners reach consensus more quickly.

The bill also includes important provisions offered by Democrats last Congress, such as Representative CLARKE's provision to require that the FCC provide quarterly reports on pending decisions to ensure accountability and timely responses, Representative MATSUI's provision that required the FCC to coordinate with the Small Business Administration to improve small business participation in FCC proceedings, and Representative LOEBSACK's provision that requires the FCC Chairman to publicly post the agency's internal policies and procedures for greater transparency. The addition of these Democratic ideas make this a better bill.

The bill also requires the FCC to post, in its entirety, any item adopted by the Commission within 24 hours of filing of final dissenting statements, a compromise that was reached by Congressman MCNERNEY and Congresswoman Ellmers last Congress.

FCC process reform has been an issue in our subcommittee going back several years. I hope this compromise bill is something all Members can support.

Mr. Speaker, I see no other speakers on my side of the aisle, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), the author of the legislation and the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on the Energy and Commerce Committee and our new chair of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and the new ranking member on the committee, Mr. DOYLE.

I believe by the end of today, Mr. Speaker, the House Energy and Commerce Committee will have produced close to 20 pieces of legislation already this Congress for consideration by the House, and I think all of them have been bipartisan. That is the kind of work this great committee is known for and we hope to continue to do. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

I think we agreed that the FCC was in need of process reform. This is the people's business that they are conducting. It needs to be done in an open and transparent and predictable way so that all of those involved in the public's business can see what is happening.

The Federal Communications Commission regulates an incredibly dynamic and innovative sector of the American economy. The communications technology sector directly impacts the lives of consumers in meaningful ways. Consumers are able to map their ways to new places, find information and enriching content, and reach their loved ones who might live in the most remote places, literally, of the globe.

Communications technology also enables other industries to reach their audiences in new and life-changing ways: health care, finance, manufacturing, agriculture. All of these industries are leveraging communications technologies in ways to better serve the American consumer.

It is essential that we do as much as we can to protect and promote innovation in this sector of the economy. We can't afford to allow this fundamental sector of the economy to languish or fail under outdated regulations or faulty regulatory processes. That is why Committee on Energy and Commerce has focused on improving the processes at the FCC, so that it operates in an effective and transparent manner.

This bill represents the fourth time, as you have heard, that we have brought a measure to this House floor that seeks to improve the way the FCC conducts its business. Last Congress, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, process reform was a priority and it still is. I am committed to continuing the reform effort by supporting this legislation once again.

Over the years, we have worked closely across the aisle to formulate a bipartisan compromise piece of legislation that addresses many of the concerns that we all share. Whether it is creating certainty for regulated industries by requiring shot clocks and deadlines, protecting consumers by prohibiting data dumps at the eleventh hour, or empowering all Commissioners by creating a tool for bipartisan majority to bring an item up for a vote at the FCC, this legislation is intended to improve the way the FCC does its business all across the board.

One of the concerns we heard from some on the committee during the consideration of this legislation was that an overly proscriptive piece of legislation could hamstring the agency. Well, I think we have structured this legislation to fully address that legitimate concern by allowing the agency, itself, to determine the specifics of the overarching principles that we set forth. We give them that flexibility. We just want them to do the job.

For example, the bill requires that all Commissioners have adequate time to review decision documents before having to vote. However, we allow the agency to determine what the adequate amount of time is through a rulemaking process that will generate input from the industries, the consumers, the stakeholders; and, ultimately, that should result in a Commission decision that reflects the way that the agency can best function.

□ 1615

I think it is important to note that we are still extremely committed to these important reforms, even though we have seen a change in administrations and will see a new chairman.

Process reform is not about political ideology or partisan rancor, rather, it is about ensuring that government continues to work for the people. I am hopeful that this legislation will reach the President's desk and result in a better, more efficient, more transparent Federal Communications Commission, the kind of regulator that the most innovative and dynamic sector in the world deserves.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss H.R. 290, the FCC Process Reform Act of 2017.

I'm particularly proud of a bipartisan provision I first authored in the 112th Congress that I'm pleased is included in this legislation today. This provision would modify current FCC rules to allow three or more Commissioners to hold non-public collaborative discussions, as long as no agency action is taken.

Today, under the FCC's "Sunshine Rule," three Commissioners or more are prohibited from talking to each other outside of an official public meeting. The FCC oversees industries representing approximately one-sixth of the American economy. It must be able to collaborate freely and deliberate on our nation's most pressing communications issues, from enhancing universal service and public safety, to making more spectrum available for mobile broadband.

As Congress looks at ways to help modernize the FCC, this bipartisan, commonsense provision will help to promote greater discussion among the five FCC Commissioners and ensure they can benefit from each other's expertise and experience. Through greater collaboration, the FCC will be better positioned to respond to a fast-paced and rapidly growing telecommunications industry in the 21st century.

I thank Chairman WALDEN for including this provision in the bill the House has passed today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 290.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANTI-SPOOFING ACT OF 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 423) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 423

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 "Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. SPOOFING PREVENTION.

(a) EXPANDING AND CLARIFYING PROHIBITION ON MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—

(1) COMMUNICATIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.—Section 227(e)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(1)) is amended by striking "in connection with any telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "or any person outside the United States if the recipient is within the United States, in connection with any voice service or text messaging service".

(2) COVERAGE OF TEXT MESSAGES AND VOICE SERVICES.—Section 227(e)(8) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(8)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking "telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "voice service or a text message sent using a text messaging service";

(B) in the first sentence of subparagraph (B), by striking "telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service" and inserting "voice service or a text message sent using a text messaging service"; and

(C) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

"(C) TEXT MESSAGE.—The term 'text message'—

"(i) means a message consisting of text, images, sounds, or other information that is transmitted to or from a device that is identified as the receiving or transmitting device by means of a 10-digit telephone number or N11 service code;

"(ii) includes a short message service (commonly referred to as 'SMS') message and a multimedia message service (commonly referred to as 'MMS') message; and

"(iii) does not include—

"(I) a real-time, two way voice or video communication; or

"(II) a message sent over an IP-enabled messaging service to another user of the same messaging service, except a message described in clause (ii).

"(D) TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE.—The term 'text messaging service' means a service that enables the transmission or receipt of a text message, including a service provided as part of or in connection with a voice service.

"(E) VOICE SERVICE.—The term 'voice service'—

"(i) means any service that is interconnected with the public switched telephone network and that furnishes voice communications to an end user using resources from the North American Numbering Plan or any successor to the North American Numbering Plan adopted by the Commission under section 251(e)(1); and

"(ii) includes transmissions from a telephone facsimile machine, computer, or other device to a telephone facsimile machine.".

(3) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 227(e) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)) is amended in the heading by inserting "MISLEADING OR" before "INACCURATE".

(4) REGULATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 227(e)(3)(A) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(3)(A)) is amended by striking "Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of the Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009, the Commission" and inserting "The Commission".

(B) DEADLINE.—The Commission shall prescribe regulations to implement the amendments made by this subsection not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(5) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall take effect on the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Commission prescribes regulations under paragraph (4).

(b) CONSUMER EDUCATION MATERIALS ON HOW TO AVOID SCAMS THAT RELY UPON MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIALS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission, in coordination with the Federal Trade Commission, shall develop consumer education materials that provide information about—

(A) ways for consumers to identify scams and other fraudulent activity that rely upon the use of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information; and

(B) existing technologies, if any, that a consumer can use to protect against such scams and other fraudulent activity.

(2) CONTENTS.—In developing the consumer education materials under paragraph (1), the Commission shall—

(A) identify existing technologies, if any, that can help consumers guard themselves against scams and other fraudulent activity that rely upon the use of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, including—

(i) descriptions of how a consumer can use the technologies to protect against such scams and other fraudulent activity; and

(ii) details on how consumers can access and use the technologies; and

(B) provide other information that may help consumers identify and avoid scams and other fraudulent activity that rely upon the use of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

(3) UPDATES.—The Commission shall ensure that the consumer education materials required under paragraph (1) are updated on a regular basis.

(4) WEBSITE.—The Commission shall include the consumer education materials developed under paragraph (1) on its website.

(c) GAO REPORT ON COMBATING THE FRAUDULENT PROVISION OF MISLEADING OR INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the actions the Commission and the Federal Trade Commission have taken to combat the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and the additional measures that could be taken to combat such activity.

(2) REQUIRED CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall examine—

(A) trends in the types of scams that rely on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information;

(B) previous and current enforcement actions by the Commission and the Federal Trade Commission to combat the practices prohibited by section 227(e)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(e)(1));

(C) current efforts by industry groups and other entities to develop technical standards to deter or prevent the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and how such standards may help combat the current and future provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information; and

(D) whether there are additional actions the Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and Congress should take to combat the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the findings of the

study under paragraph (1), including any recommendations regarding combating the fraudulent provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, shall be construed to modify, limit, or otherwise affect any rule or order adopted by the Commission in connection with—

(1) the Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–243; 105 Stat. 2394) or the amendments made by that Act; or

(2) the CAN–SPAM Act of 2003 (15 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.).

(e) COMMISSION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Commission'' means the Federal Communications Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017. Today we are considering a very worthy piece of legislation, which has been introduced in each of the last two Congresses by Vice Chairman BARTON, Vice Chairman LANCE, and Representative MENG. All of them have put a lot of hard work into this bill, and I thank each of them for their dedication in pursuing a much-needed update to the Truth In Caller ID Act.

Spoofing is the act of altering the number that will appear on the receiving end of the caller ID. It is a trick that has been around for more than a decade. Spoofing provides a false identity to bad actors and criminals who seek to harass and defraud our hard-working taxpayers, oftentimes through various scams.

Sometimes the scams are elaborate, and other times they are simple. But these schemes are all petty; and once carried out, they are criminal. Spoofing lets the bad guys disguise their identity and will often pose as official entities, such as credit card companies, hospitals, and government agencies to target their unsuspecting victims. These crooks regularly target seniors and use intimidation tactics to extract personal and financial information.

The FCC has the authority to levy penalties and criminal fines against individuals that use fake caller ID information for the purpose of defrauding or harming another. However, current law only covers traditional voice calls. While this was considered a good fix when it was enacted in 2009, the Truth in Caller ID Act no longer sufficiently protects consumers. New communication methods and an evolving consumer trend towards text messaging have left the law with significant holes for the fraudsters to fly through and avoid prosecution.

H.R. 423 would extend and clarify provisions of the Truth in Caller ID Act to include text messages and Voice over Internet Protocol services and would also apply the penalties to violators outside of the United States.

The bill would also seek to make it more challenging for those using fake caller ID information. In the past, you needed to have advanced skills and expensive equipment in order to spoof. Nowadays, it isn't hard. All someone needs to have is a smartphone and access to any of the various apps on the market that can instantly generate a fake caller ID.

This is another classic case where technology has outpaced the laws that govern it. We will never be able to legislate ahead of technology advancement, nor should we try to do so. But when we find areas where legislation can help shield our consumers and hold the bad guys accountable, it is incumbent on us to act.

I believe that the legislation we are considering today is a good next step in our pursuit of stronger protection for our consumers. This bill will not prevent spoofing and it will not make our constituents invincible from the related scams and harassment, but what this bill does is important. By updating the law to more accurately reflect today's environment, we will be equipped to hold violators subject to the penalty of law.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act, introduced by Representative MENG as well as Representative BARTON of Texas and Representative LANCE of New Jersey.

Consumers should feel safe knowing that the caller ID information they see when they answer the phone is accurate. Unfortunately, fraudsters use misleading caller ID numbers every day to trick consumers into handing over sensitive information.

Americans, from young people to senior citizens, are misled by crooks using a fake caller identification into thinking they are being connected to a trusted institution. This practice known as spoofing contributes to the millions of identity theft cases in our country each year and so many other forms of fraud.

Under the law today, it is already illegal for scammers to use fake caller ID information for regular voice calls. This legislation expands that band to text messages and to calls coming in from overseas. That just makes sense.

It is a bipartisan bill. It passed last Congress on a vote of 382–5.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for consumers and strengthen spoofing protection. It is time for us to pass the Anti-Spoofing Act.

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the committee report for this legislation from the last Congress.

H.R. 423, ANTI-SPOOFING ACT OF 2017

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Spoofing is a practice in which a phone number shown on a phone or caller identification device is deliberately falsified, often to portray an official entity such as a government agency or credit card company, typically with malicious intent. Spoofing is a commonly used tool for a number of illegal practices, including phishing for personal information and swatting—calling in a fictitious crime in progress in order to generate a police response. The original Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009 prohibits spoofing voice caller identification. However, as communications methods and consumer habits continue to evolve, so too do the attempts by third parties to fraudulently gain personal information for criminal use. Many Americans are now relying on text messaging to stay connected, and this method of communication has become a target for spoofing in much the same way voice calls have been.

H.R. 423 extends the provisions of the Truth in Caller ID Act to include text messaging as well as Voice over Internet Protocol services. The legislation, introduced by Rep. Barton, Rep. Lance, and Rep. Meng, also addresses the growth of services that allow users to knowingly transmit misleading or inaccurate caller identification information by adding a definition of ''spoofing service'' to the Truth in Caller ID Act.

In amending H.R. 423, the Committee significantly changed the definitions of ''text message'' and ''text messaging service.'' The changes are designed to exclude from these definitions those online messaging services that use traditional telephone numbers for the purpose of identifying a user's account, just as other online services may use an email address or username for a similar purpose. The excluded services do not use telephone numbers to interconnect with the public switched telephone network or enable communication with individuals who do not subscribe to the same messaging service. The Committee intends the Commission to devise its rules using the meanings set forth in the legislation. ''Short message service'' and ''multimedia message service'' should be narrowly interpreted consistent with current industry standards (see, e.g., ETSI, Technical Specification, 3GPP TS 23.040 version 12.2.0 Release 12, ETSI TS 123 040 v12.2.0 (Oct. 2014), available at www.etsi.org).

The Committee takes notice of the fact that the language set forth in the version of H.R. 423, as ordered reported, is identical to the text relating to the same subject contained in S. 253, the Communications Act Update Act of 2016, as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, on September 27, 2016. The House passed S. 253, as amended, by unanimous consent. The foregoing discussion should therefore serve as an explanation of that bill's provisions for purposes of legislative history.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section provides that the Act may be cited as the ''Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017''.

Section 2. Spoofing prevention

This section amends the Communications Act to expand the Truth in Caller Act to include text messaging services, as well as communications from outside of the United States. This section defines the terms ''text message,'' ''text messaging service,'' and ''voice service.''

This section also requires the Commission, in coordination with the Federal Trade Commission, to develop consumer education materials regarding caller ID scams and technologies that can help consumers protect themselves against fraudulent activity.

This section also requires a Government Accountability Office report on the actions taken by the Federal Communications Commission and FTC to combat caller ID fraud.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a new member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017, because it addresses the issue of call spoofing and the impact that these deceitful callers are having on Americans.

Every day, millions of Americans are hit with calls using a fraudulent caller ID profile and with impersonators on the other end of the line. These con artists are able to disguise their real number in an effort to convince unsuspecting victims that they are a representative from a government agency, financial company, healthcare system, or other organizations that may request information to contact someone. An example of a common call is someone saying they are calling from the IRS and are asking for personal information over the phone. This has got to stop.

Representatives MENG, BARTON, and LANCE have again introduced this legislation to prevent these criminals from further victimizing hardworking Americans.

We have a real opportunity to combat this growing tactic and protect those in our communities who are the most vulnerable.

I applaud the Energy and Commerce Committee for their continued effort to protect Americans from criminal behavior and in updating such important policy measures. Last Congress, this legislation passed the House with an overwhelming vote of 382–5 in support.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 423 because we have an opportunity to fix a growing problem in our country and to cut down on fraud.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG), the primary sponsor of the Anti-Spoofing Act.

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in strong support of my bill, H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017.

I am honored to have authored this bill with Congressman BARTON and Congressman LANCE once again, and I thank Amy Murphy and Ryan Farrell of their respective staffs for working so closely with mine. I also thank the COMET Civic Association from my district for first bringing this problem to my attention.

This legislation seeks to combat spoofing, which is when phone call recipients are tricked into answering the phone due to inaccurate caller ID information. Criminals have used this technique to scam thousands of Americans and steal millions of dollars. Recent spoofing attempts have included scam artists pretending to be sheriff's offices, hospitals, and even the IRS. The bill before us this afternoon expands spoofing protections to calls that originate outside of the country as well as text messages.

It is often stated that a measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable. Almost every day, I receive new reports of spoofing that harm the most vulnerable in my district, including immigrants, seniors, veterans, and those in need of help from law enforcement. That is why this legislation is endorsed by senior citizens, law enforcement, and consumer protection groups.

The Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017 is a bipartisan bill. It passed the House in both the 113th and 114th Congresses under suspension of the rules, and it is my sincere hope that this bill will continue to be noncontroversial and that we will do everything in our power to combat telephone scams against our constituents.

In closing, I thank Representatives BLACKBURN and DOYLE for their support this afternoon, as well as Energy and Commerce Chairman WALDEN and Ranking Member PALLONE. Without their support, this legislation would not be on the floor.

I urge the Senate to quickly take up this legislation.

I urge all of my colleagues in this Chamber to support it once again.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I do not have any other speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act. I am a proud sponsor of this with Congresswoman MENG and Congressman BARTON, and I commend them for their leadership on this issue.

Caller ID spoofing occurs when a scammer calls and attempts to disguise his or her identity by manipulating the recipient caller's caller ID display. The scammer may be posing as an IRS agent, a police officer, or a representative from another governmental agency. After tricking people in picking up the line, the criminal then attempts to entice the other person to giving up personal information.

To date, hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions, have been defrauded, including veterans, immigrants, and senior citizens. In Somerset County, New Jersey, a county which I represent here in the House, scammers cloned the telephone number of the county sheriff's office and impersonated the sheriff's staff in an effort to steal residents' personal information.

This problem has gotten out of control. Millions of Americans continue to get ripped off by con artists and scammers who perpetuate this despicable crime.

Since Congress passed the Truth in Caller ID Act in 2009, new technologies have enabled these criminals to scam consumers with increased ease and efficiency.

This legislation is one step forward to ensure that governmental policies keep up with these criminals. This disgraceful practice must end, and this consumer protection legislation goes a long way toward accomplishing that critical goal.

The bill has been passed through the House twice before, as Congresswoman MENG has just said. And after collaboration with our colleagues in the Senate, we now have secured enough support to see that this commonsense consumer protection legislation will advance. I hope it advances in the 115th Congress as quickly as possible and I hope it reaches our new President's desk as quickly as possible.

□ 1630

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 423, the ''Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017,'' which amends the Communications Act of 1934, to make it unlawful to cause a caller identification service to knowingly transmit inaccurate caller identification information with the intent to: defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value.

Spoofing is a practice in which a phone number shown on a phone or caller identification device deliberately is falsified.

Spoofing is a commonly used tool for a number of illegal practices, including ''phishing'' for personal information and ''swatting''—calling in a fictitious crime in progress in order to generate-a-police response.

The Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009 prohibits spoofing of voice caller identification information; however, as communications methods and consumer habits continue to evolve, so do the attempts by third parties to gain personal information for criminal use.

Many Americans now rely on text messaging to stay connected.

According to CTIA, in 2015, Americans sent over 156 billion text messages per month.

H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act, will extend the provisions of the Truth in Caller ID Act to include text messaging and text messaging services.

The legislation adds a definition of ''spoofing service'' to the statute, addressing the growth of services that allows a user to knowingly transmit misleading or inaccurate caller identification information.

In addition, it extends the prohibitions to any person or service placing an international call to a recipient within the United States.

Additionally, H.R. 423 will revise the definitions of ''caller identification information'' and

"caller identification service" to include text messages sent using a text messaging service.

It defines "text message" as real-time messages consisting of text, images, sounds, or other information transmitted from or received by a device identified by a telephone number.

It also includes in the definition both, real-time and two-way voice or video communications, addressing the emerging law enforcement issue of "swatting" by which people can purposefully misdirect valuable, police efforts and resources.

This bill takes the right approach targeting behavior, while protecting innovations that are important to the digital economy.

As the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, I understand the vital need to safeguard against caller identification spoofing.

For example, women's abuse shelters and law enforcement officers working undercover have a need to protect their clients' identities.

This bill seeks to target those who have the intent to cause harm or commit a crime.

I support this legislation because it protects the consumer from criminal behavior, while protecting our fundamental right to privacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 423.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

SECURING ACCESS TO NETWORKS IN DISASTERS ACT

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 588) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a study on network resiliency during times of emergency, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 588

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 ''Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act''.

SEC. 2. STUDY ON NETWORK RESILIENCY.

Not later than 36 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to Congress, and make publically available on the Commission's website, a study on the public safety benefits and technical feasibility and cost of—

(1) making telecommunications service provider-owned WiFi access points, and other communications technologies operating on unlicensed spectrum, available to the general public for access to 9–1–1 services, without requiring any login credentials, during times of emergency when mobile service is unavailable;

(2) the provision by non-telecommunications service provider-owned WiFi access points of public access to 9–1–1 services during times of emergency when mobile service is unavailable; and

(3) other alternative means of providing the public with access to 9–1–1 services during times of emergency when mobile service is unavailable.

SEC. 3. ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS DURING FEDERALLY DECLARED EMERGENCIES.

Section 427(a)(1)(A) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189e(a)(1)(A)) is amended by striking ''telecommunications service'' and inserting ''wireline or mobile telephone service, Internet access service, radio or television broadcasting, cable service, or direct broadcast satellite service''.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Act—

(1) the term ''Commission'' means the Federal Communications Commission;

(2) the term ''mobile service'' means commercial mobile service (as defined in section 332 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332)) or commercial mobile data service (as defined in section 6001 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1401));

(3) the term ''WiFi access point'' means wireless Internet access using the standard designated as 802.11 or any variant thereof; and

(4) the term ''times of emergency'' means either an emergency as defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122), or an emergency as declared by the governor of a State or territory of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 588.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 588 includes a provision to facilitate the repair of communications infrastructure in the wake of a disaster.

We know how critical communications can be following a disaster for first responders and everyone that is impacted. I commend the bill's sponsor for pursuing this legislation, and I thank the Energy and Commerce Committee for working with the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on this language.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) be permitted to control the remainder of the time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 588, the Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act, or the SANDy Act, introduced by Ranking Member FRANK PALLONE. This bill is all about making sure that the communication networks that so many Americans rely on are as resilient as they can be.

Disaster is going to strike and networks are going to go down. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that when those networks go down, the network operators have the resources they need to get things back online as quickly as possible.

The bill also requires the FCC to conduct a study on the future of network resiliency, and how new and existing technologies can be used during our times of need to communicate with loved ones or call for help.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation that passed 389–2 in the last Congress, and I urge all Members to support it.

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

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

When disaster strikes, there is a lot of hard work to be done, and every second counts. First responders go into action for those that need help. Relief organizations and volunteers rush in to begin the process of cleaning up. Utilities and service providers must be on the ground repairing damaged infrastructure.

All of these mission-critical tasks require a functioning communications network. People turn to the network for potentially lifesaving information and rely on its functionality to reach emergency services.

We are here today to consider this bill. Representative PALLONE—I want to give some credit to him—has been a champion of following the eye-opening effects of Superstorm Sandy. He has worked tirelessly on this legislation since October 2012.

In total, the Sandy storm resulted in roughly $74 billion in damages in the U.S. alone. Sometimes we forget the magnitude of that storm. Damage to power and communications infrastructure, it knocked out about 25 percent of the cell sites in its path. In some of the hardest-hit counties, 50 percent of those sites were down.

When the networks go down, public safety communications and emergency response services are threatened. In order for the networks to get back up and running, telecommunications providers need access to critical resources and permission to enter the disaster area.

The chaos immediately following a major disaster makes it challenging to obtain resources and entry to the affected area. What we saw after Sandy were communication providers being turned away from the disaster area and denied resources because they were not considered essential to the recovery effort. This bill seeks to change that.

In the wake of Sandy, and as a result of repair workers being barred from the recovery effort, communication networks remained offline for hours and, in some cases, days longer than need be. This left those who were still vulnerable in the disaster area without critical information and no means to call for help.

There are numerous entities that are essential for the rescue and recovery phase following a disaster. The affected area needs power. Water is critical. The bill would clarify that communications networks are also an essential service.

Whether it be wireline, mobile telephone, Internet, radio or television, communication services play a key role in facilitating recovery. In some cases it can be the difference between life and death. By defining these types of providers as essential, telecommunication companies will be granted the access and resources needed to get their networks back online.

The bill would also require the FCC to conduct a study on the feasibility and benefits of making WiFi access points available to the general public to access 911 services during times of emergency.

I would also like to recognize that the original version of this bill included a number of wireless provisions designed to increase preparedness. These provisions were removed, however, because the five largest wireless carriers voluntarily adopted these provisions.

H.R. 588, in its current form, combined with the voluntary framework established by the wireless carriers, leaves us with a strong, bipartisan bill that will improve the resiliency of our Nation's communications infrastructure to avoid a recurrence of the widespread and extended service outages, as experienced in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy.

I thank our colleagues from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for working with us on this bill, and I urge the support of my colleagues for the legislation.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the primary sponsor of the bill, a friend and colleague, and the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would like to start today by congratulating him on taking the reins of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. That subcommittee is a critical part of the Energy and Commerce Committee and serves an important role for Congress as a whole. Congresswoman ESHOO left big shoes to fill, but I am confident that, with Ranking Member DOYLE and his longtime expertise in this area, the subcommittee is in capable hands.

I also thank our colleague from Tennessee, who is now the chairwoman of the subcommittee. The gentlewoman basically summarized what I was going to say about this bill, so I will try not to be too repetitive. But I do want to ask support for my bill, H.R. 588, the Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act, or SANDy Act.

Superstorm Sandy had a traumatic effect on my district back in New Jersey, and we saw firsthand how critical communication networks can be damaged during emergencies. Broadcast and cable networks provide crucial information that helps us stay out of harm's way, and phone and Internet access makes sure we can call for help and keep track of our loved ones.

Unfortunately, when Sandy ripped through the Northeast, many of these networks went down when we needed them most. Across the region, nearly 1 in 4 cell towers were knocked out. But in some of the hardest-hit areas of New Jersey, as many as half of the towers were actually down. Many of them stayed down for weeks. That is why I have spent the past several years figuring out what went right and what went wrong.

Initially, I worked with the Nation's largest wireless carriers and the Federal Communications Commission to put together a voluntary resiliency framework. That framework, as Mrs. BLACKBURN mentioned, makes sure that if one cell network goes down, like AT&T did during Sandy in my district, its customers can access another network, like Verizon, that was still operational.

Everyone, I think, should be able to call for help as long as any signal is available.

Mr. Speaker, the voluntary resiliency framework will save lives during major emergencies in the future, and I would like to thank the wireless carriers and the FCC for working with me to craft that comprehensive agreement. Having these networks operational can mean the difference between life and death during an event like Superstorm Sandy.

The other major problem during Sandy was the inability of communications services to repair their equipment. The SANDy Act will recognize the critical role that wireline and mobile telephone, Internet, radio, and TV broadcast, cable and satellite services play during emergencies.

For example, ''The RAT,'' which is a radio station at the Jersey Shore, switched from music to 24-hour news coverage right after Sandy, and that helped people to access vital services in the days after the storm.

These providers will receive, pursuant to the SANDy Act, priority access to otherwise restricted areas during emergencies like other utilities to help them repair and maintain their communications equipment during disasters.

The SANDy Act will begin a process to provide 911 services over WiFi hotspots during emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, this is truly a commonsense, bipartisan bill. It passed the House last Congress on a vote of 389–2. I urge all Members to support the bill.

I understand the bill has been scheduled for a markup in the Senate tomorrow. So, hopefully, once they do their work, we can get this bill to the President and signed into law.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Mr. PALLONE for his diligence in solving this problem not only for his constituents there in New Jersey after Superstorm Sandy, but many of my family were down in south Mississippi and we know what happened in Katrina with those in the Gulf region around New Orleans and over in south Mississippi and the loss of communications that were there.

This week we are seeing it in Mr. CARTER's district in Georgia, again, the impact that a storm has when people cannot reach their loved ones and when they cannot get in contact to let people know the services that they needed or the injury that they are experiencing. So we are fortunate to be able to bring this bill forward. We extend our condolences and concerns to Mr. CARTER for what is going on in his district.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) to speak on the bill.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 588, the Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act because it will help to strengthen and reinforce our networks during times of emergency.

Representing the entire coast of Georgia, I am no stranger at what a working network means for the coordination of rescue and recovery efforts. Hurricane Matthew made landfall and had a significant impact on multiple States along the Southeastern seaboard, including Georgia. I personally toured many of the hardest-hit areas in my district and I have seen devastation that natural disasters, such as hurricanes, can inflict on areas such as ours.

Of course, just this past weekend, Mr. Speaker, we witnessed tornadoes in south Georgia, tornadoes that brought about tremendous devastation and the loss of life.

However, our first responders and emergency specialists are there to heed the call and assist in helping people who are most in need.

Ranking Member PALLONE's legislation would direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a

study on network resiliency during times of emergency and distress. Under this bill, the study done by the FCC would be made publicly available on their Web site and would include public safety benefits and the costs of implementing new alternatives that will aid in contacting and coordinating emergency services during those difficult times.

I urge my friends and colleagues to support this legislation because I have seen firsthand not only what disasters can do to an area, but the importance of our emergency services in having the networks and communication means to coordinate relief.

Strengthening our network resiliency is a benefit to everyone across our great country.

□ 1645

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 588, ''Securing Access to Networks in Disaster Act'', which requires the Federal Communications Commission to submit to Congress and publish on the FCC website a study on the: public safety benefits, technical feasibility, and cost of providing the public with access to 9–1–1 services during times of emergency when mobile service is unavailable.

As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am well aware of the importance of telephone service during disasters.

The Securing Access to Networks in Disasters (SANDy) Act seeks to ensure the resiliency of the nation's communications networks during emergencies.

Acquiring cellphone service during a massive natural or manmade disaster is often difficult, if not impossible, and this is why this piece of legislation is so essential.

During the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City, cellphone service was severely disrupted, forcing many callers to repeatedly dial to get through to 9–1–1 emergency services.

On that day, some of the most tragic, heart wrenching calls came from those trapped in the Twin Towers.

It is not only during terrorist attacks that cellphone services are severely disrupted, but also natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, which claimed the lives of over 1,800 people.

The SANDy Act would ensure that during an emergency, consumers' cell phones work on other carriers' networks if a consumer's own network goes down.

H.R. 588 would give priority to calls to 9–1–1 services and emergency alerts.

It also would increase coordination between wireless carriers, utilities, and public safety officials by creating a directory of the contact information for relevant disaster response officials.

The bill would require the FCC to report to Congress regarding whether additional outage data should be provided in times of emergency.

In addition, the bill requires the FCC to report to Congress on the viability of providing 9–1–1 services over Wi-Fi hotspots during emergencies.

H.R. 588 would be of immense benefit to the 18th Congressional District and the greater Houston area.

On April 17–18, 2016, Houston experienced a historic flood event that claimed the lives of eight people; damaged over 1,150 households; disrupted hundreds of businesses; closed community centers, schools, and places of worship due to flood waters.

On April 25, President Obama granted the request for federal Individual Assistance for Harris County residences and business owners who were affected by severe weather and flooding.

Unfortunately, that was not the end of the story of flooding in Houston for 2016—in early June another record setting rainfall led to catastrophic flooding throughout the Houston area.

I am grateful to President Obama and the great work of those at the Department of Homeland Security who worked tirelessly to help people after both 2016 flood events.

I spoke on the House Floor several times about the floods and the suffering caused by the waters that came through our communities—damaging homes, our schools, places of business, and our places of worship.

The flooding problems in the Houston area are frequent, widespread, and severe, with projects to reduce flood risks in place that are valued at several billion dollars

In 2015, the Houston and surrounding area experienced widespread historic flooding.

The importance of being able to contact emergency responders in the case of natural disasters is critical in order to save the lives of those directly affected by such events.

The SANDy Act would provide telecommunication access to victims of natural and manmade disasters.

The SANDy Act amends the Stafford Act to ensure that all communications providers:

1. Have the ability to access relevant disaster stricken areas during emergencies to restore service; and

2. Are included in the universal credentialing program for essential service providers

The SANDy Act would recognize the critical role that all communications providers—broadcasters, cable, and telecommunications—serve in emergencies, but most notably, the bill would ensure consumers have access to wireless service even if their cellphone service provider's wireless network goes down.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 588, the ''Securing Access to Networks in Disaster Act.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 588.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 555) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to amend its rules so as to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land use restrictions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 555

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 ''Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) More than 730,000 radio amateurs in the United States are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission in the amateur radio services.

(2) Amateur radio, at no cost to taxpayers, provides a fertile ground for technical self-training in modern telecommunications, electronics technology, and emergency communications techniques and protocols.

(3) There is a strong Federal interest in the effective performance of amateur stations established at the residences of licensees. Such stations have been shown to be frequently and increasingly precluded by unreasonable private land use restrictions, including restrictive covenants.

(4) Federal Communications Commission regulations have for three decades prohibited the application to stations in the amateur service of State and local regulations that preclude or fail to reasonably accommodate amateur service communications, or that do not constitute the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish a legitimate State or local purpose. Commission policy has been and is to require States and localities to permit erection of a station antenna structure at heights and dimensions sufficient to accommodate amateur service communications.

(5) The Commission has sought guidance and direction from Congress with respect to the application of the Commission's limited preemption policy regarding amateur service communications to private land use restrictions, including restrictive covenants.

(6) There are aesthetic and common property considerations that are uniquely applicable to private land use regulations and the community associations obligated to enforce covenants, conditions, and restrictions in deed-restricted communities. These considerations are dissimilar to those applicable to State law and local ordinances regulating the same residential amateur radio facilities.

(7) In recognition of these considerations, a separate Federal policy than exists at section 97.15(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, is warranted concerning amateur service communications in deed-restricted communities.

(8) Community associations should fairly administer private land use regulations in the interest of their communities, while nevertheless permitting the installation and maintenance of effective outdoor amateur radio antennas. There exist antenna designs and installations that can be consistent with the aesthetics and physical characteristics of land and structures in community associations while accommodating communications in the amateur radio services.

SEC. 3. APPLICATION OF PRIVATE LAND USE RESTRICTIONS TO AMATEUR STATIONS.

(a) AMENDMENT OF FCC RULES.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall amend section 97.15 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, by adding a new paragraph that prohibits the application to amateur stations of any private land use

restriction, including a restrictive covenant, that—

(1) on its face or as applied, precludes communications in an amateur radio service;

(2) fails to permit a licensee in an amateur radio service to install and maintain an effective outdoor antenna on property under the exclusive use or control of the licensee; or

(3) does not constitute the minimum practicable restriction on such communications to accomplish the lawful purposes of a community association seeking to enforce such restriction.

(b) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—In amending its rules as required by subsection (a), the Commission shall—

(1) require any licensee in an amateur radio service to notify and obtain prior approval from a community association concerning installation of an outdoor antenna;

(2) permit a community association to prohibit installation of any antenna or antenna support structure by a licensee in an amateur radio service on common property not under the exclusive use or control of the licensee; and

(3) subject to the standards specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), permit a community association to establish reasonable written rules concerning height, location, size, and aesthetic impact of, and installation requirements for, outdoor antennas and support structures for the purpose of conducting communications in the amateur radio services.

SEC. 4. AFFIRMATION OF LIMITED PREEMPTION OF STATE AND LOCAL LAND USE REGULATION.

The Federal Communications Commission may not change section 97.15(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, which shall remain applicable to State and local land use regulation of amateur service communications.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION.—The term ''community association'' means any nonprofit mandatory membership organization composed of owners of real estate described in a declaration of covenants or created pursuant to a covenant or other applicable law with respect to which a person, by virtue of the person's ownership of or interest in a unit or parcel, is obligated to pay for a share of real estate taxes, insurance premiums, maintenance, improvement, services, or other expenses related to common elements, other units, or any other real estate other than the unit or parcel described in the declaration.

(2) TERMS DEFINED IN REGULATIONS.—The terms ''amateur radio services'', ''amateur service'', and ''amateur station'' have the meanings given such terms in section 97.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, amateur radio, also known as ham radio, is a fun hobby for enthusiasts who use it to communicate with people around the world while teaching themselves the basics of communications technology. But more importantly, amateur radio operators utilize their skills to provide essential communication services to first responders when the conventional networks go down in times of emergency.

In order to be eligible to operate an amateur radio station, individuals must obtain a license from the FCC and comply with the FCC's rules. One such requirement is that individuals must own and install the equipment needed to operate a station. This includes a transceiver, transmission lines, and an antenna. Currently, there are more than 730,000 amateur radio operators licensed in the United States, including a number of active clubs in New Jersey, the State I represent in the House.

Because communications equipment provides a societal benefit and is a critical part of our Nation's infrastructure, the FCC prohibits land use restrictions imposed by governments or homeowners' associations on certain communications equipment. However, these protections do not extend to amateur radio equipment.

Roughly 90 percent of new housing in the United States is subject to deed restrictions, homeowners' associations, and other land use limitations. This is increasingly making the installation of amateur radio equipment more challenging.

Amateur radio operators have a history and tradition of being ready, willing, and able to lend their services during times of emergencies at no cost to taxpayers. Due to the nature and structure of amateur radio, hams are able to link communications between first responders using their own networks and equipment.

The only necessity for amateur radio stations, however, is some form of outdoor antenna. For this group of unsung heroes with a long tradition of public service when it is needed most, Congress should help deter barriers to their operation. H.R. 555 would extend the FCC protections over limitations on communications equipment to include amateur radio equipment.

Now, while I have described the critical role that amateur radio plays during times of disaster, I also understand the concerns shared by homeowners' associations that this bill will expose their neighborhoods to big towers and antennas. This bill recognizes that there needs to be a balance between the right of homeowners and their associations with the rights of amateur radio operators. That is why Mr. KINZINGER's bill passed without objection twice last Congress and enjoys the support of both the amateur radio community and the Community Associations Institute. I congratulate our distinguished colleague from Illinois on working with both sides on this critical issue.

Mr. Speaker, there was much discussion and hard work that went into this bill in order to strike the right balance between the rights of the amateur radio community and the concerns of homeowners' associations. Both sides were willing to compromise, and we are considering a good bill today because of that compromise. I hope all of our colleagues will support this bipartisan piece of legislation that I believe is critical to the safety of the American Nation.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 555, the Amateur Radio Parity Act. This is a bill that passed the House last Congress by voice vote after careful negotiations in the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

Amateur radio operators provide essential services in times of emergencies, and they shouldn't be prohibited from building their facilities. H.R. 555 will provide for new rules that will help these operators navigate homeowner association restrictions when they are attempting to build their stations.

The bill strikes the right balance to ensure that homeowner associations can impose reasonable regulations for amateur radio towers, but it would also make sure that amateur radio enthusiasts can continue to operate.

Again, this measure passed the House by voice vote last Congress, and I encourage Members to support it today.

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER), who is the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding. I also want to thank Chairman WALDEN and Congressman COURTNEY for working with me to introduce this legislation and bring it to the floor for debate today.

Additionally, I appreciate the willingness of the associations impacted by this legislation, both the CAI and the ARRL, for working with our offices last Congress in order to come to an agreement on where this legislation needs to be in order to move forward in a bipartisan and a positive manner.

The legislation before us today is the same legislative text as H.R. 1301, which was able to gather over 100 bipartisan cosponsors and passed the House by voice vote in the 114th Congress.

The intent of this legislation is to remedy current law which prohibits the use of any antenna for amateur radio operators in certain areas with no consideration for the emergency ramifications that come about as a result. For some, this is merely a nuisance, but for others—those who use

their amateur radio licenses for emergency communications—a dangerous situation has been established by limiting the ability of hams to create effective communications for those in need.

For example, during times of emergency service, such as following a hurricane or a tornado, amateur radio operators are able to use their skills and equipment to create a network of communications that are utilized by first responders when other wired or wireless networks are taken down or are otherwise unavailable. This is a vital and lifesaving function.

Additionally, there are numerous hams that take their certifications even further by purchasing expensive equipment and going through extensive training to become part of MARS, the Military Auxiliary Radio System. I have personally used this system as a pilot in the military. What is amazing about MARS is that it gives our military members the ability to communicate both domestically and abroad when other systems are not available or are simply not able to establish communications the way that these hams are able to do.

MARS members are able to accomplish this not only due to their extensive training and knowledge, but due to their commitment to this program. MARS members must not only have access to expensive high-frequency radio equipment, but they must also file monthly reports and participate in a minimum of 12 hours of radio activity each quarter in order to stay in compliance with the requirements of this program. This is a great service provided by these individuals, and it is my hope that we can get even more amateur radio operators involved in the future with the passage of this bill.

Again, the purpose of this bipartisan legislation is to change current regulations hampering the ability of amateur radio operators to effectively communicate in certain areas, while respecting and maintaining the rights of local communities in which many of these hams reside. It is my hope that by passing this bipartisan legislation early in this session of Congress, that we will be able to get this legislation through the Senate and to the President's desk in short order.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this bill, and I thank all my friends who helped work with me on this.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), in spite of the fact that the gentleman is a New England Patriots fan who showed no mercy to my Pittsburgh Steelers last night, to show there are no hard feelings.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. DOYLE for his generous yielding of time and the great work he does representing the great city of Pittsburgh, which has had many Super Bowl rings in the past and will again in the future no doubt.

Mr. Speaker, again, I rise in support of this measure. As Mr. KINZINGER indicated, this is the third try that we have pushed this bill on a bipartisan basis, and hopefully the third time will be the charm. It was introduced only 10 days ago, and the fact that, again, we are moving so quickly hopefully is going to send an encouraging signal that the Senate can really move forward and finish this very, I think, important and useful piece of legislation.

There are about 737,000 ham radio operators that have been licensed by the Federal Communications Commission across the country. As has been said, they provide a great backup for emergency services around the country. Again, in Connecticut, where we did get hit with Hurricanes Sandy and Irene in back-to-back years, the harm that was done to the wireless communications system as well as just the regular radio system really put the spotlight on the fact that ham radio operators were critical in terms of keeping police, fire, and small communities and State services in up-to-date, realtime communication regarding both weather conditions as well as public safety conditions. So the work that they perform is not just kind of a hobby; it really has great value to the country.

What I think this bill tries to address is that, in 1985, the FCC issued an order and ruling basically describing ham radio as critical to the Nation's information and communication infrastructure, and that reasonable accommodation should be made in terms of public entities like zoning boards and land use bodies. It did not extend, however, to private land use restrictions.

Since the 1980s, there probably hasn't been a deed signed in the country that hasn't had land use restrictions, and this bill really tries to, I think, adjust to that reality with the compromise language that has been put forward so that condominium associations and, again, neighborhood developments have to reasonably make sure that this network is going to be able to function.

The good news is that the technology has moved forward so well that the antenna intrusion really is not what it used to be, that the equipment that they have is quite remarkable to see how strong their signals are and the reception is with, again, just really almost tiny antenna technology.

So, again, this legislation I think really updates the FCC's promotion of ham radio. Communities that are going to end up depending on it because of natural disaster and other emergency situations I think will benefit strongly. So again, I congratulate all the members of the Energy and Commerce Committee. I thank Mr. DOYLE again for generously yielding his time to me.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my voice of strong support for the Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2017. This important measure will affirm individual freedom and property rights and ensure every ham radio operator has the opportunity to enjoy their pastime regardless of the community in which they live.

H.R. 555 guarantees that all amateur radio operators living in deed-restricted communities have the right to construct and operate an effective outdoor antenna without burdensome restrictions being imposed by their respective homeowners' association.

Under the bill, HOAs would be required to allow ham radio use with the least practicable restrictions to preserve their aesthetic interests.

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Across central Washington, many of my constituents are avid ham radio operators. I believe we should be encouraging this advocation, which also serves as a useful tool for emergency communications and preparedness.

I was proud to cosponsor this legislation in the 114th Congress, and I commend the work of Chairman KINZINGER, Chairman WALDEN, and Mr. LANCE to bring this bill forward again.

I look forward to supporting this bill on the House floor later today, and remain hopeful that, in this new Congress, we can advance the Amateur Radio Parity Act to the President's desk, where it can be signed into law.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 555.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING RURAL CALL QUALITY AND RELIABILITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 460) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 460

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 ''Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

Part II of title II of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 262. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

''(a) REGISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE BY INTERMEDIATE PROVIDERS.—An intermediate provider that offers or holds itself out as offering the capability to transmit covered voice communications from one destination to another and that charges any rate to any other entity (including an affiliated entity) for the transmission shall—

''(1) register with the Commission; and

''(2) comply with the service quality standards for such transmission to be established by the Commission under subsection (c)(1)(B).

''(b) REQUIRED USE OF REGISTERED INTERMEDIATE PROVIDERS.—A covered provider may not use an intermediate provider to transmit covered voice communications unless such intermediate provider is registered under subsection (a)(1).

''(c) COMMISSION RULES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) REGISTRY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall promulgate rules to establish a registry to record registrations under subsection (a)(1).

''(B) SERVICE QUALITY STANDARDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall promulgate rules to establish service quality standards for the transmission of covered voice communications by intermediate providers.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In promulgating the rules required by paragraph (1), the Commission shall—

''(A) ensure the integrity of the transmission of covered voice communications to all customers in the United States; and

''(B) prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of covered voice communications.

''(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF REGISTRY.—The Commission shall make the registry established under subsection (c)(1)(A) publicly available on the website of the Commission.

''(e) SCOPE OF APPLICATION.—The requirements of this section shall apply regardless of the format by which any communication or service is provided, the protocol or format by which the transmission of such communication or service is achieved, or the regulatory classification of such communication or service.

''(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the regulatory classification of any communication or service.

''(g) EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt or expand the authority of a State public utility commission or other relevant State agency to collect data, or investigate and enforce State law and regulations, regarding the completion of intrastate voice communications, regardless of the format by which any communication or service is provided, the protocol or format by which the transmission of such communication or service is achieved, or the regulatory classification of such communication or service.

''(h) EXCEPTION.—The requirement under subsection (a)(2) to comply with the service quality standards established under subsection (c)(1)(B) shall not apply to a covered provider that—

''(1) on or before the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, has certified as a Safe Harbor provider under section 64.2107(a) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation; and

''(2) continues to meet the requirements under such section 64.2107(a).

''(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COVERED PROVIDER.—The term 'covered provider' has the meaning given the term in section 64.2101 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.

''(2) COVERED VOICE COMMUNICATION.—The term 'covered voice communication' means a voice communication (including any related signaling information) that is generated—

''(A) from the placement of a call from a connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource or a call placed to a connection using such a numbering resource; and

''(B) through any service provided by a covered provider.

''(3) INTERMEDIATE PROVIDER.—The term 'intermediate provider' means any entity that—

''(A) enters into a business arrangement with a covered provider or other intermediate provider for the specific purpose of carrying, routing, or transmitting voice traffic that is generated from the placement of a call placed—

''(i) from an end user connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource; or

''(ii) to an end user connection using such a numbering resource; and

''(B) does not itself, either directly or in conjunction with an affiliate, serve as a covered provider in the context of originating or terminating a given call.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 460, the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act, a bill that earned unanimous support in the last Congress.

Consumers expect to be able to pick up the telephone and be connected with businesses, friends, and loved ones across the country. In today's connected world, that should not be a tall request. Unfortunately, for many constituents across the country, particularly in rural areas, call quality and reliability are just not up to par compared to their urban counterparts.

This is due, partly, because of the call routing process where long distance and wireless providers use so-called least cost routers. These inexpensive third-party intermediate providers try to complete calls for the lowest possible price, without taking measures to ensure the call actually goes through.

I am sure that most of us have experienced the annoyance of at least one failed or dropped call. You make a call to someone and it rings over and over again but no one, not even the voicemail, picks up. Or, maybe you place a call, only to hear a prerecorded message telling you that the number you dialed is not in service, even though you know you have the right number. Even in cases where you are able to connect, the sound might be distorted or delayed.

For many constituents, this is more than just an annoyance. These missed connections have significant consequences.

Folks rely on the networks for more than just staying in touch with loved ones. Our constituents count on reliable networks to run their businesses and receive messages from our community institutions. A failed call can mean a lost sale for a small rural business. Another failed call might mean that a message from your child's school or your medical provider goes undelivered. These are real and harmful impacts. This bill will address this situation through commonsense improvements.

For the most part, consumers are unaware of these intermediate providers, which has allowed them to be held unaccountable. H.R. 460 takes measured steps to bring these intermediate providers out from the shadows and into the light so that we can hold them accountable to the consuming public.

First, the bill requires intermediate providers to register with the FCC, and it prohibits carriers from using any nonregistered provider. The bill also requires the FCC to establish a database and publish the list of registered providers on its Web site. Finally, the bill requires the FCC to establish quality standards for these intermediate providers, which will raise the bar for all of the providers who provide call routing services.

These straightforward measures are another step in our effort, on a bipartisan basis, to mitigate call completion and quality issues for the consuming public. This bill will build upon the work the FCC has done in recent years.

Our constituents in rural areas face significant challenges compared to their urban counterparts, but subpar call quality should not be one of them. By raising the bar, which this bill does, we will hold the bad actors to higher standards and allow consumers to benefit from the improved integrity of our networks.

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise to support H.R. 460, Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act, the bipartisan bill introduced by Representative DAVID YOUNG and cosponsored by a number of

other Members, including Representatives WELCH and LOEBSACK from the Energy and Commerce Committee.

We deal with a lot of high-tech and complicated issues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, but this bill aims to address the most basic function for a telephone system: making sure all Americans' phone calls go through.

Many people take our modern communications tools for granted, but, in rural America, even the basic function of connecting a call is sometimes difficult. Consumers have been reporting to the FCC that calls in rural areas result in false busy signals, calls not arriving, or long pauses after dialing a number.

This isn't just an important problem for rural Americans but also for people in all of our districts who want to reach loved ones across the country and can't. This state of affairs is simply not acceptable. We need reliable telephone service to keep us connected.

Problems with call completion are often related to intermediate providers—the middlemen hired to route calls. This bill requires intermediate providers to register with the FCC and comply with service quality standards.

These commonsense steps should make it easier to figure out when providers are cutting corners or not doing their jobs. Ultimately, the bill puts consumers first by helping to make sure that we can stay connected to one another.

H.R. 460 is a bipartisan bill that passed on suspension last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to support it today.

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG), the distinguished sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 460, the bipartisan Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act, legislation I introduced with my colleague from Vermont, Congressman WELCH.

This bill helps fix the significant problems rural Iowans and other rural Americans face from dropped and poor quality calls. Reliable communication is critical for our constituents to live their lives, for our businesses to succeed, and for our communities to thrive. Yet, in rural States and areas across America, phone calls are not getting through or the connection and quality are poor.

Telephone companies often rely on intermediate providers, who are paid to route calls from larger networks to local service providers. Much of the time, this is to mixed results.

There simply is no excuse for these intermediate providers to not fulfill their contracts and leave our rural constituents with unreliable communication service. Dropped, looped, or poor quality calls hurt rural America's quality of life, impacting our small businesses, farmers, consumers, and our families who are in need of emergency assistance and public services. It also gives unfair blame to our essential local service providers when they are not the problem, they are the solution.

A family in rural America should not be disadvantaged because of where they live. Iowa businesses should have the same communication access to conduct daily businesses as those in urban areas.

Improving rural call completion rates and quality are important to ensuring the survival of small towns and granting Americans the choice to live and thrive in whatever community is best for them and their family, rural, urban, or anywhere in between.

Our bill will help address this problem by requiring providers to register with the FCC in order to meet quality standards and ensure reliable phone service in rural areas. It also prohibits providers from using intermediary routing services not registered with the FCC.

I want to personally thank Chairman BLACKBURN and Ranking Member PALLONE for their attention to this important issue, as well as my partner in this, Congressman WELCH, for the opportunity to get this bill passed. This bill did pass the House in the 114th Congress, and I am hopeful we can get the partnership we need from the Senate to get this to the finish line. Rural Americans deserve it.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a distinguished colleague on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. YOUNG for being a great partner in the presentation of this bill. Many of us worked together on rural telecommunications issues, from getting broadband to all Vermonters and folks in rural parts of your districts to improving our wireless infrastructure to ensuring we have adequate choice and competition in cable markets. That is because it is our desire, and mine especially, to ensure that rural America has comparable telecom services to urban and suburban America, just as the 1996 Telecommunications Act requires. Making that happen requires constant effort and focus.

We often focus on rural broadband accessibility and affordability so that the next generation of technological innovation does not skip rural America and leave it behind. The promise of innovation, like the Internet of things, should not be earmarked just for urban and suburban America, which is why it is backwards and unfortunate that we are still talking about finding ways to ensure that traditional landline telephone calls can be completed without interruption on a consistent basis, but that is exactly what this bill that I worked on with Representative YOUNG is getting at.

Our bill would require the FCC, the Federal Communications Commission, to establish rules that require third-party providers—or least cost routers, as they are called, which is the problem in the call chain—to register their companies, for the first time, with the FCC and, therefore, have to comply with FCC service quality regulations, just like other companies.

This legislation would make it easier for the FCC to hold accountable third-party providers. The FCC will finally know who they are and make them comply with those quality standards.

This is really important in rural areas because we have got companies that do business with urban America. In Vermont, Dakin Farm had rural call completion problems during their busiest times in 2012. That was the Thanksgiving to Christmas holiday period.

It really hurt their bottom line. It put them at a competitive disadvantage. When people call in and the call is dropped, they think it is bad service from Dakin Farm or the company that they are calling, when it is not. Those folks have to then deal with the reputational harm that is caused.

It is important in rural school districts like Camels Hump in Vermont that rely on these calls when there is a snowstorm or ice storm—and there is one coming tonight—to check whether, in fact, they have got to get their kids to school or not. So it is a big deal when they need it.

I appreciate, by the way, the work that Representative YOUNG has done on this. I look forward to this bill passing both Chambers and being signed into law so we can, hopefully, make rural call completion issues a thing of the past.

□ 1715

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 460, the "Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017", which amends the Communications Act of 1934 to require voice communications that charge users to register with the FCC, and comply with service quality standards to be established by the FCC.

The bill, should it become law, prohibits long-distance providers from using an internet provider to transmit voice communications and signals unless the intermediate provider is registered.

H.R. 460 would require the FCC to:

1. Ensure the integrity of voice communications to all customers in the United States,

2. Prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination across areas of the United States in the delivery of voice communications; and

3. Make a registry of intermediate providers publicly available on the FCC website.

H.R. 460, the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2016, would seek to ensure that calls to Americans living in the rural areas of our country actually make it through to the intended receiver.

Making sure a call goes through, regardless of where it is being made, is fundamental to our communications system.

H.R. 460 would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish basic quality standards for providers that transmit voice calls to consumers, among other things.

The Senate Commerce Committee adopted an amendment in the nature of a substitute (AINS) that made the following changes:

1. Extends deadlines for service quality standards for intermediate providers from 180 days to one year,

2. Exempts intermediate providers that have been certified as a safe harbor provider; and

3. Amends the definition of intermediate provider.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 460, the "Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 460.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION CONSOLIDATED REPORTING ACT OF 2017

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 599) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 599

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 ''Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. COMMUNICATIONS MARKETPLACE REPORT.

Title I of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 13. COMMUNICATIONS MARKETPLACE REPORT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the last quarter of every even-numbered year, the Commission shall publish on its website and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the state of the communications marketplace.

''(b) CONTENTS.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall—

''(1) assess the state of competition in the communications marketplace, including competition to deliver voice, video, audio, and data services among providers of telecommunications, providers of commercial mobile service (as defined in section 332), multichannel video programming distributors (as defined in section 602), broadcast stations, providers of satellite communications, Internet service providers, and other providers of communications services;

''(2) assess the state of deployment of communications capabilities, including advanced telecommunications capability (as defined in section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302)), regardless of the technology used for such deployment, including whether advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion;

''(3) assess whether laws, regulations, or regulatory practices (whether those of the Federal Government, States, political subdivisions of States, Indian tribes or tribal organizations (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)), or foreign governments) pose a barrier to competitive entry into the communications marketplace or to the competitive expansion of existing providers of communications services;

''(4) describe the agenda of the Commission for the next 2-year period for addressing the challenges and opportunities in the communications marketplace that were identified through the assessments under paragraphs (1) through (3); and

''(5) describe the actions that the Commission has taken in pursuit of the agenda described pursuant to paragraph (4) in the previous report submitted under this section.

''(c) EXTENSION.—If the President designates a Commissioner as Chairman of the Commission during the last quarter of an even-numbered year, the portion of the report required by subsection (b)(4) may be published on the website of the Commission and submitted to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate as an addendum during the first quarter of the following odd-numbered year.

''(d) SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) ASSESSING COMPETITION.—In assessing the state of competition under subsection (b)(1), the Commission shall consider all forms of competition, including the effect of intermodal competition, facilities-based competition, and competition from new and emergent communications services, including the provision of content and communications using the Internet.

''(2) ASSESSING DEPLOYMENT.—In assessing the state of deployment under subsection (b)(2), the Commission shall compile a list of geographical areas that are not served by any provider of advanced telecommunications capability.

''(3) INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.—The Commission may use readily available data to draw appropriate comparisons between the United States communications marketplace and the international communications marketplace and to correlate its assessments with demographic information.

''(4) CONSIDERING SMALL BUSINESSES.—In assessing the state of competition under subsection (b)(1) and regulatory barriers under subsection (b)(3), the Commission shall consider market entry barriers for entrepreneurs and other small businesses in the communications marketplace in accordance with the national policy under section 257(b).

''(5) CONSIDERING CABLE RATES.—In assessing the state of competition under subsection (b)(1), the Commission shall include in each report required by subsection (a) the aggregate average total amount paid by cable systems in compensation under section 325 during the period covered by such report.''.

SEC. 3. CONSOLIDATION OF REDUNDANT REPORTS; CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) ORBIT ACT REPORT.—Section 646 of the Communications Satellite Act of 1962 (47 U.S.C. 765e; 114 Stat. 57) is repealed.

(b) SATELLITE COMPETITION REPORT.—Section 4 of Public Law 109–34 (47 U.S.C. 703) is repealed.

(c) INTERNATIONAL BROADBAND DATA REPORT.—Section 103 of the Broadband Data Improvement Act (47 U.S.C. 1303) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b); and

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) through (e) as subsections (b) through (d), respectively.

(d) STATUS OF COMPETITION IN THE MARKET FOR THE DELIVERY OF VIDEO PROGRAMMING REPORT.—Section 628 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 548) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (g);

(2) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (g); and

(3) by transferring subsection (g) (as redesignated) so that it appears after subsection (f).

(e) REPORT ON CABLE INDUSTRY PRICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 623 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 543) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (k); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (l) through (o) as subsections (k) through (n), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 613(a)(3) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 533(a)(3)) is amended by striking ''623(l)'' and inserting ''623(k)''.

(f) TRIENNIAL REPORT IDENTIFYING AND ELIMINATING MARKET ENTRY BARRIERS FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND OTHER SMALL BUSINESSES.—Section 257 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 257) is amended by striking subsection (c).

(g) SECTION 706 REPORT.—Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) DETERMINATION.—If the Commission determines in its report under section 13 of the Communications Act of 1934, after considering the availability of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans (including, in particular, elementary and secondary schools and classrooms), that advanced telecommunications capability is not being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion, the Commission shall take immediate action to accelerate deployment of such capability by removing barriers to infrastructure investment and by promoting competition in the telecommunications market.'';

(2) by striking subsection (c);

(3) in subsection (d), by striking ''this subsection'' and inserting ''this section''; and

(4) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (c).

(h) STATE OF COMPETITIVE MARKET CONDITIONS WITH RESPECT TO COMMERCIAL MOBILE RADIO SERVICES.—Section 332(c)(1)(C) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(c)(1)(C)) is amended by striking the first and second sentences.

(i) PREVIOUSLY ELIMINATED ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 154) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (k); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (l) through (o) as subsections (k) through (n), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 9(i), by striking ''In the Commission's annual report, the Commission shall prepare an analysis of its progress in developing such systems and'' and inserting ''The Commission''; and

(B) in section 309(j)(8)(B), by striking the last sentence.

(j) ADDITIONAL OUTDATED REPORTS.—The Communications Act of 1934 is further amended—

(1) in section 4—

(A) in subsection (b)(2)(B)(ii), by striking ''and shall furnish notice of such action'' and all that follows through ''subject of the waiver''; and

(B) in subsection (g), by striking paragraph (2);

(2) in section 215—

(A) by striking subsection (b); and

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

(3) in section 227(e), by striking paragraph (4);

(4) in section 309(j)—

(A) by striking paragraph (12); and

(B) in paragraph (15)(C), by striking clause (iv);

(5) in section 331(b), by striking the last sentence;

(6) in section 336(e), by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) REPORT.—The Commission shall annually advise the Congress on the amounts collected pursuant to the program required by this subsection.'';

(7) in section 339(c), by striking paragraph (1);

(8) in section 396—

(A) by striking subsection (i);

(B) in subsection (k)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking subparagraph (F); and

(ii) in paragraph (3)(B)(iii), by striking subclause (V);

(C) in subsection (l)(1)(B), by striking ''shall be included'' and all that follows through ''The audit report''; and

(D) by striking subsection (m);

(9) in section 398(b)(4), by striking the third sentence;

(10) in section 624A(b)(1)—

(A) by striking ''REPORT; REGULATIONS'' and inserting ''REGULATIONS'';

(B) by striking ''Within 1 year after'' and all that follows through ''on means of assuring'' and inserting ''The Commission shall issue such regulations as are necessary to assure''; and

(C) by striking ''Within 180 days after'' and all that follows through ''to assure such compatibility.''; and

(11) in section 713, by striking subsection (a).

SEC. 4. EFFECT ON AUTHORITY.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to expand or contract the authority of the Federal Communications Commission.

SEC. 5. OTHER REPORTS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to prohibit or otherwise prevent the Federal Communications Commission from producing any additional reports otherwise within the authority of the Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the distinguished majority whip of the House.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding and for managing the time here.

I bring forward this FCC Consolidated Reporting Act because this is a bill that focuses on streamlining government. It focuses on really establishing and identifying areas where we need to improve competition in the telecommunications marketplace and make recommendations to Congress that can help us make better policy for the country. At the same time, we are eliminating a lot of unnecessary reports that are currently burdening not only the people who are out there creating jobs but also the FCC by having eight different reports that are required annually to be filed and to be evaluated by the FCC at disparate times throughout the year, to consolidate all that into one report, one report that focuses on the entire telecommunications marketplace on a biennial basis. That report would come in at the end of the 2-year period so that each new Congress would be presented with very relevant and much more timely information that would help each Congress evaluate if changes and reforms need to be made to the law.

What laws am I talking about, Mr. Speaker? I am talking about in the current marketplace some of these various disparate reports where you might have throughout the year a requirement where a report has to look just at the satellite industry or a report looks just at the cable industry or a report looks just at the landline industry. Mr. Speaker, as we know, all of these industries now compete against each other, and whether you are getting your telecommunications data at home, through a cable, through fiber, through satellite, on your mobile device, it is all ultimately the same content that people are consuming, and all of these companies are competing against each other.

It is not like in the old days where you just had telephone lines and the telephone companies would compete against each other, and then cable companies would compete against each other. Now it is a consolidated marketplace, and it is time that we get all these disparate reports that are outdated and bring them all into one place.

When you look at what this means, they say time is money, and so when all of these reports are required by Federal law, where all of these different entities have to put together reports and a lot of times create documents, paperwork that is unnecessary, that is outdated, that doesn't really reflect what is happening in the marketplace, that is time that they can better spend creating jobs, Mr. Speaker. It is time they can better spend reinvesting so that we can have better broadband as consumers, families across the country that use all of this great telecommunications infrastructure. Let's focus more on competing and creating a better marketplace.

Something else this bill does is get rid of some outdated laws, Mr. Speaker. Do you know there is still a requirement in Federal law, that we get rid of in this bill, that there is a requirement every year that there has to be a telegraph report that studies competition in the telegraph industry. Mr. Speaker, this might have been useful back in 1934 when Congress mandated it. You can go back to the 1830s when Samuel Morse invented the telegraph, but we don't really need to be spending time and legal requirements that there be a report filed annually on competition in the telegraph industry. We get rid of that in this bill.

So often we hear from people around the country, when Congress is contemplating new laws, when are they going to get rid of some of the old laws that are unnecessary on the books? We actually do that in this bill. This has bipartisan support. It is a commonsense piece of legislation that actually streamlines government and focuses on helping increase competition for families across this country.

I urge adoption of this piece of legislation.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 599, the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act. This bill passed the House last Congress with unanimous support after careful negotiations that resulted in a bipartisan agreement. The FCC oversees a wide range of industries that drive economic growth in the Nation. These industries connect businesses to markets large and small, but, most importantly, they deliver innovative new products and services to consumers.

Democrats and Republicans agree that the FCC needs to collect good data to inform the public about these dynamic markets. Good data is important for Congress to have as well so that we can make good policy decisions and conduct oversight of the FCC. At the same time, we have worked to ensure this effort to promote efficiency does not undermine important existing FCC obligations and authorities.

Again, this bill is one I think that all Members can support. I urge its passage today.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers on my side, so I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill is an important step toward modernizing the Federal Communications Commission. The FCC has served Americans since 1934, and over the past more than 80 years, this agency has been responsible for overseeing the evolving telecommunications sector, with collecting information and analyzing the state of competition, and the impact of these changes on consumers.

As society has moved from one technology to the next, the FCC has been asked to keep up with the changing technologies, and Congress has directed the Commission with reviewing data and reporting on everything from the telegraph, as Mr. SCALISE has indicated, and the AM radio to online video distributions like Hulu and Netflix. This bill will eliminate reports that are no longer necessary and waste time and resources on issues that are no longer critical to consumers.

The bill also recognizes that technology continues to progress and consumers are no longer served by separate voice, data, or video networks. Rather, providers are leveraging the same IP network to provide multiple services over the same network. Providers that were solely video providers now offer voice and data. Companies that thought of themselves as telephone providers are also offering video and broadband services. The game has changed, and we believe that the FCC should change its reporting to reflect the new reality.

This bill consolidates multiple annual or biennial reports that require the agency to evaluate competition in different sectors. We will no longer require a separate mobile wireless or a separate video competition report. Rather, the bill requires the Commission to evaluate the state of competition across multiple tech industries in a single biennial report on competition in the communications marketplace. Our policymakers should be looking at the world as it is, not the world that once existed.

I thank the majority whip for his leadership in sponsoring this bill. He has always shown a keen interest in modernizing the communications marketplace, and I welcome his continued engagement over the 115th Congress, where he serves with such distinction as our whip.

I also thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), the former ranking member, for her work in ensuring that this bill is bipartisan in nature and is successful. I certainly thank Mr. DOYLE for his leadership as well.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill. I look forward to more bipartisan work on this and other issues in this Congress. I am hopeful that this bill will reach our new President's desk as soon as possible.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 599.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KARI'S LAW ACT OF 2017

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 582) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 582

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 ''Kari's Law Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. CONFIGURATION OF MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS FOR DIRECT DIALING OF 9–1–1.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 721. CONFIGURATION OF MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS FOR DIRECT DIALING OF 9–1–1.

''(a) SYSTEM MANUFACTURE, IMPORTATION, SALE, AND LEASE.—A person engaged in the business of manufacturing, importing, selling, or leasing multi-line telephone systems may not manufacture or import for use in the United States, or sell or lease or offer to sell or lease in the United States, a multi-line telephone system, unless such system is pre-configured such that, when properly installed in accordance with subsection (b), a user may directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 from any station equipped with dialing facilities, without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, including any trunk-access code such as the digit '9', regardless of whether the user is required to dial such a digit, code, prefix, or post-fix for other calls.

''(b) SYSTEM INSTALLATION, MANAGEMENT, AND OPERATION.—A person engaged in the business of installing, managing, or operating multi-line telephone systems may not install, manage, or operate for use in the United States such a system, unless such system is configured such that a user may directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 from any station equipped with dialing facilities, without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, including any trunk-access code such as the digit '9', regardless of whether the user is required to dial such a digit, code, prefix, or post-fix for other calls.

''(c) ON-SITE NOTIFICATION.—A person engaged in the business of installing, managing, or operating multi-line telephone systems shall, in installing, managing, or operating such a system for use in the United States, configure the system to provide a notification to a central location at the facility where the system is installed or to another person or organization regardless of location, if the system is able to be configured to provide the notification without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system.

''(d) EFFECT ON STATE LAW.—Nothing in this section is intended to alter the authority of State commissions or other State or local agencies with jurisdiction over emergency communications, if the exercise of such authority is not inconsistent with this Act.

''(e) ENFORCEMENT.—This section shall be enforced under title V, except that section 501 applies only to the extent that such section provides for the punishment of a fine.

''(f) MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'multi-line telephone system' has the meaning given such term in section 6502 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1471).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), section 721 of the Communications Act of 1934, as added by subsection (a) of this section, shall apply beginning on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (b) or (c) of such section 721 shall not apply to a multi-line telephone system that was installed before the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act if such system is not able to be configured to meet the requirement of such subsection (b) or (c), respectively, without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

At our subcommittee hearing last April, we heard the very moving testimony of Mr. Hank Hunt. Hank told us the story of how his daughter Kari was brutally murdered in a Texas motel bathroom in December 2013. As emotional as his story was, Hank continued with the gut wrenching details of how Kari's daughter frantically tried and failed to reach first responders.

The little girl had done as she was always taught, dial 911 for help. Tragically, as it turns out, that was her mistake. Due to the configuration of the phone installed in the motel room, she needed to dial 9 before dialing an outside number. Time after time she tried, but the call never went through. The first responders who could have attempted to save Kari's life were not reached in time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this commonsense bill that has the ability to save lives. Unfortunately, it

cost the life of Kari Hunt before the call for action was recognized.

Multiline telephone systems, like the one in that Texas motel room, are everywhere. Many businesses, including hotels, offices, and schools, use MLTS at their facilities across the country. They serve a very practical purpose and make connecting to other onsite users much easier. Unfortunately, many of these phones do not preset with the ability directly to dial 911.

It may be routine for someone who works in an office to know to dial 9 before dialing out, but would the instinct seem so natural during an emergency? Incidentally, I have telephones in offices here and in several district locations in New Jersey, and in some of those offices you dial 9 and in some you don't.

Moreover, our children should not have to be taught that sometimes they need to dial an extra number. 911 should mean 911. Those three numbers are one of the earliest things many parents teach their children. Kari's Law would require multiline telephone systems to be configured with the ability directly to dial 911 without any additional prefix.

□ 1730

The law would also require that multiline phone systems be configured to notify a central location within the system's facility when someone initiates a call to 911. This provision will help ensure first responders have the information needed to better locate and assist the caller.

There are some businesses, including a number of hotel chains, who have shown initiative and applied these changes in their facilities already. I commend them, but there is more work to be done. These simple fixes should be adopted and implemented nationwide. When dialing to reach emergency responders, it needs to go through, period.

I thank Hank Hunt, Kari's father, who has been a tireless advocate for this legislation. He has brought this important issue to our attention. Kari's Law passed without objection twice last Congress, and I urge all of my colleagues to support Representative GOHMERT's bill once again. Representative GOHMERT has certainly taken the lead on this across the United States. He is an angel of mercy in this regard. I hope this legislation becomes law this year and will be signed into law by our new President because I think it is critical for the safety of the American people.

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

H.R. 582 KARI'S LAW ACT OF 2017

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATTON

Multi-Line Telephone Systems (MLTS) serve multiple telephone users at a single site, often an office building, hotel, university campus, or similar location. One common feature of MLTS is the configuration that permits shorter dialing sequences within the system by requiring a user to dial a digit or prefix to reach a number outside of the system—that is, dial ''9'' before reaching an outside line. Thus, on some MLTS a user may have to dial the prefix when attempting to make an emergency call. In December 2013, Kari Hunt was killed by her estranged husband in a motel room in Texas. Her daughter repeatedly attempted to dial 9–1–1 from the motel room, but was unable to reach emergency responders because the motel's MLTS required users to dial ''9'' to reach an outside line.

Kari's Law seeks to ensure that this situation does not result in confusion in the heat of an emergency, preventing others from accessing essential emergency services from an MLTS phone. While many hotels and office buildings have begun to make this change to their systems, this bill would make it a universal requirement. H.R. 582 requires that all MLTS have a default configuration that allows users to directly dial 9–1–1, without the need for any additional digit or prefix, from any phone with dialing facilities. In addition, the system must also be configured to notify a designated central point of contact when someone initiates a call to 9–1–1 using the system. By notifying a central point of contact, emergency responders are better able to access, locate, and assist a caller who initiates a 9–1–1 call within the MLTS.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 provides that the Act may be cited as the ''Kari's Law Act of 2017.''

Section 2. Configuration of multi-line telephone systems for direct dialing of 9–1–1

Section 2(a) adds a new Section 721 to the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

New Section 721(a) requires that any person manufacturing, selling, importing, or leasing multi-line telephone systems only do so if the system is pre-configured in a way that a user may directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digits or prefixes. This section applies to any system that is sold, leased, offered, or imported for use in the United States after the effective date. This includes systems that have call control located outside of the U.S., but have terminals or end points in the U.S. While systems are required to be pre-configured with the default dialing pattern described in this section, it does not preclude the inclusion of additional optional dialing patterns to reach 9–1–1 (e.g. (9)9–1–1). However, if the system is configured with these additional dialing patterns, they must be in addition to the default pattern.

New Section 721(b) requires that any person who installs, operates, or manages a MLTS only do so if the system is configured such that a user may directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without any additional digit or prefix. This section also applies to systems installed, managed, or operated for use in the United States.

New Section 721(c) requires that systems be configured to provide a notification to either a central location at the facility where the system is located, or to a contact person or organization regardless of location. This section is intended to assist first responders in their emergency response by providing access and information needed to locate the caller. This can be particularly important in large buildings like hotels, hospitals, and schools, where on-site personnel are uniquely suited to provide information about the building and its occupants. This provision requires the system to designate a central point of contact, but allows the MLTS owner or operator some flexibility in determining the most appropriate contact, whether in the building or otherwise.

This subsection only applies to systems where the configuration is achievable without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system. The Committee intends this provision to include upgrades to the core systems of a MLTS, but not the addition of additional extensions or lines. The Committee also intends this provision to apply to substantial upgrades to the software, particularly those requiring a significant purchase. Minor software upgrades that are easily achieved or are made to improve the security of the system would not be considered an ''improvement'' for the purposes of this section. The legislation seeks to balance the need for an onsite notification with the goal of not placing an undue burden on MLTS owners or operators.

New Section 721(d) clarifies that this legislation does not alter the authority of state or local agencies with jurisdiction over emergency communications, as long as that authority isn't exercised in a manner inconsistent with this legislation.

New Section 721(e) allows for enforcement under Title V of the Communications Act, but only to the extent that the section allows for the imposition of a fine.

New Section 721(f) defines multi-line telephone system by crossreferencing the definition in Section 6502 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.

Section 2(b) sets an effective date for the changes at two years after the date of enactment of the Act.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in general support of H.R. 582. The primary sponsor is Representative GOHMERT.

This is a bill that passed the House last Congress by voice vote.

I agree that we must do all we can to make sure that consumers using multiline telephone systems can directly dial 911 without having to dial additional digits first. These are in many large office buildings and hotels. Many of these systems require consumers to dial an extra 9 before they get a dial tone. You have to hit 9 before you get your dial tone to get an outside line. Most of us know that, but too many people do not realize that this applies to 911. If you don't dial 9 first, you can't reach the emergency services.

Such a requirement led to a tragedy in Texas several years ago. Kari Dunn was killed while her 9-year-old daughter tried to call for help. She did what she was taught to do in an emergency. She dialed 911. But because the system she was using required her to dial a 9 first, she only heard silence on the other end of the line.

Building on the Herculean effort of Kari Dunn's family, we are one step closer to fixing this problem once and for all. H.R. 582 is an important step to making our systems work better in an emergency. But for all the good this bill does, it still leaves work to be done.

Specifically, these multiline systems still often fail to deliver accurate location information to first responders. That means that if somebody called 911 from this very building, for instance, precious minutes would tick by as emergency personnel struggle to figure out where the call came from in this

enormous complex. That delay could be the difference between life and death.

We have to correct this problem, too, because making sure the call goes through is only helpful if the public safety officials can find the caller. Democrats tried to include such a provision in the version of this bill from last Congress, and at that time we received a commitment from Chairman WALDEN to work together on a separate bill to address this concern.

We were not able to solve this problem in the last Congress, and we expect that commitment will carry over to this Congress. I urge Members to support H.R. 582.

Mr. Speaker, we have no other speakers on this side, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful to Mr. LANCE for his great leadership on this issue. And I appreciate the comments of my friend across the aisle, Mr. DOYLE.

This did pass by voice vote.

One can't help but wonder: How many times has this played out that we don't know about? How many times has there been a child that tried to dial 911? How many times has a panicked adult dialed 911 not knowing?

And I was in a hotel the other day where you had to dial 7 to get out.

How many times has somebody been killed trying to dial 911?

We don't know. There is no way to know. But we do know that this is the right thing to do. And the only reason this came forward is after the tragic loss of Kari. Her death occurred over several minutes. Normally in a town like Marshall, especially in a town like that, the police are going to be there within a minute or two when something goes on this long. It was a beating; it was a stabbing; her daughter was trying to dial.

After Kari had left this world, her daughter was sitting in Hank Hunt's lap. She was crying saying: I did all I could. I kept dialing 911 and it wouldn't go through.

Hank was torn up about it and got to investigating. That is when this was brought to light. When Hank brought it to my attention, we got to investigating. And we do have limits here in Congress. We are not supposed to go meddling, according to the 10th Amendment, in State and local affairs; but this is a matter of interstate communications. This is a matter for the Congress. This goes across State lines constantly. It is in the public domain across the country. If we don't do it when it involves interstate commerce, then nobody else has the authority to go across State lines.

I also thank the FCC Commissioner Pai, who I understand will soon be the chairman, for all his efforts because he truly participated.

We found out that there is really no cost. If we pass this law such as it is, then the companies that produce these phones would just set the default position so that when someone dials 911, it goes straight to an emergency operator without having to dial a prefix, whether it is 7, 9, 3, whatever. So there is no cost in that. It is just telling them how to do the default.

What about existing lines?

And then we found from people that have installed these multiphone lines that, actually, if somebody calls and says, ''Hey, we need to get our phone system reset so you can dial 911 and it goes straight through,'' everyone that we have talked to that was in that business said, ''Oh, we will come make that switch for free.''

So we knew we had a bill here, we had a law—it goes across party lines, it goes across bicameral lines—we had an opportunity to pass a bill.

I am grateful to Senator KLOBUCHAR in the Senate and all the bipartisan support there. As my friend, Mr. DOYLE, pointed out, there is another push. Let's identify exactly where someone is within that multiline system. That will cost money.

There are some that have said: Look, if there is somebody that is making a secret call, they don't want the bad guys figuring out where the call is coming from.

So there are other issues involved here, but we have a bill that will save lives and it is agreeable across the aisle. It passed this manner in the past Congress. It will pass this way again today. So I urge not only our friends here in the House, but also my friends in the Senate, please pass this bill that we all agree on, save lives, and then let's have a full and thorough debate on the part that will cost money. We have some mom and pop hotels that say: If you make us buy a new phone system, the one we have won't be able to identify which room is making the call. You make us add to that, we are already in trouble. We are barely getting by. Please don't add more costs to what we are struggling to pay as it is.

Let's have that debate in a separate bill. Go in and pass this noncontroversial one for Kari's sake and for the sake of all of those that would come into the same situation. Let's just pass this bill. Kari, as her father and her daughters have said, will then not have died for nothing. Her loss of life will save lives in the future.

Again, I thank my friend, Mr. LANCE. What a great American, the way he pursues matters of conscience. I appreciate again my friend across the aisle, Mr. DOYLE.

I urge passage of this bill now, today.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 582, the Kari's Law Act of 2017, which amends the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix.

As a senior member of the House Committees on Homeland Security and Judiciary, I am well aware of the importance of 9–1–1 services and some of the challenges of E–9–1–1 to ensure that those seeking emergency assistance receive the help they need.

H.R. 582 would create parity for landline ''9–1–1 services'' and smartphone E–9–1–1 services'' so that emergency assistance request from either is treated the same.

The bill requires that those engaged in the manufacturing, importation, sale, and lease of telecommunication service or devices pre-configured technology to dial 9–1–1.

The goal of H.R. 582 is to ensure that all emergency calls regardless of the source are routed properly to emergency services.

Kari's Law is not intended to alter the authority of State commissions or other State or local agencies with jurisdiction over emergency communications.

The establishment of the Kari's Law Act acknowledges the importance of the configuration of multi-line telephones systems for direct dialing for 9–1–1.

Over the past two decades, the personal communications of Americans have changed.

The Wireless Association reported that the penetration of cellular devices surpassed 100 percent in 2012, and as of the latest 2014 report, penetration is now at 110 percent.

According to the Pew Research Center, 68 percent of U.S. adults have a smartphone, up from 35 percent in 2011, and tablet computer ownership has edged up to 45 percent among adults, according to newly released survey data from the Pew Research Center.

Smartphone ownership is nearing the saturation point with some groups: 86 percent of those ages 18 through 29 have a smartphone, as do 83 percent of those ages 30 through 49 and 87 percent of those living in households earning $75,000 and up annually.

With so many mobile devices deployed the majority of calls to 911 emergency public safety answering points (PSAP) originate from them.

U.S. emergency dispatch agencies report that wireless callers are responsible for at least 80 percent of their emergency call volume.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to Support H.R. 582, Kari's Law Act of 2017.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 582.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 423, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 582, by the yeas and nays.

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

ANTI-SPOOFING ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 423) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 398, nays 5, not voting 31, as follows:

[Roll No. 60]

YEAS—398

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cleaver
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—5

Amash
Gohmert
Jordan
Labrador
Massie

NOT VOTING—31

Barton
Beatty
Becerra
Bishop (MI)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Byrne
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Conyers
Duncan (SC)
Engel
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Jones
Kaptur
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Payne
Pocan
Pompeo
Price, Tom (GA)
Reichert
Richmond
Ruiz
Rush
Speier
Webster (FL)
Zinke

□ 1851

Ms. ADAMS changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 60.

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR VICTIMS OF TORNADOES IN GEORGIA AND MISSISSIPPI

(Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, you have, I am sure, seen the devastation from the tornadoes on the TV. My district, Cook County, is the heart of ground zero. We had seven deaths in Cook County; two in Brooks County; two in Berrien County; four in my colleague's, Mr. BISHOP's district in Dougherty County; and four in Mississippi.

I want to say thank you to the many volunteers and first responders who have been there to provide aid. I want to say thank you to the Americans who have provided prayers.

When I spoke earlier, we had five people unaccounted for. Four of the five are accounted for and alive today. We are thankful for that. We are still trying to account for one additional person.

Recovery efforts are still going on. I ask that you continue to keep these families who have lost so much and the first responders in your prayers.

I would like to say thank you to Governor Deal for his speedy response and President Trump and his administration for their quick response to the tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I come before this body tonight with my colleagues from Mississippi and Georgia to offer our prayers for those whose lives were lost, whose homes were destroyed, and whose neighborhoods were

shattered during this weekend's tornadoes across the Southeast.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to our first responders, local law enforcement, and emergency personnel for their quick, courageous, and compassionate response in the aftermath of the storm.

Finally, I also want to say thank you to the citizens of Mississippi who rushed toward the sites of devastation. Their generosity, bravery, and willingness to help their neighbors gives me hope that our community will rebuild again and be stronger than ever.

We will get through this difficult time together, confident in our ability to persevere through any trial, with neighbor helping neighbor, as we begin the difficult work of rebuilding our community following this terrible natural disaster.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, in my hometown of Albany, Georgia, four of my neighbors lost their lives due to the tornadoes and storms that tore through our city. Many more in both Albany and the larger region had their homes destroyed and their lives upended.

For the second time this month, our region has confronted the worst that Mother Nature had to offer. However, I am confident that, with the grace of God, we will continue to see the best in human nature as we come together as a community to support each other during these very, very trying times.

I ask that the Members of this House, the Senate, and the administration join my colleagues from Mississippi and Georgia to ensure that all of those impacted by these disasters are provided the necessary resources to recover and to rebuild their lives as soon as possible.

In this moment, though it is but a small gesture, given the magnitude of the disaster, I ask that the House observe a moment of silence to recognize and remember the victims of the storms and tornadoes that struck the Southeast region of our Nation.

KARI'S LAW ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 582) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multiline telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1-1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 0, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 61]

YEAS—408

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
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Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
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Murphy (PA)
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Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
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Thornberry
Tiberi
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Tonko
Torres
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Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—26

Barton
Becerra
Blumenauer
Bustos
Byrne
Conyers
Duncan (SC)
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Jones
Kaptur
Lawrence
Messer
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Payne
Pocan
Pompeo
Price, Tom (GA)
Reichert
Richmond
Ruiz
Rush
Speier
Webster (FL)
Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1904

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, due to bad weather that did not allow for me to arrive in Washington, DC, in time, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yes" on:

H.R. 423—Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017.

H.R. 582—Kari's Law Act of 2017.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 7, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017

Ms. CHENEY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–5) on the resolution (H. Res. 55) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

A POSITIVE MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Friday marked a positive new era for American families, as Donald J. Trump was sworn in as the 45th President of the United States, with MIKE PENCE serving as the 48th Vice President.

President Donald Trump and Vice President PENCE will work alongside Speaker PAUL RYAN to create jobs, replace ObamaCare with a patient-centered alternative, and promote a national defense so that American families can be protected, policies that were clearly outlined in his inaugural address.

In an op-ed published in Forbes, President Trump's speech was described as ''revolutionary.'' The article went on to detail how ''he has defined a new role for the government, for the public, for patriotism, for America first.''

President Trump confirmed: ''This is your day, your celebration . . . What matters is that your country is ruled by you, the people.''

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism. The hateful protesters who assaulted my inaugural guests from New Jersey with water balloons will fail again, as President Trump with Speaker RYAN prevail creating jobs.

THE WOMEN'S MARCH WAS DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, 7,000 in Rhode Island, over 500,000 in Washington, and millions across the country, the Women's March was democracy in action this past Saturday, and it filled me with hope, hope for a better future and hope that we can withstand whatever challenges lie ahead as a nation.

The scene in Rhode Island was incredible, replicated around the world. I joined millions who gathered and marched to remind us that women's rights are human rights and to support inclusion and equality for all—immigrants, the LGBT community, people of color, people with disabilities, and people of differing faiths and backgrounds. This is the diversity that makes us stronger as a nation, and this is the diversity that President Trump must now represent in a way that is befitting of the honor and dignity of his office.

Together, Mr. Speaker, we must hold him accountable to protect opportunity for all Americans, not just a select few, because it is by working together, treating people with dignity and respect that we move America forward. A rising tide lifts all boats, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the rising tide of engagement and passion that we saw on Saturday will lift all Americans.

ANOTHER BETRAYAL OF ISRAEL BY THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Friday morning, as the 45th President was about to be sworn in, Obama administration officials packed up their desks and prepared to ride off into the sunset, but not before quietly slipping in a last-minute surprise snub to Israel on their way out of town by shipping off $221 million to the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Speaker, this move is sadly not surprising, but wildly inappropriately insulting. The final days of the Obama White House were filled with unapologetic, downright hostility to our friend Israel. Just last month the United States betrayed our friends by allowing the U.N. Security Council to vote attacking Israel.

Now in the shadow of that vote, in a last act of defiance, the old group sent millions of dollars to fill the coffers of Israel's enemy. Thankfully, there is a new man in charge in Washington. President Trump has pledged to support Israel, not betray them. He says he will move the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move I support if the Israelis support that.

Israel is our greatest friend and should never question where we stand. The Trump White House seems to understand that. Good riddance to those who did not understand it.

And that is just the way it is.

PEELING BACK THE MANY LAYERS OF THE ACA

(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, I rise today to recognize the Trump administration's recently announced action of peeling back the many layers of the Affordable Care Act. For millions of hard-working Americans who have carried the burden of this law, relief is finally on the way. President Trump's first order of business was to issue an executive order to begin reversing the damages of the Affordable Care Act and start to minimize costs for consumers.

Under the ACA, premiums have skyrocketed while access to health care has dwindled for many Americans, including many of whom reside in my own California's First District. The American people have spoken. They want this disastrous law repealed. Grand claims of 20 to 30 million newly covered are obscured by the fact that over 6 million would rather pay the penalty because they can't afford the Affordable Care Act.

The quick action taken by President Trump will aid our efforts in Congress to both repeal and replace the ACA with something better. The American people have suffered through the nightmare that is ACA. Luckily, they won't have to do so for much longer.

IF PRESIDENT TRUMP WERE A DEMOCRAT

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, just think what the media would be saying about President Trump if he were a Democrat:

> He has tremendous energy. He campaigned for 18 months, puts in 15-hour days, and has the stamina of a bull elephant like Teddy Roosevelt.
>
> He is courageous, even fearless. Given the amount of hate directed his way, no doubt he constantly receives death threats. But that doesn't curtail his public appearances or seem to worry him in the least.
>
> He has conviction. He practices what he preaches. He doesn't waffle or waver. And he is obviously not deterred by media criticism.
>
> He is a great father. Anytime his son or daughter calls, he picks up the phone. He includes them in his activities. Clearly, he has a strong relationship with his children.
>
> He is off to a fast start. His Cabinet consists of smart, experienced, and successful individuals. He already has taken steps to keep jobs in America, put unnecessary regulations on hold, and improve health care. Consumer confidence is at a 16-year high.

No, the national liberal media won't print that or air it or post it. Better to get your news directly from the President. In fact, it might be the only way to get the unvarnished truth.

□ 1915

NO AMERICAN TAXPAYER DOLLARS TO FUND ABORTIONS

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

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. The premise of this bill is clear: American taxpayer dollars will not be used to fund abortion in this country.

I stand here today as a husband, father, grandfather, and, most importantly, as someone who cherishes the God-given right to life. In a country founded on life and liberty, the act of abortion should not be condoned, and it certainly should not be subsidized.

It is fitting that the House consider this legislation this week as we prepare for millions of people to come to Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Life rally where they will give a voice to the unborn. We must work together to move the pro-life message and pro-life policies forward to protect those who cannot yet speak for themselves.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, and stand up for the principles of life and liberty.

AMERICA IS A COUNTRY FOR ALL PEOPLE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, having worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and been engaged with many of the foot soldiers that studied under Dr. Martin Luther King, I love and cherish nonviolent protests and the rights for people to petition.

I hold up a beautiful and powerful statement by way of a picture, powerful together, as thousands marched across the Nation, upwards of 1 million and maybe even more. I am particularly proud of those in Houston, Texas, and particularly ''Across Texas, marchers 'just can't be silent anymore.' ''

Congratulations to those who marched safely, securely, and nonviolently. Congratulations to the Houston organizers. Yes, it is your right to fight against the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, the ignoring of the funding of access to women's health care. It is your right to fight for educational opportunity. It is your right to recognize that we have rights as women, but we have rights as Americans; and it is your right to seek a nation that will be representative of all of the people, no matter where they come from, what their religious background is, what regions they live for.

It is beyond the wonderful Midwest that the Nation needs to be represented. It is in the far corners of the east and the north, yes, down in Houston, Texas, far to the west. We cannot isolate and say we won with few votes from this region. America is a country for all people, and I look forward to this Congress and this White House representing all of us.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS TO GOVERNING BOARD OF THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 4(c) of House Resolution 5, 115th Congress, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following individuals to serve as the Governing Board of the Office of Congressional Ethics:

Nominated by the Speaker after consultation with the minority leader:

Mr. Richard Norman ''Doc'' Hastings, Washington, Chairman

Mr. James M. Eagen, III, Colorado

Ms. Allison R. Hayward, Virginia

Ms. Judy Biggert, Illinois, alternate

Nominated by the minority leader after consultation with the Speaker:

Mr. David Skaggs, Colorado, Co-Chairman

Brigadier General (retired) Belinda Pinckney, Virginia

Ms. Karan English, Arizona

Mr. Mike Barnes, Maryland, alternate

FIXING OUR NATION'S HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, tonight, what I would like to do is engage the American people on several subjects. I will be speaking for quite a bit of time tonight on the health care issue facing America.

Mr. Speaker, before I get there, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), a very dear friend of mine.

WINDSWEPT PLAINS OF NEBRASKA

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank the chairman for yielding, but, more importantly, for his extraordinarily hard work as chairman of the Rules Committee. I don't think a lot of people are aware just how critical his job is in shepherding and guiding order in our institution here. So I am grateful for his hard work, most grateful for his friendship, and very grateful for his leadership. I thank him so much for the time.

Mr. Speaker, when Presidents give their inaugural addresses, we are very accustomed to lofty narratives, to visionary ideals, and to sweeping language. But last Friday, President Trump spoke very differently. The only sweeping thing in the President's speech was his reference to the windswept plains of Nebraska. Of course, when I heard that, I perked up.

President Trump's speech was a striking and direct call for a new, healthy nationalism. He spoke to the people, about the people, and for the people. A certain awkwardness marked the beginning of his speech, not only because of the initial confrontational style from the outset, but it also began to rain as the President started, creating a bit of an uncomfortable moment. But then the rain suddenly stopped and his speech gained momentum. He discussed, in hard terms, some of the stark realities we are facing and how they might be resolved for our country.

Mr. Speaker, we all know this, that defining problems is an easy task, but finding solutions is much harder. While President Trump's speech lacked specifics in that regard, nonetheless, there was extraordinary power in the attempt to articulate an America that has been lost to globalized supply-side elitism, an America that has been lost to drugs and crime, and an America that has systems that no longer seem to serve all persons. It just seems that no matter how hard individuals work, they just can't get ahead.

Mr. Speaker, our President's speech was an authoritative call for a new national unity, particularly for those forgotten. The idea that America can do better, that we must do better, and that we will do better for everyone was clearly conveyed by President Trump.

I recognize the tone of this speech will not have universal appeal. It was to the point, direct, and firm. It was not a delicate, textured speech. But the President was clear when he declared: ''The American carnage stops right here and stops right now.''

Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing a renewed and important and essential focus on reviving America's economy. The multinational corporations of this world are on notice: they cannot play both sides of the balance sheet, being for us and against us at the same time, and the benefits of exchange will have to be fair for all. Frankly, I believe this creates possibilities, possibilities for authentic relationships with peoples around the world rather than a transactional one. If this objective can be achieved, it will be constructive indeed. A healthy American nationalism will lead to properly ordered international engagement—for our benefit and the benefit of others.

Mr. Speaker, when the President spoke before the entirety of our government, he also spoke before the House of Representatives. The President's authoritative style, communicating the desire to devolve power from Washington as well as Wall Street, interestingly repositions Congress to its appropriate role in governing society through the power of the people.

Mr. Speaker, it is statistically shown that the majority of Americans believe that it is the job of Congress to do whatever the President says. This is not true. Congress is an independent, coequal branch of government that makes the law, which is interpreted by the judiciary and enforced by the President. But across Democratic and across Republican executive administrations more and more power has been taken by the executive and has been ceded by Congress. This balance of power, this necessary balance of power, this original idea of the balance of power, has been out of balance for 100 years, and perhaps now a realignment begins.

Mr. Speaker, whether you love President Trump or you loathe him, or whether you are someplace in between with certain apprehensions but hoping that President Trump succeeds, Friday, Inauguration Day, was an extraordinary American day. What we saw was the successful and peaceful transfer of power.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I want to thank, again, my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), for yielding to me.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) not only for taking time today to discuss the important things that he has on his mind, but also for sharing with the American people his ideas about where our country is and where we are headed with the new Presidency, a new Senate, and a new House of Representatives.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about the current state of our Nation's healthcare system.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I am given this time as a result of the majority leader, Mr. MCCARTHY. He has given me time to talk about an important issue that faces not only our country, but also elected Members of the House of Representatives and the United States Senate and the President of the United States, our new President, President Trump.

As each of us is aware, the issue of health care is one of the most important issues that has been faced in our Nation for many years. Back in 2009, President Obama began the search that he talked about for what was called an Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act seemed to be a promise to make health care better. It seemed to be a word, in the words of the President, an Affordable Care Act that would help all Americans to receive health care on a fair basis and one that would be sustainable.

The President stood before this body several times and talked about his ideas about health care. It took about a year, maybe a little bit more, for the Democratic Congress to work through this issue. On or about March 21 or 22, 2010, a bill popped out of the United States Senate, came to the House of Representatives, and we handled the matter here up in the Rules Committee, brought it to the floor, passed it with debate, no opposition—no opposition, meaning Republicans were not allowed to present an alternative case, a bill. It was a closed rule. And the Democrats passed it and went to the White House the next day, March 23, 2010, and signed the bill.

□ 1930

The American people had grave reservations about that, but what happened is that it took several years in which they were working through this process. We did not know exactly what would happen; but, almost immediately, hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of spending would take place and taxes would take place. What the President did and what the Democrat Party did is they tied health care directly to employers and put mandates on top of employers and mandates on top of individuals with the belief that individuals would be forced into taking what was then ObamaCare—health care—under the Affordable Care Act.

What has happened over the years, including as we stand today, is that only some 12 to 20 million people are on ObamaCare at any one time. That is because the system that was devised and run by the Affordable Care Act is a system that does not work well. It is very expensive. It provides limited benefits. And perhaps worst of all, the promise that it would make health care available and better for poorer people never materialized as they sold it. In fact, healthcare providers are reimbursed 50 percent less than from normal insurance; meaning that, while you may have some bit of coverage, the people who would accept that health care are hard to find.

It is true that many times you could find someone who is a GP—someone who is a family physician, someone who is an internist who might take what is known as ObamaCare—but if he found something that might be wrong or needed to refer that individual, it was very difficult to do. In my hometown of Dallas, Texas, major hospitals do not take what is known as ObamaCare under the Affordable Care Act, and it is because of this problem that it is a false promise for the people who are on it.

Members of Congress are legally required to be on ObamaCare if we accept the health care from our providers, but President Obama did not ask anyone else in government to fall under the same opportunities that we would have as Members of Congress. Over the years, it became a festering point—a sore—among not only those who were paying the costs, but also those who were on it saw it as a concrete life preserver, one that did not live up to its billing. Repeatedly, businesses would come to the House of Representatives—to Members of Congress—and say to us: This law is not only not working, it is causing us to make full-time employees become part-time employees because we cannot either pay or do not want to or do not have the ability to follow all of the requirements of the law.

We here in America saw not only dwindling opportunities for employment, but we also saw the skyrocketing cost—from taxes, from behavior that did not help health care. So Republicans, yes, and the American people began talking about some way that we could isolate health care to where we would have our friends who were Democrats want to accept one of these opportunities to fix this broken system. Over the years, Republicans offered some 60 different alternative votes—piece parts, rifle shots—that said we want to fix ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act. We picked 60 different things about the bill that were either incomplete, that did not live up to the billing, that caused bad behavior, or that simply were tremendously anticompetitive in their nature.

It was a lonely few years.

As the chairman of the House Rules Committee, day after day, we would seek opportunities for our colleagues to come join us to present their ideas, and they not only disagreed with us, but they chastised us. We kept going. We kept offering alternatives to a healthcare system that was not working.

Mr. Speaker, what happened is the American people soon saw, as we came close to another election, that we were going to have to ask the American people to be a part of the solution. We had tried in Washington, D.C. We had over 60 votes and we had made it a regular part of our discussion. Republicans, each time, had better ideas, better alternatives—ways to take 60 different pieces and trade them out so that we could better this terrible law that was not working.

Then came the election. With the election, one of the most key and cleanest issues that was discussed was not only the repeal of ObamaCare, but the promise that Republicans would replace it also. For the past 4 or 5 years, Republicans have had a talking point that we want to repeal and to replace the healthcare system that was known as ObamaCare.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I am here tonight—to talk about Republican ideas that we think are better for health care and ideas that we think will work not only in a marketplace, but that will be able to be used by a vast number of people here in America. It will not be something that is use it or lose it, as health care many times is. It will be sustainable. Perhaps, more importantly, there will be the ability for families to get what they want and to not have to pay for what they do not need. It passed on March 21 by a vote of 219–212. No Republican supported the Affordable Care Act, but every Republican understands that health care is important to families. It is important that a family takes the responsibility and tries to cover its family.

Tonight, as I speak with you about where we are in health care, I want to include the words that come from Dallas, Texas—my home—of the families whom I have gotten to know and of the families who have communicated with me, because, as their Member of Congress, I am expected not only to listen, but to try and work for their betterment. I am probably no different than hundreds of other Members of Congress who come to Washington every week with a message.

This is from Julie Ross of Dallas, Texas, with her two beautiful children. This is a very high-level conversation in which she says:

> Now that my daughter is at home and thriving—who was in the hospital—we depend upon these protections to provide

health care for her complex healthcare needs.

ObamaCare did not meet those needs; but as a Member of Congress, if I am going to talk about repealing, I need to also, forthrightly, talk about replacing what is a bad healthcare law with a better healthcare alternative. Republicans have better ideas to fix health care, and I am going to speak about these.

The first thing I would like to speak about is the reality that about 150 million Americans have an opportunity to receive their health care on a pretax basis. That means that our employers and our employees who work for large companies have a chance to get their health care without paying for it on an after-tax basis. I pay about $13,000 myself out of pocket for my health care. My employer pays essentially what is a 70–30 split, but that entire amount is on a pretax basis. The 1943 employer-sponsored insurance exemption and the 21st Century Cures, which we just passed this last December, allow businesses an opportunity to provide their employees with pretax health insurance. Pretax health insurance means that they are able to deduct the contributions that they make for their employees, and employees are allowed to receive this as a benefit.

However, this, I believe, is part of what we have known for a long time as being an unfair, rigged system. It is a system that says, if you work for one of these larger companies, you will get that tax advantage; but if you do not—if you are self-employed, if you are an entrepreneur, if you are a 941-type employee, meaning perhaps you are a real estate agent who is self-employed or perhaps you work for a small company—then you are not offered this pretax opportunity. It is probably true that you could deduct that amount next April. As you pay your taxes, you would file if you qualified based upon the amount of money that you spent.

Mr. Speaker, this right here is the disadvantage for about 100 million Americans. They do not receive what 150 million other Americans do, and that is to get their health care on a pretax basis. I have worked now for some 2 years with some 500 physicians who are across the country. We have worked on a system that would allow every single American not only to have better health care, but to have an opportunity to participate on a fair basis.

The gentleman from Lubbock, Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON) will participate with me tonight and will speak about how important this is for him.

Mr. ARRINGTON. I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about something that is near and dear to my heart and to the hearts of my constituents.

It has been 44 years since Roe v. Wade. Since then, 58 million precious American lives have been aborted. The Supreme Court got it wrong when it violated its authority by creating a constitutional right to abortion. To make matters worse, the Federal Government is now using our taxpayer dollars to subsidize these abortions. Tomorrow we will have the opportunity to put a stop to this. This is an area in which the Constitution, my constituents, and my conviction will not allow me to budge.

I believe that all life is ordained by God and begins at conception, as the psalmists so eloquently said: ''for You created my inward parts. You knit me together in my mother's womb.'' Our Constitution clearly defines that all Americans—even those who cannot vote, who cannot speak or defend themselves—have the same right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand with me in support of H.R. 7; but, most importantly, I plead with them to stand up for generations of Americans yet unborn.

I thank the gentleman again.

□ 1945

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON), one of our brand new freshman from Lubbock, Texas. JODEY not only comes from the high plains of Lubbock, a young man who has given great service to the State of Texas, but he also comes as our newest member from the Texas delegation who stands not only with the principles of that district, but with the principle of caring about other people. I thank the gentleman for letting his voice be heard about what will be a bill that will be before the House of Representatives tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, continuing our discussion about health care and Republican ideas. Back in 2013, some 4.7 million Americans that had their own health care were knocked off that health care because it didn't qualify in the way that President Obama and Democrats wanted to have a comprehensive healthcare plan. So it knocked off 4.7 million Americans, and what it did is it placed America into a circumstance where we began looking for options and alternatives about how we would insure the uninsured.

We were told: Just watch and wait. This Affordable Care Act is going to make sure that it takes every single American and gives them an affordable healthcare plan.

Here is what happened, Mr. Speaker. We found out that we still have some 30 million people in this country—now in the sixth year of ObamaCare—that do not have coverage. We have learned that about 49 percent of those who are insured work for employers, about 20 percent of the marketplace is Medicaid, about 14 percent is Medicare, but we still have some 9 percent who were uninsured.

We then find out that what happened is that the Federal Government decided that insurance was not working, so we had coops that were invented out of the Affordable Care Act. Seventeen out of the 23 coops have now gone into bankruptcy. They could not provide the services that the Affordable Care Act was just so sure, with government-run programs, would work; and they wiped out almost unilaterally every single insurance plan where they came in. I don't know if it was just because they undercut them, but what they did is provided a false indicator for people.

Well, the Federal Government is here. Barack Obama and Democrats now have a healthcare plan for every single American. Only a few short years later, they are gone. They are gone from the marketplace after wiping out the insurance that was there.

Perhaps worst of all, as they left, there was a requirement by the Obama administration that somebody had to come and renew insurance, even late in the year, or they would receive a $2,000 penalty because they did not have insurance at the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, this is what the insured and the uninsured look like. A gentleman from Dallas, Texas, Kennis Ketchum told us: I am being penalized for being an entrepreneur. I am in here, and I want to be in here. I want to be able to go and to allow myself to be in insurance, but I cannot afford it because I do not have the tax advantage.

So Republicans finally have the chance for our ideas that we believe are bigger and better. We have a chance to do, I think, what we have wanted to do for a long time; and that is to repeal the Affordable Care Act, but with the promise that we need to make sure that we replace it with something better.

What does this mean?

Well, I will tell you what it means, Mr. Speaker. What it means is that Republicans are going to understand that a simple plan that can be paid for literally with the existing dollars that are in health care today and authorized by law—some $1.2 trillion that exists in law and authorized today—can be utilized for a healthcare system to take care of each and every American. I would like to describe that.

First of all, it is important for us to understand that of the uninsured in this country, 74 percent work. That means that people that are no different than me and you, Mr. Speaker, get up and go to work to the best of their ability. It might be that they don't have all the advantages of education that I have. It could be that they have something in their life that might be an impediment. It could be some sort of perhaps what might be a difference or a disability. I understand this. I have a son that has Down syndrome. Alex is not really capable of taking care of himself, so he is not necessarily one of these that would qualify for what we know as the alternative to ObamaCare.

There are millions who do need the help, who do want and need insurance and not insurance that is like the Affordable Care Act because we know

that reimburses at 50 percent less than insurance, some 25 percent less than Medicaid, a plan that limits the number of physicians and healthcare professionals that a person can see. No.

The American people need something that they can count on. They need something that is better, that provides better reimbursement to where virtually every hospital would take their plan instead of a few, where four times as many doctors would take their plan, their insurance as opposed to them being on ObamaCare. These people who want and seek health care need a plan that is worthy of the representation that would be given to them, and that is the Republican idea.

So Republicans have a chance, an opportunity. Just one of the ideas is to allow the healthcare tax benefits to be consistent with those of every American who works for a large company.

You see, there are two ways to look at this. One might be a high standard deduction that an employee or a person would be able to take and buy health insurance and, next April, be able to write that off, so to speak, as a pretax deduction. You know the problem with that and so do I. Seventy-four percent of the people who are uninsured do not have the money to buy health care. Seventy-four percent of the people who are uninsured might not have enough money to be able to go buy insurance and wait all year long to get back their money next April when they file their taxes.

So one of the ideas that I have—and I shared this plan with Senator BILL CASSIDY from Louisiana—is that what we would like to do is to provide a $2,500 tax credit for adults and a $1,500 tax credit for dependent children that would be advanceable, assignable, and refundable.

What would this mean?

This would mean that this year every single American that did not receive the tax advantage—the tax advantage like I receive and some 150 million Americans receive by getting their health care on a pretax basis—would have an opportunity to go online. They would be able to go online and look at the insurance in their area, and they would be able to receive this benefit, this tax advantage. It would not ever come to them. It would go directly to their insurance program.

They would be able to take, for a family of four, some $8,000. They would be able to use this first $8,000—the exact same tax advantage that PETE SESSIONS and 150 million other Americans get—January 1st of next year and to assign this $8,000 to their healthcare plan.

They could decide they wanted more, and they would be able to do that on a pretax basis also up to $5,000. They could decide that they would like perhaps to get a plan that would be at their local hospital. That is fine. They could decide that they would like to have what is called a health savings account, an HSA, which, more generally, is an opportunity for them to control their costs. This is very attractive for young people and advantageous for young people because they would be able to control their costs and roll these advantages or savings over year after year after year as opposed to losing what they had saved or, at the beginning of the year, starting back over.

Republicans have an opportunity to make things fair. I think this is what President Trump talked about when he was candidate Trump. I think he talked about a rigged system. When you have a system where 150 million Americans get a tax advantage and you don't, you would describe that as a rigged system.

So Republicans, at least one of the proposals that is out there—because it is Senator CASSIDY's and mine, known as the World's Greatest Healthcare Plan—employs an opportunity where up front we allow every single American to have health care January 1 that is superior in nature to whatever they had with ObamaCare.

It allows the purchase of a nongovernment plan and it allows each individual, if they choose, to go to a health savings account.

What is a health savings account?

A health savings account is a well-known product whereby a family would be able to get what is called major medical coverage. They actually, as part of their plan, would make sure that, if they were in the hospital or a member of their family was in the hospital, they would have to cover the first $5,000, but that the insurance plan then that they could find about affording out of this $8,000 for a family of four would give them a chance then to have either a 90/10, 80/20, or 70/30 contribution. Meaning they could decide what they wanted to afford based upon their age, based upon their risk, based upon their own circumstances. But they, as a consumer, would be able to make sure that they are taken care of if they go in the hospital.

Then that contribution, to the level that they would choose—either they would pay 30 percent or 20 percent or 10 percent for expenses past $10,000—gave them the coverage that they need in the marketplace. Maybe it is a baby. Maybe it is major surgery. Maybe it is cancer. But they would receive hospital coverage.

Then with the remaining amount of money, they could then put that into a health savings account and use cash for their doctor's visits. Cash is king. Cash is also the most economical way to get your health care because you go and actually, instead of negotiating with a doctor or looking at what your insurance company negotiated, you negotiate paying that person today instead of the doctor having to file insurance and go through the necessary elements to receive their money back.

You go to the doctor you choose. You pay for what you want. You pay for those things that you have made a decision, and you pay out of your cash account. It is the most leading edge, fastest way to get health care in America, and, generally speaking, it is 18 percent cheaper.

Mr. Speaker, these are but one of the ideas that Republicans bring to the table.

□ 2000

And it is why I can stand up, as chairman of the Rules Committee, when my colleagues say: oh, you are going to take away something that people had with the Affordable Care Act. And I say: you know, I think we have got a better way to look at it.

Instead of only some 27 out of 100 doctors being available to you as a patient, I would like to double or quadruple that. I would like for you to be able to make your own decisions, and, in the long run, you will be better.

But there is more to the story. And the more to the story is, what this will do is allow a robust marketplace where, instead of forcing people to go into a system and then penalizing them, we encourage people to go into a system and encourage them to be not only consumers, and not only to take care of themselves, but to help everybody out because it helps the curve.

It helps people get in of all ages, of all needs, of all types back into the marketplace automatically January 1st. Didn't have to guess at how much money they were going to make; didn't have to worry about whether they got laid off; didn't have to go check with the IRS; didn't have to ask Uncle Sam.

We are automatically giving the tax advantage by virtue of them being American and us doing the right thing off the existing money that exists in ObamaCare and health care today.

Mr. Speaker, that is a better idea. That is a better opportunity for us, as Republicans, to go back home, and, no matter who we want to look at, we can say: we get it. We do get that you want and need health care, that we want and need America to have the greatest healthcare system in the world, but we need to make sure we can pay for it. And it should not restrict business. It should not come and tell a business or a group of people what they will—how they will tie themselves together with their health care and their job that makes absolutely no sense.

I know we were told that is the way it would happen, but it did not. It became a concrete life preserver for employees, employers, and for the marketplace.

So, Mr. Speaker, this health insurance tax advantage is but one of the ideas that is available to the American people and to the Republican Party as part of the world's greatest healthcare system.

I believe that we need a very disciplined approach. I believe that we need to be thoughtful. I believe that we need every single Member of Congress to understand what kind of healthcare system America deserves, not only for the physicians and the hospitals back

home but for the real live people who are called constituents. And we as Members of Congress should know, the day we pass a bill, how we intend it to work.

My colleagues, the Democrats, for 6 years have bumbled around and, even today, don't even understand, nor will they admit, what a disaster ObamaCare is. So, the American people did it for them.

The American people voted in Donald J. Trump. They voted in Republicans to the House in the majority. They voted in Republicans to the Senate. And now we are in Washington, and we are going to struggle. We are going to struggle mightily. We are going to throw ideas onto the wall. We are going to have committee hearings. We are going to have the best thought process.

We are going to be able to go back home and to sell to the American people not only some of the ideas that I have but some of the ideas that my colleagues have. And we are going to come up with a better healthcare system.

So what we are about is fix the system before we repeal it. I believe it is wise to say that Republicans owe it to the American people to say: before we go replacing something—before we repeal something, let's replace it. And more and more and more and more of my colleagues are saying this openly. It only makes sense.

We have nothing to fear with a Republican option and an alternative that will be superior for the American people, and every single person will be able to see that. We believe establishing a Republican alternative that can be implemented this year is the best answer.

Now, this is my idea. My idea is, let's go get it on. We know what we are doing. Let's go hold our hearings. Let's go to the American people. Let's sell the ideas that we have got. Let's go move forward and get this process on.

Secondly, we believe that what we have got to do is use reconciliation to repeal the most onerous mandates. What might those be? Well, the individual and the business mandate, the Cadillac tax.

We believe that we have got to go and use the processes, the leverage that we have got. And then we have got to count on what I hope will be the gentleman from Georgia, TOM PRICE, who is today the chairman of the Budget Committee, but tomorrow has been nominated to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

We will count on Dr. TOM PRICE actually sitting in the seat, looking at the exact same law that was overwhelmingly voted by Democrats and no Republicans, and using those levers that he has that were expressly given to the head of HHS to make wise decisions on how to implement the law as we move forward.

I will tell you, Chairman PRICE, as a physician with a long history of understanding health care, as a provider of health care for years, as an awesome physician, TOM PRICE knows the problems, and he will use those same opportunities that exist in the law today. Instead of it being something that would be more difficult for a consumer, more difficult for a person on ObamaCare, more difficult for what might be an employer, more difficult and time consuming for a consumer, more costly to the consumers of this country, but, perhaps worst of all, making it harder to provide better health care for a patient, TOM PRICE will have that opportunity.

So this is a three-tier process for Republicans, for us to also bring the best ideas. The American people should be checking with their Member of Congress who will be able to understand the Republican alternative. This is great for the American people to know.

We are going to use the levers of laws to change them, to repeal and take back the most onerous parts of ObamaCare, and we are going to work within the law that Mr. PRICE, as head of HHS, would be able to use exactly the same levers that someone sat there, if they really wanted to fix health care instead of making it harder for someone.

We know that Republicans have better ideas, and that what we want to do is to establish a tax benefit system while allowing the employer-sponsored insurance tax system to remain. That means that every single American will have parity on the opportunity to buy health care on January 1 of every year; that no longer will we find that people lag behind because they can't afford, or it is a rigged system, or they have a disadvantage.

Republicans have an opportunity to level the playing field. This is why Republicans openly in any crowd can say: we have better ideas. We don't have to force anybody. We will invite them to come be a part of what we do. And I guarantee you, more people will flock to our system than fled and ran from ObamaCare, because it has to work for everybody, not just some of us.

The healthcare system that we have today, ObamaCare, literally, young people ran from the system. They could not afford it. But worst of all, they could not pay the high deductible. And if you have such a high deductible, it means, by and large, insurance is useless to you.

So, Mr. Speaker, what Republicans are doing is going to allow a tax benefit system. Republicans are going to make HSAs available as an option, an alternative, so that people have a choice and a chance to buy what they need but not pay for what they don't want. We want an opportunity for them to become consumers. We want them to be a part of a system where it is not use it or lose it, rather, they can only, through their own means and their hard work, roll over perhaps $1,000 a year, $1,000 at 21, $1,000 at 22, $1,000 at 23, and to allow private physicians to make sure they are in the system.

Lastly, as my time is moving forward, I want to say something to each and every American because it seemingly has been a part of the lexicon in my Democrat friends' viewpoint, and it is this: The Republican plan has available to it and, I believe, will accept the rights that were known as under ObamaCare, which were very bipartisan, dependent coverage through age 26—Republican plan, you bet. No lifetime annual limits—Republican plan, absolutely. Modified guarantee availability renewability, just like what was in ObamaCare—you bet we will have that too.

Prohibition on preexisting conditions exclusions—literally, just the same. You have to buy in. And if you don't, then you have a problem. But if you buy in the first time you get a chance, it is an opportunity just like ObamaCare.

Prohibition on discrimination based on health status—absolutely. That is a Republican idea, too. It is not owned by just one party. It is a generally accepted idea and would be a part, should be a part, of a Republican plan, and nondiscrimination and healthcare coverage.

Mr. Speaker, what I have tried to do in this hour is to give the American people and my colleagues the confidence that what lies ahead will be an awesome debate, but it will be done in public. It will be done above board. It will be done where Members of Congress can go back home and explain to people not only what we want to do but be willing to take their own feedback also.

It will be a system that will fix the inequities, the things that were unfair about tax benefits. And it should be, and I hope will be, a system that will be available this next year so that, on January 1 of this next year, as we find the American people wanting eagerly to look at the health care that their families would want and need, that they will find a tax benefit that is consistent with what any other American gets.

Now, the last point I would like to say is a thank you. I would like to say a thank you to some 500 physicians of the National Physicians' Policy Council who have worked through, for 2 years, 9 very large meetings across this country, the last one, the first week of December here in Washington.

Dr. John T. Gill, national co-chairman, and Dr. Marcy Zwelling—Dr. Gill is from Dallas. Dr. Zwelling is from Los Angeles—and our 16 vice chairmen, who have devoted not only hard work but a belief that a healthcare change should be done with physicians, with the people who care about not only patients but care about the system that they would be engaged in, the system of health care in America, that is the greatest system that we know of.

□ 2015

They have sent me hundreds of ideas and hundreds of things which we have openly discussed where we rubbed elbows trying to decide how do we hone

this idea. It has come down to every single American should end up with a better healthcare system than one that was designed that they could not explain and still leaves some 30 million people uninsured in America, and that is called ObamaCare. We should not have a system that demands that a person be on that system or have to pay a huge fine. No. We would want a system where people gleefully came to it, liked their healthcare system, became a consumer, were proud of what they got, and perhaps more importantly, could go to the doctor of their choice instead of calling a number and being assigned or take the person that they were given.

Mr. Speaker, there are lots of ways to get things done in this country, but Republicans have, for years, had better ideas. The idea on health care is one that Republicans are eager—eager—not only to accept this challenge, but eager to say that we are going to work together. Speaker RYAN has pledged himself to our Conference. We have Members of the United States Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL—the other body—and there are a number of Members, including Dr. BILL CASSIDY and Dr. RAND PAUL who have come out with their own healthcare bills, ways to attract not just other cosponsors, but their colleagues who are Democrats also.

So I would say tonight to my colleagues: I would like for you to take just a minute to look at the world's greatest healthcare plan. I would like for you to be concerned, instead of the some 12 to 20 million people across the country—everybody has their own congressional district, and there might be a large number in some of their districts. But by and large, the vast number would not be on ObamaCare, and each of our Members owe them a better healthcare system also.

But if we all get together, every single person can have the opportunity to have a nondiscriminatory system where virtually every hospital would take your coverage instead of only a few. ObamaCare is only a few, only a few doctors. And if we work together and form larger team sizes, we can make health care even better for all Americans.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity tonight to talk about not only better ideas to fix health care, but it would be done through a deliberate, disciplined approach, one in which every single Member of this body should be able to describe what they want. If they want to be for ObamaCare and say that only 24 percent of physicians and only a few hospitals will take their plan, then let them stand on that.

But I want to be for a system where virtually every hospital and virtually every doctor would take the healthcare plan that I would like my family to be on and them, also. That is why I stand up tonight and speak favorably about the Republican advantages of where we will head, specifically about the world's greatest healthcare plan that Senator BILL CASSIDY and I have cosponsored and, more specifically, that the American people can be sold by every single one of us to make health care work and be better for each and every American.

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

A RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT TRUMP'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS AND NEW DEAL FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), who is the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman PLASKETT.

Mr. Speaker, the CBC has led the charge in proposing solutions for the underserved and disadvantaged communities throughout this country.

In his first remarks as President, Donald Trump claimed to champion this cause in his remarks, which proved to be petty and beneath the Office of President of the United States. On day one, in his first official acts in the office, one of his first official acts was to remove from the whitehouse.gov Web site a page detailing a broad set of civil rights commitments and accomplishments under President Obama.

It is fitting that President Trump, as one of his very first actions in office, would take down the public pledge to defend the civil rights of all Americans. This is a continuation of the divisiveness that defined his campaign where he proposed a Muslim ban, mass deportation, and a nationwide stop-and-frisk program. This is consistent with a President who would nominate JEFF SESSIONS, a man unanimously opposed by the civil rights community, as Attorney General.

President Trump didn't stop with changing the Web site. It has been reported that the Department of Justice is seeking to delay a hearing meant to focus on the relief required for Texas' discriminatory voter identification law. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled last year that the law had a discriminatory effect and that provisions must be made to allow those who lack the specific ID that the law requires be able to cast a vote. Every judge who has considered the Texas law found it discriminatory, but it still has been used in elections there.

Unfortunately, President Trump has given no indication that he is willing to stand up to protect the voting rights of all Americans. Since being elected, he has ignored proven instances of intentional voter suppression and chosen instead to spread alternative facts about voter fraud.

As one of its first substantive acts, the Trump administration suspended a mortgage insurance rate cut put in place by the Obama administration to give relief to homeowners. According to the Federal Housing Administration, the cut would have saved the average homeowner $500 this year. This reversal will make it more difficult for middle class Americans trying to purchase a home and eliminate relief for homeowners struggling to make their mortgage payments.

According to the National Association of Realtors, this will prevent 30,000 to 40,000 new home buyers from purchasing homes in 2017. This move will disproportionately affect African American homeowners who are more likely than White homeowners to rely on FHA mortgage insurance.

Mr. Speaker, we know exactly who Donald Trump is and have an inkling about what he intends to do, but what we plan on doing is educating the President about the needs of underserved communities. So I will just take a moment to address a few of his points in his new deal for the African American community, which is truly a bad deal in terms of economic equality. It is a raw deal in terms of public education, and it is a hollow deal in terms of voting and civil rights.

On behalf of the caucus, the CBC, the Congressional Black Caucus, I would like to inform him that 39 percent of African Americans actually live in suburbs compared to 36 percent who live in inner cities. The remaining 25 percent live in small metropolitan areas or rural communities.

For more than 45 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has worked to improve conditions for African Americans from all walks of life. Collectively, our members represent 78 million Americans, 17 million of whom are African American. Our districts are rural as well as urban. Some of our members represent majority minority districts, while others do not.

Mr. Speaker, tonight you will hear from several members of the Congressional Black Caucus who will point to specific pieces of legislation that we have championed and that we have authored that would address many of the issues facing inner-city communities, facing poor communities, and facing communities all across this country no matter the race or makeup of those communities.

What I would like to reiterate and stress is the fact that we don't just talk about a problem, but we offer solutions. We have sent to you, Mr.

President, a letter outlining all of the 10 points in your new deal with concrete solutions and legislation that we have authored that we think will go further and is a more comprehensive way of approaching the problems in those communities.

We also sent you another document that details more than your 10 issues, but highlights issues that are faced by American families all across this country and our policy proposals that will solve them. We would just encourage you to step out of the White House and to listen to people who have done this for a long time and who live in those communities and who have offered viable solutions.

So I would just say that we don't need more talk or more rhetoric. What we need is action, and we need action from 1600 Pennsylvania. We need action from the White House, and we would urge you to look at the proposals that we have that offer a better solution.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, my friend and colleague, the Honorable CEDRIC RICHMOND, for his leadership in our caucus as well as his continued fight on the issues impacting Black Americans and other minority communities in underserved American communities in this great Nation.

I would also like to thank my colleague, the Honorable MARC VEASEY of Texas, for joining me and sharing this evening's Special Order hour and my many colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus who are here to speak on this most important issue. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight as Representatives of America's minority communities to respond directly to President Trump's inaugural address, and specifically to his new deal for African Americans.

During President Trump's campaign, he promised to address issues confronting African Americans, and he gave a 10-point plan outlining that. We have studiously reviewed the issues outlined in the plan and have concrete suggestions for him in accomplishing those goals.

While I acknowledge President Trump's willingness to confront these issues, I find the points in his new deal do not go far enough in substance to adequately address the needs of African American communities and rely heavily on assumptions that African American communities are primarily in the inner cities. Just as the chairman spoke of earlier this evening, let's not continue with this fallacy and stereotyping of the dynamic diversity of African Americans in this country. African Americans live in the Rust Belt. They live in rural areas across this country, in suburbs, and they live in territories.

My home district of the U.S. Virgin Islands has a population of 100,000 American citizens and permanent residents. It is a majority minority, and it, too, has experienced the same slow recovery as many of the economically dispossessed communities across America. The issues of African Americans cannot be solved in just 10 bullet points directed to a small portion of the African American community.

Mr. Speaker, we are here this evening, in large part, to send a message, suggestions, thoughts, ideas, and support to President Trump that, if he is serious about addressing the issues in disadvantaged communities, it would be wise to tap into the decades of experience held by the members of this caucus. The answers to those 10 points are very nuanced, and we have been working on them for decades, and we are happy to support positive improvements in our underserved communities.

For almost a half century, this caucus has advocated to improve the lives of millions of Americans in both rural and urban communities—African Americans and all Americans. The 49 members of this caucus who sit in both Houses of Congress and the members before us tonight have offered policy solutions for decades that would help not only those African American communities, but underserved areas nationwide.

□ 2030

We will continue to lead by offering solutions to improve the lives of all Americans in search of a better opportunity. We are hopeful to give you an idea of some of those this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), my able colleague, for his remarks on this matter.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands who is helping to lead tonight's Special Order hour.

I, again, want to highlight how President Trump's inaugural address served as a preview of what the African American community can expect over the next 4 years.

This past Friday, thousands of Americans from all over the country traveled to Washington, D.C., to witness the new President and what type of message he was going to deliver. Unfortunately, instead of starting his Presidency with a bold, new agenda that would benefit all Americans, what we heard was an inaugural address that reminded us that the America he wants to build will leave many of the constituents of those of us who serve as members of the Congressional Black Caucus behind.

In his speech, President Trump said that a nation exists to serve its citizens. But for far too many, a different reality exists. He also painted another grim picture of mothers and children trapped in poverty in inner cities and rusted out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our Nation; an education system flush with cash, but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of knowledge; and crimes and gangs and drugs that have stolen the lives of too many and robbed the country of so much of its unrealized potential.

Those are problems that need to be addressed. I don't think that anybody will disagree with that. We need to make sure that our children have access to good public schools and good, quality education. We need to make sure that, as the nature of work changes in this country, people are ready to get those new jobs. We must make sure that we invest in our communities so that they prosper.

But yet, very little of what President Trump proposed would actually address the root cause of any of those problems. Not even his new deal for Black Americans provides real solutions for the problems that he outlined in his inaugural address. Instead, we see the same recycled, broken promises.

Since the creation of the Congressional Black Caucus, we have been fighting to uplift our communities. We have bold ideas to help transform the lives of those individuals that were mentioned and real ideas that can get going.

I thank the gentlewoman as we prepare to have other speakers from the Congressional Black Caucus share their remarks.

Ms. PLASKETT. I appreciate the remarks that the gentleman has given, particularly about the grim view that was given of African Americans during the inauguration that didn't really expound on the great diversity that is here.

We have someone from another part of our country who is now going to speak. I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), one of our senior great leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus, former chairwoman of the Caucus from California, who is going to give us her remarks and her thoughts on this topic this evening.

Ms. LEE. Let me first thank Congresswoman PLASKETT for her tireless leadership to protect our progress, but also for her vigilance and hard work on behalf of her district and the territories. I thank her and Congressman MARC VEASEY for cosponsoring our Special Order, making sure that the drum is being beat very loudly throughout the country with regard to what is taking place here in Washington, D.C.

For more than 45 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has been the conscience of the Congress. Since its founding, we have fought for robust legislative action to lift our constituents and the African American community, I guess, in a way, to ensure equal justice under the law so that everyone, including African Americans, will be able to live the American Dream.

Now, make no mistake about it: we will continue to fight for justice and equality under President Donald Trump.

The President's inaugural address, quite frankly, was appalling. In my nearly 20 years in the House, I cannot recall a darker, more pessimistic view of our Nation from an incoming President.

The President's inaugural address distorted the truth about our communities. He used dog whistles to paint a frightening picture of our neighborhoods and stoke fear.

Let me be clear: America is not the downtrodden, helpless Nation President Trump described. Yes, we have much more work to do to ensure equal justice under the law and to address the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and segregation. But this means public investments in housing, education, jobs, not budget cuts and corporate tax breaks that just do the opposite and also dismantle the safety net.

Within hours of taking office, the President already began to unravel the progress of the last 8 years. With the stroke of a pen, the President stuck a dagger in the heart of the Affordable Care Act that will take away health care for millions and pull the rug out from under low-income families seeking to buy homes.

These destructive policies are an attack on the most vulnerable in our society. It is clear that these executive orders will disproportionately harm communities of color, the African American community, and the poor.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act is just the tip of the iceberg. We have seen the Trump administration planning a full scale attack on the most marginalized community in our society.

Last year, after continually insulting the African American community, Trump's so-called new deal for Black America really did just add insult to injury. Rather than helping struggling families, this agenda would gut Social Security, repeal the Affordable Care Act, and abolish the safety net. We know that these cuts now will just lead to more poverty. This approach is dead wrong.

Instead of stepping on the most vulnerable to benefit special interests, President Trump should follow the CBC's lead by supporting a national strategy to eliminate poverty and extend economic opportunity to all Americans.

He can start by supporting our Half in Ten Act, which would reduce poverty in half over 10 years. And if the Trump administration really wants a new deal to benefit African Americans, they should look to our assistant leader JIM CLYBURN's 10–20–30 antipoverty plan, which would direct at least 10 percent of funds in designated accounts to spent in communities experiencing persistent poverty—those with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent over the last 30 years.

These are just a few of the proposals that we have to address poverty and lift up our communities. What we won't do is allow President Trump to roll back progress or push more families over the edge into poverty.

We should be identifying the root causes of poverty and developing policies to lift Americans up. Instead, President Trump has shown he would rather line the pockets of billionaires and advance those failed trickle-down economics.

In President Trump's new deal for African Americans let me just read you very quickly what he said with regard to illegal immigration. He said: ''We will restore the civil rights of African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and all Americans, by ending illegal immigration.''

Our response is that the CBC will not buy into the divisive rhetoric that blames immigration for the social and economic problems in African American communities. Our members support comprehensive immigration reform. President Trump will not roll back the clock on our progress or doom another generation to the crippling effects of poverty.

Let me be clear: this 10-point plan really is a slap in the face to African Americans everywhere. As co-chair of the CBC's Working Group on Poverty and the Economy, along with Congressman CLEAVER and chair of the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality and Opportunity, we will continue to work to make sure that the vital resources for low-income Americans, African Americans, and those struggling to make ends meet are there.

We will make sure that the country understands that the Congressional Black Caucus continues to fight for a real deal for the African American community, for our entire Nation, and that means lifting people out of poverty, creating good-paying jobs, and moving forward on the progress that has been made.

I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I was really very interested in the discussion the gentlewoman had and about the work that you have done to alleviate poverty both in the Democratic Caucus as well as the Congressional Black Caucus, particularly her words about not allowing immigration to be divisive and used as a means to separate Americans and not being able to realize the American Dream. America is big enough to have immigrants under a comprehensive immigration plan that will allow all of us to be able to lift it up.

I want to thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on that and particularly the fight that she has been fighting for so many years when it comes to alleviating poverty in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), but more specifically from the great city of Detroit, where she has been a strong voice for the people of Detroit, a strong voice for surrounding areas, and her work on Flint, Michigan, and its water crisis, and other areas of people who are in the inner city that need support in so many areas, to speak on the issues that are the topic for today.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I thank the Congresswoman, my colleague, for her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus, the conscience of the Congress, stands strong to promote unity and fight against divisive rhetoric.

Trump's inaugural speech included a lot of pledges and promises: pledges of ''allegiance to all Americans,'' promises to the American people, saying, ''I will never let you down.''

He even quoted the Bible, saying: ''. . . how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.''

But pledges and promises fall flat when tweets, speeches, and now actions are followed by reckless executive orders, thoughtless nominations for our Nation's leaders, and attacks on the American healthcare system.

The American people were let down when President Trump nominated unqualified and out-of-touch candidates such as Senator JEFF SESSIONS, Betsy DeVos, and TOM PRICE.

How can you pledge allegiance to all Americans while threatening to leave so many without options and access to healthcare coverage? This is not unity. It is hypocrisy. We need to focus on facts and not ''alternative facts.''

I have a question: Do we have a replacement for the Affordable Care Act? Is it a fact that a repeal without a replacement will leave over 30 million people uninsured? Yes, that is a fact.

Is it a fact that Betsy DeVos, if confirmed, will be the first Secretary of Education without any prior experience in public schools, including early childhood education and higher education?

Is it a fact that JEFF SESSIONS has been nominated as the Attorney General but was denied Federal judgeship over accusations of racism?

I support efforts that will bring more jobs to the American people. I fully support efforts to improve our country's transportation and infrastructure. But only time will tell if President Trump will follow through with the promises he has made to the American people on inauguration day. Only time will tell if he will continue to act, speak, and tweet in a manner that builds walls and not bridges.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus intends to be a voice to create bridges and work toward real solutions to the real challenges that face African Americans, minorities, and the unheard and disenfranchised. We will be watching, and we will be listening. We will continue to fight for equality, liberty, and justice for all.

Ms. PLASKETT. I thank the gentlewoman for those words and thoughts on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who has been a stalwart for social justice, a stalwart on the Judiciary Committee, and is going to speak on the issue that is here before us this evening, the CBC Special Order hour, ''A Response to President Trump's Inaugural Address and New Deal for African Americans.''

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands and the gentleman from Texas for their service to the Nation and for leading the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order. It is always important for the voices of the Congressional Black Caucus and the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. RICHMOND of Louisiana, to be heard. Both Ms. PLASKETT and Mr. VEASEY have accepted the challenge and the call. I want to express to them my greatest appreciation for the leadership that they are showing.

□ 2045

I want to start my remarks again by saying that it may be hometown pride, but I like the headline of the Houston Chronicle that says ''Powerful Together.'' The numbers have not yet been fully calculated, but we know upwards of a million and maybe over a million persons around the Nation, and then they added individuals from foreign countries far and wide. I would take by this title that represents, Mr. Speaker, the peaceful protests—I want to say that again; in fact, I might want to say it two times: peaceful, peaceful protests, nonviolent protests—that occurred on Saturday, expressing the view of what America is really about.

I say that to my colleagues, they are about what the Congressional Black Caucus is about, and I believe our chairman made the point that we come from very diverse districts, representing people of many racial backgrounds, religious backgrounds, as well as economic backgrounds, that we are the voice of reason and the conscience of this Congress. We fight against poverty, but we have Ph.D.'s, lawyers, judges, and we have businesspersons. They, by and large, Mr. Speaker, are charitable individuals who believe in social justice.

That is why we come with a sense of privilege, if you will, to be able to speak about what America truly is. Yesterday at the Community of Faith, under the leadership of Bishop James Dixon, I gathered for a prayer for the Nation. Mr. Speaker, I did not dissect it. I did not eliminate the White House. I did not point out Members of Congress, call them by name. I said a prayer for the Nation, and that included the White House and individuals in the Congress and the Senate. We had international representation. We had the Consulate General of Pakistan. We had imams. We had individuals who worship on Saturday Sabbath. We had people who spoke Spanish, people who spoke, obviously, English. And we gathered to pray for the nation. That is what I think is represented in the message or the title of the ''New Deal for Black America,'' it needs prayer because it is not reflective. Although well-intentioned, I am not sure who may have advised the administration, but it does not speak to the wideness of diversity of the African American population, African American communities in this Nation.

So I want to speak very briefly on questions of health care and justice. I would like to say that in the safe communities of which the administration or the President has offered his new deal, he says: ''We will make our communities safe again. Every poor African-American child must be able to walk down the street in peace. Safety is a civil right. We will invest in training and funding both local and federal law enforcement operations to remove the gang members, drug dealers, and criminal cartels from our neighborhoods. The reduction of crime is not merely a goal—but a necessity.''

In that there is no mention of ending gun violence or looking at sensible gun safety regulations or laws, of which we have asked. I introduced Gun Violence Reduction Resources Act, which really answered Republicans' cry for enforcing the law, to add to the ATF, to enforce the penalties against those who use guns wrong. In particular, the perpetrator in Mother Emanuel should not have been able to get the gun, but he was because the gun dealer was so easy and quick to sell it, even though he had not gotten an affirmation by ATF, that is the one. I would argue it was because they did not have enough personnel.

He also seems to categorize that every poor child has to walk down the streets. We want every child to walk down—as I said, our community is very diverse. He then says: ''Equal Justice Under the Law. We will apply the law fairly, equally and without prejudice. There will be only one set of rules—not a two-tiered system of justice. Equal justice also means the same rules for Wall Street.''

So I quickly want to offer these points before I yield the floor. Number one, we are not all impoverished, but I join my colleagues in ending poverty. African Americans want the same thing as Barbara Jordan said when asked, ''What do your people want?''

''It is the same thing that all America wants.''

Yes, we do want opportunities, but we do have to be more forceful for issues that are relevant.

We have seen nothing in Mr. Trump's statement of a new deal for Black America to deal with sentencing reduction and ending mandatory minimums. We see nothing about working with police departments that have found themselves falling upon bad times and having a plague of bad actors, even though we respect and honor police. And so the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act that JOHN CONYERS and myself introduced has to do with correcting the issue of training and the improper inaction of police and community.

I would offer to say that the nominee for the Attorney General is completely opposed to addressing any questions of bad behavior on behalf of bad actors and bad officers. In fact, he opposed consent decrees like the one in Ferguson and Baltimore that were only positive, welcomed by the police departments to help them do a better job at policing the community.

Prison reform to change the matrix of prison, gun violence prevention that I have already mentioned, and healthcare access that are truly crucial to all of us.

Let me also indicate a changing of the matrix of juvenile justice. We want to reauthorize the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program Reauthorization Act, but, more importantly, we want to change how we are dealing with juveniles. We want to change from the idea of them being, if you will, punished versus incentivized.

Finally, let me offer to say that two Senators in the other body have offered a new matrix on health care. I understand there are some proposals here. I would say that we see that we can't have unity. We don't have any replacement. What is being offered by the Senators is health savings accounts, which we know are not realistic. So I would offer to the President that there are many ways of looking at serving all of America, including African Americans. It is not listening to your own voice. It is helping us change the matrix for juveniles, changing the matrix for those who are incarcerated, mandatory minimums, the way police and community work, at the same time respecting them, but, more importantly, it is listening and working with Members who have real life experiences in some of the issues that will make this country continue to be the greatest country in the world.

I thank the gentlewoman for her courtesies.

Ms. PLASKETT. I thank the Congresswoman from Texas. I want to thank her for all the work she has been doing not just in terms of incarceration reform, but pointing out to us that the safety of children also includes gun violence in their communities. That is so very important. And, of course, the real tireless work that she has done in terms of juvenile justice.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE has been at the forefront of changing the dynamic in how we see juveniles and the things that lead them into incarceration or lead them into problems with the law, and the solutions that are on the table. This is what we are speaking about this evening, giving real solutions and concrete legislation that has already been drafted and worked on by members of the Congressional Black Caucus that President Trump can use in carrying out the 10-point plan that he has.

I yield to the Congresswoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), who also would like to speak on this topic and who has been doing tireless work in her district of Wisconsin and throughout the United States for communities, for children, for working mothers, for women who are attempting to move ahead, to receive a part of the economic justice, who has really been concerned about so many of the things that we are talking about this evening.

I yield to her to speak to us this evening.

Ms. MOORE. I thank the Delegate and the Congresswoman from the Virgin Islands and her counterpart, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), for really supporting this Congressional Black Caucus hour so that we can discuss the pledges and proposals that President Trump has made as the new deal within the Black community.

Mr. Speaker and Madam Chairwoman of this Special Order, I would like to engage in a kind of colloquy with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS), who has been a State appropriator before he joined this body for some 25 years. I hate to date him. He has been a member of the prestigious appropriations committee. So, therefore, he was tasked with taking Federal funds and making those appropriations and those decisions at the State level. I wanted him to help evaluate some of the proposals that now President Trump has made regarding his new deal for Black America.

One of the proposals that President Trump has made is to allow the conversion of funds for poverty programs to be converted from those programs into microloans that he would then provide to the poor. I am feeling a little confused and perplexed as to how this would work. I fear that this is part of kind of the double speak or alternative facts about the roots of and the solutions to poverty.

As the gentleman now serves on the Committee on Small Business here in the House, and he has been an appropriator, I am wondering, number one, if converting funds from, say, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Act, which is comprised of mostly poor women and children or Social Security disability insurance, which is set aside for those folks with significant disabilities, or perhaps SNAP and food stamps, those people who are temporarily out of the workforce waiting to go back, find another job, but need to sort of eat that month—I am wondering how, in his experience, converting programs set aside for poor people would a poor person use a microloan.

I have two questions. I want the gentleman to sort of respond to what poor people would do. Presumably they would create their own jobs with these microloans. How big, perhaps, would these microloans have to be in order for them to establish their own businesses so that they would be off welfare?

In fact, on any given day, there are 3 million children who live in extreme poverty, off of less than $3 a day. So I guess I would wonder how converting those funds—what those children who are not capable and eligible to work would do with such a proposal.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I think that the points that the gentlewoman is raising are very legitimate in terms of the experience that I have had. And the experience that I have had, always the question is: Is there enough availability of capital in any startup of any particular business?

The experience has shown that this idea of microloans hasn't been sustainable or sufficient in terms of what it would mean. And as a result, Mr. Speaker, I think that this is like kind of a pig in a poke, giving people some sense, but really it doesn't give them a sustainable sense of whether you have the necessary long-term investment that is necessary. So I think that this is like smoke and mirrors. And the gentlewoman is correct in what she is saying in terms of this is not something that will give them a sustainable effort.

Ms. MOORE. I thank the gentleman for that because I thought maybe it was just me who thought that. Here we are, we live in a country with the largest economy, with arguably the strongest, greatest technological economy, and I wonder what these poor women who are on welfare would do?

He says he wants to get them off of welfare. Would they sell fruit on the street? How would that work in Detroit or Milwaukee?

We are not talking about women who live in countries where microloans may work very well in those limited economies.

□ 2100

I am also wondering how those people who are structurally unemployed would benefit from these microloans.

What this does, Madam Chairperson of this initiative, is that what this really is saying is that this is really perpetuating the persistent myth of people who are poor as the shiftless, lazy welfare queens of poverty pimps, and that the solution is to take away the safety net and force them to do some kind of work, whether that work is sustainable enough for them.

And so I would say, as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, that we ought to have welfare reform that really honors our commitment as Americans to make sure that we provide some kind of safety net for the majority of the poor who are, in fact, children. There are, in fact, people who are not capable, or should not be responsible, for providing for themselves through our very sophisticated economy.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if we really want to help get people off welfare, we should not start the debate by taking away reproductive freedom from women. One of the major reasons that women fall into poverty is the lack of access to birth control, health care, that would enable them to plan their families, plan their pregnancies. And to say that you are going to help people get off welfare and to snatch away funds from Planned Parenthood or their ability to control their reproduction is a nonstarter in truly helping the truly poor.

I think that President Trump's quest to help those who are truly poor will only come if the President and his team will actually listen to the voices of the poor, actually listen to solutions that have been tried and tested, like providing educational opportunity and upward mobility to poor people; by respecting women's reproductive rights to choose; by really creating a sense of Congress that any goal of welfare reform ought to be to protect children; that any welfare reform ought to make sure that women are free from domestic violence, sex trafficking, and human trafficking, and that they be protected; and that during these periods they not be cut off from public support.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. PLASKETT for this opportunity to speak to the American people.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) and ask if he has additional thoughts on this after having that colloquy with Ms. MOORE.

Mr. EVANS. Yes. And, Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. PLASKETT for the opportunity to offer some comments. The fact that the Congressional Black Caucus has taken this lead, I applaud our leadership, Chairman RICHMOND.

I join with my colleagues this evening to speak to the plan our new President has penned as the ''new deal for African Americans.'' This plan, unfortunately, does not meet the needs of our communities and focuses on the same assumptions that have not worked for our communities over the years.

In his inaugural address, President Trump stated: ''The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country. Their victories have not been your victories; their triumphs have not been your triumphs; and while they celebrated in our Nation's Capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land.'' That was stated by President Trump.

Well, while individuals were celebrating last week, actions were taken for people all over our Nation to lose their healthcare coverage, and the Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance rate was cut an hour after President Trump took office, which would have reduced insurance premiums for borrowers each year. This does not help the men, women, and children of our great Nation.

In the new deal for Black America, President Trump asserts that there will be tax reform to create jobs and lift up people and communities. Just in my community alone, Mr. Speaker, at Temple University Hospital, which has 8,000 jobs, there are jobs that will be lost due to the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, which President Trump signed an executive order to dismantle the day he was sworn in as our President. This is counter to any notion of job creation.

As our chairman so eloquently stated in the letter expressing the views of

the caucus on January 19, the new administration should target investment to those communities that need it the most and support programs that support small- and medium-sized businesses and address the access to capital crisis in the African American entrepreneur community.

In President Trump's inaugural address, he stated ''a new national pride will stir our souls, lift our sights, and heal our divisions.'' I assert that we already have a national pride. It is the pride that those in our communities feel when there is unity when they understand that individuals here in Congress are fighting for them. It is the pride that communities feel when they understand that groups such as the Congressional Black Caucus zealously represented and advocated to improve their lives over the course of the existence of the caucus, those in rural and urban communities.

An additional point in the new deal for Black America asserts financial reform to expand credit to support new job creation and specifically calls out the Dodd-Frank reforms set forth and protected through the leadership of Ranking Member WATERS. These financial reforms and protections are absolutely essential to protect our communities.

With the racial wealth gap reaching an unfortunate and historical level, with White households maintaining 13 times the wealth of African American households, we must work to ensure the protections of Dodd-Frank remain in place. Additionally, as Representative RICHMOND shared, programs such as the Small Business Administration's Microloan Program, which provides capital and assistance to minority-owned business, must be bolstered.

I have spoken directly with my constituents about the need for access to capital; thus, my statement is not hypocritical or speculative in nature. There is an actual need in our communities so that our small businesses can grow and flourish.

Our new President asserts:

> We are transferring power from Washington, D.C., and giving it back to you, the American people.

I assert that the American people have always had the power. I see this power as I walk through my district as through my community, as I walk through Ogontz Avenue in West Oak Lane, part of my district, down Girard Avenue in North Philadelphia, Lancaster Avenue on the Main Line, and Baltimore Avenue in West Philadelphia. The faces in my community let me know that the power has always belonged to the people. It is now up to all of us to do what is in the best interest of our communities, to work collectively and address the issues that plague our communities.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania, DWIGHT EVANS. I know that he is new to this Congress, but he has worked for so many years on the issues that we are talking about today. I look forward to our continued collaboration in supporting so many communities throughout our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), who has been a stalwart voice on so many of the issues that the Congressional Black Caucus has brought here this evening and is here, Mr. Speaker, to share some of her thoughts on the things that have been spoken about earlier today.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congresswoman STACY PLASKETT, for leading tonight's Special Order hour, joined by her cochair, Congressman MARC VEASEY, and also my classmate.

Let me say to our chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND for bringing this Special Order hour here tonight. So much has been said already. But let me say how honored I am to join my colleagues as we address and talk about ''A Response to President Trump's Inaugural Address and New Deal for African Americans.''

Like so many of my colleagues tonight, Mr. Speaker, and the countless Americans who are watching at home, I remain deeply concerned and troubled about several of the statements that Mr. Trump made and also about the stances of Mr. Trump's Cabinet members, comments about minorities and women and immigrants, and, of course, comments about our own colleague Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, in Trump's inaugural address, he did nothing to ease those concerns or to unite us. On the contrary, all I heard on Friday was another campaign speech of more of the same divisive rhetoric and recycled ideas from his campaign trail, ideas like the new deal for Black America that he mentioned on the campaign trail, a proposal that you have heard a lot about tonight that embraces the same trickle-down economic assumptions that didn't work for African Americans in the past and certainly won't work today.

Mr. Speaker, during his campaign speech, Trump talked about gangs roaming the streets and how African American communities are being decimated by crime. He went so far as to say, overwhelmingly, the majority of Black people living in inner cities in the United States are ''living in hell.''

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want President Trump to know that I am Black. I grew up in the United States inner city, but I didn't live in hell. And here I stand now, educated in the public schools, attended a historically Black university and college, and I am a Member of the United States Congress.

Mr. Trump said: ''We are one Nation—and their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams, and their success will be our success.''

He was referencing mothers and children strapped in poverty in our inner cities. He was referencing rusted out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our Nation, and an education system flush with cash but leaving our young students deprived of knowledge.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to see his plans for public education. I want to see his plans for inner-city students. I want to see his plans flush with all that cash that he talked about going into our public schools. I want us to unite to help eradicate the cycle of poverty and eliminate the too-often traveled pipeline from underperforming schools to overcrowded prisons.

I want to see Mr. Trump's plan on criminal justice reform. I want a fair Attorney General vetted and confirmed because they will stand up every single day for equal rights of all Americans, for freedom of speech, for freedom to vote, and much more—not an Attorney General who lacks the ability to represent disenfranchised groups, not someone who fails to champion the least of us.

□ 2115

I have not seen those things in nominee SESSIONS.

Lastly, I want Cabinet members who will be champions for our seniors—people like my 92-year-old mother. I want Cabinet members who will stand up for minorities and minority businesses. See, we need greater assistance in minority businesses and funds for minority business. I want Cabinet members who will build on and strengthen our healthcare system—yes, to make it greater, not to take away health care from 30 million people. Let me just say that I want to plan for workforce development programs and reentry training programs for those laid-off factory workers. I want to see plans for mothers and families because we certainly know, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I dare ask that women get equal pay for equal work. I don't want recycled, failed policies that will do nothing to heal our communities. I am proud to be a member of the Congressional Black Caucus. We are the conscience of the Congress.

Let me end by saying that there are so many programs. We have a task force on poverty, led by Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. I won't repeat the program that Assistant Democratic Leader CLYBURN has already introduced—the 10–20–30 plan.

Let me again thank my colleagues for bringing their powerful voices to this floor.

Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent upon all of us to join the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, the entire House Democratic Caucus, and all Americans of every color—in standing up to President Trump and continuing to let him know, as our preamble of the Constitution says—to form a more perfect Union for all Americans.

Ms. PLASKETT. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I was struck by some information that I just received. This is a summary of the new deal for Black America. Nowhere in the new deal for Black America is a commitment to protecting voting rights. One of the Achilles heels of the nominee for the Attorney General is he does not have a history of protecting voting rights.

Particularly, I want to acknowledge President George W. Bush because the Congress—both the House and the Senate—worked extensively with him in the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, including section 5, which is preclearance. Lo and behold, the Shelby case imploded section 5. We no longer have it in a potpourri—a flourishing, a garden of weeds—of voter ID laws, one by which my colleague Mr. VEASEY, who was a plaintiff, was promoted.

The last point that I want to make is, in addition to not having anything on voting rights, we just had breaking news that the White House has indicated that the President would have had the popular vote if he had not had happen to him 3 to 5 million illegal votes cast. This is being reported. Likewise, what is being reported is there is absolutely no evidence that there were 3 to 5 million illegal votes cast in the 2016 election. I think we need to have focus on voting rights and on the protection of those who vote.

Ms. PLASKETT. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY).

Mr. VEASEY. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of the Members who have participated tonight. We are about to run short on our time here, but there are just so many other areas that need to be addressed, and the Congressional Black Caucus is going to continue to address those when we talk about safe communities; when we start talking about great education and some of the issues that we see with the nominee for the Secretary of Education that threaten to really cripple and hurt our public schools; when we talk about equal justice for all. How are we going to work with the Justice Department to try to foster some of the good initiatives that President Obama put forward in dealing with community policing? It is all of those things, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. PLASKETT. And education and workforce development.

Mr. VEASEY. Absolutely. Education and workforce development with our changing workforce—STEAM jobs and STEM jobs.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, within hours of taking the oath as President of the United States, Donald Trump signaled that his much touted "New Deal for Black America" is just the same "old deal" of discrimination, voter suppression and establishment entitlement. In politics, as in life, actions always speak louder than words. And the speed of his repudiation of the inclusive agenda of the Obama administration shouts his intention to turn back the clock on civil rights for a broad swath of our nation.

Since the Supreme Court suspended the application of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County Case, African American communities around the nation have fought the passage of discriminatory voter identification laws as part of a scheme to suppress the vote. The states of Texas and North Carolina have been particular battlegrounds, where important victories were achieved in the federal courts. The work of civil rights advocacy groups received important support from the Voting Section of the DOJ Civil Rights Division in reversing some of the most aggressive state-passed voter suppression plans.

As many have feared, the election of Trump threatens to produce a radical change in support for voting rights from the White House. Unlike even President George W. Bush, who signed the reauthorization of Section 5 of the VRA, Trump has exhibited an hostility to voting rights not seen since the Civil Rights era.

By Friday afternoon, lawyers for the Department asked for a delay in the hearing scheduled for tomorrow on the Texas voter ID case, citing the change in presidential administrations. The motion noted that "Because of the change in administration, the Department of Justice also experienced a transition in leadership, . . . and requires additional time to brief the new leadership of the Department on this case and the issues to be addressed at the hearing before making any representations to the Court." It is generally expected that DOJ will reverse course in the case.

This case is a bellwether of what can be expected from a Trump DOJ on civil rights. Given the size of Texas and the precedential impact of the case, the stakes in this litigation could not be higher for the minority community.

The voting law at issue in the case, known as SB 14, set strict requirements for permissible ID to vote. While it included such identification as a driver's license, passport and a concealed handgun license, it excluded identification like federal government or student IDs.

In July, the Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit in New Orleans ruled that the law violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act because it disproportionately affected minorities. The Department of Justice had previously argued that the law violated the Voting Rights Act and was intended to directly impact the abilities of minorities to vote, as more than 600,000 minorities lacked the ID necessary under state law to vote.

The belief that the Civil Rights Division will change position and will be under attack is well founded. Last Thursday, it was reported that the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Violence Against Women Grants and the Legal Services Corporation would be target for elimination and the Civil Rights Division would have its funding cut as part of Trump plan for reducing the size of the federal government.

Most troubling, it was also reported that John M. Gore, an attorney who led the legal teams on several key cases attacking civil rights, would be the head of DOJ' s Civil Rights Division as the Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

Gore was one of the defense attorneys who argued in court on behalf of North Carolina's legally dubious and discriminatory anti-transgender bill HB2. The bill blocks transgender people from using public bathrooms that align with their gender identity. The bottom line here is that Gore was on the side of discrimination in the country's most high-profile LGBTQ rights case of the past year. (Many will recall that this legislation generated a huge economic backlash against the state, including the relocation of major sporting events).

His record of being a legal champion for discriminatory causes appears to be a highlight of Gore's legal career. One of his main areas of expertise appears to be defending redistricting plans against claims of civil rights violations, with his online bio boasting of a number of successful such defenses.

One of the most high-profile civil rights cases Gore has litigated in recent years is the Florida Purge case. This case brought many of us to the floor to denounce yet another attempt at voter suppression that was designed to alter the balance of state politics. The state of Florida was found to have violated the National Voter Registration Act with a systemic purge of voters it suspected of being non-citizens. As the New York Times wrote of Florida's voter restriction attempt:

> The program to identify and remove non-citizens from the rolls prompted a national outcry and several lawsuits in 2012 because it was riddled with mistakes and was being pushed through months before the election. A number of people on the lists, which were sent by the state to county election supervisors, were, in fact, citizens (including the two lead plaintiffs in the lawsuit).

Just as we opposed the nomination of Sen. JEFF SESSIONS to serve as Attorney General, we must similarly build a record against John Gore to head the Civil Rights Division. We simply cannot entrust our legacy civil rights statutes to any person who has shown a lack of sensitivity and balance in protecting the interests of justice in our society.

Though Trump's inaugural speech invoked an image of my home City of Detroit, I fear what his vision will mean for my community and vow to continue the struggle for jobs, justice and peace. He stated that "the time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action." I take him at his word and his actions send an unmistakable message: His action is to appoint a defender of discrimination to head the Civil Rights Division. His action is to retreat from an agenda on Community Oriented Policing. His action is to undermine affordable healthcare. His action is to appoint cabinet officials who fail to represent the mosaic that is America.

The Congressional Black Caucus took to this floor tonight to outline our response to the President's Inaugural Address & New Deal for African-Americans. While our views may not find much in common, I believe we can agree on this: the time for talk is indeed over and the hour for action has arrived. This caucus will not stand idly by while an administration attempts to turn back the clock. The greatness of America is found in its diversity, inclusiveness and empathy. That is why we are the beacon on the hill. Whether we fly, walk or crawl, we are committed to moving this nation forward and will not turn back.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, President Donald Trump addressed the nation during his inaugural address by laying out his priorities for the new administration and his future vision for our country. Among his priorities is to incentivize private investments in infrastructure through tax incentives and public-private partnerships.

Tax incentives and public-private partnerships are simply two elements that I believe should be part of a larger, more comprehensive infrastructure plan. A truly comprehensive plan will include direct spending and invests real dollars in both rural and urban communities So far, the only portions of President Trump's infrastructure plan that have been made public include $100 billion in tax breaks to private investors. I believe that President Trump is deeply misguided in relying solely on tax breaks to miraculously spur investments in our decaying transportation network. We need to include a healthy mix of direct spending, tax incentives, public-private partnerships, and sensible public policies if we are to sufficiently address the infrastructure needs across the country.

Our highways, railways, and airways serve as the arteries that drive the U.S. economy. As our nation's population continues to grow and become more diverse, the growth of our transportation infrastructure needs to keep pace. Texas is projected to account for nearly fifteen percent of all the national population growth through 2030. Yet, it has become increasingly difficult to make the investments that we need to properly maintain and build up the state's infrastructure due to dwindling federal funding for transportation projects. President Trump's plan in its current form falls drastically short of the necessary steps that we must take in order to modernize our crumbling infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, it has been and continues to be my intention to give President Trump a fair chance at proving to the American people that he is serious about bringing real solutions to our nation's problems to the table. I strongly encourage this administration to present a well-rounded infrastructure plan that goes beyond merely hand-outs to corporations, and also includes the direct spending that is so desperately needed.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This letter is to inform you that I have sent a letter to Kansas Governor Sam Brownback informing him that I am resigning my position as the United States Representative for the 4th Congressional District of Kansas effective upon my confirmation as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

In November, I was nominated by then President-elect Donald Trump to serve as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and have now been confirmed to have the privilege to serve in that role. I am truly honored that President Trump has given me the opportunity to lead an amazing organization filled with men and women who put their lives on the line for the safety and security of every American.

I want to thank you for all you have done to make the House of Representatives live up to its constitutional duty to represent all Americans. Thank you too for your personal assistance in working with me on the issues that impact all Americans, but, especially, those who I have had the privilege to represent from South Central Kansas. There is much work to do legislatively; I will miss working to be part of this historic opportunity now laid before us.

I look forward to continuing to work with all of you as we strive to keep America safe. My commitment to keeping you and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence fully informed on important intelligence matters is sincere and continuing.

Sincerely,

MIKE POMPEO,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2017.

Hon. SAM BROWNBACK,
Governor, State of Kansas,
Topeka, Kansas.

DEAR GOVERNOR BROWNBACK: I have now been confirmed by the United States Senate to serve as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I am hereby resigning my position as the United States Representative for the 4th Congressional District of Kansas effective upon my confirmation as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I have genuinely been privileged to represent the people of South Central Kansas in Congress. Kansans are inspiring, compassionate, and hard-working. To serve them in this fashion has been a true honor I will always cherish.

The opportunity to lead the world's finest intelligence warriors was a call to service I could not ignore. I am truly honored that President Trump has given me this opportunity. The men and women of the CIA are the world's finest intelligence professionals the world has ever known. Their integrity, passion, and commitment to keeping our nation safe is unquestionable. I am excited to lead them during this dangerous time around the world.

Sincerely,

MIKE POMPEO,
Member of Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO), the whole number of the House is 434.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. HURD, Texas

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. KAPTUR (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of bad weather affecting travel.

Mrs. LAWRENCE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of bad weather affecting travel.

Mr. PAYNE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of medical appointments.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, January 24, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

303. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a letter reporting a violation of the Antideficiency Act, in the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Chief Information Officer during Fiscal Year 2013, pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 1254(n)(3); June 30, 1948, ch. 758, title I, Sec. 104(n)(3) (as amended by Public Law 95-217, Sec. 6); (91 Stat. 1567); to the Committee on Appropriations.

304. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Food and Drug Administration's Fiscal Year 2016 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

305. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Food and Drug Administration's Fiscal Year 2016 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

306. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Possession, Use, and Transfer of Select Agents and Toxins; Biennial Review of the List of Select Agents and Toxins and Enhanced Biosafety Requirements [Docket No.: CDC-2015-0006] (RIN: 0920-AA59) received January 18, 2017, 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.

307. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program: Revisions to the Vaccine Injury Table (RIN: 0906-AB01) received January 18, 2017, 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.

308. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Import and Export Requirements for Controlled Substances, Listed Chemicals, and Tableting and Encapsulating Machines, Including Changes To Implement the International

Trade Data System (ITDS); Revision of Reporting Requirements for Domestic Transactions in Listed Chemicals and Tableting and Encapsulating Machines; and Technical Amendments [Docket No.: DEA-403] (RIN: 1117-AB41) received January 5, 2017, 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.

309. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Clarification of When Products Made or Derived From Tobacco Are Regulated as Drugs, Devices, or Combination Products; Amendments to Regulations Regarding ''Intended Uses'' [Docket No.: FDA-2015-N-2002] (RIN: 0910-AH19) received January 17, 2017, 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.

310. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain Entities to the Entity List [Docket No.: 161228999-6999-01] (RIN: 0694-AH27) received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

311. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR): Control of Spacecraft Systems and Related Items the President Determines No Longer Warrant Control under the United States Munitions List (USML) [Docket No.: 150325297-6180-02] (RIN: 0694-AG59) received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

312. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Department of Labor Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Annual Adjustments for 2017 (RIN: 1290-AA31) received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

313. A letter from the Division Chief, Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, transmitting the Department's final rule — Onshore Oil and Gas Operations—Annual Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustments [17X.LLWO310000.L13100000.PP0000] (RIN: 1004-AE49) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

314. A letter from the General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Eliminating Exception to Expedited Removal Authority for Cuban Nationals Arriving by Air [EOIR Docket No.: 401] (RIN: 1125-AA80) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

315. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Eliminating Exception to Expedited Removal Authority for Cuban Nationals Arriving by Air [DHS Docket No.: DHS-2017-0003] (RIN: 1601-AA81) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

316. A letter from the Chief, Regulatory Coordination Division, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — International Entrepreneur Rule [CIS No.: 2572-15; DHS Docket No.: USCIS-2015-0006] (RIN: 1615-AC04) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

317. A letter from the Chairman, Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, transmitting the Board's final rules — Dispute Resolution Procedures Under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015 [Docket No.: EP 734] received January 19, 2017, 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.

318. A letter from the Chairman, Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, transmitting the Board's final rule — United States Rail Service Issues—Performance Data Reporting (Docket No.: EP 724 (Sub-No. 4)) received January 19, 2017, 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.

319. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Economic Impact Analysis for RIN 2900-AP66, Diseases Associated with Exposure to Contaminants in the Water Supply at Camp Lejeune received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

320. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Regulation Regarding Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Color, or National Origin in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance From the Department of the Treasury (RIN: 1505-AC45) received January 12, 2017, 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.

321. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Annual Report of the Departments of Health and Human Services and Justice titled ''Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program FY 2016'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395i(k)(5); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1817(k)(5) (as added by Public Law 104-191, Sec. 201(b)); (110 Stat. 1996); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

322. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Health Care Programs: Fraud and Abuse; Revisions to the Office of Inspector General's Exclusion Authorities received January 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. CHENEY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 55. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions (Rept. 115–5). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SCALISE (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. WALDEN):

H.R. 599. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. considered and passed. considered and passed.

By Mr. ROYCE of California (for himself, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 600. A bill to promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 601. A bill to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 602. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for Eastvale, California; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. ROYCE of California, and Mr. EMMER):

H.R. 603. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the maximum penalty for mail theft; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. BABIN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. OLSON):

H.R. 604. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit the Governor of a State to reject the resettlement of a refugee in that State unless there is adequate assurance that the alien does not present a security risk and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 605. A bill to facilitate nationwide availability of volunteer income tax assistance for low-income and underserved populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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 (for himself, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BERA, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COOK, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROHRABACHER,

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. VARGAS, and Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California):

H.R. 606. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1025 Nevin Avenue in Richmond, California, as the ''Harold D. McCraw, Sr. Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 607. A bill to prohibit election officials from requiring individuals to provide photo identification as a condition of obtaining or casting a ballot in an election for Federal office or registering to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MASSIE, Ms. LEE, Mr. JONES, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 608. A bill to prohibit the use of United States Government funds to provide assistance to Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and to countries supporting those organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. EVANS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DENT, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 609. A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs health care center in Center Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the ''Abie Abraham VA Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mr. HARRIS, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 610. A bill to distribute Federal funds for elementary and secondary education in the form of vouchers for eligible students and to repeal a certain rule relating to nutrition standards in schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LAMBORN:

H.R. 611. 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; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 612. A bill to establish a grant program at the Department of Homeland Security to promote cooperative research and development between the United States and Israel on cybersecurity; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. MARINO, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. EMMER):

H.R. 613. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons ensure that each chief executive officer of a Federal penal or correctional institution provides a secure storage area located outside of the secure perimeter of the Federal penal or correctional institution for firearms carried by certain employees of the Bureau of Prisons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 614. A bill to require each owner of a dwelling unit assisted under the section 8 rental assistance voucher program to remain current with respect to local property and school taxes and to authorize a public housing agency to use such rental assistance amounts to pay such tax debt of such an owner, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 615. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include student loan repayers as members of targeted groups for purposes of the work opportunity credit and to provide for a credit against tax for student loan program startup costs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to provide that Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the number of persons in each State who are citizens of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. SHERMAN):

H. Con. Res. 11. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and therefore, consistent with the location of other United States embassies, the United States embassy in Israel should be located in Jerusalem; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SIRES (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H. Res. 54. A resolution reaffirming the United States-Argentina partnership and recognizing Argentina's economic reforms; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey introduced A bill (H.R. 616) for the relief of certain aliens who were aboard the Golden Venture; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SCALISE:

H.R. 599.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ROYCE of California:

H.R. 600.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 601.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 602.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 and clause 18.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 603.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 and clause 18.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 604.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 605.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution and its subsequent amendments and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 606.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 607.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 608.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 9, Clause 7

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 609.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 610.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The ''Power of the Purse'' as defined in Article I, Section 9, Clause 7

By Mr. LAMBORN:

H.R. 611.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 612.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 613.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution, ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 614.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 615.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 616.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 4 of the Constitution provides that Congress shall have power ''To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;''

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.J. Res. 30.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 7: Mr. JORDAN, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. BOST, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. COMER, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. MESSER, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BACON, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. DUNN, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, Mr. HARPER, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. BIGGS.

H.R. 38: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 60: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 80: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 83: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 99: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 146: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 162: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 165: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 167: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 173: Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NADLER, Ms. TITUS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. JONES, Mr. COOK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 174: Mr. BYRNE and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 184: Mr. DUNN and Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 193: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 198: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 244: Mr. ROKITA and Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 245: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 275: Mr. BARLETTA and Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 277: Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 332: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. DOGGETT, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 334: Mr. VARGAS and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 342: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.

H.R. 346: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 350: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 351: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 355: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 361: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 367: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 371: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 381: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. BASS, and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 389: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 390: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 395: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 398: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 406: Ms. ADAMS.

H.R. 423: Mr. KILMER and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 432: Mr. KILMER and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 458: Mr. BERGMAN.

H.R. 465: Mrs. WALORSKI and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 468: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 469: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 485: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 490: Mr. PERRY, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 520: Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. COOK, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 523: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 530: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Ms. LEE.

H.R. 531: Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 553: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. TURNER, Mr. GALLAGHER, and Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 564: Mr. CLAY, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 582: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PITTENGER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. YODER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. BARTON, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. RAMER.

H.R. 586: Mr. BRAT, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 589: Mr. VEASEY, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.J. Res. 27: Ms. FOXX, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. HARRIS.

H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. NEAL and Mr. TIBERI.

H. Res. 28: Mr. PANETTA, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BEYER, and Ms. GABBARD.

H. Res. 31: Mrs. TORRES, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H. Res. 46: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. BRADY

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 7 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. GOODLATTE

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Judiciary in H.R. 7 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. WALDEN

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in H.R. 7 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we sing of Your steadfast love and proclaim Your faithfulness to all generations.

Today, strengthen our Senators to walk in the light of Your countenance. Abide with them so that Your wisdom will influence each decision they make. Lead them around the pitfalls that bring ruin, as You empower them to glorify You in all they think, say, and do. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts be acceptable to You. Lord, purge our lawmakers of self and fill them with Your peace and poise.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, President Trump gave his first major address to the Nation. The week before, President Obama gave his last. These are different men. They come from different parties, but their speeches were more similar than you might think, and there were some common themes: The world is dangerous, our economy isn't living up to its potential, Americans are divided, worried about their futures and don't feel like Washington is listening.

Here is one quote:

> Too many families, in inner cities and in rural counties, have been left behind—the laid-off factory worker; the waitress or health care worker who's just barely getting by and struggling to pay the bills—convinced that the game is fixed against them, that their government only serves the interest of the powerful—that's a recipe for more cynicism and polarization in our politics.

That was former President Obama at the end of his term. It is obvious the situation today for many families simply isn't sustainable. As my friend the Democratic leader said in his speech on inauguration day, ''We live in a challenging and tumultuous time.'' Our economy, he cautioned, leaves ''too many behind.'' Our politics, he warned, is ''consumed by rancor,'' and we face threats ''foreign and domestic.''

Americans are reeling after 8 years of grand promises and diminished dreams, leftwing experiments and heavy-handed overreach. Small businesses are literally drowning in regulations, bigger employers, as well. College graduates are struggling to make it and too often simply move back in with their parents. The middle class feels under assault, as kitchen tables pile ever higher with health care bills, energy bills, and paychecks that fail to keep pace. Americans feel like they don't have a say in what is happening either.

So let us not underestimate the challenges President Trump is inheriting. They are indeed formidable. There is a lot to fix, but we can move forward if we work together. The first thing we have to do is move beyond this us-and-them mentality that has so often characterized the last 8 years. Our goal should be to give confidence to everyone, regardless of race, religion or income, regardless of where someone lives or whom they voted for. We are all in this together. We rise and fall as one.

When I applied for the job of majority leader, I vowed to open up the Senate for a reason. I thought it would give more Americans a voice again. I thought it would give both sides skin in the game again. I thought it would bring us closer to durable solutions, and it has—on education, on transportation, on the fight against cancer, on so many other issues we passed meaningful legislation that can positively impact millions. The way we did it was simple—really simple, actually. We set the slogans aside. We listened to each other. We listened in good faith. We kept our focus where it truly belonged, on areas where both sides can agree. Wouldn't you know it, it turns out we actually agreed on a lot. It turns out we all want to give our kids a better future, turns out we all want better roads and infrastructure, turns out we all want a country that is healthy. It seems obvious, but we can forget these things in the midst of a divisive campaign. We can get lost in the politics and lose sight of our common humanity.

The campaign is over. The time for governing is upon us, and we face huge challenges. Many of these issues President Obama sought to solve. Sometimes his policies moved us forward. More often, they moved us backward or created new problems altogether. This is not an attack on the sincerity of his aims. It is a critique of the efficacy of his means.

REPEALING AND REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we have seen quite clearly over the last 8 years which policies do not work. We now have the opportunity to try policies that can work. ObamaCare offers a great example. Democrats came into office in 2009 with a promise to unify the country and big majorities that allowed them to ignore half of it. They

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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made their choice with partisan, highly ideological laws like ObamaCare that divided us further—and often made things worse. We have seen how ObamaCare, in particular, has hurt the middle class. Choices are dwindling, costs are skyrocketing, and too many middle-class families don't know how much more they can sustain.

This is why we promise to repeal and replace ObamaCare, and this is why we will meet our responsibility to do so. ObamaCare came into this world on a party-line vote and a flurry of Executive actions, and it can leave the same way. What repeal presents is a fresh canvas where we can start over with durable, lasting reforms that both parties—if they choose to engage—can take credit for.

I hope our Democratic friends choose to engage. I hope they join in the hard work of improving health care for the American people because, let us remember, this should not be about winning or losing. It isn't about scoring points. It is about replacing a law that doesn't work with reforms that can. It is as simple as that. You can hardly accuse President Trump of being a rigid ideologue. He is interested in health care that actually works. Americans are interested in health care that actually works. All of us are.

So we can work together to finally solve big problems like ObamaCare or we can continue to bludgeon each other election after election. Our Democratic friends can crank the faux outrage machine up to 10, claim Republicans are motivated by some desire to make America sick, and get right back to the Hatfield-and-McCoy routine, but that will not solve the problem or move us forward. The moment calls for something more.

The question now is whether we have the courage to begin binding our national wounds. We can fight about the things that divide us forever or we can take a moment to finally move forward as one country.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. One way to begin moving forward is by proceeding with confirmations without delay, especially when it comes to key national and economic security nominees.

Tonight we will vote on the nomination of MIKE POMPEO to be Director of the CIA. He enjoys overwhelming support to be confirmed, just as we know that many other Cabinet nominees command sufficient support as well. So let us confirm them now and never forget the way Republicans worked with the administration of former President Obama to confirm seven members of his Cabinet the day he took office and nearly his entire Cabinet within 2 weeks.

Both parties appear to agree that our economy, our health care, and our politics need fixing so let us get down to fixing them. Let us join hands and move forward. The American people are ready for solutions, and after 8 long years, they are ready for Democrats to work with Republicans to deliver them.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would like to discuss five topics this afternoon: the President's remarks this weekend and the lack of Republican reaction to them, his Executive order on Friday about mortgage rates, the continuing nominations process here, the President's withdrawal from TPP, and the Republican alternative to the Affordable Care Act that was announced this morning.

First, the need for Republicans to speak out when President Trump engages in the kind of rhetoric he engaged in this weekend. The first few days of the new administration are traditionally a time for an incoming President to call for unity and to try and bring the country together. Instead, President Trump kicked off a bizarre first weekend in office that alternated between braggadocio and furor. The President quarreled over the size of inaugural crowds, bragged about his election victory in a speech at CIA headquarters, with a wall commemorating fallen American intelligence officers behind him, and then sent his Press Secretary out to hold an emergency briefing to present ''alternative facts,'' as one of President Trump's advisers described them yesterday, about the size of the crowds again.

Whatever your politics, in order to debate, argue, compromise, and get things done for the American people, we have to be able to agree on a base line of facts. Facts aren't partisan. They don't have alternatives. The alternative to fact is fiction. If this Presidency is going to be based on ignoring the facts on the ground, we are going to have huge problems. It is not that important when you are talking about the number of people who attended an inauguration, but what about the facts if Russia is doing something that is very bad or something terrible is happening to our economy or something else? If the Presidency looks away from the real facts, we have trouble. You cannot govern a country like that.

So if the White House is ignoring the facts on the ground and is willing to make up ''alternative facts'' about crowd size, what else are they willing to stretch the truth about? National security? What Vladimir Putin is up to? The implications are terrifying.

A White House that presents alternative facts needs to be called out for doing so by both parties. The folks who can really help rein in the President are the members of his own party who have a special responsibility to do so, but they have been silent, totally silent when President Trump has been saying and doing things they know are wrong. They should be speaking out for the good of the country.

I urge my friends on the other side of the aisle to help us hold the President and his White House accountable for the truth; otherwise this country is going to have a lot of trouble. Whether you are a Democrat, Republican, liberal or conservative, you cannot ignore the facts and govern and move the country forward.

MORTGAGE RATES

Mr. SCHUMER. Second, I want to address again the President's Executive action on Friday that would make it harder for Americans to afford mortgages. President Trump said in his inaugural address that ''for too long a small group in our Nation's Capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost.'' He promised to combat that trend, but only 1 hour later—1 hour after that speech—in one of his first acts as President, President Trump made it harder for average Americans to afford a mortgage by reversing a recent decision by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to reduce annual insurance premiums that many borrowers pay, saving homeowners about $500 a year. These are young families just starting out. They want part of the American dream—a home. There is no need to raise their mortgage rates, which is what was done 1 hour after those populist words were delivered on the steps of the Capitol. Yes, it only took 1 hour for those populist words delivered on the steps of the Capitol to ring hollow. Actions speak louder than words.

So I will just say this. If Dr. Carson wants to earn my support for his nomination to run HUD, he ought to reverse the President's decision and reinstate the policy that makes mortgages more affordable for working Americans.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Third, on nominations, the evidence continues to mount that our Republican friends are trying to ram through the President's Cabinet nominations without a fair and complete vetting process. Totally different, I would say to my good friend the majority leader, than what happened when President Obama took office. As I said, our constitutional duty to advise and consent does not mean ramming through nominees. Here are three instances, just new ones. They pile up. Secretary of State nominee Rex Tillerson did not adequately respond to our questions for the record, and a number of Democrats still await more complete responses. Secretary of Education nominee Betsy DeVos refused to return to the HELP Committee now that her ethics paperwork is in, even though her ethics agreement gains her

the ability to retain interest in companies that will be directly affected by the policies of the Department of Education. Representative PRICE, the nominee for HHS, refused to meet with several members of the committee before his nomination is scheduled for a vote.

This is not how nominations should go. Now, I know—with a swamped Cabinet of bankers, billionaires, more wealth, more potential conflicts of interest, more positions way far over from what the American people want—why our Republican colleagues want to rush these nominees through. But let me reiterate that they will have tremendous power over the lives of average Americans. A few extra days to examine and explore what they believe to make sure that they don't have conflicts of interest—who wouldn't be for that, unless they don't want the facts to come out?

So we are not stalling nominations. This isn't sport. This is serious stuff. We have genuine concerns about the qualifications and ethical standards of these nominees, and we are going to continue to seek an open, transparent, and thorough vetting process for the President's Cabinet. These folks are going to be in power for 4 years, maybe. Then they deserve a few days of careful vetting. They should not be all rushed in a day, with hurried debate, hurrying them through in the dark of night—no way. We are going to use whatever abilities we have here to make sure that doesn't happen.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Mr. SCHUMER. Fourth, on the Executive action that the President will be withdrawing the United States from the TPP, or the Trans-Pacific Partnership, as you know, my views on trade are probably closer to President Trump's than they were to President Obama and President Bush. I opposed NAFTA and TPP. But the fact that the President announced with fanfare that he will be withdrawing the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership is not news. The Trans-Pacific Partnership was dead long ago, before President Trump took office. That is why Leader MCCONNELL didn't bring it up on the floor in the lameduck session. It didn't have the votes and was even further away from getting votes in the Senate. It was over.

We await real action on trade, one of the President's signature campaign issues. Now, what President Trump said in his campaign over and over was that, on his first day as President, he would label China a currency manipulator. That hasn't happened. Even though China is letting their currency float at the moment, you can be sure they will return to manipulating their currency—hurting our exports, helping them unfairly compete with American jobs and businesses—as soon as it is in their best interest to do so.

I worked, frankly, with the nominee for Attorney General, JEFF SESSIONS, and with many others to try and get both President Bush and President Obama to label China a currency manipulator. It didn't happen, unfortunately. But President Trump promised that he was going to do it on his first day in office, and it has not happened. If President Trump wants to send a shot across the bow that he is getting serious on trade, addressing the currency issue would have been a lot more effective than a meaningless and redundant Executive order on the TPP.

While we are on the subject of trade, I remind the President of the two simple rules he laid out in his inaugural address: buy American and hire American—two rules that his current businesses don't follow. Trump shirts and ties are made in China; Trump furniture is made in Turkey. While he is importuning others to ''make it in America''—I don't disagree with that—he should start by demanding it of his own businesses. How can he expect others to do something that he is not doing? He wants the automobile makers to make cars in America. So do I. Then he ought to stop making his ties in China and his furniture in Turkey. He ought to set a good example. Until he totally and completely divests himself from his businesses, which is the right thing to do, he ought to start following the rules himself that he has laid out for the country.

REPUBLICAN ALTERNATIVE TO THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, this morning, two of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Senator from Maine and the Senator from Louisiana, introduced a proposal purporting to be a Republican alternative to the Affordable Care Act. While I sympathize with my two colleagues, whom I respect a great deal and who understand that repeal without replace would be devastating for our country, their proposal would create chaos, not affordable care for millions of Americans. It is much like the vague Executive order issued by the President on Friday that my friend, the Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, called ''confusing.''

Their proposal today illustrates the dilemma that both the Republicans and the White House are in. It is nearly impossible to keep the benefits of the Affordable Care Act without keeping the whole thing. There is an easier way out of the pickle our Republican friends have created for themselves. Republicans can and should stop repeal plans, which are disruptive, and work with Democrats to improve, not gut, the Affordable Care Act and health care system for all Americans.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the nomination of MIKE POMPEO to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of MIKE POMPEO, of Kansas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 6 hours of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The majority whip is recognized.

WELCOMING A NEW DAY IN THE COUNTRY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I had a chance to listen to our friend, the Democratic leader, and it is becoming clearer exactly what his strategy is for dealing with the aftermath of the November 8 election, in which Republicans retained the majority in both Houses of Congress and picked up the White House to boot. I realize it was a shock to our Democratic friends—the election that occurred on November 8 and the verdict of the American people, given the choices they were presented. What is becoming increasingly clear is that the Democratic leader, the Senator from New York, believes that Democrats and the country are better served by being an opposition party—in other words, opposed to everything that is proposed by either the President or anybody on this side of the aisle.

Rather than working together with us to try to build consensus, to try to address the challenges that face the country, what they are going to do is to sit back and enjoy the failure—which is what they are hoping and praying for—when we try to do this alone. We know our system is built on bipartisan cooperation and consensus building, and I have to tell my friend, the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, that I doubt his party's political prospects are going to improve as long as people see them as a restoration of the status quo at a time when they voted for change. Rather than working together to find solutions to the challenges that face our country, they have decided to sit back, drag their heels, oppose, and say no to each and every constructive solution offered by either the White House or this side of the aisle. I really do hope they decide that this is a recipe for political failure, continuing to wander in the political wilderness.

At a time when the voters voted for change, they are arguing for a restoration of the status quo—the direction that the country, the majority of voters, and certainly those whose votes are reflected in the Electoral College felt was a wrong direction for our country.

So I believe that most Americans greeted the peaceful transfer of power

as reflected by the inaugural ceremonies of last Friday with relief and welcomed a new day in the country.

My wife and I had the chance to attend those inauguration ceremonies. Let me first say to President Trump, the First Lady, and his family, as they start this journey leading the Nation, that I wish you well and offer my help, because I believe if President Trump succeeds and if his administration succeeds, then there is a better chance that the country will succeed, and it is not going to happen by opposing each and every idea of the administration, which our Democratic colleagues seem bound and determined to do, being seen as merely obstructionist and being naysayers rather than constructive solution finders for the problems that confront the country. I am very hopeful about what the future holds, and I look forward to working with the new President in the years ahead to strengthen our country.

One obvious way all of us can support this peaceful transition of power, which is the hallmark of our democracy, is by making sure that President Trump has the counsel and advice of the men and women he has chosen to serve with him in his Cabinet. Our Democratic colleagues at one point want to criticize the President for not making a smoother transition, while enjoying every difficulty encountered, at the same time by denying him the Cabinet that he has chosen to serve with him to lead the country.

We have said it before, but it bears repetition. On January 20, 2009, when President Obama was sworn into office, people on this side of the aisle weren't necessarily happy with the electoral outcome. Our preferred candidate did not win, but that didn't mean we obstructed President Obama's choice for his Cabinet. Indeed, we agreed to seven Cabinet members being approved on the first day that President Obama took office, on January 20, 2009.

Well, all of these positions are important and are necessary to make the transition of power in our democracy as smooth as possible. Posts such as Secretary of Defense and Homeland Security and the CIA Director, which we will be voting on later today, are particularly critical, given the national security responsibilities associated with them.

While I am glad we confirmed General Mattis and General Kelly on Friday, we should have voted on the nomination of Congressman MIKE POMPEO to head the Central Intelligence Agency.

MIKE POMPEO is well qualified for this position as CIA Director, but unfortunately some of our colleagues want to slow-walk his nomination. How is it that 89 Members could vote to proceed to confirm his nomination for today last Friday but still they denied us the opportunity for an up-or-down vote last Friday, which we should have had?

Our colleague from Oregon said that he wanted some debate during the light of day. Well, we were willing to stay as late, or into the weekend, as we needed to in order to get Congressman POMPEO confirmed, but, no, he wanted to delay it until today, so presumably there would be less competition for airtime on the evening news. I can't think of another reason he would have delayed that confirmation.

I just want to remind our colleagues that our country continues to face incredible threats, and they are not hitting the pause button. Instead, it is possible that some of our foes could try to test the resolve of President Trump and his new Cabinet during this period of transition, where everybody recognizes this is a period of vulnerability for the United States.

I am reminded of a sobering quote from the Director of National Intelligence during a hearing in 2016. Former Director Clapper, who served our intelligence community for more than half a century, testified: ''In my 50-plus years in the intelligence business,'' he said, ''I cannot recall a more diverse array of challenges and crises than we confront today.'' That is the former Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, who spent more than half a century in the intelligence community.

So with that in mind, you would think that we could all agree that the President needs his national security Cabinet at his side, particularly his CIA Director, a Cabinet position integral to keeping our country safe. That is why, in my view, we must confirm Congressman POMPEO as the next Director of the Central Intelligence Agency as soon as possible.

For those who don't know MIKE well, he served in Congress for several years, including as a member of the House Intelligence Committee. And I have no doubt, as Director, he will do all he can to make sure that those serving in the intelligence community have the tools and the respect they need and deserve to keep America safe.

So we need to get this done and to get this done without further delay. Let's not keep the President of the United States from his team, a team that could help him better serve and better protect the people of this country.

And, even more, we need to have our Democratic colleagues recognize that the election is over. The votes have been counted. President Trump has been sworn into office. So we need to end the electioneering that has succeeded all of their activities since November 8. They haven't stopped the campaign.

The campaign is over. The voters have spoken. And we need to get busy governing on behalf of all the American people.

Some of the comments that were made on the floor last week by Senator WYDEN from Oregon—when he objected to voting on the nomination of Congressman POMPEO, he raised the issue of surveillance programs and referred to the so-called 215 program that was designed to collect metadata, but not content, of foreign nationals. He referred to the USA FREEDOM Act, which Congress passed and which replaced the old 215 program with a new approach. But one thing he overlooked is that both the Senator from Oregon and I voted for final passage of the USA FREEDOM Act, as did Congressman POMPEO. They voted for the same piece of legislation, yet the Senator from Oregon wants to take the new CIA Director to task for apparently having some divergent views from his own, when they both voted for the same reforms in the USA FREEDOM Act. That is why it seems so disingenuous when he suggests on the floor, as he has done, that Congressman POMPEO does not believe that there are any legal boundaries for surveillance programs. Indeed, in the Intelligence Committee last week, Congressman POMPEO, during his open hearing, said he would abide by the law of the land, as I am sure he will, and as we all must.

Surely the Senator from Oregon does not think that support for expanding access to certain metadata is grounds for opposing the nominee. In fact, 59 Members of the Senate and a majority of the Senate's Intelligence Committee last year voted to make clear that the government should be able to access Internet metadata with the use of national security letters.

Just to be clear, we are not talking about content. We are not talking about private information that is subject to a reasonable expectation of privacy under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. When the government wants access to private information, subject to a reasonable expectation of privacy, it requires a search warrant, along with establishing probable cause to believe that a crime or threat is present.

So it is a little disingenuous to be arguing about metadata, which is not content, which is not protected by the Fourth Amendment, which doesn't require a search warrant, as a reason to object to Congressman POMPEO's nomination as CIA Director. Indeed, as I pointed out, the Senator from Oregon and Congressman POMPEO and I all voted for legislation that he believes addressed the concerns he had with the previous metadata collection program.

Then there is the detention and interrogation policies of the U.S. Government post-9/11. It is time to turn the page on this chapter of the CIA's history. We need to focus now on how to defeat the threats of today and tomorrow, not relitigate the battles of yesterday.

But, to be clear, Senator JEFF SESSIONS, the President's choice for Attorney General, has made clear that the enhanced interrogation policies that were used with the approval of the Office of Legal Counsel and the authorities during the Bush administration no longer would be permissible because

the Army Field Manual is now the law of the land. Congressman POMPEO voted for the legislation that made that change to Federal law, and he has pledged to follow it. So I am not sure what more we can ask of a nominee.

Finally, later today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will vote on the nomination of Rex Tillerson, President Trump's nominee to serve as the next Secretary of State. I have known Mr. Tillerson for a number of years now. Over time, I have come to admire and respect him for many reasons. He has proven over a decades-long career in the top echelons of a large, global company that he has what it takes to represent not the shareholders that he has been representing but the American people throughout the world in the most sensitive diplomatic and international matters you can imagine. And, most of all, he has proved time and again that he is a man of strong conviction and character.

I have confidence that Mr. Tillerson will help the United States regain our leadership role in the world by unapologetically supporting our allies and our friends while keeping a check on our adversaries. He is, simply stated, the right man to lead our State Department, and I hope that the committee supports his nomination and that the full Senate votes to confirm him soon.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, before my friend, the Senator from Texas, leaves, I am sure he understands that I am rising now in support of the nomination of Congressman MIKE POMPEO to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. But before I speak on the nominee, I do want to take a moment to address the criticism that has been leveled against my colleagues who asked for time to debate the nomination.

As Members of the U.S. Senate, we are responsible to the American people to make measured, thoughtful decisions. I will support this nomination, but, again, I fully respect the right of my colleagues to ask for time to debate the nomination on its merits. I know Senator WYDEN and others will be coming to the floor later today to address their issues.

To be clear at the outset, I do not agree with some of the views that Congressman POMPEO has expressed, and our personal and political views are wildly divergent. While Congressman POMPEO and I disagree on many issues, I believe he can be an effective leader of the CIA.

In our private discussions, and in the open and closed hearings, he has convinced me that he will follow the law banning torture. And let me be clear. As the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, I will oppose any effort to change law or policy to once again torture detainees, and I will keep a careful watch to ensure that no one ever tries to do so again.

I have also received public and private assurances from Congressman POMPEO that he will accurately represent the unvarnished views of the analysts and folks who work for the CIA and that he will relay those views no matter what the President or others want to hear.

One of the most important jobs of the Intelligence Committee is speaking truth to power.

Congressman POMPEO has also given me assurances that he will support those who work for the CIA and not discriminate against anyone based on their personal views and, not in the least, that he will cooperate with Congress, particularly as we look into Russia's efforts to interfere with our election system.

I heard my friend, the Senator from Texas, call out the former Director of National Intelligence, General Clapper, who has over 50 years in the intelligence business. And again, Mr. Clapper, along with all the other leaders of the intelligence community, basically has said that the Russian efforts to interfere in our elections in this past year were unprecedented.

We all know that President Trump has said some unacceptable things about the intelligence community, accusing them of leaks and of politicizing intelligence. Those of us who serve on the Select Committee on Intelligence—indeed, all of us in Congress, and I know I see my friend, the chairman of the committee, is sitting here on the floor—know that those attacks were unwarranted and should not be continued.

Congressman POMPEO did not participate in those attacks. Instead, throughout his tenure on the House Intelligence Committee, he showed respect for the intelligence community and worked to help make them even better.

His former colleagues and staff on the committee speak highly of him, even when they disagree.

Since he was nominated for the position of Director, Mr. POMPEO has spent a great deal of time at the CIA, working with the professionals there to understand his new role and the challenges he will face. We have had a number of conversations about that.

I have heard nothing that undermines my view that he will treat the employees of the Agency with the decency and fairness they deserve. And since most of those employees also happen to be my constituents, I will watch his actions very carefully.

Under Congressman POMPEO, the CIA will face many challenges. For example, the growth of open source information and big data will supplement and challenge traditional collection means. The Agency has the increasing need to operate in expeditionary and nontraditional environments, which will drive a need for changes in personnel, support, and training. The Agency will have and will need an increasingly diverse workforce which grew up online, which will create new opportunities but also new problems, for example, in establishing and maintaining cover. And if he is confirmed as Director, Mr. POMPEO will have to complete and sometimes tweak the reorganization begun by his predecessor, John Brennan.

While Congressman POMPEO and I disagree on many issues—and I suspect will disagree on many in the future—I support his nomination. I believe he can be a good leader for the CIA and will cooperate with the oversight of the SSCI and Congress.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to support MIKE POMPEO as the next Director of the CIA. And I thank my good friend, the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Senator WARNER, for his comments.

I will vary slightly from Senator WARNER in that I think the committee process provided every member of the committee a sufficient amount of time and opportunity to ask and to have answered every question that one can query a four-term Member of the U.S. Congress, a member of the House Intelligence Committee. Representative POMPEO made himself available to every member on the committee for a private meeting in their office, to the best of my knowledge, with no time limit.

Representative POMPEO came to an open hearing—which is unusual for our committee, but we do that with nominees—with no time limit. He made himself available to a closed committee hearing with no time limits. He answered over 150 questions for the record. Every member of the committee was given a tremendous opportunity to ask everything and to have it sufficiently answered by the nominee.

Maybe we won't explain what went through the mind of my colleague from Oregon to claim that he hadn't had sufficient time, that there were more questions that needed to be asked, and he made the statement in the light of day. Trust me, most all of the hearings we had and the meetings the members had were in the light of day—it was before 5 p.m. and after 8 a.m. in the morning.

In fact, there is a little game going on with Representative POMPEO, and I think it is similar to what we are going to see with other nominees. But let me tell you why this ought to be different. This ought to be different because of what is at stake. The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency should be somebody who is above reproach, somebody who understands that integrity is everything—not just with the Congress of the United States but with the employees of the CIA.

This is an agency that operates in the shadows. The President gave a speech there on Saturday, and behind him as a backdrop were the stars of individuals who have no names, who have sacrificed their lives without recognition on behalf of the future of this

country and the security of the United States. So it is absolutely crucial that we put somebody there who understands the value of the individuals but more importantly, the value of what they do for the security of America.

Representative POMPEO has been asked to lead what I believe is our Nation's most treasured asset. It is an agency that works in the shadows and requires a leader to be unwavering in integrity, who will ensure that the organization operates lawfully, ethically, and morally.

Just look at MIKE POMPEO's background. He went to West Point. He graduated No. 1 in his class. He left West Point and went to Harvard, where he became a lawyer, God bless him. He headed the Law Review at Harvard. But he didn't pursue a legal career; he started an aerospace business and became the CEO of an aerospace business. He has had multiple successes in life, yet he ended up in public service. He ended up in the House of Representatives.

When asked by the President on behalf of the security of the American people to serve at the Central Intelligence Agency, MIKE POMPEO said: Yes, sir, I will do it—only to come up here with a biography like I have read, with the trust and the integrity needed to fill the slot.

For Members of Congress to question whether this is the right fit, not because of the content of what he has accomplished but because they wanted to claim they hadn't had enough time—if we don't change this—and I say this in a bipartisan way—if we don't change this, good people will not respond ''yes'' when asked. If we continue to berate people who come here, because of things in their background that have no real, rational reason for exploration as to whether they can sufficiently do the job, then America stands a chance to lose the best and the brightest, regardless of where they grew up, regardless of the color of their skin, and regardless of their or their family's success. I say that to my colleagues in the hope that we will back off before we have done everlasting damage to our possibilities to get the right people here.

Representative POMPEO has honorably and energetically represented the people of the Fourth District in Kansas for three terms. He is on the House Intelligence Committee. House or Senate, I can't think of a Member of Congress who has traveled more around the world and spent more time at the CIA understanding the ins and outs of what they do, how they do it, and why it is important to the American people and to the security of this country, than MIKE POMPEO. He is well versed on intelligence community operations, capabilities, and their authorities. He understands the nature of the threat we face here at home and abroad.

Some are going to question whether, in fact, his personal views that maybe there are events that will happen that will challenge Congress to change the laws are important. That is fine for him or me or for the President to question. The important thing is, How would he answer it if you applied it today? And his answer: I would follow the law. I wouldn't circumvent the law, I would follow the law, and the law says this today. Short of Congress changing the law, I will follow the law as it is today.

I am not sure you can have more clarity in an answer than that.

MIKE POMPEO's intellectual rigor, honorable service, and outstanding judgment make him a natural fit for the CIA. As I said earlier, he is one of the most active, most engaged, and most charismatic individuals I have seen nominated in quite a while.

I ask my colleagues to support the nomination of MIKE POMPEO as next Director of the CIA. Do it expeditiously. Treat him fairly. Don't paint him as for something he is not. He is a colleague of ours who worked hard to be here. He has a background of proof as to why the Fourth District of Kansas made an incredibly wise decision, but more importantly, MIKE POMPEO is somebody who can contribute in a significant way to the security of the American people, the security of this country, and can, in fact, manage and lead at the CIA without concerns as to whether there is the integrity of the institution, without concerns as to whether he might step across the legal line of what is appropriate, that every day he is there following the rule of law in this country, someone whose primary focus is to make sure that we as policymakers and the President as Commander in Chief have the best intelligence possible to make decisions about America's future and about America's security.

I hope it won't take 6 hours today, but we are in the first hour of debate. I urge my colleagues to be brief but be thorough, but at the end of the day, make sure that tomorrow morning the CIA has permanent leadership and not acting leadership.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

(The remarks of Mr. CASSIDY and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 191 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I understand the order was for the distinguished senior Senator from Oregon to be recognized next.

Madam President, I see the distinguished Senator from Oregon on the floor. I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for 5 minutes and then yield to the Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Tonight, the Senate will vote on the President's nominee to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. As I said on Friday, I do not believe the Senate should rush to confirm such a critical position, without the opportunity for debate or discussion. We are having that debate today, and that is why on Friday, I supported a motion to proceed to this nomination.

Our intelligence agencies have an enormous task ahead. The challenges they face range from state-sponsored information warfare to countering violent extremists around the world. Among those who will lead these efforts will be the next Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The importance of the CIA cannot be overstated. Now, perhaps more than ever, we need a Director who will manage the Agency with the full confidence of the American people.

This confidence is based not only on a future Director's ability to comprehend security challenges, but on his or her ability to safeguard the privacy and civil liberties of all Americans and to uphold and advance United States leadership in protecting human rights.

I have serious concerns with President Trump's nominee to lead the CIA. Congressman POMPEO has called for the re-establishment of the bulk collection of Americans' phone records, and has even argued that the intelligence community should combine that metadata ''with publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a comprehensive, searchable database.'' He went on to say that ''[l]egal and bureaucratic impediments to surveillance should be removed.''

But Congress outright rejected the bulk collection of Americans' records when it passed the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015 on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis—the very program that Congressman POMPEO said that he wants to bring back.

During his testimony last week, Congressman POMPEO attempted to diffuse this and other questions about his more alarming positions by affirming his appreciation of the supremacy of law. It sounded to me, like the tried and true confirmation conversion. I appreciate that he testified that he understands the responsibility of a Director to uphold the Constitution and the laws passed by Congress.

But I remain deeply concerned that he advocated for such dangerous measures in the first place. And I am concerned that he will push to remove ''legal and bureaucratic impediments to surveillance''—just as he said last year.

We face grave threats from around the world, whether from Russia, from ISIS, or other adversaries. The Director of the CIA must be trusted by all Americans to protect us from these threats, but also to protect our nation's core values.

I don't question Congressman POMPEO's loyalty to our nation. I do question his stated beliefs that immediate security concerns can be used as a justification for eroding the fundamental rights of all Americans. For

these reasons, I cannot support his nomination.

I thank the distinguished senior Senator from Oregon for letting me take this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I want to thank Senator LEAHY, particularly because, once again, on this issue he showed there was a path forward that was bipartisan. The senior Senator from Vermont got together with our colleague from Utah, Senator LEE, and the two of them set out from the get-go to try to find common ground.

I think most people didn't give us great odds. Senator LEAHY and I used to talk about how when we began the effort, being on the Intelligence Committee and the Judiciary Committee, a group of us could probably have met in a phone booth, but then, under Senator LEAHY's leadership, we began to pick up colleagues from both sides of the aisle.

The Obama administration, which we both remember, had reservations at the beginning. We said: Look, we can find a way. The intelligence community said to go forward with this, but this didn't happen by osmosis. It happened under the leadership of Senator LEAHY and Senator LEE, our colleague on the other side of the aisle. One of the reasons we feel so strongly, as the Senator from Vermont has stated, is that if we are not careful, particularly with this nomination, we could undo, we could unravel a lot of that good bipartisan work.

I know my colleague has a tight schedule, and I so appreciate his coming over and very much recognize that one of the reasons we are here is to make sure we don't undo the good bipartisan work that he has authored.

Madam President, today the Senate is doing something that doesn't happen often around here—having an open debate about the future of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Central Intelligence Agency, in my view, is an enormously important and valuable part of our government. It is staffed by thousands and thousands of patriotic Americans who make extraordinary sacrifices on our behalf. They work so hard to protect our country in so many ways Americans will never find out about. They give up their time. They give up their weekends, family vacations, and all kinds of things that would be scheduled that they would enjoy personally, and they give it up on 1 or 2 hours' worth of notice because they want to protect the security and the well-being of our Nation. The fact is, many at the CIA have risked their lives defending us and some have made the ultimate sacrifice with their lives.

When you talk about the CIA on the Senate floor, it is especially important to protect the people I have just mentioned and to protect what are called their sources and methods. Sources and methods are the secret means by which the CIA gets the information that is needed for our national security, and it needs to stay classified. While sources and methods need to stay classified, the debate about our laws and those who execute them is a public matter. The policies that guide what the CIA does in its important work—the debate about policies always has to be public. The nomination of a CIA Director is a rare and important chance to talk about what the nominee thinks those policies ought to be.

In the beginning, I am going to offer my guiding principle. Smart national security policies protect both our security and our liberty, and they recognize that security and liberty are not mutually exclusive; that it is possible to have both; that it is essential to have both. Nothing illustrates the need for policies that promote security and liberty more clearly than the issue of encryption, which we will be talking about—in my view—at length in this Congress as part of the intelligence debate.

Strong encryption protects Americans from foreign hackers, criminals, identity thieves, stalkers, and other bad actors. It is the key to protecting our cyber security. Yet there are some in government and some in the Congress who think it would make sense to require American companies to build backdoors into their products so the government can get access to that information. My own view is this would be an enormous mistake, a mistake from a security standpoint, a mistake from a liberty standpoint, and also very damaging to our companies—companies that produce jobs with good wages. I have been fighting against ill-advised encryption proposals because they would be bad for security for the reason I mentioned. It would be a big gift to foreign hackers and bad for liberty. The reality is, if we require our companies to build backdoors into their products, the first thing that is going to happen is all the companies overseas, where they will not have such rules, will benefit enormously. A lot of good-paying jobs—high-skill, high-wage jobs—would be at risk. I bring this up only by way of stressing how important it is that we get this right; that we advance policies that promote security and liberty and we recognize right at the get-go that they are not mutually exclusive.

With that in mind, we turn to the nomination of Congressman MIKE POMPEO to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. After consideration of his testimony and a review of his past statements—and response to written questions—I have concluded that he is the wrong man for the job. He has endorsed extreme policies that would fundamentally erode the liberties and freedoms of our people without making us safer. He has been unwilling to provide meaningful responses to my questions with respect to these views. When he has provided responses, they have often either been so vague or so contradictory that it is impossible to determine what his core beliefs are or what he might actually do if he is confirmed.

On issue after issue, the Congressman has taken two, three, or four positions, depending on when he says it and whom he is talking to. He has done this with surveillance, with torture, with Russia, and a number of other subjects. So now we are at the end of the confirmation process. There has been a hearing. I met with the nominee in private. We submitted two sets of questions, both before and after the hearing. Despite it all, it has been impossible to walk away with consistent answers on the Congressman's beliefs on how he would lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

Let me begin with surveillance. Just over a year ago, after the USA FREEDOM Act had become law, Congressman POMPEO wrote in an op-ed that Congress should pass a law reestablishing collection of all metadata. This was a reference to the program in which the government collected and kept the records of tens of millions of innocent Americans. When the American people found out about this program, they were rightly horrified and they rejected it, which was why—as we touched on this afternoon on a bipartisan basis—Congress abolished the program through the USA FREEDOM Act. That law got the government out of the business of collecting these millions of phone records on law-abiding people, and it did nothing to harm our security. For example, I am very proud that I was able to work in a bipartisan way to author a provision that allowed the government, in emergency circumstances, to get phone records immediately and then go back later and seek court approval. I wrote that provision to make sure that when the security of our great Nation was on the line, it would be possible for our national security officials to move immediately, without delay, to get the information that was needed. Congressman POMPEO himself voted for the USA FREEDOM Act before he turned around 8 months later and wrote that he wanted to reestablish this sweeping and unnecessary program. So understand the timeline. The Congressman talks about voting for the USA FREEDOM Act, but after he cast that vote, he came out in a widely circulated article in the Wall Street Journal for a proposal that really makes all the earlier collection of phone records about law-abiding people look like small potatoes. I am going to discuss that this afternoon.

The question really is, What does the Congressman believe? Does he stand by his vote to abolish the NSA phone records dragnet? Was that what he was suggesting when he brought up that vote during his hearing or does he stand by what he wrote in his major opinion article that came out well after the law he voted for? In response to questions, the Congressman wrote

that he believes the collection of tens of millions of Americans' phone records provided a significant tool for the intelligence community and that ''I have not changed my position.'' That sounds like an endorsement of the mass surveillance of phone records.

Again, in the hearing, the nominee said something else. Senator HEINRICH asked him whether he had been briefed on whether the current process—where the government collects phone records on an individual basis rather than in bulk from millions of Americans, even if they are not suspected of a crime—protects our Nation as well as the liberty of millions of innocent Americans. The Congressman is a member of the House Intelligence Committee so he has had the opportunity to be briefed on this topic, but here is his response to Senator HEINRICH: ''Senator, I have not had a chance to have a complete briefing on that, but I can say I have not heard anything that suggests that there is a need for change today.'' In other words, in just a matter of days, Congressman POMPEO has taken the position, first, that the bulk collection of American phone records was a significant tool and that it should be reestablished, and, second, while testifying to the committee, that he has no basis on which to believe that is necessary. That is such a head scratcher, I just don't know how to go about squaring these truly conflicting statements.

What troubles me especially is if the Congressman were to be confirmed as CIA Director, the doors would close and he would operate in secret. Yet Americans do not know which position he would take in running the CIA. The American people have no idea how Congressman POMPEO would advise the President and his national security team on what is truly necessary to protect the Nation.

Phone records are not the only communication records we need to be concerned about. Until a few years ago, the NSA also ran a program in which millions of Americans' email records were collected. Since the Congressman wrote that he wanted to reestablish collecting all of the metadata, I asked him whether he would support the resumption of that program as well and whether he believed that millions of Americans' email records should be combined with millions of American phone records. He could have said no. He could have clarified that he was only talking about phone records. Instead, he ducked taking a position. In fact, he even indicated that he would be open to including email records in his new database. His exact words were: ''If I am confirmed and agency officials inform me that they believe the current programs and legal framework are insufficient to protect the country, I would make appropriate recommendations for any needed changes to laws and regulations.''

What is especially troubling about this is that the bulk email program was discontinued because it wasn't effective. I spent a lot of time pressing intelligence officials to give us some evidence that you had to go out and collect all of these email records from law-abiding Americans. In the end, the Agency decided to look at it, and they came to the same conclusion I did; that it wasn't needed. That is not a judgment about whether the program violated Americans' privacy because it definitely did that. The NSA determined that—in its words, not mine—the program did not meet their ''operational expectations.'' This is public information. All the details are available to the House Intelligence Committee on which the Congressman sits. This should have been an easy answer for the nominee, but he refused to rule out the inclusion of millions of Americans' email records—records the NSA has said it doesn't need—in what would be his idea of a massive new government database.

The collection of phone and email records of millions of innocent Americans is small potatoes compared to what the nominee wrote next. His proposal was to combine all of the communications metadata, and these are his words, with ''publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a comprehensive searchable data base.'' This is far bigger and more encompassing than any such data collection program that the Bush-Cheney administration ever imagined.

I have been a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee since before 9/11. I have been in a lot of debates about the appropriate scope of government surveillance. I have never heard ever—not from anyone—an idea so extreme, so overarching, and so intrusive on Americans' privacy. I wanted to give the Congressman the opportunity to explain what he was actually proposing. So during the confirmation hearing—and later in what are questions that are submitted to him—I tried to find out what his database would include and what, if anything, it wouldn't include. I could not get substantive answers. What we basically got was a big word salad with a liberal helping of words that just kind of skirted the issue. My folks would call them weasel words.

The Congressman did mention social media in his answers. But it is one thing for the government to read the social media postings of Americans because there is a specific reason to do so; it is something else entirely to create a giant government database of everyone's social media postings and to match that up with everyone's phone records. We asked where the nominee would draw the line. He wouldn't say.

Congressman POMPEO's vision of this vast government database doesn't stop, by the way, with social media. What he wrote in his responses to my questions was that he was ''generally'' referring to publicly available information on the Internet or other ''public databases.'' I will repeat that. He was generally talking about information already in the public domain. That raised the question of what else the nominee wanted to enter into a giant government database of information on millions of innocent Americans. For example, did he have in mind information on Americans that the government could obtain or purchase from third parties, such as data brokers who collect information on the purchasing history of our people? Imagine putting every American's purchases into a government database, along with their social media postings and all of their phone records.

After two rounds of submitted questions and a hearing, it was not clear what the Congressman meant when he referred to ''all metadata'' or how he defined ''publicly available financial and lifestyle information.'' What we do know for sure is that he wouldn't give us any real sense of what he wanted to do with this proposal. He was unwilling to talk about it.

The responses I got from the Congressman on this and other topics generally fell into three categories. The first was, I will do what is legal. The second one was, when it comes to Americans' privacy, that is the FBI's problem, not the CIA's. And third, as CIA Director, I won't do policy. I am going to briefly state why these are unacceptable answers.

First, I asked the Congressman if there were any boundaries to his proposed new, vast database on Americans. His response was, ''Of course there are boundaries; any collection and retention must be conducted in accordance with the Constitution, statutes, and applicable presidential directives.'' That is not a response. Just because the government may be able to legally obtain information on Americans on an individualized or limited basis doesn't necessarily make it legal, much less appropriate, to create this vast database with all kinds of information on law-abiding Americans. If you take his response to mean that the only boundaries are those established by law, then it is worth considering how the intelligence community has frequently interpreted the legal limits in which it operates: flexibly and in secret.

Even if we imagine that there are established legal boundaries that would rein in the Congressman's CIA, consider what he himself has said about those legal boundaries. He wrote in his op-ed—and these are his words, not mine—that ''legal and bureaucratic impediments to surveillance should be removed.'' It is also significant that throughout his response to questions, he refers to CIA policies, procedures, and regulations. As CIA Director, he would be in a position to change those.

It seems to me that the Congressman can't have it both ways—he can't say he is bound only by legal restrictions and avoid saying what he thinks those restrictions should be.

The nominee's second way to avoid answering these questions was by arguing that concerns about the privacy of

Americans are the business of the FBI, not the CIA. That is just not the case. There is a long and unfortunate history related to the CIA and domestic intelligence, which the Church Committee documented in the 1970s. I will be clear—I don't believe the CIA is up to anything like this today, but the possibility of returning to those days is certainly a possibility if the Director of the CIA takes the flexible approach to the rules that are intended to keep the CIA out of the lives of American citizens. I will give just a few examples.

On January 3, the Director of National Intelligence put out new procedures about the distribution within the intelligence community of what is called raw signals intelligence. These are the actual content of communications, as opposed to an analyst's report about these communications. According to the new procedures, these communications can be provided to the CIA if the CIA Director asks for them and explains to the NSA why the CIA needs them.

Here is why this matters to the privacy of Americans: When raw communications are distributed to the CIA, they include the communications of Americans that have been sucked up in the overall collection. So at this point, the CIA would have these communications. According to the new procedures, in some instances the Director of the CIA can approve CIA searches of that data for the communications of Americans. The Director of the CIA can also approve the use of Americans' communications. The question is, How would the Congressman exercise these authorities? We just don't know.

Another example would be the CIA's own procedures for dealing with information on Americans. Last week, the CIA updated these procedures in a 41-page public document. They covered, for example, the CIA's collection of vast amounts of information that includes the communications of or information about Americans—what can be collected by the CIA, what can be kept by the CIA, what can be distributed by the CIA. The new procedures also cover when CIA officers are required and when they are not required to identify themselves when participating in organizations in our country.

Just reading these procedures makes it clear that the CIA's activities bump up against the liberties of Americans all the time. That is why the regulations exist. But if a CIA Director has extreme views with regard to the liberties and freedoms of our people, that could very well be reflected in how the Agency implements these procedures or whether they get rewritten. How would the Congressman apply these rules? Would he propose new ones to make it easier for the CIA to look at more information about Americans? Again, we just don't know.

One thing is clear: The views of the CIA Director about the liberties and freedoms of Americans are just as relevant as those of the FBI Director.

The nominee's third effort to avoid discussing his position was to say that as the CIA Director, he wouldn't be responsible for policy. As he asserted in his opening statement at the hearing, he would ''change roles from policymaker to information provider.'' But anyone who is familiar with the role of the CIA Director knows that is just not what happens at the Agency.

First, the CIA Director does far more than deliver analysis to government officials. Collection priorities, methods of collection, relationships with foreign services, covert action, and many other responsibilities of the office are policy matters.

In addition, the CIA Director and other leaders of the intelligence community are asked repeatedly what they think is necessary and appropriate to keep our Nation safe. At a moment of crisis, these questions are especially pressing. We now know what happens in those moments when leaders give wrong answers. After September 11, the Directors of the NSA and the CIA offered their views of what should be done. We all thought they had time stamps on them because we came back to look at them after the immediate crisis was over, but our country ended up for a fair amount of time with programs that ripped at the very fabric of our democracy. There were warrantless wiretappings and torture.

The Director of the CIA is a unique position. When someone is nominated to lead a department that operates more or less openly, at least the public can assess his or her performance, and at least a fully-informed Congress can respond when he or she implements wrongheaded policies. But the CIA Director operates in secret. What the public finds out is entirely up to the CIA and the administration.

When it comes to deciding whether this is the right person for the job, there is nothing for the public and most of the Congress to go on other than what the nominee has said and done before and during the confirmation process. Unless this is going to be a rare exception and the Congressman would be a historically transparent CIA Director—and there aren't any indications of that—then what we are talking about in this confirmation debate today and why I thought it was important to have a real debate today is that what we are talking about in terms of much of the future of the CIA and the person who heads it—this is a one-time shot for that discussion. That is why I don't consider the vetting process to be finished.

(Mr. MORAN assumed the Chair.)

On the topic of the proposed massive new database and on a range of other topics both classified and unclassified, the Congressman did not provide substantive responses, so I have resubmitted my questions to him.

Now, some—I heard this mentioned today—have said the Congressman answered every question. They claim that somehow we are stalling, that stalling is taking place for political reasons, so I want to be very specific about what I mean when I say the Senate has not gotten responsive answers.

The facts show that the nominee has gone to great lengths to dodge, evade, and in effect tiptoe around a significant number of the questions that were put to him. We held our hearing on January 12. I asked the Congressman about what information that he would put in his comprehensive, searchable database. I didn't get a meaningful response, so I said at the hearing that I would like the nominee to furnish in writing what limits, what safeguards, what railings would exist with regard to this massive new database, far more encompassing than the one the Congress voted to sideline.

The next day, I sent over specific questions. I asked him in writing, as I had at the hearing: What are the boundaries for collection on Americans who aren't connected to a specific investigation? This is fundamental. What are the boundaries on collecting information on Americans who aren't connected to a specific investigation? It is particularly relevant since the nominee proposed this vast and sweeping new database.

I wanted to know, and I believe the American people would like to know because, as I said at the beginning, I think the public wants security and liberty. That is what I am committed to doing. That is what we did in the debate about the FREEDOM Act, where we stopped collecting all of these phone records of law-abiding people, but I wrote the provision that increased government's authority in emergency situations.

People want to know: Are there any kind of limits and safeguards, particularly if you are proposing something brandnew, a centralized database, after the Congress voted to curtail something much more limited?

The Congressman responded by saying that publicly available information can be useful in stopping terrorist attacks and that publicly available information involves fewer privacy concerns compared to surveillance.

I agree on both counts. Nobody, no sensible person would dispute these matters.

The question which remains unanswered is whether publicly available information on every American should be gathered up into what the Congressman describes as a ''comprehensive, searchable database.''

Since I had trouble getting an answer at that point, I also sent a written question about whether—if information on an American is legally available to the government on an individualized or limited basis, does that make it legal or appropriate to compile it into a bulk, giant database?

The Congressman testified that the boundaries of his database of ''publicly available financial and lifestyle information'' were legal. That raised the question: Is this whole database, this huge, new database legal or not?

He responded: ''I have not consulted legal experts.''

That is it. That was his answer.

So, again, when you have this sweeping new proposal, far more encompassing than anything I have heard people talk about, the Congressman, when asked whether the database was even legal, said that he had not consulted legal experts.

Here is another question I submitted. I asked if his comprehensive database should include information from third parties, such as data brokers. And I think the distinguished Presiding Officer, who has a great interest in these issues in the private sector, knows about the possibilities of abuses with data brokers. I wanted to know whether this database was going to include this kind of information.

Here is the Congressman's response in full: ''I have not studied what information is available from third parties and the applicable legal restrictions on obtaining such information.''

That is it. Nothing more. He could have said, for example, that he wasn't contemplating including information from data brokers in this database. He could have elaborated on what he actually meant. He didn't do either. It was just more stonewalling.

Now, I want to make it clear. The question that I have asked—and I heard a comment about why would we be taking this time. The questions were prompted because of the Congressman's own words. He is the one who proposed a vast database on innocent Americans. He is the one who will not articulate the boundaries of what is a very extreme proposal. These are basic questions that are directly relevant to this nomination. They are questions that Americans need answered, and they go right to the heart of how, in the future, we will have smart national security policies that protect both our security and our liberty.

The American people thought after the USA FREEDOM Act was passed—this was before, as I mentioned, the Congressman's new idea, something vastly more involved. The public thought when the FREEDOM Act was passed that the government was out of the business of collecting millions and millions of phone records on law-abiding Americans. Now we are talking about a nominee to be CIA Director who not only wants to bring this back but proposes something that makes the collection of millions of phone records on law-abiding people look like nothing.

That is why I wanted this debate. That is why I wanted us to have a chance to talk about it in the light of day, rather than late Friday night in the middle of inauguration parties. I wanted the public to understand what the issues were and these questions I had about the Congressman's own words. That is what this debate is about: What is the Congressman really talking about with his own words?

When I receive meaningful answers to these and other questions, I will consider the confirmation process complete. Until then, I don't believe our work in reviewing the nominee and his views is done. That, in my view, is the only way to pin down a nominee who has taken multiple positions with regard to some of the most important issues.

By the way, I think it is worth noting, with respect to trying to get some guardrails and protections into the most sweeping new surveillance program I have ever heard of, that the Congressman said in his testimony to the committee: ''I take a back seat to no one with respect to protecting Americans' privacy.''

Now I want to turn to several other issues. I tried to get answers from the Congressman about the outsourcing of surveillance against Americans. During the campaign, the President invited the Russian Government to continue hacking operations against his political opponent. The President also said, with regard to Russian hacking, that he would ''love to have that power.'' That is his quote, not mine.

So the question I wanted answered is: What would happen if the Russians, or some other foreign entity, collected the communications of Americans and, instead of giving them to WikiLeaks, provided them directly to our government? This could be information about our political leaders, journalists, religious leaders, business people, typical innocent Americans.

At the hearing, the Congressman testified that it is not lawful to outsource collection that the Agency isn't authorized to conduct itself. That sounds like a reassuring statement to me. The problem is, we are in a world in which the President of the United States has already openly encouraged a foreign adversary to use its hacking capabilities to attack our democracy.

What if a foreign adversary does it again and provides the fruits of that hacking to the government without waiting for a specific invitation from the CIA? What happens then?

In response to questions, the nominee wrote that only in ''very limited circumstances'' would the collection of Americans' communications be so improper that it would be inappropriate for the CIA to receive, use, or disseminate them.

So I asked what those circumstances would be. The response was that it was ''highly fact-specific.''

The vagueness here also is very troubling, so I tried to follow up. What if the information came from an adversary, rather than an ally? Did it matter what the intent of the foreign partner was—to support our national security or further disrupt our democracy? Did it matter if the information was about Americans engaged in First Amendment-protected activities, rather than about terror suspects? What if the information provided to the government involved thousands or millions of U.S. persons? I received no substantive answer other than all of these issues were ''relevant.''

Other members of the committee and I asked other questions relating to the collection and use of information on law-abiding Americans. First, I asked the Congressman about section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, specifically about the government's backdoor searches of data for information on Americans.

He responded that the CIA can conduct these warrantless searches if they are ''reasonably likely to return foreign intelligence information.'' This is certainly potentially troublesome and is an issue that the Senate is going to need to take up when considering the reauthorization of that part of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Perhaps more concerning, however, was the Congressman's statement that when we are talking about collection outside of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the rules of what the CIA can access, query, use, and retain should be even more broad and more flexible. And I will just say, I don't know how you get much broader and more flexible than the standard that currently applies to section 702.

Then I asked the Congressman about encryption, and, frankly, I did because I had gotten the sense that maybe he held moderate positions, and, as I said earlier, I am very troubled about the possibility that American companies would be required to build back doors into their products and that strong encryption would be weakened. I think this is a massive gift to foreign hackers. I think it is a huge gift, by the way, to pedophiles because if you weaken strong encryption, you weaken that feature that parents use to make sure they are watching their child and their child is safe.

I think it is very important not to weaken strong encryption from a security standpoint, from a liberty standpoint. And I think it is just flatout nuts to do it to our companies because our companies wouldn't be able to compete with the companies overseas that would continue to rely on strong encryption to be able to assure that their customers' data was protected.

So I had kind of gotten the thought that the Congressman had moderate positions. I asked him about that. And all he would say was that it was a complicated issue, and he said that he might begin to form some judgments.

This is an issue that has been discussed extensively in the Congress. It has been discussed in this body. It has been discussed in the other body. There are Members of both the Senate and the House, high-ranking senior Members, who have a difference of opinion with me on encryption. They want to weaken strong encryption. They think this is what the government needs to get this data. I think that is a flawed view, but people can have differences of opinion. That is why we have our unique system of government; we have

real debates, unlike what goes on in most of the world.

But here is a topic that has been discussed extensively in Congress. And it was my hope that the nominee would at least have some sort of judgment about this issue and could express that to the American people prior to a confirmation vote.

Instead, what I got was: It is complicated. I think everybody understands that.

Now I would like to turn to the question of torture. I simply have not been reassured by the shifting statements about torture that the nominee has given, so I would like to walk through this.

I happen to share the views of our very, very widely respected and acclaimed senior Senator from Arizona that it is just not effective, and he makes the case more eloquently than I. But that is not what is at issue here specifically. It is about trying to sort out the nominee's shifting statements about torture.

As late as 2014, he cited ending the CIA's torture program as purported evidence that President Obama had refused to take counterterrorism seriously. That is a pretty extreme view. By then, even Members of Congress who had previously supported the program believed it was best left in the past, but not our nominee to head the CIA.

Now we come to this hearing when he emphasizes commitment to the 2015 law that limits interrogation techniques to those authorized by the Army Field Manual. That sounds pretty good, but a review of his responses to the committee's questions revealed more troubling views. For example, he was asked about his statements in 2014 and whether he believed the CIA's interrogation program should be resumed. He responded that he would have consultations about whether there should be ''changes to current interrogation or detention programs involving CIA.'' Understand the implications of that. He was asked: Should this interrogation program be resumed? And he was going to have consultations about whether there ought to be changes in it.

With respect to the Army Field Manual, he wrote that these consultations, including ''with experts at the Agency'' on ''whether the Army Field Manual uniform application is an impediment to gathering vital intelligence to protect the country or whether any rewrite of the Army Field Manual is needed,'' certainly suggest again that there are open questions with respect to the field manual and torture. The fact is that the Army Field Manual could be improved to further clarify, in my view, that the U.S. Government should rely on noncoercive techniques that are the most effective. The statute states clearly that revisions to the Army Field Manual cannot ''involve the use of threat or force.'' But given the Congressman's statements in support of torture, it is not clear that is what he has on his mind. Consistently, on this issue, there is a difference between what he says and the fine print when he is required to state his views about interrogation in writing. Moreover, the nominee is not just talking about changes in the Army Field Manual, he is expressing openness to ditching the whole thing, at least as far as the CIA is concerned.

The fundamental premise of the McCain-Feinstein legislation in 2015 was that the Army Field Manual would apply uniformly across the U.S. Government, including the Department of Defense and the CIA. So while he may have testified that McCain-Feinstein is the law, he plans on questioning whether the whole thing ought to be tossed out.

Who are the experts at the Agency he wants to ask? There are certainly CIA officers who understand the importance of uniform standards and recognize the effectiveness of noncoercive interrogation techniques. But if he is talking about going back to individuals associated with the CIA's torture program, everybody ought to be very apprehensive about what he is going to hear.

In other words, reading the nominee's response to written questions is very different than listening to his testimony. His written responses indicate both an openness to resuming the CIA's interrogation program and questions about whether the Army Field Manual should apply to the CIA.

I come back to that point. The nominee is a very skilled lawyer, and he has been involved in intelligence for quite some time, but I have been concerned that he has consistently said things that are different than his written responses with respect to this issue. Part of what concerns me about all this hedging is that the Congressman doesn't seem familiar with the broad consensus that torture, in addition to being contrary to our values, does not work. This is what was documented extensively in the Intelligence Committee's torture report—not just the 500-page summary but the 6,700-page full report. But there is a growing body of additional evidence.

For example, the role of interrogating high-level terrorist suspects in present years has been given to the High-value Detainee Interrogation Group, which does not torture. The Congressman was asked whether he believed this program was effective, a topic with which he should be familiar as a member of the committee. He said he hadn't studied the question. He was asked about their report last year that detailed how noncoercive interrogation techniques are more effective. He refused to give an opinion on this as well.

All of this is problematic because, as in the case of surveillance, the Congressman has not considered whether we can do without highly problematic programs at no cost to our security. Just as we have security and liberty, we can have smart security policies that maintain our national values.

His troubling views on torture were most apparent in the inflammatory statements made in December 2014, when the Intelligence Committee released the torture report. The nominee referred to criticism of the CIA torture program as a ''liberal game,'' as if this view hadn't also been expressed by some of the most conservative Members of Congress and dozens of retired U.S. generals and admirals.

Many Senators from both parties supported the release of that report. In my view, his statement was a direct attack on the patriotism of people who had a different view. The nominee said that the release of the report ''will ultimately cause Americans to be killed.'' The torture report was not some leak. The CIA engaged in what is called redaction, where they take out provisions that could put Americans at risk. They took out names, pseudonyms, and, in some cases, titles.

I asked the Congressman whether he thought the Agency had failed to protect Americans. He said he hadn't looked into it. In other words, he just asserted that the release of the report would cause Americans to be killed without having considered whether the CIA had adequately protected against that. When an intelligence program such as the CIA's torture program raises so many questions about our laws, our policies, and our fundamental values, the American people deserve to know about it. When the President of the United States has repeatedly advocated for torture, it is especially critical that it be a public debate based on facts.

If that can be done while protecting sources and methods, openness is an imperative. That is why the Congressman's statements about the release of the torture report are still so relevant. In my view, they call into question his commitment to the principles of transparency and accountability when our country needs both.

Finally, his responses to a number of other questions I proposed raised additional concerns about the lack of transparency. I asked him if he would commit to correct inaccurate public statements. He said that wouldn't always be possible, and it would be his ''bias'' to correct his own inaccurate statements.

I don't think that is good enough. As we saw in the case of the public testimony by the Director of National Intelligence about surveillance, when the American people learn that intelligence officials have not been straight with them, it fundamentally erodes the trust between the public and the government, and that is not good for anyone.

I also asked the Congressman whether, if a U.S. Ambassador tells the CIA to cease activities in his or her country, the Agency is obligated to comply. Despite a clear statute that establishes this authority, the nominee refused to

answer. In my view, this raises questions about whether the CIA is going to retain secret interpretations of the law. Without taking a lot of time, sources and methods have to be classified in secret, but the law ought to be public. Going back to secret laws, we saw that the phone records program would be a big mistake.

I will wrap up by mentioning the Congressman's shifting views on the intelligence community's assessment with regard to Russia and the U.S. election.

On January 3 he submitted responses to prehearing questions. At the time, then President-Elect Trump was still dismissing the intelligence community's assessment, including the October 7 statement from the Director of National Intelligence and Homeland Security that the Russian Government had interfered in our election. The nominee is a member of the House Intelligence Committee. So he had every opportunity to judge the assessment for himself. But when he was asked about the intelligence community's assessment by the committee, all he would say is that it was a ''serious assessment of attribution and charge against another country'' and that it ''should be taken seriously.'' That is it. He didn't say whether he agreed with the Director of National Intelligence or Homeland Security. In fact, he even defended the President-elect's dismissal of the intelligence community's assessment, saying that the ''context'' for the President-elect's statements was political criticism of him and the election. Whatever politics are going on have nothing to do with whether the intelligence community's assessments about Russia made by the Director of National Intelligence and made by the head of Homeland Security were or weren't accurate.

But then everything changed. On January 11, the President-elect said: ''As far as [the] hacking, I think it was Russia.'' The next day at our hearing, the nominee changed. He said the analysis was sound, but that was a position he could have taken before, when the President-elect didn't yet want to hear it.

We are headed into dangerous times. We need a CIA Director who is direct about his beliefs and his assessments. The Congressman's evolution on whether he agreed with the intelligence community's assessment on Russia and our election is just one of the problematic aspects of this nomination. Time and again, the nominee has taken multiple positions on the same issue, which is why I have given him a number of opportunities to explain where he stands.

But as I have explained this evening, that has been impossible. I haven't gotten adequate responses. I resubmitted them. I also note that I sent him classified questions as well. They were also unresponsive.

Frankly, I don't consider this nomination to have been fully vetted, but we are going to vote. What I have heard leads me to conclude that the Congressman should not be confirmed. He has held extreme views on surveillance, torture, and other issues. His positions on surveillance have failed to recognize that it is possible to have security and liberty. I see virtually no commitment toward real transparency. His views on the most fundamental analysis issue of the day—the involvement of Russia in our election—seemed to shift with those of the President. His changing positions on all these matters suggest that, at this rare moment when the American people actually have an opportunity to know who it is we are entrusting with some of the most important, weighty, and secret positions in government, they are going to be denied that chance.

That is why I oppose this nomination. I urge my colleagues to do so as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today I urge all Senators to confirm MIKE POMPEO as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. MIKE is a distinguished Congressman, a successful businessman, an Army veteran, and he is my friend.

I served with MIKE for 2 years in the House of Representatives. Over the last 2 years, we both served on our respective intelligence committees. I cannot count the hours we have spent together reviewing analytic products, assessing the needs of the intelligence community, conducting oversight of that community, and we have traveled the world together to do those things. From personal experience, I can tell you this is a man who understands exactly what it takes to keep America safe.

He understands it because he has dedicated his life to it. When he was 19, MIKE decided to join the Army, writing a blank check to his country for any amount, up to his life. He graduated first in his class at West Point and afterward joined the 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry, patrolling the Iron Curtain in Germany.

For some people—including not a few in this Chamber—the Cold War is little more than ancient history and mostly the unfortunate result of American provocation and misunderstanding, but for MIKE POMPEO, it was real life. He saw for himself the tank divisions, the gunships, and the eastern frontier of freedom. He knows, from personal experience, that conflict is rarely just a big misunderstanding, something you can clear up with reset buttons, open hands, and nice gestures. Our enemies have made a deliberate choice to oppose our way of life, and if we are to protect it, we must be equally deliberate, clear-eyed, and hard-nosed in our defense.

I have every confidence that MIKE POMPEO will do that. He has succeeded in everything he has ever done. After his military service, he excelled at Harvard Law School. Later, he started his own company and went on to serve as president of another. He is a community leader in his adopted home of Wichita, where Kansans have elected him in repeated landslides to serve them in the House of Representatives. In the House, MIKE is a sober, respected voice.

In short, MIKE has spent his entire life preparing for a moment like this. It is clear why President Trump didn't interview anyone else for the job after meeting MIKE.

It is a big job, and the CIA will benefit from new blood and fresh leadership. MIKE is ready for the job. As he said himself, he doesn't take a backseat to anyone when it comes to protecting our security and our privacy. Some politicians may say things like that, but it is all talk. It is nothing but talk. With MIKE, it is the real deal.

Don't take my word for it. Here is what prominent Democrats are saying about MIKE POMPEO. Leon Panetta, a respected public servant and former CIA Director himself, says MIKE POMPEO ''is somebody who understands the intelligence agencies, is smart, and somebody I think will be a good director.''

John Brennan, who just departed as CIA Director, says he ''looks forward to being able to hand this baton over to somebody who is as dedicated an American as MIKE POMPEO.''

ADAM SCHIFF, the senior Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, says MIKE POMPEO ''is bright and hardworking'' and ''he is willing to listen and engage, both key qualities in a CIA director.''

I couldn't agree more. It seems, among the people who actually know MIKE POMPEO—and who actually know the job—there are no last-minute political stunts or petty delaying tactics. They understand intelligence is deadly serious business and ought not be treated like a political football. In a world as dangerous as ours, with threats gathering every day, there is no more time for dithering. We need a CIA Director of the highest caliber, and MIKE POMPEO is the man for the job.

I commend President Trump for this inspired nomination, I thank MIKE for once again answering the call of duty, and I also thank his wife Susan for her love and steadfast support of MIKE in the trying times and sacrifices that inevitably will lie ahead.

The time has come to put aside partisan politics and do the right thing for our country and the brave men and women of the CIA. I call on every Senator to vote for confirmation and to send to the CIA a strong leader, a wise counselor, and a fierce patriot.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Kansas for giving me the opportunity to make some remarks for the record.

I support MIKE POMPEO to be Director of the CIA. I want to make clear that Congressman POMPEO has committed to following the law with respect to torture. He committed, during his open hearing, to a question I asked, to refuse any orders to restart the CIA's use of enhanced interrogation techniques that fall outside of the Army Field Manual.

However, what has happened is that his written answers to my questions for the record on torture appear to leave open the possibility that he would be open to the CIA carrying out these practices again in the future. I have had an opportunity to discuss this with Congressman POMPEO, and I asked him today to give me some statements from him that I could put directly into the record in that regard, and I wish to share these responses. I received them today, prepared by his staff.

Let me quote. ''By law, any agency interrogations will be limited to techniques in the Army Field Manual.''

''The Army Field Manual explicitly prohibits waterboarding and other techniques.''

He further recommitted to the promise he made at his hearing that he ''would 'absolutely not' comply with an order that violates the law, including an order to restart a program with techniques that violated the limitations in the Army Field Manual.''

Additionally, he clarified his comments regarding which experts he intends to consult at the CIA and other organizations in the government regarding the Army Field Manual. This is where there was particularly—I think in the Daily Beast, this question was raised, as well as in other places, so I want to clear it up. Here is his statement: He ''would listen to any items raised by the High-Value detainee Interrogation Group''—which we call the HIG—''or other career intelligence professionals that any improvements were needed to the Army Field Manual based on their professional experience.''

Moreover, he promised to provide objective analysis of Iran's compliance with the nuclear agreement and insisted that he would keep the Senate informed of all CIA activities in that regard.

Additionally, he has promised to put aside his previous political considerations, and he has committed to providing the President and the Congress with independent, objective intelligence analysis.

Certainly, I, and certainly others, intend to hold him to these commitments. For these reasons, I am clearly voting for his confirmation and look forward to working closely with him on the Senate Intelligence Committee to make sure strong congressional oversight of the CIA continues.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I believe that to continue to delay confirmation of Congressman MIKE POMPEO to serve as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency would be a real disservice to the Nation and to the security of the American people.

It was 2 weeks ago that I had the honor and privilege of introducing my colleague from Kansas during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee—a committee I once had the privilege of chairing. More than enough time has passed for all Senators to really acquaint themselves with the pertinent qualifications of the President's nominee.

As a long-serving Member of the House Intelligence Committee, MIKE has the merits for the job. He has the experience, he has the knowledge, the judgment, and the skills necessary to lead the Central Intelligence Agency. MIKE is Army strong. He graduated at the top of his class at West Point and then served as a cavalry officer patrolling the Iron Curtain before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

After completing his military service, MIKE attended Harvard Law School, where he was an editor of the Harvard Law Review. Because he is an attorney, MIKE understands the law, as emphasized by my distinguished colleague from California, a long-serving member of the Intelligence Committee, Senator FEINSTEIN.

Aside from the many questions posed to Congressman POMPEO, this is the salient point. He will respect the limitations we have placed upon our intelligence services, and he will preserve our constitutional values.

After practicing law, MIKE returned to his mother's roots in South Central Kansas, running several very successful businesses in Wichita before making the decision to run for Congress in 2010.

MIKE came to Washington with a strong desire to serve the people of the Fourth District. Ready for a challenge, he sought a seat on the House Intelligence Committee at a time when intelligence-gathering methods were under fire.

Again, a salient point, as an experienced legislator, MIKE POMPEO understands and respects the role of Congress and the need for vigorous oversight, again demonstrated by the remarks of the distinguished Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN.

I know he will provide the House and Senate Intelligence Committees with candid and honest assessments and provide the information the committee needs necessary to fulfill their oversight responsibilities. I know he will also demand that of everyone who serves at the CIA. In so doing, I know—and he knows—the difference between intelligence reporting and an intelligence product with salient input from all within the intelligence community, thus making sure our intel community does not become mired in assessment failure or any political controversy. We have certainly seen enough of that.

There are few positions in government of greater importance than that of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. At a time when democracy and freedom are under assault by radical elements fueled by hatred, our intelligence-gathering services must have a strong leader who will guide their mission and ensure the safety of the American people and not be swayed by any political interference.

We must demonstrate the respect we have—all of us in this Chamber have—for the men and women of the intelligence community by giving them a leader that will have their backs while, at the same time, will demand excellence of each and every one of them. MIKE POMPEO will be that kind of leader. I strongly urge every one of my colleagues to support his nomination. We have had ample time for debate. Now it is time to confirm.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the confirmation of Congressman MIKE POMPEO as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I respect Congressman POMPEO's background and service to our Nation. However, I strongly believe that his positions on at least three key issues undermine his qualifications to lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

First, he has supported broad surveillance programs that allow the government to spy on the American people—programs that were far-reaching, invasive, and violated law-abiding citizens' constitutional rights to privacy.

These programs were hastily passed as a part of the PATRIOT Act in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. I was one of only 66 Members in the House of Representatives to vote against the PATRIOT Act.

Since then, we have learned through reviews by the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, as well as the unauthorized disclosure of programs by Edward Snowden, that these programs did go too far. There is no doubt about it. They did go too far.

The government collected massive amounts of personal cell phone information, with no probable or reasonable cause to justify the collection, and the PATRIOT Act was used to obtain hotel records, car rental records, apartment leasing records, credit card records, and other personal information. While the government collected personal information from innocent Americans, there is no credible evidence that it made us more secure.

The majority of the American people opposed the surveillance program. They understood it went too far and violated our basic American right to privacy. So Congress responded and passed the USA FREEDOM Act—bipartisan legislation to rein in the surveillance programs.

Congressman POMPEO was skeptical of the USA FREEDOM Act, and he introduced his own bill to resume and expand the spying programs.

I believe in strong national security, and I have consistently supported our

military and our National Labs to ensure that we have the strongest and most effective defense in the world. However, in the United States of America, we protect national security and our constitutional rights. The United States is not a police State. The U.S. Constitution protects us from overreaching invasions of our privacy. Congress struck an appropriate balance in the USA FREEDOM Act between security and civil liberties. I hope the new administration will not try to return to mass surveillance programs that don't work, aren't supported by the American people, and invade our civil liberties.

Second, Congressman POMPEO's views on torture are deeply concerning. He has stated that the so-called enhanced interrogation programs used by the CIA in the Bush administration ''were within the law'' and ''within the Constitution.'' That is his quote, ''were within the law'' and ''within the Constitution.'' They were not. They violated Federal law prohibiting torture, and they violated the U.N. Convention on Torture and the Geneva Conventions—treaties the United States signed and that became Federal law. Programs of torture were a stain on our Nation's history and contrary to our value as Americans.

Beyond the legality of these programs, any CIA Director must understand that the use of torture is ineffective. It yields bad intelligence, which makes it harder for our analysts to do their jobs. The Senate Intelligence Committee's 6,000-page classified report, issued in December 2014, concludes: ''The CIA's use of its enhanced interrogation techniques was not an effective means of acquiring intelligence or gaining cooperation from detainees.'' This finding is from the publicly available executive summary from the report.

On key national security issues, like the use of torture, the new administration's top appointees must speak with one voice. Secretary of Defense Mattis has disavowed the use of torture. His many years of experience, training, and leading troops have taught him that torture does not work. Americans go to war—and risk and sacrifice their lives—to preserve our deeply held values. We cannot be engaged in conduct antithetical to those values at the same time. We must lead by example.

Finally, if America uses torture, we have no moral authority to stop foreign countries or terrorists from torturing Americans. We can never give implicit license to others to brutalize our soldiers. President Obama banned the use of torture in 2009. Again, I hope we will not be forced into debate about whether to return to the use of inhumane interrogation techniques that don't work and that undermine what we stand for as a nation.

Third, Congressman POMPEO has expressed that the Guantanamo Bay detention center should remain open, and he has said he believes detainees can be imprisoned indefinitely. The continued use of Guantanamo Bay prison and indefinite detention are at odds with our Nation's commitment to human rights and rule of law. There is no place in America's traditions under the Constitution and under international norms for indefinite detention without trial or adjudication. Guantanamo Bay hurts America's standing around the world, it is a recruiting tool for terrorists, and it is a huge waste of taxpayer dollars. Again, we must strike an appropriate balance between national security and America's fundamental principles. We cannot take actions to preserve American values that at the same time are opposite those very same values.

Finally, Congressman POMPEO's views on Muslims are troubling. He has stated that Muslim leaders are ''potentially complicit'' in acts of terrorism if they don't condemn it. Muslim leaders around the world have condemned extremists' violence. Muslims around the world strongly condemn such acts. Accusing Muslim leaders of complicity and acts of terrorism that they have nothing to do with, that they oppose, is not acceptable speech from a Director of a national security agency.

In conclusion, I want to underscore that I have nothing but respect for the men and women who work in the Central Intelligence Agency. They are true patriots who work hard every day, at personal risk, to keep our Nation secure. These patriots deserve a leader who will keep our Nation secure and secure our Nation's basic values.

In defense of America, in the name of national security, we must protect Americans' constitutional rights, the rule of law, and human rights. I believe Congressman POMPEO's views do not hold with American values. His positions will not keep America safe. I think they could undermine our security. For these reasons, I must oppose Congressman POMPEO's nomination as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, in less than 2 hours, the United States will have a new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Those watching may conclude that perhaps there is still debate going on about how we are going to vote. Everyone in the Senate knows how they are going to vote on this confirmation. Quite frankly, the President deserves the right to have someone at the CIA whom he trusts and is going to do a good job at a very critical agency. This is a critical component of our national security apparatus. It is unfortunate that the first weekend as President he had to have that position vacant. Nevertheless, that ill will be remedied here in about an hour and a half.

I am proud to stand in support of Congressman POMPEO, whom I got to know well. He was very supportive of my efforts earlier last year when I chose to pursue the Presidency. I got to know a lot about him in that endeavor. So I want to take a few moments to tell the people of Florida and those who may be watching this, now or in the future, a little bit about their next Director of the CIA.

First of all, he is an incredibly respected leader. Anyone who has interacted with him, anyone who watched the hearing before the Intelligence Committee would conclude that he was a star in terms of the way he presented himself. That is in line with his honorable service during his time on the House Intelligence Committee, which he has been on for over 6 years.

He is a graduate of West Point. He is an Army veteran. He finished at the top of his class at Harvard Law. I don't think anyone here would say that someone who went to West Point, who served in the Armed Forces, and who finished at the top of his class at one of the most exclusive law schools in the world does not qualify for the job. He certainly has the intellect for it, but he also has a very keen understanding of our national security issues, both as a Congressman but also from a practical perspective, having operated in that space in the Army.

Senate Democrats, unfortunately, have delayed his confirmation for political reasons. As I said earlier, we could have voted on this last Friday, as the Senate Democratic leader had promised the chairman of the Intelligence Committee. That word was not kept. Nevertheless, we are here today, and we are going to move forward.

Our new Commander in Chief deserves and needs the Director of the CIA in this job as soon as possible because we face a complex number of dangerous threats, perhaps more than at any time in our recent memory. These include the threat of radical Islamic terrorism—in Iraq, Syria, Southeast Asia, North Africa, even here at home; Russian aggression toward our friends and allies in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. We face the savage Assad regime in Syria, which continues to slaughter innocent men, women, and children, targeting civilians in Aleppo and other places. We, of course, face an increasingly unstable dictator in North Korea who continues to develop long-range missiles, soon capable of reaching the west coast of the United States—at least according to his claims. We face an emboldened China which, in pursuing their illegitimate territorial claims in the South China Sea, threatens to destabilize the region. We face Iranian leaders—an Iranian leader who still leads the chant of ''Death to America'' every week as they cheat on the lax requirements of President Obama's flawed nuclear deal. We face illicit trafficking in the Western Hemisphere, right here in our own backyard, that destabilizes governments in the region and floods the streets of our country with narcotics.

Quite frankly, Congressman POMPEO's national security experience makes supporting his nomination one of the easiest nomination decisions I have faced in the 6 years and 1 month that I have had the honor of serving the people of Florida in the U.S. Senate.

As a military veteran, as a West Point graduate, as I said earlier, he knows firsthand. We can read about this in a book. He knows firsthand the role intelligence plays in helping the President and other policymakers formulate both U.S. foreign policy and U.S. national security policy and in turn protecting the American people.

Quite frankly, I believe any delay in approving this nomination weakens America and strengthens our adversaries. It sends the wrong message to the men and women of the Central Intelligence Agency who are our first line of defense and among our finest public servants.

Congressman POMPEO served our country in the gulf war, and since 2011 he has served the country in Congress. I truly hope many of my colleagues are willing to cross the aisle and support his nomination. He is extraordinarily well qualified. It is a phenomenal thing for our country that he will, in a few hours, be the new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I wish to start my remarks by saying I have tremendous respect for anybody who will go through the process of confirmation. It is a tough, rigorous process, but it is a process that is very important to this country. The Senate needs to confirm the nominees, and we need to do our work as Senators to make sure the people in the positions in the Cabinet are well-suited to those positions.

In that regard, I am going to rise today in opposition to the nomination of MIKE POMPEO to lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

As our Nation's top intelligence agency, the CIA plays a critical role in keeping our country safe from those who want to do us harm, but Mr. POMPEO envisions American intelligence-gathering that does much more than keep us safe from our adversaries. He wants to collect the private information of law-abiding citizens. Mr. POMPEO has advocated for reestablishing bulk metadata collection, combining it with publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a searchable, comprehensive database.

That might sound fine, but it isn't. What this means is that a phone call with your friend or coworker could be a conversation tracked by the U.S. Government. That is not right. What this means is that a kid from Lewistown, MT, who is attending college in Bozeman and feels homesick and wants to call home on a Sunday afternoon, that could be tracked. Look, he is not a threat to our country. A grandmother calling her grandkids on their birthday to wish them happy birthday, that could be a tracked. It is not a threat to our country.

This type of bulk data collection Mr. POMPEO advocates for fails to protect our right to privacy and potentially treats innocent Americans like hostile actors. The threats we face in this world are real, but we cannot afford to revive and expand some of the worst elements of the PATRIOT Act. Every American has a fundamental right to privacy, and Mr. POMPEO has indicated he is willing to sacrifice that right. The President deserves to have the guy in office whom he wants, but we can't allow a person to be in office that is going to take away our privacy, take away our civil liberties.

It has been pointed out on this floor before all the bad people out there—in North Korea, in China, in Iran, in Syria, in Russia. Let me be clear. We must strengthen our national security, but we do not have to sacrifice our civil liberties in that process.

We can have a safe nation that respects our fundamental freedoms. Both are possible. Because of these reasons—of bulk metadata collection and infringement on our civil liberties in this country—I cannot support Mr. POMPEO. I urge my colleagues to look at what he is requesting and oppose his nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, the new Director of the CIA must focus on uncovering facts about the many complex national security threats confronting our Nation. Now is the time to turn the page on our discussions of old programs and activities, which we have thoroughly reviewed and addressed.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 included a provision to apply the Army Field Manual's interrogation requirements to all U.S. agencies, including the CIA. Congressman MIKE POMPEO voted for that law. During both our personal conversations and his confirmation hearing, Congressman POMPEO has repeatedly committed to me that he will comply with the law as Director of CIA. He also committed to me that if, after talking to professional officers of the CIA, he has any recommendations for changing the law or updating current guidelines, he will present those recommendations to the Congress.

I have no reason to doubt Congressman POMPEO's word, and I fully support his confirmation. Going forward, I will continue to closely monitor this issue and use my oversight powers to ensure the law is obeyed.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of MIKE POMPEO to serve as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Representative POMPEO has been wrong on many critical intelligence issues during his 6 years in Congress.

He will not disavow his past support of torture.

He opposed the release of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence's torture report.

He has advocated for reinstating mass surveillance of American citizens.

He recently left the door open to outsourcing surveillance of American citizens to foreign governments to circumvent existing laws.

He opposes the closure of Guantanamo.

He opposes the Iran nuclear agreement.

Congressman POMPEO is the wrong person to the lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on his nomination.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, President Trump has repeatedly called into question the integrity and professionalism of the brave men and women in our intelligence community. In addition, throughout the campaign, his statements revealed a dangerous propensity to ignore important principles of civil and religious liberty.

Under these circumstances, it is especially important that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency be an individual who will implement the Agency's vital national security responsibilities in a manner consistent with our Constitution and the rule of law. The head of the CIA must ensure that the men and women of the Agency are not pressured by the President—or anyone else—to violate important American values and principles.

Congressman MIKE POMPEO has impressive credentials; and, should he be confirmed, I pledge to work with him to support the national security missions of the CIA. However, his positions on spying on Americans, the use of torture, and religious minorities cause me to question this nomination.

Modern nations must have intelligence agencies to help keep us safe. Thus, in the 1947 National Security Act, Congress created the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA provides the President and senior policymakers with vital national security intelligence.

But the CIA and other U.S. intelligence agencies must work within our Constitution. By design, the CIA has no law enforcement role. And the law focuses the CIA on overseas intelligence gathering, limiting what it can do here in the United States.

Our Constitution limits how much intelligence agencies and government generally can intrude into the lives of Americans. The Fourth Amendment to the Constitution provides: ''The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.'' To conduct searches, the Constitution requires the government to have probable cause and get a warrant. Congress passed and the States ratified the Fourth Amendment as part of the Bill of Rights, in response to the abuse of general search warrants issued by the British in pre-Revolutionary America.

Thus, in 2015, a Federal judge ruled that the National Security Agency's program of systematically collecting Americans' domestic phone records likely violated the Constitution. And also in 2015, Congress enacted the USA FREEDOM Act in large part to limit that program. The USA FREEDOM Act represented real progress and a departure from the untenable situation before the law. It ensured that the intelligence community and law enforcement have the necessary tools that they need to protect our Nation, but it does so in a manner that is consistent with the fundamental principles in our Constitution.

Congressman POMPEO, however, has been an ardent proponent of the data collection that the Federal judge ruled likely unconstitutional. In a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed piece, Mr. POMPEO wrote that Congress should reestablish the collection of metadata and also combine it ''with publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a comprehensive, searchable database.'' And in 2015, Congressman POMPEO introduced the so-called Liberty Through Strength Act II, which would have rolled back the reforms of the USA FREEDOM Act

Indeed, Mr. POMPEO apparently has a troubling bias against privacy. Mr. POMPEO wrote in the Wall Street Journal op-ed piece that ''the use of strong encryption in personal communications may itself be a red flag.''

I am also deeply concerned about Congressman POMPEO's position on torture. After release of the 2014 Senate torture report, Mr. POMPEO said, ''These men and women are not torturers, they are patriots. The programs being used were within the law, within the Constitution.'' If Mr. POMPEO's conception of the law and the Constitution would allow the use of the torture that the 2014 report documented, then I am concerned that he reads our Constitution's protections too narrowly. If confirmed, Mr. POMPEO's support for such torture techniques as described in the 2014 Senate torture report could once again harm America's reputation abroad and endanger American troops whom our enemies might capture.

I am also concerned that Mr. POMPEO has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Guantanamo Bay prison. When MSNBC's Craig Melvin asked Mr. POMPEO in 2013 about a hunger strike at the Guantanamo Bay prison, Mr. POMPEO said, ''The last thing to say about these folks who are supposedly hunger strikers is that they look to me like a lot of them had put on weight.'' And last year, Mr. POMPEO said, ''The detainees at GTMO are treated exceptionally well—so well that some have even declined to be resettled, instead choosing to stay at GTMO.''

In fact, the Guantanamo Bay prison is a blot on America's reputation in the world. As President Obama has said, ''Keeping this facility open is contrary to our values. It undermines our standing in the world. It is viewed as a stain on our broader record of upholding the highest standards of rule of law.'' If confirmed, Mr. POMPEO's support for the prison would harm American interests in the world.

Mr. POMPEO has also cast aspersion on Muslims generally. In a 2013 statement on the House floor, Congressman POMPEO said:

> ''When the most devastating terrorist attacks on America in the last 20 years come overwhelmingly from people of a single faith, and are performed in the name of that faith, a special obligation falls on those that are the leaders of that faith. Instead of responding, their silence has made most Islamic leaders across America complicit in these acts. . . . But the silence in the face of extremism coming from the best funded Islamic advocacy organizations and many mosques across America is absolutely deafening. It casts doubt upon the commitment to peace by adherents by the Muslim faith.''

It is unacceptable to smear all Muslims based on the actions of radical extremists who seek to hijack the name of Islam for their evil purposes. That kind of demagoguery has no place in our country.

Placing someone who maligns all Muslims in charge of the CIA would be a propaganda boon to enemies who seek to portray America's foreign policy as a war against Islam. And the expression of such views by a senior government official could discourage Muslim Americans from working with law enforcement here at home.

Run properly, the Central Intelligence Agency makes an important contribution to keeping America safe. But run poorly, the CIA can embarrass the Nation in the world and ultimately endanger our troops, our diplomats, and Americans abroad.

It is thus important that the person who heads the CIA be a person who respects the Constitution and understands the limits that the Constitution and statutes place on the Agency's role. While I hope he will prove me wrong, Mr. POMPEO's statements lead me to conclude that he is not the right person for this job.

Mr. TESTER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. 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. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose the nomination of MIKE POMPEO to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. At a time when we are facing massive attacks against privacy rights thanks to the explosion of technology, we should be greatly troubled by giving power to a person who has stated flat-out that he wants to expand the surveillance state, not rein it in.

Here is the kind of world we are now living in, a world that should be of concern to every freedom-loving American, whether you are Democrat or Republican or Independent, conservative or progressive. We are living in a world where government and the private sector often know where you are at any time. They know where you are. They know where you are traveling. They know what books you are reading, what Web sites you are visiting, and maybe the emails you are sending out or reading.

I hear a whole lot of discussion on the floor of the Senate about freedom, about our desire to live and defend a free society. I would ask my colleagues and the American people—when we talk about freedom, one of the attributes of a free society is the right to live our lives the way we want to live our lives, without Big brother knowing everything there is to know about us. You want to do what you want to, it is your business; I want to do what I want to do, it is my business—if we are not harming other people. I believe that is a basic American right and a basic constitutional right, and I want to see people at the CIA, at the NSA, at other intelligence agencies who, yes, will be vigorous about defending us from terrorism but will do it in a way that is constitutional, that protects the civil liberties and the civil rights of the American people.

According to the Pew Internet Project, today 95 percent of American adults own a cell phone. More than three-quarters of American adults own a smartphone. Eighty-eight percent of American adults use the Internet. These advancements obviously have enormous advantages. Everybody knows all of the extraordinary things we can do on the Internet and all the information we can gain. It is almost unthinkable that we were living not so many years ago without the advantages of the Internet. All of these advantages, all of these conveniences come with a price.

If you have a Google account and the GPS enabled on your phone, Google creates a map for you of every single place you go in a given day. Facebook amasses a massive amount of data on you to better target commercials and advertisements to you. Credit card companies track your spending habits. Even innocuous things like a loyalty program in which you gain benefits by buying at a certain store give the private sector and the government eventually access to a massive amount of information about you.

When you go to the grocery store and scan your card, it is very convenient, moves things faster, and you can get a discount, but the store gets to track everything you purchase. Is that really what want? Do you want the whole world to have knowledge of everything you purchase? For just one rather famous example, Target—a huge chain in America—could tell if a woman was pregnant based on what she was purchasing at the store. Do we really feel comfortable about that kind of information getting out into the private sector or the government sector?

If you are wearing a tracking device today to count your steps, to count your heart rate and your sleep patterns, you may see it as a way to become healthier. Your employer or health insurance company, however, may see it as a way to charge you more if you don't meet certain employee wellness targets. Are we really comfortable about corporations knowing all about our health? If you are dealing with a serious illness, maybe it is something you and your family want to keep within the bosom of your family and not spread to the whole world.

That companies are collecting this much information on their own is very troubling to me, but Mr. POMPEO apparently wants to go even further. Last January, he published an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal in which he wrote:

> Congress should pass a law reestablishing collection of all metadata, and combining it with publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a comprehensive, searchable database. Legal and bureaucratic impediments to surveillance should be removed.

Wow. What we are talking about is the U.S. Government having, in many ways, more information about us than we may even understand about our own lives. In many ways, it sounds to me that we are moving toward an Orwellian society where, between the government and the private sector, there is very little about ourselves that is not known by somebody else. I am very, very uncomfortable about that.

I want at the head of the CIA somebody who understands thoroughly the Constitution of the United States and privacy rights and understands that we can fight terrorism effectively within the Constitution and the privacy rights guaranteed to the people of our country.

Since June of 2013, here is what we have already learned that the NSA collects: phone call metadata, including the numbers of both parties—my number and the number of the person I call—the location, time, and duration of that telephone call. NSA has access to text messages, email chat, and Internet browsing history, smartphone app data, including map data, which can pinpoint a person's location to within a few yards. They have maps of people's social networks and bank and credit card transactions. That is a lot of information held by the government and/or the private sector on the personal lives of the American people.

As I have mentioned, there is nobody in this Congress who does not understand the threat of terrorism and does not want to see our government be as strong and vigorous as possible in fighting terrorism and getting all the information we need to effectively combat terrorism, to make sure that if somebody is a suspect in terrorist activities, that we go after that person as strongly and as effectively as we can. I believe from the bottom of my heart that we can do that without invading the privacy rights of the American people.

It is not acceptable for Senator after Senator to come here and say we are defending freedom, we live in a free society, and then vote to allow the government or the private sector to have an unbelievable amount of knowledge about each and every one of our personal lives.

Now more than ever, it is vital to have a head of the CIA who will stand up for our Constitution, stand up for privacy rights. Unfortunately, in my view, Mr. POMPEO is not that individual.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I rise today to support Congressman MIKE POMPEO for the CIA. He isn't somebody I just met in my office to be able to talk with; he isn't just somebody I served with in the House. I know him personally. For 6 years, he served on the House Intelligence Committee. He struggled through the legal issues of what it means to be in the CIA and also have good oversight, understanding those difficulties that keep America safe but also making sure we protect the privacy rights of Americans.

MIKE POMPEO was a Harvard law grad at the top of his class. He gets this information. He understands the constitutional implications. He is also a top graduate of West Point, serving in the Army as well. He knows what it means to be able to defend this country. He is one of the most qualified people out there to possibly serve in this role, understanding the legal implications, having 6 years of service on the House Intelligence Committee, understanding the background, what it means to seek real oversight and to be able to struggle through these issues.

He is a person of great integrity, and he is a person who will passionately help protect the Nation. He is a person who holds tremendous respect for the people serving in our intelligence community—people who most of us will never, ever meet but work every single day to be able to keep our Nation secure. These are individuals who are also passionate about not only keeping our Nation secure but also maintaining the constitutional protections we have always had as a nation.

I heard a lot of the debate today, and I have been astounded at some of the conversations coming out. Let me just recap a couple of these things that I have heard because it was surprising to me. On the issue of advice and consent from the Senate, it seems that some people have not actually read the written testimony and the questions for the record that MIKE POMPEO has put out there or listened to his actual testimony or maybe seen his voting record when he was in the House of Representatives. For instance, there is this conversation sitting out there about torture—that he is going to somehow promote torture. He has stated over and over again that he would abide by the law and the Army Field Manual. That is what every candidate would say on that. That is the actual law. He has been very clear on that; he doesn't promote torture. I don't know what else he would have to say. Yet it continues to come up that somehow the head of the CIA is going to promote torture.

I have also heard that he wants to keep Gitmo open. Well, I would stand in line with him on that one. For those of us who have actually been to Guantanamo Bay and have seen it, it is a modern prison facility. It is not some dog cage out there that is holding people out in the weather. Neither is it a place that is doing torture. Guantanamo Bay is a place where the worst of the worst terrorists are being detained and held for trial. The issue of the past 8 years wasn't just that the Obama administration was working as hard as they could to release as many terrorists as they could from there; it is that they weren't taking them to trial. That is the right action—not to do indefinite detention but to actually work toward trial for these individuals. But in the meantime, they should be held at Guantanamo Bay, which is a modern prison facility, and it is the appropriate spot to be able to hold terrorists offshore.

Then there are all of these conversations about collecting data, as if MIKE POMPEO wants to scan through all of our Facebook pages. May I remind everyone that the Central Intelligence Agency is focused on foreign intelligence gathering—outward facing. The FBI is focused on the United States, on what is happening with U.S. persons. The CIA has strict prohibitions from gathering data on U.S. persons. The comments he made about gathering any kind of information on social networks and about gathering from what is publicly available is something all of us, I think, should support. If anyone outside the United States—whether they be in Pakistan, whether they be in Syria, or wherever they may be—is on social networks talking about the destruction of the United States, I would assume someone is tracking that, and that someone would be the CIA. We would hold the head of the CIA to account, saying: Weren't you tracking this terrorist's Facebook page, at least? Weren't you tracking their Twitter account? So for him to make a public statement that we should gather information on social media, I think all of us would agree, hopefully, that, yes, on foreign terrorists we should gather as much as we can possibly gather from the publicly available information, whatever it may be. Comments about his wanting to expand data collection fly in the face of reality when he voted as a Member of the House of Representatives to limit data collection.

I have no issue supporting MIKE POMPEO. He is very experienced, he is very well educated, he is well prepared for the task, and he is passionate about keeping our Nation safe within the bounds of the law. That is what we

want a CIA Director to do: to passionately go to work to honor our civil liberties. We want to make sure he is standing up for us every single day. In the moments when our Nation is asleep, we want to know the great folks of the CIA are awake and watching because the threats that we face internationally are very real.

I am glad MIKE POMPEO is going to be at the watch. I look forward to voting for him in a very few minutes.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HEINRICH. 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. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I thank my colleague Senator WYDEN for leading this important discussion. I joined the Senate Intelligence Committee 4 years ago, just a few short months before the public release of thousands of classified documents forced our country to have a debate over the scope and reach of America's surveillance programs, especially as they relate to American citizens.

That debate has formed the backdrop for national security policy decisions ever since, and I am very proud of the positive steps we have made toward reclaiming our civil liberties while still giving our intelligence and law enforcement communities the tools they need and deserve to anticipate threats, track down terrorists, and keep this Nation safe. It is because of Congressman POMPEO's opposition to those important reforms that I rise today to oppose his nomination to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Congressman POMPEO has a long legislative and rhetorical history on surveillance, on torture, and on other issues that I believe we simply cannot overlook in considering his nomination.

In our conversations, in answers to written questions, and during his confirmation hearing, Congressman POMPEO has often said the right thing or tried to give answers that on their face give the impression that he has changed his positions on these issues. But we need to carefully review the Congressman's votes and public statements to be sure that he understands the importance of protecting Americans' constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties and meeting the needs of our national security at the same time.

I was proud to help lead the effort to pass the USA FREEDOM Act in 2015 to finally end the government's overreach, their dragnet collection of law-abiding Americans' personal information, and provide the intelligence community with an updated legal framework that ensures they have the tools they need to focus on the records of actual terrorists, while at the same time protecting the privacy of innocent Americans.

Although the Congressman voted to support the USA FREEDOM Act in 2015, within a year, he had backtracked, writing a column for the National Review that stated:

> Those who today suggest that the USA FREEDOM Act, which gutted the National Security Agency's (NSA) metadata program, enables the intelligence community to better prevent and investigate threats against the U.S. are lying. I use that word intentionally.

A few weeks later, Congressman POMPEO in the Wall Street Journal wrote: ''Congress should pass a law reestablishing collection of all metadata, and combining it with publicly available financial and lifestyle information in a comprehensive, searchable database.''

I think I should read that one more time: ''Congress should pass a law reestablishing collection of all metadata, and combining it with publicly available financial and lifestyle information in a comprehensive, searchable data base.''

Wow. I think we should unpack that sentence a little bit. First, when asked by Senator WYDEN and me to clarify what metadata he believes should be collected, Congressman POMPEO made clear that he was referring to a rollback of the USA FREEDOM Act and a return to the warrantless and unnecessary collection of billions of communication records for millions of innocent Americans not suspected of any crime.

Shortly after Congressman POMPEO's Wall Street Journal column was published, the NSA's general counsel wrote in a column in Lawfare: ''Largely overlooked in the debate that has ensued . . . is the fact that under the new arrangement''—meaning the USA FREEDOM Act—''our national security professionals will have access to a greater volume of call records subject to query in a way that is consistent with our regard for civil liberties.''

But, really, it is the second part of Congressman POMPEO's position that gives me far more concern. What exactly does he mean by calling for the collection of ''publicly available financial and lifestyle information'' and placing it into a ''comprehensive, searchable data base''? When asked to clarify his proposal, Congressman POMPEO declined. However, I think it is clear from the context of both his columns and his public statements that he believes the U.S. Government ought to be collecting dramatically more private information from innocent Americans who are not under investigation for a crime.

Let me be clear. The Federal Government has no business collecting ''lifestyle information'' on its own citizens, and innocent Americans should expect that their private financial data is just that—private. This flies in the face of the Fourth Amendment.

On torture, Congressman POMPEO's record is also clear: He has supported it. Congressman POMPEO thinks it was a mistake to stop the enhanced interrogation program. He issued a very personal attack against then-Committee Chairman FEINSTEIN when the committee released its report on the CIA detention and interrogation program. And while he acknowledges that CIA interrogation techniques are currently limited to those contained in the Army Field Manual, Congressman POMPEO said to our committee that he will ''consult with experts at the Agency and at other organizations in the U.S. government on whether the Army Field Manual uniform application is an impediment to gathering vital intelligence to protect the country or whether any rewrite of the Army Field Manual is needed.''

One could easily infer that the Congressman would ask the CIA officers who participated in the detention and interrogation program whether they believe the techniques contained in the Army Field Manual are sufficient. If he is told they are not, he has certainly left open the option of literally rewriting the Army Field Manual. This is problematic for a number of reasons and should be of deep concern to my colleagues.

Finally, the day before his nomination was announced, Congressman POMPEO tweeted that he was looking forward to ''rolling back'' the Iran nuclear agreement, which ended each and every pathway for Iran to develop a weaponized nuclear device, including a covert path. When I asked him about this in our hearing, Congressman POMPEO said: ''That communication was approved before I was aware that I was going to be the nominee to the Central Intelligence Agency.'' The Congressman went on to say that in his view, the Iran nuclear agreement was a ''mistake for American national security,'' but as CIA Director, he would ''work to make sure it is fully implemented and will endeavor to provide straight information'' about the progress being made in reducing Iran's nuclear capability. However, given his deep antipathy toward the Iran agreement, I have serious concerns about his ability to be objective about this issue, which is critical to the stability of the entire Middle East and to our efforts to ensure that Iran never develops a nuclear weapon.

Having said all of this, if the Congressman is confirmed, I hope he will fulfill one of the commitments he made to me: to improve the communications and relationship between the oversight committees in Congress and the Agency itself. It is my hope that a CIA Director coming from outside the Agency will give greater weight to informing the Intelligence Committee of the CIA's activities than his immediate predecessor has. Congressman POMPEO, if confirmed, will have an opportunity to recalibrate this relationship, and, if given the chance, I hope he seizes that opportunity.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. 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. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I want to be very brief. I know colleagues are facing tough weather and are trying to deal with the logistics of all that. I just want to close with a couple of points.

The first is that I have heard several of my colleagues say to me that a central reason for voting for Congressman POMPEO this afternoon is that they have said that he voted for the USA FREEDOM Act. That is correct. The problem is that just a few months after he cast that vote, the Congressman turned around and said he wanted to reestablish the bulk phone record program in a way that was vastly more encompassing and way more intrusive than the USA FREEDOM Act abolished. What he was proposing after he voted for the USA FREEDOM Act, which says that Congress says you ought to have limits, was a bulk metadata program that was way beyond anything that the Bush-Cheney administration ever imagined.

I have been on the Senate Intelligence Committee since before September 11. I have been in the middle of countless debates about the appropriate scope of government surveillance, but I have never heard—not from anyone—an idea that was so extreme and so overreaching and so intrusive of Americans' privacy. I bring this up only by way of saying that, if confirmed, the nominee is going to be dealing with a whole host of issues that, if we really think it through carefully and thoughtfully, we can find a way to ensure that Americans have security and liberty and that the two are not mutually exclusive. If we do it wrong, which would certainly happen if one were to weaken strong encryption, we will end up with less of both—less security and less liberty.

With respect to the process, I would only say that this matter of the way the Congressman handled his views with respect to surveillance and torture and Russia really reflect how his views change on a major issue, whether it is surveillance or torture or Russia, depending on the time and who he is talking to. I just don't think that ought to be the standard for winning support to head an agency as important as the CIA.

I know my colleagues are on a very tight time schedule. I appreciate the fact that we have had a chance to have this debate. I urge my colleagues to oppose this nomination.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I am not sure if we need to yield back the time or not.

Let me state that the committee had an open hearing that was unlimited. We didn't cut off questions. We had a closed session that was unlimited. We didn't cut off questions. The nominee asked to see every Member and didn't cut off the length of time he was willing to answer any questions. He handled more than 150 questions for the record and answered them honestly. At the end of the day, when it came to those questions that were of most interest to most Members, he said: I am going to follow the law. That is exactly how we would expect or hope a nominee would, in fact, respond.

But I ask you to look at MIKE POMPEO, Representative POMPEO, Congressman POMPEO's record: West Point grad, first in his class, served his country with distinction, went to Harvard, opened up an aerospace business, became the CEO, ran a successful business, decided that his life needed to have community service in it, ran for Congress, served four terms representing Kansas's Fourth District.

This is an individual who, as a member of the House Intelligence Committee, committed to do the things that—as the Presiding Officer knows because he is on the Senate select committee—are tough to do. He traveled around the world to see firsthand the men and women who operate in the shadows; the ones who we, on behalf of our other Members of the Senate, certify are living within the letter of the law, that they do things that only they can do because of the positions they hold, but they do it with the laws of the United States in place. And the 15 of—those of us who serve on the committee certified that for our colleagues because in many cases they can't see behind the curtain with the clarity we can.

MIKE POMPEO did that. He traveled around the world. He saw firsthand what these men and women do. They are invaluable to the security of this country, and, I might add, they are invaluable to the policies we as legislators put in place because they provide us with the intelligence we need to make the right decisions. That is MIKE POMPEO. That is the person whom the President has nominated to be CIA Director. I am not sure you can find a glove that fits any better for the Agency, for the Congress of the United States, and for the administration, but more importantly, for the American people. This glove fits perfectly to make sure they are performing to keep America safe.

I hope all of my colleagues will vote for MIKE POMPEO's confirmation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all debate time on the nomination be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pompeo nomination?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 32 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Alexander	Graham	Perdue
Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hassan	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Schatz
Corker	Johnson	Schumer
Cornyn	Kaine	Scott
Cotton	Kennedy	Sessions
Crapo	King	Shaheen
Cruz	Klobuchar	Shelby
Daines	Lankford	Sullivan
Donnelly	Lee	Thune
Enzi	Manchin	Tillis
Ernst	McCain	Toomey
Feinstein	McCaskill	Warner
Fischer	McConnell	Whitehouse
Flake	Moran	Wicker
Gardner	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—32

Baldwin	Durbin	Nelson
Bennet	Franken	Paul
Booker	Gillibrand	Peters
Brown	Harris	Sanders
Cantwell	Heinrich	Stabenow
Cardin	Hirono	Tester
Carper	Leahy	Udall
Casey	Markey	Van Hollen
Coons	Menendez	Warren
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Wyden
Duckworth	Murray	

NOT VOTING—2

Blumenthal	Murphy

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO TODD NOVASCONE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I would like to take just a few moments of the Senate's time this evening. We all work in an environment in which we are surrounded by dedicated people. One of those in my world, Todd Novascone, who has been my chief of staff for 12 years, has had his last day of work in our office today. I wanted to take just a few moments to pay tribute to him and others like him.

I think we are here because we want to make a difference. I have no doubt that is the case for my 99 colleagues here on the Senate floor, but it is also true for all the folks who work here in the Senate Chamber, who work in our individual offices, and who work in the committees. The goal is to be in the Nation's Capital in the hope that we can make better things happen for America. I have had the privilege of being surrounded by many dedicated individuals—most of them Kansans—over the period of time that I have served in the Congress of the United States of America. I know that my ability to work on behalf of Kansans and on behalf of the citizens of our Nation is greatly altered and improved by the fact that people who care about America, who care about our home State, are there by my side. One of those most important to me has been my chief of staff.

Todd was an elected official in his own right. He was elected to the Kansas House of Representatives and served there with distinction. Twelve years ago, back in the days when I was a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I asked him to uproot his family and move to Washington, DC, and assume the task of managing our office and helping accomplish the things that we all wanted to accomplish. He has done it with great style and with grace and with friendship. He has been the person who has motivated us to do better and has always done it in a way in which we felt good about what we were doing, in a management style that made us feel good about ourselves, bringing us together, not taking us apart, making certain we knew that the outcome was important, but how we got there—matters that are important to us as individuals, as human beings with integrity, doing things right, telling the truth—those things were always honored and achieved because of his leadership.

People are hard to replace, and Todd is especially difficult to replace. I spend almost every week in the Nation's Capital, away from my own family. Like many people here in the Senate, those who work in our offices become part of our family. That is certainly true with the people who work in my office today. I feel that, although when I came to Congress I was more their age, now there is a significantly wider gap in the age of our staff and me. But my wife and I believe that I am surrounded by people who are part of our family, and Todd is certainly that. In fact, his family grew while he was my chief of staff. His two children, Grace and Will, were born during the days of his time as an employee in our office. Again, as a reminder about how to put things in perspective, he was always taking care of his kids. He was always there for their school activities, part of the school board, involved in their athletic and musical activities. That is a good thing for a chief of staff to know because if it is important to him, he will make certain that his commitment is permitted, honored, and encouraged by those who work in the office.

So tonight, I just want to say thank you to Todd Novascone from Hanover, KS, who decided to devote 12 years of his life here in the Nation's Capital, trying to make things better, trying to make our office work well, and trying to achieve the things all of us want to achieve for our Nation. So, Todd Novascone, thank you for a job well done, thank you for being my friend, and thank you for the way you have conducted yourself on my behalf.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I have one more role to undertake this evening.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JAMES H. ''JIM'' SKAGGS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of James H. ''Jim'' Skaggs, a Louisville resident, who passed away in December at the age of 94. To his family, his church community, and to those who knew him, Jim was a man known for his kindness, patience, and compassion. As a member of this Nation's Greatest Generation, he was an example of commitment and devotion.

Like so many other brave men and women, Jim answered his country's call in the Second World War. Kentucky has a proud history of military service, and Jim is a fine model of that tradition. As a staff sergeant in the 755th Railway Battalion, U.S. Army Transportation Corps in England, France, and Belgium, Jim showed the deep passion he held for his country.

Jim leaves behind a legacy of love and family. His daughter Debbie is my personal friend and archivist. If it is possible to measure a father by his daughter, Jim will surpass all standards. She is impressive in her own right, and she is surely a reflection of him. He will be remembered fondly. Elaine and I send our deepest condolences to Jim's family and friends.

REMEMBERING ROBERT L. ''BOB'' WILLIAMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a good friend and a true Kentucky hero, Robert L. ''Bob'' Williams. Bob, a northern Kentucky native, passed away in December at the age of 94. He left behind many loved ones, including his wife, Barbara, but he also left his mark on our Nation and the Commonwealth.

As a member of the Greatest Generation, Bob answered the call of duty and bravely served in World War II. On June 6, 1944, he was one of the first Allied paratroopers to land during the D-day invasion. With his fellow soldiers, Bob fought well behind enemy lines before the beach battle began. His mission to secure roads and bridges was vital to the success of the entire operation.

With uncommon courage, Bob and his comrades completed their dangerous mission, overcoming enemy fire and capturing the crucial junctures. Once the invasion began, they continued their fight joining the largest amphibious assault in world history. Without faltering, Bob heroically battled for 10 more days, before suffering a serious injury on June 16, 1944.

It is without question that Bob's actions during the war displayed the highest possible valor. But his actions after the war proved his dedication to those who lost their lives on the battlefield. He spent his life after the War commemorating those who served in any way possible. If there was a parade to march in, you can be sure that Bob marched in it. To remember the 50th anniversary of the D-day invasion, Bob joined other veterans and parachuted into Normandy again. In an interview with the Lexington Herald-Leader, Bob remembered ''[t]he government said, 'There's no way we're going to let you do that, you're all too old.' [. . .] We did it anyway.''

The following week, TIME magazine published a double-page, full color picture of Bob. Triumphantly walking away from his 1994 jump with dozens of parachutes still gliding behind him, Bob looked overjoyed. He was paying tribute to his comrades, those with him on that day and those who were not.

To further honor those with whom he served, Bob wrote a book to share veterans' stories of the war for future generations. He has impacted countless lives and is someone I very much respect and admire.

In 2013, it was my privilege to recommend Bob for admission to the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame. This honor was a recognition of something I already knew well: Bob exemplifies the highest American values of service, self-sacrifice, and heroism.

Bob's family represents the greatest of Kentucky values with kindness, compassion, and charity. It was easy to see the love between Bob and his wife, Barbara, and they raised wonderful children in Barbara, Diane, Jeffrey, Kim, and Kevin. Although they endure the pain of loss, I know they are comforted in the memory of Bob's deep love for all of them.

My wife, Elaine, and I were deeply saddened to hear the news of Bob's

passing. He lived an admirable life with courage and devotion, and I am proud to say he was my friend.

REMEMBERING PARKER BEAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I join many Kentuckians who were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Parker Beam, the master distiller emeritus of Heaven Hill Distillery in Bardstown, KY. Parker was a giant of the industry, and he helped promote ''the new Golden Age'' of bourbon in the United States.

The Beam family is no stranger to bourbon. Tracing its distilling roots in Kentucky back to 1795, Parker Beam continued the tradition of his lineage. When he succeeded his father as master distiller, Parker grew Heaven Hill Distillery with its first premium small batch and single barrel bourbons. During his long career, Parker won numerous awards and accolades for his craft and became a charter member in the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame.

Parker was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease in 2010. Since then, he dedicated himself to finding a cure and established the Parker Beam Promise of Hope Fund. After 50 years of bourbon and a courageous battle with this disease, Parker passed away at the age of 75.

Kentucky's bourbon heritage has brought pride, culture, and economic development to the Commonwealth. Parker Beam helped cultivate that tradition and pass it on to the next generation. He was a man of skill, authenticity, and passion, and his legacy will surely live on. Elaine and I send our condolences to his friends and family.

Mr. President, The Herald-Leader in Lexington, Kentucky published an article on Parker Beam's career. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Herald-Leader, Jan. 9, 2016]

PARKER BEAM, MASTER DISTILLER OF KENTUCKY BOURBON, DIES

(By Bruce Schreiner)

Parker Beam, who carried on his family's historic bourbon-making tradition as longtime master distiller for Kentucky-based Heaven Hill Distilleries, died Monday after battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as Lou Gehrig's disease. He was 75.

Beam's career as a whiskey maker spanned more than a half century at Bardstown, Kentucky-based Heaven Hill, a family owned and operated distilled spirits company and maker of the popular Evan Williams brand. Beam was responsible for distilling and aging Evan Williams—the world's No. 2-selling bourbon—and other Heaven Hill whiskeys.

''He was a true industry giant long before the current bourbon renaissance,'' said Max L. Shapira, president of Heaven Hill Brands. ''Without question, he was committed to our industry and possessed a real passion for the craft of distilling.''

Beam's pedigree as a bourbon maker was impeccable. As a grandnephew of Jim Beam, Parker Beam was born into a family that traces its whiskey-making roots in Kentucky to 1795, when Jacob Beam set up his first still. Park Beam, Parker's grandfather and namesake, was Jim Beam's brother.

''If you were a Beam, you sort of were destined to follow in the footsteps of either your father, grandfathers, cousins or uncles,'' Parker Beam said in a 2007 interview with The Associated Press.

Another industry patriarch, Bill Samuels Jr., on Monday called his longtime friend ''one of the good guys.'' For some people, living up to a legendary family name can be a burden, but not so for Parker, Samuels said.

''In his case, he lived up to and exceeded the burden of having the most famous name in bourbon,'' said Samuels, who retired after a long career as the top executive at Maker's Mark.

During his years-long battle with the disorder, Parker Beam raised funds in hopes of helping find a cure.

Parker Beam was among a small fraternity of master distillers who oversaw production at various Kentucky distilleries during bourbon's revival.

According to a 2014 report by the University of Louisville's Urban Studies Institute, distilling contributes $3 billion in gross state product to Kentucky's economy every year, up from $1.8 billion two years ago. Kentucky bourbon and Tennessee whiskey exports shot past $1 billion for the first time in 2013, according to the Distilled Spirits Council. By 2015, combined U.S. revenues for bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye whiskey rose 7.8 percent to $2.9 billion, while bourbon and Tennessee whiskey exports topped $1 billion for the third straight year, the group said.

Parker Beam began his career at Heaven Hill in 1960 and learned the craft by working alongside his father, Earl. The job of master distiller shifted from father to son in 1975 when Parker Beam assumed the role. He developed the company's first premium small batch and single barrel bourbons.

That father-son partnership extended into another generation when Parker Beam's son, Craig, started working at Heaven Hill in the early 1980s. For years, the Beams shared duties as co-master distillers. Parker Beam had the title of master distiller emeritus at Heaven Hill at the time of this death.

''Parker Beam wasn't just a name on a bottle—he was the living embodiment of the whiskey inside—authentic, classic, well-seasoned and distilled from old-fashioned hard work and gentleman integrity,'' said Eric Gregory, president of the Kentucky Distillers' Association.

Craig Beam had his own humble start. On one summer break from school, he cleaned pigeon droppings in a vacant warehouse purchased by Heaven Hill. He later drove a truck for the distillery and worked in the bottling operation.

''I've got a whole lot to live up to with my father and grandfather,'' Craig Beam told the AP in 2007. ''I've got a lot of weight on my shoulders.''

CONFIRMATION OF MICHAEL POMPEO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, I voted against Representative POMPEO's confirmation as Director of the CIA. His changing statements on the use of torture leave me no choice. His written answers to the Senate Intelligence Committee, saying that he will consult with CIA experts as to whether the methods in the U.S. Army Field Manual are sufficient and, if they aren't, work with legal experts and congressional overseers to make changes, are extremely alarming and contradict what he told me personally when we met in my office.

Federal law now clearly prohibits torture and ''cruel, inhumane, and degrading'' treatment of detainees and prohibits interrogation techniques not authorized by the Army Field Manual. We cannot go backwards on this seminal issue of human rights.

For years, I was highly critical of the CIA's detention and interrogation program and repeatedly questioned its legality. Over 13 years ago, I authored the first legislation to make clear that the cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of detainees is illegal under U.S. law in all circumstances. Today, I stood in opposition of Representative POMPEO's confirmation to be CIA Director because, in order to win the war on terrorism, we must remain true to the principles upon which our country was founded.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Record the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–79, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Kenya for defense articles and services estimated to cost $418 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–79

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Kenya.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment $53.6 million.

Other $364.4 million.

Total $418.0 million.

(iii) Description and Ouantitv or Ouantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Maior Defense Equipment (MDE):

Components for Paveway II (GBU–12/58) (includes spares):

Two hundred and twenty-two (222) MXU–1006/B Airfoil Groups for GBU–58.

One hundred and fourteen (114) MXU–650 Airfoil Groups for GBU–12.

Three hundred and twenty-four (324) MAU–169 L/B or MAU–209 CB CCGs for GBU–12/58.

Three hundred and twenty-four (324) FMU–152 Fuzes for GBU–12/58.

Two hundred and sixteen (216) MK–81 Bomb Bodies for GBU–58.

One hundred and eight (108) MK–82/BLU–111 Bomb Bodies for GBU–12.

Components for Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) (includes spares):

Seven hundred and fourteen (714) WGU–59/B APKWS Guidance Sections.

Non-MDE includes: Twelve (12) Air Tractor AT–802L aircraft; two (2) Air Tractor AT–504 trainer aircraft; twelve (12) FMU–152 A (D–2/D–5)/B Fuzes (for Training/Inert); six (6) Mk–81 Trainer/Inert Bomb Bodies; six (6) Mk–82 Trainer/Inert Bomb Bodies; Seven hundred and fourteen (714) MK–66 MOD 4 2.75'' Rocket Motors; Seven hundred and fourteen (714) M152 HE Warheads (2.75'' Airborne Rocket); 505,000 rounds .50 cal ammunition; FN HMP400 LLC Herstal 50 cal guns; MX–15HDi electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) full motion video cameras with laser designation; VHF/UHF radios; LAU–131 Launchers; AAR–47 Warning Systems; electro countermeasure display systems AN/ALE–47; HGU–55/P Helmet Mounted Cueing Systems; spare engines; initial spare parts; support equipment; studies; contract logistics support and technical services; publications; aircraft ferry and support; life support equipment; maintenance training; pilot training; follow-on training; alternate mission equipment; U.S. Government manpower services and travel; modifications and engineering change proposals; ground based training system; operational flight trainer and spares; and aircraft modification, integration, and support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (SAA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 18, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Kenya—Air Tractor Aircraft with Weapons and Related Support

The Government of Kenya has requested a possible sale of up to twelve (12) Air Tractor AT–802L and two (2) AT–504 trainer aircraft, weapons package, technical support and program management. The total estimated program cost is $418 million.

This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a strong regional partner who is a regional security leader undertaking critical operations against al-Shabaab and troop contributor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The proposed sale provides a needed capability in the ongoing efforts to counter al-Shabaab. The platform maximizes the Kenyan Defense Force's Close Air Support (CAS) ability because it is a short-field aircraft capable of using precision munitions and cost effective logistics and maintenance.

The proposed sale supplements Kenya's aging F–5 aircraft as it will be more fiscally efficient and able to be pre-positioned much closer to the conflict area than the F–5 fleet. The Kenyan Defense force is committed to modernizing its air fleet and is capable of absorbing these aircraft. The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be L–3 Communications, Platform Integration Division, Waco, Texas. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale requires the assignment of at least five contractor representatives in Kenya.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–79

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale involves the release of sensitive technology to Kenya. The AT–802L weapons system is classified up to Secret. The AT–802L aircraft uses the AT–802 airframe and features avionics and other technologically sensitive systems. The AT–802L contains an MX–15HDi electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) full motion video (FMV) cameras with laser designation; internal and external self-protection equipment; a modified HGU–55/P helmet that incorporates a reticle-projected Heads-Up Display to cue weapons and aircraft sensors to ground targets; and software computer programs.

2. Sensitive and classified (up to SECRET) elements of the proposed AT–802L include the hardware, accessories, components, and associated software associated with the: MX–15HDi EO/IR FMV turret, Stores Management System (SMS), Missile Warning System (MWS), HGU–55/P Helmet Mounted Cueing System (HMCS), and air-to-ground weapons. Additional sensitive areas include operating manuals and maintenance technical orders containing performance information, operating and test procedures, and other information related to support operations and repair. The hardware, software, and data identified are classified to protect vulnerabilities, design and performance parameters, and other similar critical information.

3. The MX–15HDi is an EO/IR FMV camera that includes a laser designator which creates the ability to designate ground targets for use with laser guided weapons. The commercially developed system software and hardware are UNCLASSIFIED.

4. The SMS provides basic flight path guidance to release zone, mission recording and diagnostics, and continuous stores status and inventory management. It is an internally mounted suite. The commercially developed system software and hardware are UNCLASSIFIED.

5. The AN/AAR–47 is an electronic warfare system used to protect against IR guided missile threats, laser-guided/laser-aided threats, and unguided munitions. The system, hardware components and software are SECRET.

6. The AN/ALE–47 system uses information from missile warning sensors to determine the correct response to defeat IR and other guided missiles. The AN/ALE-47 is SECRET.

7. HMCS is a modified HGU–55/P helmet that incorporates a reticle-projected Heads-Up Display to assist with cueing weapons to ground targets. This system projects visual targeting information, enabling the pilot to monitor this information without interrupting his field of view through the cockpit canopy. This provides improvement for close combat targeting and engagement. Hardware is UNCLASSIFIED.

8. The following munitions are part of the AT–802L configuration:

a. The Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) is a low cost semi-active laser guidance kit developed by BAE Systems which is added to current unguided 70 mm rocket motors and warheads similar to and including the HYDRA 70 rocket. It is a low collateral damage weapon that can effectively strike both soft and lightly armored targets. APKWS turns a standard unguided 2.75 inch (70 mm) rocket into a precision laser-guided rocket, classification up to SECRET.

b. The LAU–131 launcher is tube shaped, 59.8 inches in length, and 10.125 inches in diameter. It weighs 65 pounds and is capable of carrying seven rockets (2.75 in or 70mm). Hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Technical data and documentation provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

c. GBU–12/58 Paveway II (PW–II): 500-lb (GBU–12) and 250-lb (GBU–58) are laser-guided ballistic bombs (LGBs) developed by Raytheon and Lockheed Martin. The LGB is a maneuverable, free-fall weapon that guides to a spot of laser energy reflected off of the target. The LGB is delivered like a normal general purpose (GP) warhead and the semi-active guidance corrects for many of the normal errors inherent in any delivery system. Laser designation for the weapon can be provided by a variety of laser target markers or designators. The LGB consists of a computer control group (CCG) that is not warhead specific (MAU–169UB or MAU–209C/B) and a warhead specific Air Foil Group (AFG), that attach to the nose and tail of MK 81 and MK 82 or BLU–111 and BLU–110 General Purpose (GP) bomb bodies. The overall weapon is CONFIDENTIAL.

d. The FN HMP400 LCC is a self-contained airborne weapon system that includes a Herstal .50 cal M3P machine gun and 250-round ammunition box. This system is UNCLASSIFIED.

9. Kenya has expressed a willingness to protect United States classified military information equivalent to US Government standards. Kenya is firmly committed to its relationship with the United States and to its promise to protect classified information and prevent its transfer to a third party. This sale is needed in furtherance of USG foreign policy and national security interests by helping to improve the security of a vital partner in the AFRICOM AOR.

10. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware or software source code in this proposed sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of systems with similar or advance capabilities. The benefits to be derived from this sale in the furtherance of the US foreign policy and national security objectives, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

11. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Kenya.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of

the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–78, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $525 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–78

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.

Other $525 million.

Total $525 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE includes:

Ten (10) 74K Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) Aerostats.

Fourteen (14) Ground Moving Target Indicator (GMTI) Radars.

Twenty-six (26) MX–20 Electro-Optic Infrared (EO/IR) Cameras.

Ten (10) Communications Intelligence (COMINT) Sensors.

Also included are the Mooring systems with powered tether with embedded fiber optics; Ground Control Systems (GCS); associated installation hardware; special tools and test equipment; Basic Issue Items (BII); program management support; verification testing; systems technical support; transportation; spare and repair parts; communications equipment; operators and maintenance manuals; personnel training and training equipment; tool and test equipment; repair and return; publications and technical documentation; Quality Assurance Team (QAT); U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; in-country Field Service Representatives (FSR); and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (ZAJ)

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 23, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—74K Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) Aerostats

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of ten (10) 74K Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) Aerostats; fourteen (14) Ground Moving Target Indicator (GMTI) Radars; twenty-six (26) MX–20 Electro-Optic Infrared (EO/IR) Cameras; and ten (10) Communications Intelligence (COMINT) Sensors. Also included are the Mooring systems with powered tether with embedded fiber optics; Ground Control Systems (GCS); associated installation hardware; special tools and test equipment; Basic Issue Items (BII); program management support; verification testing; systems technical support; transportation; spare and repair parts; communications equipment; operators and maintenance manuals; personnel training and training equipment; tool and test equipment; repair and return; publications and technical documentation; Quality Assurance Team (QAT); U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; in-country Field Service Representatives (FSR); and other related elements of logistics and program support. Total estimated program cost is $525 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of an important ally which has been and continues to be a leading contributor of political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. This sale will increase the Royal Saudi Land Force's interoperability with U.S. forces and conveys U.S. commitment to Saudi Arabia's security and armed forces.

The proposed sale will improve Saudi Arabia's capability to meet current and future threats and provide greater security for its critical infrastructure. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing these systems into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor is unknown at this time. There are no known offset agreements in connect with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the U.S. Government or contractor representative to travel to the Kingdom of Sadia Arabia for a period of six (6) years for de-processing/fielding, system checkout and new equipment training, as well as provide the support of in-country FSRs and operators.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–78

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale will involve the release of sensitive technology to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) is a tethered aerostat system capable of supporting a variety of surveillance payloads. The PTDS is a 74K tethered aerostat with a relocatable mooring system capable of supporting payloads up to 500 kg at altitudes of 1,500m, providing surveillance systems with line of site up to 140km. In addition to the aerostat, each system includes a mobile mooring system, ground control and maintenance shelters, electrical generators and power distribution panel, forklift and man lift, supply of helium and spare parts. The program will also include system training, maintenance and in-country support services. Each of the ten (10) aerostats will carry a payload consisting of one (1) radar system and two (2) Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) systems or one (1) radar system, one (1) EO/IR system and one (1) communications Intelligence (COMINT) system.

a. Radar System. The Telephonics APS–143G Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Radar is a multi-function radar capable of providing long-range detection of land based or maritime targets that are static or in motion. The system can operate in overland, maritime, and air-to-air modes. It displays Ground Moving Target Indicator (GMTI) tracks overlaid on a Doppler Beam Sharpened (DBS) image. The system can switch between vertically and horizontally-orientated antennas and incorporates an optional Identify Friend or Foe (IFF) capability. The hardware and software are UNCLASSIFIED.

b. Communications Intelligence (COMINT) System. The Raytheon Applied Signal Technology, Inc. Model 1240 Titan Reconfigurable Multichannel Receiver is a modular, scalable software-defined radio (SDR) designed for airborne COMINT missions. The system can search, intercept, collect, geo-locate, analyze, store, and distribute wireless signals. The hardware and software are UNCLASSIFIED.

c. Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) System. The L3 WESCAM MX–20 is suite of up to seven (7) long-range camera and imaging sensors mounted within a gimbaled pod. Sensors include either a thermal image or high definition infrared imager; a daylight continuous zoom color TV camera, either a daylight spotter color TV camera or lowlight spotter TV camera; a laser rangefinder; and a laser illuminator. The hardware and software are UNCLASSIFIED.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–63, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Kuwait for defense articles and services estimated to cost $400 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–63

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Kuwait

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.

Other $400 million.

Total $400 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Non-MDE: Non-MDE items include support equipment and services for AH–64D Apache helicopters, to include: Apache Maintainer unit support, Depot Level support, training devices, helmets, simulators, generators, transportation, wheeled vehicles and organization equipment, spare and repair parts, support equipment, tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S.

Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army (UMN and UMP)

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any:

KU–B–UKS (31 Aug 02, $827,515,435).

KU–B–ULM (17 Dec 09, $21,102,796).

KU–B–ULK (17 Dec 09, $21,700,694).

KU–B–ULJ (2 Nov 09, $183,209,259).

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc.. Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress:

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Kuwait—Sustainment and Contractor Logistics Support for AH–64D Apache Helicopters

The Government of Kuwait has requested the sale of support equipment and services for its AH–64D Apache helicopters, to include: Apache Maintainer unit support, Depot Level support, training devices, helmets, simulators, generators, transportation, wheeled vehicles and organization equipment, spare and repair parts, support equipment, tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, United States Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support. The total overall estimated value is $400 million.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the U.S by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that has been and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East region. Kuwait plays a large role in U.S. efforts to advance stability in the Middle East, providing basing, access, and transit for U.S. forces in the region.

Kuwait requires continued support for equipment already procured to ensure national security interests and objectives are met. The defense articles maintained are used solely by the Ministry of Defense to protect the sovereign border and to conduct operations and training to include joint exercises with the U.S. military. Kuwait will be able to absorb this additional equipment and support into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The U.S. companies potentially involved in the sale are Boeing, Mesa, AZ; Longbow Limited, Orlando, FL/Owego, NY (Joint Venture between Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman); Lockheed Martin, Orlando, FL; and DynCorp International, Fort Worth, TX. There are no known offset agreements for the sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of four (4) U.S. Government representatives and sixty-five (65) contractor representatives in country for up to five year.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–56, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Kuwait for defense articles and services estimated to cost $110 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–56

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Kuwait.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $105 million.

Other $5 million.

Total $ 110 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Sixty (60) AIM–120C–7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs).

Non-MDE: This request also includes the containers and other related services.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X5–D–YAD).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: KU–D–YAB (M3).

(vi) Sales Commission. Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress:

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kuwait—AIM–120C–7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM)

The Government of Kuwait has requested a possible sale of sixty (60) AIM–120C–7 AMRAAM Missiles including containers and other related services. The total overall estimated value is $110 million.

This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. Kuwait is a strategic partner in maintaining stability in the region. This sale will increase Kuwait's interoperability with the United States. It also ensures a sustained air-to-air capability for Kuwait's F/A–18 aircraft.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

Implementation of the sale does not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Kuwait.

The principal contractor will be Raytheon Corporation, Tucson, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–56

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AIM–120C Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air (AMRAAM) is a radar guided missile featuring digital technology and microminiature solid-state electronics. AMRAAM capabilities include look-down/shoot-down, multiple launches against multiple targets, resistance to electronic counter measures, and interception of high flying and low flying and maneuvering targets. The AMRAAM All Up Round is classified Confidential, major components and subsystems range from Unclassified to Confidential, and technology data and other documentation are classified up to Secret.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary obtains knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Kuwait.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–82, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the United Kingdom for defense articles and services estimated to cost $400 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–82

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of the United Kingdom.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment $0 million.

(MDE)* Other $400 million.

Total $400 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

MDE: None.

Non-MDE includes: Follow-on support for eight (8) C–17 aircraft, including contract labor for sustainment engineering, on-site COMSEC support, Quality Assurance, support equipment repair, supply chain management, spares replenishment, maintenance, back shop support, and centralized maintenance support/associated services. Required upgrades will include fixed installation satellite antenna, Mode 5+ installation and sustainment, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out, Communications Modernization (CNS/ATM) Phase II, Replacement Heads-Up Display and three special operations loading ramps.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7–D–QDD).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: UK–D–QBK, UK–D–QBL, UK–D–QCX, UK–D–QCY.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress:

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

United Kingdom—Continuation of C–17 Logistics Support Services and Equipment

The Government of the United Kingdom has requested a possible sale of continued logistics support for eight (8) C–17 aircraft which will include: contract labor for sustainment engineering, on-site COMSEC support, Quality Assurance, support equipment repair, supply chain management, spares replenishment, maintenance, back shop support, centralized maintenance support/associated services, and additional spare and repair parts, publications and technical documentation. Required upgrades will include fixed installation satellite antenna, Mode 5+ installation and sustainment, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out, Communications Modernization (CNS/ATM) Phase II, Replacement Heads-Up Display and three special operations loading ramps. The estimated total cost is $400 million.

The United Kingdom is a close ally and an important partner on critical foreign policy and defense issues. The proposed sale will enhance U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives by enhancing the United Kingdom's capabilities to provide national defense and contribute to NATO and coalition operations.

The proposed sale of defense articles and services are required to maintain the operational readiness of the Royal Air Force. The United Kingdom's current contract supporting its C–17 aircraft will expire in September 2017. The United Kingdom will have no difficulty absorbing this support into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be the Boeing Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. The U.S. Government is not aware of any known offsets associated with this sale, Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of this sale will require the assignment of approximately three additional U.S. Government and approximately 55 contractor representatives to the United Kingdom.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–82

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex A Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale will involve the release of sensitive technology to the United Kingdom in the performance of services to sustain eight (8) United Kingdom C–17 aircraft. While much of the below equipment supporting the C–17 is not new to the country, there will be replenishment spares of the below sensitive technologies purchased to support the fleet.

2. The Force 524D is a 24-channel SAASM based Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, with precise positioning service (PPS) capability built upon Trimble's next generation OPS technology. The Force 524D retains backward compatibility with the proven Force 5GS, while adding new functionality to interface with digital antenna electronics, to significantly improve anti-jam (AJ) performance. The host platform can select the radio frequency (RF) or digital antenna electronics (DAE) interface. In the digital mode, the Force 524D is capable of controlling up to 16 independent beams. The hardware and software associated with the 524D receiver card is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. The C–17 aircraft will be equipped with the GAS–1, which is comprised of the Controlled Reception Pattern Antennas (CRPA), with the associated wiring harness and the Antenna Electronics (AE)–1, to provide AJ capability. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED.

4. The KIV–77 is the crypto applique for Mode V Identification Friend or Foe (IFF). The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED and COMSEC controlled.

5. Software, hardware, and other data/information, which is classified or sensitive, is reviewed prior to release to protect system vulnerabilities, design data, and performance parameters. Some end-item hardware, software, and other data identified above are classified at the CONFIDENTIAL and SECRET level. Potential compromise of these systems is controlled through management of the basic software programs, of highly sensitive systems and software-controlled weapon systems, on a case-by-case basis.

6. The United Kingdom is both willing and able to protect United States classified military information. The United Kingdom's physical and document security standards are equivalent to U.S. standards. The United Kingdom has demonstrated its willingness and capability to protect sensitive military technology and information released to its military in the past. The United Kingdom is firmly committed to its relationship with the United States and to its promise to protect classified information and prevent its transfer to a third party.

7. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware or software source code in this proposed sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of systems with similar or advanced capabilities. The benefits to be derived from this sale in the furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology, were revealed to unauthorized persons.

8. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of the United Kingdom.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER CHARLES KEATING IV

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor an American hero, Navy Seal Charles Keating IV, who died in service to his country.

On January 13, 2017, the Navy awarded its highest honor, the Navy Cross, to CPO Charles Keating IV for heroism demonstrated in combat against the Islamic State in northern Iraq. Our Nation lost a great patriot and American hero in Charles, who was only 31 when he succumbed to injuries sustained during an attack on his team. Charles, a Navy SEAL special warfare operator chief petty officer, was part of a quick reaction force that was called upon to aid U.S. military forces and Kurdish Peshmerga allies when they came under heavy fire by a large force of Islamic State fighters north of Mosul. Tragically, we lost Charles on May 3, 2016.

Charles enlisted in the Navy in 2007, leaving Indiana University where he was a long-distance runner. He went on to graduate from the basic underwater demolition/SEAL training in 2008, joining an elite group. He served one tour in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and two tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Previously awarded the Silver Star for his actions in the line of duty, Chief Keating was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously for his demonstration of extraordinary heroism and valor when he was the decisive repellant of an overwhelming enemy force, assuring the lives of his team and coalition counterparts. According to his award citation:

> Keating's courageous leadership, tactical acumen, and physical courage were the key factors in defeating an assault on friendly lines by more than 100 enemy fighters. He continually exposed himself to enemy automatic weapon, mortar, and rocket propelled grenade fire as he diligently maneuvered between fighting positions to stop enemy advances. The enemy then attempted to flank his position with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. At great personal risk, Chief Keating led a team into the open to intercept and neutralize the rapidly closing VBIED threat with precise sniper and rocket fire. His personal bravery throughout the engagement inspired his comrades to vigorously defend their position and repel the enemy's assault.

Nowadays, the words ''hero'' and ''heroism'' are used so often that they tend to lose some of their meaning. For this reason, it is so very important that we identify heroism and honor heroes when they truly present themselves. There can be no greater hero among us than those like Chief Keating, who gave their lives for their fellow man in support of ideals greater than their own self-interest. With this in mind, I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me as we honor the life of Navy SEAL Special Warfare Operator Chief Petty Officer Charles Keating IV and his legacy, who will stand forever in our memory as an illustrious example of each and every man and woman in our Armed Forces and those in harm's way supporting them, who give the ultimate selfless sacrifice in service to our great country.

BUILDING A BETTER MONTANA

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the speech that I gave to the Montana House of Representatives on January 16, 2017, printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

> Speaker Knudsen, Majority Leader Ehli, Minority Leader Eck, honored guests, members of the House: It is truly an honor to be here.
>
> I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that today is Martin Luther King Jr. Day—

a day that celebrates a man who saw injustice in this country and worked to change it. It is a great reminder of the impact a citizen can have on our government if we work together.

This tradition of inviting the members of our Congressional Delegation to address this body reminds us: we are Montanans first. Twelve years ago, when I was Senate President, we made time for these addresses because they are a way to align Montana's priorities at a state and federal level. Montanans look to our elected officials for leadership and a spirit of cooperation. I will admit it is disappointing that the current Montana Senate President chose to abandon the smart tradition of joint addresses to the Legislature, especially early in the session when there is a little more time to do so. Speaker Knudsen, thank you for doing your part to honor this tradition.

But first, I would like to take a moment and thank the men and women who have made our country the leader of the free world for so many generations: our veterans. Would all of the fine folks who served our country please stand to be recognized. Thank you for your service to our country. As the incoming Ranking Member of the VA Committee, I promise we do not take our responsibility to you lightly. Whether it is getting the Southwest Vets Home in Butte built or holding the VA accountable for long wait times, we will work together to do right by our veterans.

As a citizen legislature, we have veterans, farmers, teachers, and small business men and women. And for 90 days or so, you come to Helena to represent your district, vote your conscience, and make Montana proud. Our state's founders knew that whether you are a rancher from Bloomfield or a teacher from Helena, for these 90 days, your priority would be to your constituents and our great state. Despite our differences, we have a common goal, to ensure Montana continues to be the Last Best Place for generations to come.

We know Montana is already a great place. With Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, world-class hunting and fishing, and the best agriculture products in the world, folks from all over come to our state to experience a little slice of the paradise we get to call home. From Sidney to St. Regis and everywhere in between, Montana is full of the hardest working people in the nation.

I hope to work with you to create good paying jobs across Montana. Today I will present a thoughtful, common sense, Montana-focused plan to strengthen our economy and create high paying jobs. I am calling it Employ Montana. Employ Montana will rebuild our infrastructure, create a marketplace for our products, pave the way for innovation, invest in our workforce, and responsibly develop our resources. This will let folks know Montana is open for business.

But in order to compete in a global marketplace Montana needs more than scenery and a dedicated workforce. My first objective, as part of Employ Montana, is to invest in our infrastructure. Together, we can ensure that folks have an infrastructure that allows them to get to work during the week and to play on the weekend and that businesses big and small can get their products to market.

That's why I worked to pass a long-term highway bill that ensures Montanans gets more bang for their buck. Thanks to the highway bill, for every dollar that hardworking Montanans contribute to the federal Highway Trust Fund, our state gets about two-and-a-half bucks back. This year, that's about $424 million for our roads, bridges, and highways.

But we only get that funding if the state agrees to put up a certain amount as well. The Governor provided a temporary fix that ensures we get that funding this year. But this is still a systemic issue that we must address in the future. Montanans need you to ensure the tens of millions of dollars that Montana families pay into the Highway Trust Fund are not sent to New York, California, or Alabama instead. Our construction workers, contractors, and middle class families cannot afford to see money left on the table because their politicians can't agree. I've seen this body rise to the challenge time and time again and I know you will not disappoint.

Montana's infrastructure needs go beyond our bridges, streets, and water systems. That's why Employ Montana will also prepare our state for the 21st Century economy by ensuring responsible investments in rural broadband. In 2015, the second phase of the Connect America Fund delivered nearly $100 million to two broadband companies that serve Montana. I want to see that money resulting in fiber being laid down across this state as soon as possible. That's why I plan to hold CenturyLink and Frontier's feet to the fire and find out what progress they are making. We've invested in them, and it is time to find out what kind of return we are receiving.

Strong connectivity across Montana will attract businesses to our state and allow our Montana made companies to market their product worldwide—companies like Kracklin Kamut, a healthy wheat-based snack food. I am pleased to have Thomas joined by his wife Heather and daughter Grace who just moved to Big Sandy to work for Kracklin Kamut. An innovative start-up like Kracklin Kamut brought Thomas and his family to Big Sandy to work, and with stronger broadband, Kracklin Kamut can be sold even in the biggest markets, which could bring more jobs and more families to the community.

In Montana, we know that, whether it's snack food or textiles, we make a superior product and we are proud to see ''Made in America'' slapped on the label. It is time that we make sure our taxpayer dollars are being used to support American workers, not lining the pockets of foreign corporations.

Through my Employ Montana plan, I will introduce the Berry Amendment Extension Act, which would require the Department of Homeland Security to purchase their supplies from American companies. I think of Bozeman's own Mystery Ranch, which could provide the folks on the border with their quality multi-purpose backpacks. This is a common sense solution that will create jobs here in Montana and keep our taxpayer dollars within our own borders. Whether Montanans produce backpacks, airplane parts, beef, or wheat, we are competing in a global marketplace.

President-elect Trump and I agree: we need to ensure America has fair trade, not free trade. And as part of my Employ Montana plan, I look forward to working with the President-elect to develop trade policies that ensure Montana producers get a fair shake while protecting American workers.

My friends from the forested counties can agree: it's time to negotiate a new softwood lumber agreement. I will work with the new Administration to create a fair, effective, and sustainable softwood lumber agreement. This will help our timber industry get the certainty they need to responsibly cut trees and help get our mills back to work.

Our timber industry is not the only one suffering from unfair trade practices. Farmers across Montana continue to feel the consequence of unfair wheat grading by the Canadian government. There is many a company that gets stopped at the border because of unfair trade practices. Montana farmers produce the best product. To see it immediately downgraded to feed grade at the border is unacceptable. I'll do my part, and I want the Trump administration to do their part to ensure Montana farmers can be competitive in the global marketplace. This will create a strong market for Montana's farmers, putting more money into the hands of our farmers, more money that they can spend on Montana products.

I believe the best way to create jobs is to build an economy that empowers innovators. Often times, creative Montanans lack the access to capital in order to start their business. A large part of my Employ Montana plan is dedicated to ensuring Montana innovators have access to capital and the means to develop private partnerships. Programs like the Small Business Innovation Research Program provide grant money to companies to help them get off the ground.

I am pleased to have one of those innovators, Stan Abel, of SiteOne Therapeutics, in the gallery today joined by his wife Stacey. Stan saw the opioid crisis ravaging our country and worked with scientist to try and find a better, less addictive, way to manage pain. With the help of SBIR grants Stan was able to get his business started and went on to secure private investment from Montana's first successful Venture Capital firm Next Frontier. SiteOne will continue to grow and employ more and more people in Montana because of Stan's ability to see a problem and think of an innovative solution to solve that problem. A Montana business supported by Montana capital makes SiteOne a model for our state and we need to look to spread their success statewide. With increased SBIR grants, we will have more innovators like Stan leading the way.

Small business grants are only one piece of the puzzle. The next part of my Employ Montana plan is to cut red tape and increase access to capital for community banks. I am pleased to have Bob Nystuen and his wife Kim in the gallery today as well. Bob is President of Glacier Bank in Kalispell.

Bob has worked for community banks from Miles City to Kalispell, and he tells me that Montana is bursting with new ideas and ripe for a growing business climate. But our community banks are hampered by regulation that was meant to police the big guys, not the small credit unions and community banks that serve rural America and Main Street. All you have to do is spend five minutes with Bob to understand the differences between him and a Wall Street banker. As a member of the Banking Committee, I will work with Democrats and Republicans to provide responsible reforms to Dodd-Frank, to cut red tape for Bob and other Montana banks that are the cornerstone of our rural communities. With regulatory relief, our businesses will have better access to capital and be able to invest in their product, hire more workers, and expand their markets.

Luckily, for our businesses, Montana's workforce is second to none. My Employ Montana plan includes lean and mean investment in our workforce, an investment that is designed to meet the needs of the community.

In the gallery today, we have Mike Robbins, the Chairman of the Board of Montana Precision Products. Montana Precision Products builds components for GE Aviation. This company needs welders and has plans to hire 80 to 100 people by 2020.

And that's why they've partnered with the Anaconda Job Corps to build a skilled pipeline of employees. The Employ Montana plan proposes to boost our Job Corps programs in order to meet the needs of Montana businesses. So folks like Ray Ryan, the Site Manager for Anaconda Job Corps, can train

up the next generation of skilled workers, workers like Megan Widmer and Katie Barker. These two young ladies are active in the Anaconda Job Corps and they are here today with Ray. I want to thank them for their dedication to Montana.

With additional resources, we can ensure the Anaconda Job Corps and programs like it expand, create good paying jobs, and meet the needs of local industry with well-trained local workers.

But these types of community partnerships should not just be limited to Job Corps—we need to look at our education system and ensure it is creating a workforce that meets Montana's needs. Our two-year colleges are the key. That's why as part of Employ Montana, we need to give our community colleges the resources they need to develop the talent our employers are asking for. Because of our investment in education, a kid from Columbia Falls can go down to Flathead Community College, join its culinary program, and start a restaurant in Whitefish. And a young woman from Terry can travel southwest to Miles City Community College, enroll in its Commercial Driver's License course, and learn to drive an 18-wheeler hauling grain up to the Port of Raymond. We can work together to build on the success of our community colleges and expand our job training programs so that our workforce is ready to answer the call. Investing in our education is an investment in Montana's future.

Developing our human resources is critically important to a strong economy. But in Montana we have an incredible supply of natural resources as well. Included in Employ Montana is a plan to responsibly develop an all-of-the-above energy strategy. I plan to introduce the Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage Act, which will incentivize investment in the use of carbon capture technology. This legislation will provide tax credits to allow for Montana companies to burn coal cleaner and create good paying jobs.

But we can't ignore the fact that our climate is changing. This isn't a tree hugging issue; it's a jobs issue, and it's a food security issue. Montana's number one industry, agriculture, will lose profits and be more dependent on the federal government to pay the bills if we don't start taking proactive steps to protect our clean air and water. This is Montana's Constitutional right.

So I hope you will join me in supporting Employ Montana. From stronger infrastructure, to better broadband, increased start up grants and access to capital. From strengthening workforce programs and tapping our energy economy—Employ Montana will create high paying jobs and an economy we are proud of.

Now I would be remiss if I didn't take the last few minutes to talk about health care. It's a pressing issue and one that both Congress and the Montana Legislature will have to grapple with. Thanks to your good work last session Montana expanded Medicaid to over 60,000 hardworking people. For the first time in their lives these people were able to afford health coverage, you should be commended for that.

Repeal. Delay. Replace. Repeal and replace. Repeal and Delay. Obamacare. Trumpcare.

Here are the facts: The health care industry accounts for over 52,000 jobs in Montana. Health care in Montana is a $4 billion industry. If Congress repeals the Affordable Care Act: Coverage would be ripped away from the 60,000 folks you gave hope to just two years ago. Montana's economy would lose $3.1 Billion—with a capital ''B''—between 2019 and 2023. It would add $350 Billion to the deficit. We would lose 8,200 jobs in 2019 alone. And rural areas would feel it the most, hospitals in towns like Culbertson, Hamilton, and my home town of Big Sandy would potentially have to board up their doors. Working together to fix the Affordable Care Act is just good business.

I've been around the state and the message is clear: People don't want Congress taking away their health care. Right now we have an incredible opportunity to find bipartisan solutions that can make health care more affordable for middle class families. But instead of having that important conversation, Congress is on the cusp of repealing all the progress we've made.

I want to be clear. I know premiums are rising. We cannot settle for any situation where middle class families cannot afford health insurance. I know that. But let's work together to keep the accountability up, and the costs down. Repealing the ACA without a plan for what comes next will not lower costs. Our families' health care is too important to throw it into chaos. We need to look before we leap. And we can't throw the baby out with the bath water. We need to be working to provide affordability to families and certainty to the rural communities that rely on our hospitals. I know we can find common ground to deliver that to Montana.

In Montana, there is far more that unites us than divides us. We can all agree that Montana raises the best agriculture products in the world. We can all agree that on a summer afternoon we'd rather be on the river than cooped up in an office. And we can all agree that Montana is home to the hardest working men and women in the world. We owe it to these hardworking men and women to come together to build a stronger Montana.

Together, we can build stronger roads and bridges. We can build a 21st Century infrastructure. We can build the quality products to supply folks at home and abroad. We can build a business friendly environment that encourages innovation and investment. We can build a more efficient workforce to meet the needs of our changing economy. We can build an energy sector that doesn't mortgage our future for today's profits. We can build a health care system that works for everyone, not just big insurance or drug companies. And we can build a stronger, better Montana for our next generation.

Good luck in the coming weeks.

God bless you, God bless Montana, and God bless this great country.

REMEMBERING TIM MITCHELL

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to express my deep sorrow on the passing of Tim Mitchell. Through his absolute dedication to this institution and the special kind of person he was, Tim made the Senate a better place.

Tim served as the assistant secretary for the minority. As Senator Reid shared during his September remarks in celebration of Tim's 25 years of exemplary service, Tim began his career in the Senate working for Senator Don Riegle, Jr., of Michigan.

He later worked for Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota and the Democratic Policy & Communications Committee before joining the Democratic floor staff in 2001. Tim also took night classes at Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law—an impressive feat.

The Senate often calls for long days and longer nights. Debates on the floor may get heated, rollcall votes may drag on for hours, but Tim always kept a calm temperament and kind demeanor. He was soft spoken, but firm—not an easy feat while juggling the Members of this body's unique needs and passions.

He was simply the best at what he did, and he made a real difference in how the Senate worked. The value of his service is incalculable.

To Tim's family—his wife, Alicia, and his 11-year-old son, Ben—I am so sorry for your loss. I am forever grateful that you shared Tim with us for so many years.

I echo Senator Reid's previous remarks: Tim's time here changed the Senate and this country for the better.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY CONTEST FINALISTS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont high school students as part of the seventh annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The material follows:

FINN ABBEY, MOUNT MANSFIELD UNION HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN (FINALIST)

Our country has faced many issues in the past, but today we face one of our greatest challenges. Division. We have forgotten to care for each other; forgotten that we are only strong with each other. We are growing too uncompassionate, too distrustful of each other. We can and must remember that we are not enriched by the success of one person, but rather the success of many. We prosper not with the defeat of others, but with their success. And keeping with the philosophy that we must succeed together, we must work together on smaller challenges.

Our country needs a system that not only doesn't punish the poor for their very existence, but offers every person the chance to better themselves. The hope that your children will have a better life than you has long been a staple of the American dream. To accomplish this, we need to create a liveable wage of $15, and create a progressive tax system that leaves the poor with more and takes fairly from those who can afford it. We cannot be satisfied in the splendor of ourselves and people like us when our fellow Americans are living in the streets.

We must also institute universal health care. This will involve higher taxes, of course, but, combined with strict laws about pharmaceutical pricing and a fair tax system, will ensure that our country is healthy and our middle class stays strong. No one should ever have to choose between food and medicine. We need change.

We also must guarantee everyone the right to vote, and that their votes count. Time and time again voter ID laws have suppressed the African-American vote. We cannot say we are equal when we pass laws with the purpose of lowering voter turnout.

We also have to remove another recent mistake in election law: Citizens United. We cannot accept catering to special interests as a side effect of democracy; we must recognize it as a barrier to a fairer system. We must put the redrawing of congressional districts in the hands of independent commissions to prevent gerrymandering. Anything

less is a conflict of interest and a mockery of democracy. We need to replace first past the post with ranked choice voting, allowing for a greater variety of candidates. This will serve as another booth in the marketplace of ideas.

To many these goals are mountains too tall to climb. But in America, we don't know how to give up. It's what makes us great. The idea that if we want change, we'll fight until we reach it. It's what got African-Americans equality under the law. It's what got women the right to vote. It's what has brought equal love to our entire nation. And it's what led to independence for the plucky colonists who took on the world because they thought it could be better. Throughout our history, all we've needed is an idea, an ideal, and each other. After all, out of many, we are one.

EMILY BALLOU, SOUTH ROYALTON HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR (FINALIST)

It is both a privilege and an honor to live in a nation where I have the right to speak my mind without the fear of failure or retribution, where liberty of expression is celebrated, and diverging views, though challenged, are entitled to develop according to their merit.

The greatest problem we have is that the people of our country lack compassion. We lack empathy. We need to integrate our passions instead of separating them. Love should trump hate, but it seems as of late that that is reversed. We must renew our nation, and to do so, we must stop the ignorance of the public. We must end the bigoted, chauvinistic, and discriminatory ideologies and mindsets of our people.

What we have in common is more important than the differences used to divide us. Groups of like-minded people acting in a similar fashion are not a new phenomenon, but the engagement of these groups has become dedicated to excluding the expression of other views.

What makes a country great is not how rich the monetary funds of the upper class is, but how well its most vulnerable citizens are treated. This is why we must start early and teach the next generation to kindness and to love.

When someone of power misuses his or her status to bully those more vulnerable, their actions are desensitized. This disrespect incites more discord which invites both fear and hatred into the minds of all ages. The very young feel no hatred. Currently, not all adolescents are being taught the importance of tolerance and empathy in their homes, schools, or in public. These lessons must begin in their earliest years of schooling before they acquire biases from around them and their beliefs are negatively impacted.

The vernacular must include words of kindness, not derogatory terms or racially-charged slurs. No matter what an individual's values are, they should not value the discrimination and hatred associated with these words. Silence is compliance. The cycle of history will continue to repeat itself unless people begin to empathize with all. If one wishes to ''Make America Great Again,'' hate should not be the weapon of choice. We must be more inclusive and accepting of the diversity in which this nation has prided and built itself on, for change begins with ourselves.

Love does trump hate. Although we adhere to the flaws in society, we must not. We must instill hope into those of the coming generations. There is hope that our world will see peace. There is hope that our world will be preserved. There is hope for change. We are ''a nation of the people, by the people, for the people that shall not perish from the Earth,'' where people, no matter their race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender, should take comfort in. We are the great United States of America, and the day we forget that, we will cease to exist, because despite current circumstances, the world is not entirely lost if everyone resists, together.

BILLY BENDER, HANOVER HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE (FINALIST)

Mr Speaker, Mr Vice President, Members of the 115th Congress and Distinguished Guests,

As Americans we face many difficulties, but two are of particular concern: one is a challenge to our world, the other to our republic. We can and must do more to stop global warming, and we can and must get big money out of politics.

Climate Change is real. The scientific debate is over. We have already begun to see its effects in the United States. Large sections of the country have experienced severe droughts and wildfires, hurricanes have been more violent, and our summers are becoming dangerously hot in the south. Internationally, long-term droughts are causing malnutrition, threatening coastal cities, and creating climate refugees. This is real, it is urgent, it is a direct result of the actions of humans, and its impact will be felt disproportionately by the most vulnerable peoples on our planet. We caused it, and we can stop it. We have a responsibility toward our children, our grandchildren, and all of the future inhabitants of our planet.

Our government needs to invest heavily in large scale clean energy infrastructure projects. We need to renew and add to the existing subsidies on renewable energy to make solar or wind a viable financial option for homeowners and businesses. We need to invest heavily in clean energy research and stop subsidizing fossil fuels. When renewables like solar, wind and hydro power are cheaper than oil, then the massive oil companies will have no choice but to become energy companies instead of oil companies and build dams, wind farms and solar fields. We will no longer have to tolerate the risks of nuclear energy.

However, to achieve the goal of powering our nation with renewable energy, we need to take the influence of huge, anonymous donors out of American politics. Citizens United has allowed huge corporations to funnel millions of dollars into electing politicians who regard them favorably. The fossil fuel industry is hugely profitable, and the millionaires and billionaires who control them want to delay and diminish the impact of renewables on their bottom line. Their huge sums of money give them a massively disproportionate voice in elections, allowing them to create Super PACs which will ensure the continued existence of dangerous, damaging practices like fracking.

Climate change is a critical problem facing our nation and our world, but it will be difficult to take the bold steps necessary to mitigate its effects without first eliminating the advantage that billionaires have in our elections. It is time to take large scale legislative and judicial steps to eliminate the out sized voice of the extremely wealthy and save our planet for all who come after us.

SIMON BUPP-CHICKERING, BELLOWS FALLS UNION HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR (FINALIST)

''Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.''—Martin Luther King Jr.

A nation that neglects to confront and eliminate injustice is no true defender of its people's rights. Due to the death penalty's inherent inability to be more than state sponsored revenge, its exorbitant cost, and the lack of statistical evidence showing it does anything to stop murder, the death penalty is an antiquated and medieval punishment that has no place in a modern democracy.

One of the most common arguments brought up by proponents of the death penalty is the idea that enforcing the death penalty acts as a deterrent for other criminals. However, this argument fails to account for the fact that the vast majority of murderers aren't executed, less than one percent. In addition, 88 percent of criminologists, experts who study crime for a living, refute the idea that the death penalty works as a deterrent. Furthermore, as the South accounts for 80 percent of all executions in the United States, if the death penalty did act as deterrence, then those states would have the lowest rates of murder. However, the South holds the country's highest murder rate, and the North, which accounts for less than 1 percent of the country's executions, has the lowest murder rate.

The death penalty as it is practiced today is simply a tool for revenge, misguidedly used in an attempt to help grieving families. The finality of the punishment destroys any hope of reflection, apology, or forgiveness, thus eliminating any chance of true healing. Additionally, revenge is an emotional response to tragedy, and the judicial system in America should be about providing just and emotionally unbiased decisions. Instead of perpetuating a cycle of violence, the United States government should promote restorative justice, which promotes rehabilitation and the improvement and bettering society rather than resort to base human emotions in response to tragedy.

In order to prevent this outdated and pointless practice of state-funded murder from damaging our justice system any further, the death penalty must be abolished nationwide, and those on death role should have their sentences commuted to life in prison without parole. In a modern, civilized society, there is no place for such a horrific punishment. Most other enlightened nations around the world have removed the death penalty from their judicial systems. Instead of remaining among the questionable company of nations such as North Korea, America must prove that it understands the egregious error in killing as punishment for killing.

Ultimately, the fact that the United States still uses the death penalty reveals a fundamental lack of ethical maturity in our nation, and is a mark of shame to Americans who want to believe that the country they live in has evolved from the barbaric practices of antiquity along with the rest of the civilized world.●

TRIBUTE TO MILTON BRONSTEIN

● Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, Mr. Milton Bronstein, a lifelong public servant, labor leader, and great friend to me, today celebrates his 100th birthday.

Milton served in many capacities during his more than three decades of service as an employee of the State of Rhode Island. In addition, he was an active workers' organizer, leading Rhode Island's AFSCME chapter, Council 94, as its first president and eventually becoming the retiree chapter's vice president until retiring just last year at age 99.

Those who have been fortunate enough to work alongside Milton during his State service or to benefit under his tenure at Council 94 describe him as a strong, dedicated leader and mentor. Current labor leaders say Milton's involvement helped strengthen

the labor movement in Rhode Island. It is his selflessness and commitment to seeing working Rhode Islanders succeed that so many of us admire.

Milton has been a tireless leader in the community. He has served on the board of directors of the Rhode Island Credit Union and the Touro Fraternal Association, the largest independent Jewish fraternal order in New England, for more than 50 years. He also was very active in the Rhode Island Democratic Party for just as long, working as president of the Association of Democratic City and Town Chairs. One of his proudest moments in politics was being a member of the 1992 Electoral College where he proudly cast his vote for President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

I know Milton's family means everything to him. His love for his late wife, Claire, and his devotion to his children, Harvey, Andrew, and Cindy, are obvious. He has carried on his devotion to family with his seven grandchildren and his two great-grandchildren, with one more on the way.

Milton has been a close friend, supporter, and adviser to me throughout my political career. He is someone you can go to when you need help, and he is always there. He has helped so many people over the years, but you would be hard pressed to hear of him asking anything for himself.

Milton, I am lucky to celebrate you today. You are a great Rhode Islander. Thank you for everything you have done for me and for your dedicated service to the people of our great Ocean State. As your friend and Senator, please accept my birthday wishes for a wonderful 100th year.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–476. A communication from the Director, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2016 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–477. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2,4–D; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9958–07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–478. A communication from the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–479. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Joseph P. Mulloy, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–480. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment'' (RIN0790–ZA12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–481. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–482. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2016 Annual Report; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–483. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Total Loss-Absorbing Capacity, Long-Term Debt, and Clean Holding Company Requirements for Systematically Important U.S. Bank Holding Companies and Intermediate Holding Companies of Systematically Important Foreign Banking Organizations'' (RIN7100–AE37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–484. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13692 on March 8, 2015, with respect to Venezuela; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–485. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–486. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in executive order 13288 on March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–487. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13660 on March 6, 2014, with respect to Ukraine; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–488. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Cuba and of the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels, as amended; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–489. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Libya declared in Executive Order 13566; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–490. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 on March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–491. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to operation of the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–492. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–493. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, an Executive Order that revokes sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, and revokes Executive Order 13412 of October 13, 2006, in its entirety; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–494. A communication from the Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Penalty Inflation Adjustments'' (12 CFR Part 1083) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–495. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of a national emergency declared in Executive Order 13222 with respect to the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–496. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations'' (RIN0694–AH22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–497. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to the Export Administration Regulations Implementing an Additional Phase of India-US Export Control Cooperation'' (RIN0694–AH26) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–498. A communication from the Chief of the Policy, Performance, and Management Programs Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska—2016–17 and 2017–18 Subsistence Taking of Wildlife Regulations'' (RIN1018–BA39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–499. A communication from the Deputy Designate Agency Ethics Official, Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Supplemental Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Department of the Interior'' (RIN1092–AA12) received during adjournment of the Senate in

the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–500. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustments'' (RIN 1029–AC74) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–501. A communication from the Division Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Onshore Oil and Gas Operations—Annual Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustments'' (RIN1004–AE49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–502. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's proposal to accept a 3590-acre donation from The Wilderness Land Trust; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–503. A joint communication from the Special Representative, Office of Insular Affairs, Department of the Interior and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Special Representative, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to the President on 902 Consultations''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–504. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled ''Report to the Congress: Compact Impact Analysis of the 2015 Reports on Guam and Hawaii'' and ''Impact of the Compacts of Free Association on Guam FY (Fiscal Year) 2004 through FY 2015''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–505. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report related to the Colorado River System Reservoirs for 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–506. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''Report to Congress Eliminating Principal or Major Uses on Tracts of Land in California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana (exceeding 100,000 acres)''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–507. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Technical Correction to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter'' ((RIN2060–AS89) (FRL No, 9958–29–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–508. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances; Withdrawal'' ((RIN2070–AB27) (FRL No. 9958–20)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Promulgation of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead, 2008 Ozone, 2010 NO2, 2010 SO2, and 2012 PM2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standards; Wyoming'' (FRL No. 9958–35–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–510. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in Procurements Under EPA Financial Assistance Agreements'' ((RIN2090–AA40) (FRL No. 9958–44–OA)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–511. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) Electronic Reporting Requirements'' ((RIN2060–AS75) (FRL No. 9958–30–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–512. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Deadline for Action on the November 28, 2016 Section 126 Petition From Delaware'' (FRL No. 9958–26–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–513. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for the Dental Category'' ((RIN2040–AF26) (FRL No. 9957–10–OW)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–514. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment and Approval of Base Year Emissions Inventories for the Imperial County, California Fine Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area'' (FRL No. 9958–21–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–515. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Aquatic Life Criteria for Cadmium in Oregon'' ((RIN2040–AF60) (FRL No. 9958–40–OW)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–516. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; El Paso Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan'' (FRL No. 9957–56–Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–517. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Inspection and Maintenance Program Error Correction'' (FRL No. 9957–41–Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–518. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Revisions to Nonattainment Permitting Regulations'' (FRL No. 9958–28–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–519. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment to Standards and Practices for All Appropriate Inquiries Under CERCLA'' (FRL No. 9958–47–OLEM) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–520. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Disapproval; AL; Prong 4 Visibility for the 2008 8-hour Ozone Standard'' (FRL No. 9958–42–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–521. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; NOx as a Precursor to Ozone, PM2.5 Increment Rules and PSD Infrastructure DIP Requirements'' (FRL No. 9957–58–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–522. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; District of Columbia; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference'' (FRL No. 9955–98–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–523. A communication from the Chief of the Policy, Performance, and Management Programs Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Identification of 14 Distinct Population Segments of the Humpback Whale and Revision of Species-Wide Listing'' (RIN1018–BB80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–524. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure regarding the Section 403(b) Remedial Amendment Period'' (Rev. Proc. 2017–18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–525. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare and Medicaid Program; Conditions of Participation for Home Health Agencies'' ((RIN0938–AG81) (CMS–3819-F)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–526. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of the designation of Rhonda Schnare Schmidtlein as Chair of the United States International Trade Commission for the term expiring June 16, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–527. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation: Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–528. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Maximum Vehicle Values for 2017 for Use With Vehicle Cents-Per-Mile and Fleet-Average Valuation Rules'' (Notice 2017–03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–529. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Availability and Use of an Account Transcript as a Substitute for and Estate Tax Closing Letter'' (Notice 2017–12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–530. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; The Use of New or Increased Pass-Through Payments in Medicaid Managed Care Delivery Systems'' ((RIN0938–AT10) (CMS–2402-F)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–531. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program: Changes to the Medicare Claims and Entitlement, Medicare Advantage Organization Determination, and Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Determination Appeals Procedures'' (RIN0991–AC02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–532. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Finalizing Medicare Rules under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) for Calendar Year (CY) 2016''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–533. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation Rules for Post-2000 State Housing Credit Ceiling'' (Rev. Rul. 2016–29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–534. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation Regarding Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Color, or National Origin in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance From the Department of the Treasury'' (RIN1505–AC45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–535. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Recommendations for the Future of CHIP and Children's Coverage''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–536. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Clarification of When Products Made or Derived From Tobacco Are Regulated as Drugs, Devices, or Combination Products; Amendments to Regulations Regarding 'Intended Uses'" ((RIN0910–AH19) (Docket No. FDA–2015–N–2002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–537. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder Patient Records'' (RIN0930–AA21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–538. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at the Pantex Plant site in Amarillo, Texas, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor , and Pensions.

EC–539. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Student Assistance General Provisions'' (RIN1840–AD22) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–540. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2014–2015 Scientific and Clinical Status of Organ Transplantation Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–541. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''National Health Service Corps Report to Congress for the Year 2015''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–542. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–543. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–544. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Poison Help Campaign Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–545. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2014–2015 Report to Congress on Organ Donation and the Recovery, Preservation, and Transportation of Organs''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–546. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Performance Report to Congress for the Medical Device User Fee Amendments''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–547. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Report to Congress: Older Americans Act''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–548. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–549. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Performance Report to the President and Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–550. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Control of Communicable Diseases'' (RIN0920–AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–551. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at Area IV of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory site in Ventura County, California, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–552. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Department of Labor Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Annual Adjustments for 2017'' (RIN1290–AA31) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–553. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Division of Select Agents

and Toxins, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Possession, Use, and Transfer of Select Agents and Toxins; Biennial Review of the List of Select Agents and Toxins and Enhanced Biosafety Requirements'' (RIN0920–AA59) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–554. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Update of FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Regulations to Reflect the Terminology of Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements'' ((RIN1660–AA89) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0034)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–555. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments for Ethics in Government Act Violations'' (RIN3209–AA00 and RIN3209–AA38) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–556. A communication from the Director, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2016 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–557. A communication from the Chairwoman of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2016 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–558. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period from April 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–559. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to mileage reimbursement rates for Federal employees who use privately owned vehicles while on official travel; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–560. A communication from the Administrator, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's annual financial audit and management report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–561. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–621, ''Constitution and Boundaries for the State of Washington, D.C. Approval Resolution of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–562. A communication from the Chairman and Members of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of April 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–563. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''The D.C. Government Must Improve Policies and Practices for the Protection of Personally Identifiable Information''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–564. A communication from the Staff Attorney, National Indian Gaming Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Privacy Act Procedures'' (RIN3141–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–565. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Annual Report of the National Institute of Justice''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–566. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–567. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Attorney General, National Security Division, Department of Justice, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–568. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Solicitor General, Department of Justice, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–569. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, Department of Justice, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–570. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Community Relations Service, Department of Justice, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–571. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Community Relations Service, Department of Justice, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–572. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Regulatory Affairs Law Division, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Eliminating Exception to Expedited Removal Authority for Cuban Nationals Arriving by Air'' (RIN1601–AA81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–573. A communication from the General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Eliminating Exception to Expedited Removal Authority for Cuban Nationals Arriving by Air'' (RIN1125–AA80) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–574. A communication from the Chief of the Regulatory Coordination Division, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''International Entrepreneur Rule'' (RIN1615–AC04) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–575. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–576. A communication from the Acting Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Diseases Associated with Exposure to Contaminants in the Water Supply at Camp Lejeune'' (RIN2900–AP66) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. LEE (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 185. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to authorize block grants to States for prekindergarten education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. REED):

S. 186. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inacation by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 187. A bill for the relief of Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 188. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the costs of painting portraits of officers and employees of the Federal Government; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 189. A bill to modify the boundary of the Fort Scott National Historic Site in the State of Kansas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 190. A bill to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 191. A bill to improve patient choice by allowing States to adopt market-based alternatives to the Affordable Care Act that increase access to affordable health insurance and reduce costs while ensuring important consumer protections and improving patient care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 192. A bill to withdraw certain land located in Curry County and Josephine County, Oregon, from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws, location, entry, and patent under the mining laws, and operation under the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 193. A bill to facilitate nationwide availability of volunteer income tax assistance for low-income and underserved populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 194. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a public health insurance option, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. Res. 18. A resolution reaffirming the United States-Argentina partnership and recognizing Argentina's economic reforms; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, and Mrs. ERNST):

S. Res. 19. A resolution denouncing the deadly attack at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, honoring the lives of the victims, offering condolences to their families, friends, and all those affected, and commending the efforts of law enforcement and emergency response personnel in responding to the incident; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 11

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 11, a bill to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, to relocate to Jerusalem the United States Embassy in Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 16

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 16, a bill to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 18

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 18, a bill to promote freedom, fairness, and economic opportunity by repealing the income tax and other taxes, abolishing the Internal Revenue Service, and enacting a national sales tax to be administered primarily by the States.

S. 26

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 26, a bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes.

S. 27

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 27, a bill to establish an independent commission to examine and report on the facts regarding the extent of Russian official and unofficial cyber operations and other attempts to interfere in the 2016 United States national election, and for other purposes.

S. 33

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 33, a bill to provide for congressional approval of national monuments and restrictions on the use of national monuments, to establish requirements for the declaration of marine national monuments, and for other purposes.

S. 57

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 57, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to revoke bonuses paid to employees involved in electronic wait list manipulations, and for other purposes.

S. 59

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 59, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 78

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 78, a bill to provide for reimbursement for the use of modern travel services by Federal employees traveling on official Government business, and for other purposes.

S. 92

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 92, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow for the personal importation of safe and affordable drugs from approved pharmacies in Canada.

S. 104

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 104, a bill to provide for the vacating of certain convictions and expungement of certain arrests of victims of human trafficking.

S. 139

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 139, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 141

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 141, a bill to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, and for other purposes.

S. 143

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 143, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for amounts paid by a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces for a new State license or certification required by reason of a permanent change in the duty station of such member to another State.

S. 172

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 172, a bill to require the President to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and to make that Agreement ineligible for expedited consideration by Congress.

S. 175

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 175, a bill to amend the

Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 184

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 184, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

S.J. RES. 1

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 1, a joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.

S.J. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 6, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

S. CON. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 5, a concurrent resolution affirming the importance of religious freedom as a fundamental human right that is essential to a free society and protected for all people of the United States under the Constitution of the United States, and recognizing the 231st anniversary of the enactment of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

S. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 6, a resolution objecting to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 and to all efforts that undermine direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians for a secure and peaceful settlement.

S. RES. 15

At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 15, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Mexico City policy should be permanently established.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 187. A bill for the relief of Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 187

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR ALEMSEGHED MUSSIE TESFAMICAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151) and section 240 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1229a), Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical shall be eligible for the issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1154) or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—If Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical enters the United States before the filing deadline specified in subsection (c), Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical shall be considered to have entered into and remained lawfully in the United States and, if otherwise eligible, shall be eligible for adjustment of status under section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255) as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall apply only if the application for issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status is filed by Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical with appropriate fees not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REDUCTION OF IMMIGRANT VISA NUMBER.—Upon the granting of an immigrant visa or permanent residence to Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper officer to reduce by 1, during the current or next following fiscal year, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of Alemseghed Mussie Tesfamical's birth under section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(a)) or, if applicable, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of such country under section 202(e) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(e)).

(e) BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–139), shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 191. A bill to improve patient choice by allowing States to adopt market-based alternatives to the Affordable Care Act that increase access to affordable health insurance and reduce costs while ensuring important consumer protections and improving patient care; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I have the privilege, with Senator COLLINS, to introduce a replacement bill for ObamaCare, with her experience as an insurance commissioner and mine as a physician caring for the insured and the underinsured. Let me also give due credit to PETE SESSIONS in the House, who has introduced a very similar bill to come up with something that we think works not just for the people we represent but for the entire country. That is our goal.

I wish to speak on the Patient Freedom Act of 2017. Our goal, if you will—I tell my staff to imagine a woman who voted for Donald Trump and doesn't like ObamaCare, but she has breast cancer. Her coverage has a $6,000 deductible, but she has coverage. On the other hand, she wants to see something different. If we just view our efforts through the prism of her care, I think we will do right by the American people.

Let me say something else. Again, our goal is not to come up with a Republican plan; it is not to come up with an anti-ObamaCare plan; our goal is to come up with an American patient plan where, whoever she or he is, they can feel comfortable that, as a Senate, we are trying to do right by the American people.

Let's go to first principles. First principles is, we in the Republican Party think that if you like your insurance, you should be able to keep it. I will come to that later. President Obama was rightly criticized because he pledged that, and it turns out it wasn't true. That is one of our first principles, and we mean it.

Secondly, we think the States should have the power, not the Federal Government. When you speak to Americans, they want their State capital to be the kind of principal force behind how their insurance is administered, not our Nation's Capital, so we return power to both the States and to patients.

Lastly, I will say that we are truly reaching out to Democrats. One of the criticisms of ObamaCare is that it was rammed through on a partisan vote with hardly a consideration given of Republicans. Senator COLLINS and I are absolutely open to working with Democrats for this solution.

How do we begin?

We first begin by repealing the ObamaCare mandates and penalties. The American people do not like Washington telling them how to live their lives. We take those mandates and penalties from both the individual and the employer and we take them off.

Secondly, we work to make health care truly affordable. We do this by giving States a choice to put in what we call the State alternative. I think we are going to begin calling it the better choice. In the better choice, we would use tax credits which would go to those who are eligible and which would go into an account. If the patient did nothing, she would have a

health savings account, which will be pre funded. The money would go in, actually put money into the account—catastrophic coverage and a pharmacy benefit.

It is important to note that she would have power over this account. If she wished, she could combine it with her family's, these different tax credits, and they could buy a richer family policy, or she could assign it to her employer as the employee's contribution for an employer-sponsored plan.

If each member of the family decided to keep their own HPSA account and one of them got a terrible illness and went into the cash portion and exhausted their health savings account, we would allow family members to donate their health savings account balance to each other to help cover that cash exposure.

We do different things, but the goal is to give the patient the power.

Since we are going to these health savings accounts under the better choice model, in the better choice model, we give these tax credits that go into a health savings account. The individual can donate their own money, or the employer can contribute theirs. These are some of the options they have, but whichever options they have, we institute price transparency. That is to say that when the patient goes to have her blood test, she will know the cost of the blood test before she has it done as opposed to finding out later.

This came to mind this past Sunday. I had a friend in town for the inauguration. She is a physician, and she went for a vitamin D level. When she went for the vitamin D level and got the bill, it was $290. She called the hospital and said: I order these all the time. Am I really getting a $290 charge on each of these?

They said: Oh, yes, ma'am. That is what we bill patients.

So she went to different labs and found out the cash price for the panels of labs she typically orders.

She had a patient who was from out of town and was paying cash. She said: Pay me $38; it will cover the labs. Here is the slip; go to the lab.

The patient paid $38 but went to the wrong laboratory. She was from out of town and not quite sure where to go. She went to the wrong laboratory. The bill she got, which in one lab would be $38, in the other lab was $690.

My physician friend called the hospital and said: You have to be kidding—$690?

They reduced it to $380. There is a tenfold difference in the cash price for labs. If the patient had known that, she probably would have paid more attention to the directions. But certainly if the price of the labs were posted when she went, even if she went to the wrong place, she could have looked at the fee schedule and decided she needed to go someplace else.

One of the young men who work with me said: Yes, I get it, price transparency. Who would buy a car without knowing the price beforehand? It would be great for the car dealer but really lousy for you. That is how we purchase health care now. It is great for the folks selling the service; it is pretty lousy for the person paying the cash.

By this, we think we begin to use market forces to reduce costs. By the way, this is not only about saving the patient money, which is very important, but here is another example.

John Fleming is a physician who until recently was a Member of the House of Representatives. He tells the story of when their office went to a health savings account, a woman who worked with him came to him and said: Dr. Fleming, I don't like these health savings accounts. Previously I had a pharmacy benefit that paid for my inhaler, and now I don't have the same pharmacy benefit.

He said: Well, under their plan, at least, you can use the health savings account to pay for your inhaler, and, by the way, if you stopped smoking, you wouldn't need the inhaler.

Then he walks away.

Six months later she says to him: Dr. Fleming, you were right.

He didn't remember the conversation. He turns around and she says: Remember when you told me if I stopped smoking, I wouldn't need an inhaler? I stopped smoking and I don't need an inhaler.

So what this does is it activates the patient. It gets her or him engaged in their health care, and between that—not only do we protect the patient's pocketbook, but we also do something positive for their health care.

Let me also point this out. We think most States would go for the better choice. It is possible, though, that a State will reject everything and say: We don't want Medicaid expansion dollars and we don't want any extra help for those who have lower incomes. We would give States that choice. This is not Washington, DC, forcing something on people.

Let me also point out something else. Republicans believe that if you like your health care, you can keep it; if you like your health insurance, you can keep it, and we mean it. If a State decided they wished to stay on ObamaCare—I think it is a terrible decision—but this legislation would allow a State to do so.

I was so disappointed. I saw that the minority leader, Mr. SCHUMER, criticized our bill and said things that weren't true—fake news, if you will. He said we didn't cover preexisting conditions. We do. He said the deductibles and copays would be too high, which is not true, but what was striking is that he hasn't read our legislation yet.

This is what is wrong with Washington, DC. Here we have something which in good faith would allow New York to stay in ObamaCare if the people of New York decided they wished to—but we can look at double- and even triple-digit premium increases in other States. Without reading our bill, other States are going to be condemned to these double- and triple-digit premium increases because folks don't want to consider something different. This is not a Republican plan. It is not a Democratic plan. We want it to be an American plan where States can decide the best system for their State, and if it is working for New York, it can stay in New York. It is not working for Louisiana so our State would go with the better choice, I am confident.

That said, please don't criticize the plan before you even look at it, and please allow those on the Democratic side who are down to one insurance company on their exchanges, with double-digit premium increases, to at least consider an option that would be good for their State.

Now, folks say: Well, you don't have a mandate. We don't think Washington, DC, should be telling people how to live their lives. So how do we, under our better choice, get the kind of big insurance pool without a mandate? We give States the option to do what we call automatic enrollment. If someone is eligible, they would be enrolled. The tax credit they receive would be adequate for their premium. They would never have to pay anything out-of-pocket to have this health savings account—high-deductible health plan and pharmacy benefit. It would be covered with the tax credit they receive. By doing so, all these young males who haven't signed up for ObamaCare because they are paying too much would actually be enrolled in an insurance plan. For those who get ill or have chronic conditions, they are spreading the cost of their expensive illness over the many healthy and not just over the few sick. It restores the law of big numbers.

We had an insurance plan model this, and they said they think just by doing our method of enrollment, it would lower premiums by 20 percent. That is without an individual mandate.

By the way, think of the folks who will never sign up for an ObamaCare exchange policy. The mentally ill person living beneath a bridge is not going to go to a public library. If he has his W–2 form, he doesn't know where it is. He is not going to fill out a 16-page, long-line form and sign up for ObamaCare. Under our policy, he could be automatically enrolled. So if he goes to the urgent care center with cellulitis, he has coverage. If something terrible happens—if he is hit by a car, and goes to the emergency room and is admitted to the hospital, society is protected from major expenses. If he gets his life together enough, he has a pharmacy benefit providing those antipsychotics. So we actually think we would increase the number who truly need health care to the number of those who are covered.

Let me finish up by speaking about our timeline. We hope that over this next year, Republicans and Democrats can come together. I understand Democrats will not vote for a reconciliation

bill that begins the repeal process of ObamaCare, but that almost certainly will pass. What we hope is that sometime within this year, Democrats who live in States with only one insurance company on their exchanges, in which premiums are increasing by double—and maybe even at that time in their States triple digits—will come together to vote with us to give their State an option for our better choice. So we would pass that legislation in 2017, giving their State legislatures and Governors the option to choose this pathway in 2018; and in 2019, the States would implement their option of choice; and by 2020, it has all been done.

That is our hope.

Folks say Senator COLLINS and I are naive; that the Senate cannot overcome its partisanship; that inevitably it will be so partisan, people, without reading the bill, will criticize our legislation, saying things about it that are not true.

I go back to where I started, to that woman who didn't go to college, working hard, voted for Trump, doesn't like ObamaCare but has breast cancer. She needs coverage, and she wants something done for her. We want to give her the power. We want to give her that coverage. My goal is that when this finishes, as she goes from cancer to health, the only thing she knows about her coverage is that the decisions about her health care are made in her State Capitol and around her kitchen table, and that as her breast cancer is treated, her health coverage improves. That is our goal. It is not a Democratic plan or a Republican plan. It is not a partisan plan. It is a plan for her. That is our goal.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, first, let me commend the Senator from Louisiana for his extraordinary work on this bill. It has been a great pleasure to work so closely with him as we have made a genuine effort to put together a bill that would be a reasonable replacement for ObamaCare that would help to bring people together.

I wish to commend the Senator from Louisiana for his expertise. As a physician, Senator CASSIDY brings an important perspective to this debate, particularly since he has practiced for so many years in hospitals in Louisiana that serve the uninsured. So I wish to personally thank him for the privilege of working together to craft this bill.

There has been much debate recently on the best approach to replacing and reforming the Affordable Care Act. Considerable confusion and anxiety exists about the current status of the law and about the future of health care in our country. However, what is often overlooked in this discussion is that while the ACA provides valuable assistance for some people who were previously uninsured, the system created by the law is under tremendous financial strain.

ObamaCare exchanges are on the verge of collapse in many States. The reality is that significant changes must be made. Doing nothing is not an option.

I am, therefore, both surprised and disappointed by the remarks of the Democratic leader to the press and on the floor today about the genuine effort that Senator CASSIDY and I have put forward in introducing the Patient Freedom Act.

First of all, let me point out that the Democratic leader could not possibly have read our bill since we haven't introduced it yet, and it is evident that he has misunderstood many of its provisions.

For example, in a press statement, he said we gutted the preexisting condition protections that we strongly support and that are codified in our bill in section 101(b). Again, that is section 101(b). It ensures that insurers cannot discriminate against individuals with preexisting conditions who pay their premiums.

I guess what disappoints me most is that the Democratic leader's response really represents what is wrong with Washington, DC. The American people want us to come together. They want Democrats and Republicans to work as a team to solve the problems facing our Nation. If we are going to have a leader on the other side of the aisle denounce to the press and come to the Senate floor to criticize a bill that has not even been introduced yet, where are we? I really hope this is an aberration and that we can work together and that the compromises we put in the bill are recognized as a good-faith effort to bring both sides of the aisle together in the interests of the American people and in providing access to affordable health care. That is our goal.

We are not saying our bill is perfect. We are open to refinements. We have made a good-faith effort, and to hear it described inaccurately and as other than a genuine effort to solve a problem truly disappoints me.

The fact is, the ACA has been in effect for years. Yet nearly 30 million Americans still do not have health insurance coverage. Many of those who do have coverage through the ACA exchanges are experiencing large spikes in premiums, deductibles, and copays, increasing costs to consumers and taxpayers alike. Contrary to the predictions made by the early supporters of the ACA, premiums are increasing in nearly every State, with an average increase of 25 percent nationally.

In New York State, the average increase on the exchange is 16.6 percent. I don't know, but perhaps the Democratic leader thinks that is an acceptable rate of increase. It strikes me as pretty high, and even though it is below the national average, it is still in double digits. The situation is even more dire in some States like Arizona, where premiums have increased by 116 percent. In many counties throughout our country, there are only one or two health insurers offering plans on the exchanges, severely limiting consumer choice.

In my State of Maine, premiums for the individual market for 2017 have soared by 22 percent, on average, and plan options have become more limited. Now, while subsidies do cushion the blow for those consumers who are eligible for them, others have had to shoulder the full increase, and of course taxpayers have borne a greater burden. Moreover, individuals and families with incomes exceeding 250 percent of the poverty rate are not shielded from the dramatic increases in deductibles and copays. That is important to remember. The premium subsidy applies to incomes up to 400 percent of the poverty rate. It then drops off the cliff, and you are eligible for no subsidy whatsoever—there is no orderly phaseout. For help with copays and deductibles under the Affordable Care Act, the threshold is 250 percent of the poverty rate. These huge premium spikes and increases in deductibles and larger copays are having an effect on families and individuals—who are by no means wealthy—all over this Nation.

Millions with coverage under the ACA are also facing increasingly narrow networks, which means they may find their preferred doctors are not in their networks. This can be particularly difficult for rural States that may have few specialists and whose citizens rely on major medical centers in nearby States. If patients want to continue to see these doctors, they can be faced with enormous costs that are not covered by their ACA insurance. As one Mainer put it, ''[President] Obama said I could keep my doctor, and the insurance company says I can't.''

The co-ops created under the ACA to help provide health insurance coverage have been failing at an alarming rate. In fact, only 5 of the 23 remain operational. It is also important to carefully consider the effects that ObamaCare's Medicare cuts have had on providers like rural hospitals and home health agencies, many of whom are struggling.

In sum, prices are skyrocketing, coverage is narrowing, and the individual market is likely in a death spiral if Congress fails to act.

I know many Members of this Chamber share the goal of expanding access to affordable health care. Over the years, I have collaborated with colleagues on both sides of the aisle on a number of initiatives. Today I am pleased to join my colleague, Senator and Doctor BILL CASSIDY, in introducing the Patient Freedom Act of 2017 to help ensure that Americans have access to affordable health care that improves choices and helps to restrain costs.

Let me emphasize again that our bill is a work in progress. It is not perfect. However, what it does—and it is virtually unique in this regard, in this Chamber—is it puts specific proposals on the table as we seek to craft bills to repair and improve the Affordable Care Act. Other legislation being discussed,

such as those designed to help small businesses pool risks so they can better afford to provide insurance to their employees, also deserves consideration. Let's get a lot of ideas on the table.

We have to start, and we have been willing to step forward and propose a specific bill. To be criticized for that by the Democratic leader is just so disappointing, particularly since the leader is well aware that I work across the aisle all the time to try to find solutions for our country.

The Patient Freedom Act is built on the premise that giving people more choices is superior to the one-size-fits-all approach that defined the Affordable Care Act. We recognize that what works best for people in Maine or New Hampshire may not be right for people in New York or California. Our bill respects those differences by giving States options to choose the path that works best for their citizens.

Now, option one would allow a State to choose to continue operating its insurance markets pursuant to all the rules of the Affordable Care Act. So if New York State wants to keep with the status quo, despite the 16.6-percent increase, on average, in the premiums for the individual market, New York State can make that choice. If a State chooses to remain covered by the ACA, exchange policies will continue to be eligible for cost-sharing subsidies and advanced premium tax credits, and the insurance markets will still be subject to ACA requirements. The individual mandate and the employer mandate will also remain in place for that State. Medicaid expansion States will continue to receive Federal funding. So if a State is happy with the status quo—with spiraling costs, with limited choices, with a market that is broken—fine, keep the ACA. In some States, maybe it is working well. States should have that option, and they would under the Cassidy-Collins bill.

More appealing to many States, however, would be what we call the better choice option in the Patient Freedom Act that would allow a State to waive many of the requirements of the ACA, except for vital consumer protections, and still receive Federal funding to help its residents purchase affordable health insurance. Senator CASSIDY has explained how it would work so I will not go through that all again.

Let me just say that eligible individuals in States selecting this option would receive Federal funding deposited into their Roth health savings accounts. The aggregate funding for these per-beneficiary deposits would be determined based on the total amount of funding that the Federal Government would have provided in the form of ACA subsidies in each State, plus any funding each State would have received had it chosen to expand its Medicaid Program—even if, like my State, it has chosen not to do so. These deposits in the Roth health savings accounts would be phased out for higher income beneficiaries.

States selecting this option for every resident who does not have health insurance coverage through his or her employer or through public programs like Medicare or the VA or the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program—in those States, the option would be a standard health insurance plan that would include first-dollar coverage through the Roth health savings account, basic prescription drug coverage, and a high-deductible health plan. States could automatically enroll their residents who are uninsured in this standard plan, unless an individual opted to use his or her health savings account to purchase more comprehensive coverage or opted out of coverage altogether. I can't imagine someone making the choice of opting out altogether when they would receive this generous subsidy.

In addition to Federal funds, individuals and employers could make contributions to these health savings accounts, and the balances would grow tax-free. The bill also provides for a partial tax credit for very low-income individuals who do receive employer-based coverage to help these workers pay for their deductibles and their copays.

Here is another important provision of our bill: Health care providers receiving payments from the Roth health savings accounts would be required to publish cash prices for their services. That would add transparency that is sorely lacking in our current system and that we need to move toward a more patient-directed health care future. For example, if your physician has suggested that you have a colonoscopy, you would know whether one hospital or one clinic would charge more than another so you can make the right decision for you.

Health care reform should be about expanding affordable choices, and that is what our legislation aims to do by allowing States to structure their individual health insurance markets and to do so without the burdensome individual mandate, the employer mandate, or many of the other restrictive requirements in the ACA that have substantially driven up costs and forced millions of Americans to buy coverage that is more than they want, need, or can afford. Americans should have the choice to purchase more affordable coverage, if that is what works best for them.

Let me again emphasize, since misinformation was given to the press about the consumer protections in our bill, the Patient Freedom Act would retain several important consumer protections, contrary to what was said earlier today by a colleague who hadn't read our bill. Dependents will be able to remain on their parents' health insurance policies until age 26. Insurance companies will still not be able to exclude coverage for preexisting conditions or discriminate based on health status. In fact, there is no medical underwriting for the standard plan offered under the better choice option. Insurance companies cannot cap benefits by including lifetime or annual limits in their policies, and they must offer to renew policies as long as enrollees continue to pay premiums. Insurance companies must also continue to cover mental health and substance use disorder benefits for individuals, a particularly important benefit given the nationwide scope of the opioid crisis that has seriously affected my State of Maine and so many other States throughout our country, ruining the lives of individuals, their families, and their communities.

Provisions like these vital consumer protections should be retained. However, the Washington centric approach of the ACA must be changed if we are ever to truly reform our broken health care system.

I am pleased to see a growing consensus among Members of both the Senate and the House that we must fix the Affordable Care Act and provide reforms at nearly the same time as we repeal the law. This will help protect the families who rely on the program and give insurers time to transition to a new marketplace that is based on more choices for consumers. That is what we are trying to do here. Reforms in the way we provide health insurance must ensure that individuals relying on the current system do not experience a needless and avoidable gap in coverage.

If we are going to reform the system, we must begin to put specific proposals on the table for our colleagues to debate, refine, amend, and enact. That is why the criticism is so disappointing. This is an attempt to put forth a possible solution that would appeal to Members on both sides of the aisle.

As we continue our work to find a responsible path to repealing and repairing the ACA, we should give the States the freedom to choose what they believe works best for their citizens, whether that means staying with the Affordable Care Act or selecting a different path—in my view, a better path—that will lead to patient-directed reforms that contain costs and provide more choice. The Patient Freedom Act does exactly that, and I commend my colleague Senator CASSIDY for his leadership on this legislation. I also want to thank our cosponsors, including Senator ISAKSON and Senator CAPITO for their support as well.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 18—REAFFIRMING THE UNITED STATES-ARGENTINA PARTNERSHIP AND RECOGNIZING ARGENTINA'S ECONOMIC REFORMS

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 18

Whereas, on November 22, 2015, the citizens of the Argentine Republic elected Mauricio Macri as their President;

Whereas President Macri has pledged to promote greater national unity, rebuild the economy, combat domestic corruption, strengthen freedom of the press, defend human rights abroad, attract foreign direct investment, return to international credit markets, and reassert Argentina's leadership globally;

Whereas President Macri has emphasized his intention to seek closer ties with the United States and restore the bilateral partnership previously enjoyed by both countries;

Whereas the Argentine Republic is a major non-NATO ally of the United States;

Whereas United States-Argentina relations are historically characterized by comprehensive commercial ties and strong bilateral cooperation on human rights, peacekeeping, science and technology, non-proliferation, and education, as well as on regional and global issues;

Whereas President Obama traveled to Argentina in March 2016 to strengthen engagement on issues of bilateral interest, such as trade, investment, energy, security, and peacekeeping

Whereas, in an appearance with President Macri at the Casa Rosada in Buenos Aires, President Obama said that ''our countries share profound values in common—respect for human rights, for individual freedoms, for democracy, for justice, and for peace'';

Whereas the United States Department of the Treasury no longer opposes multilateral development banks lending to Argentina because of the Government of Argentina's ''progress on key issues and positive economic policy trajectory'';

Whereas President Macri prioritized Argentina resolving its 15-year standoff with private creditors stemming from the 2001–2002 economic crisis;

Whereas the Macri Administration lifted controls on trade, currency, and poultry, enhanced the quality and transparency of government data, and eliminated subsidies on electricity, water, and gas;

Whereas, in April 2016, the Government of Argentina issued $16,500,000,000 in new government bonds and paid $9,300,000,000 to holdout creditors to resolve its default settlements, which facilitated Argentina's return to international financial markets;

Whereas Argentina is Latin America's third largest economy and the International Monetary Fund, in April 2016, claimed the Macri Administration ''embarked on an ambitious, much needed transition to remove domestic imbalances and distortions and correct relative prices'';

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry visited Argentina in August 2016 to launch a High-Level Dialogue to develop and sustain cooperation on bilateral, regional, and global challenges, including democratic development and protection of human rights in Latin America; and

Whereas Secretary Kerry, during his visit, stated that ''the United States strongly supports President Macri's effort to deepen Argentina's integration with the global economy'' and that ''our governments will be supporting policies that are aimed at strong, sustainable, and balanced economic growth'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) upholds its commitment to the partnership between the United States and Argentina and reaffirms that the Argentine Republic is a major non-NATO ally of the United States;

(2) encourages the Department of State to coordinate an interagency strategy to increase cooperation with the Government of Argentina on areas of bilateral, regional, and global concern;

(3) commends President Mauricio Macri and his Administration for making far-reaching economic reforms that will benefit the people of Argentina, stimulate economic growth, and deepen Argentina's integration with the global economy;

(4) praises the Government of Argentina for resolving its dispute with international creditors;

(5) encourages the Government of Argentina to continue to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires, as well as the January 2015 death of AMIA special prosecutor Alberto Nisman; and

(6) expresses its desire that the growing partnership between the United States and Argentina will result in greater cooperation at multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations.

SENATE RESOLUTION 19—DENOUNCING THE DEADLY ATTACK AT FORT LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, HONORING THE LIVES OF THE VICTIMS, OFFERING CONDOLENCES TO THEIR FAMILIES, FRIENDS, AND ALL THOSE AFFECTED, AND COMMENDING THE EFFORTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL IN RESPONDING TO THE INCIDENT

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, and Mrs. ERNST) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 19

Whereas the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport ranks 21st in the United States in total passenger traffic, with over 73,000 travelers passing through each day on 1 of the over 650 commercial flights that embark and arrive at the airport each day;

Whereas, on Friday, January 6, 2017, around 1:00 p.m., an individual in the baggage claim area of Terminal 2 at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport shot more than 10 people, wounding several and killing 5;

Whereas the people of the United States grieve for the families of all those affected by this tragedy;

Whereas the people of the United States honor the memories of the 5 individuals who tragically lost their lives; and

Whereas constant efforts by law enforcement agencies, civilians, and communities are needed to help thwart future attacks: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the deadly attack at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport on January 6, 2017, where 5 innocent people were killed and many others were injured;

(2) honors the lives and memories of the victims killed in the attack and offers sincere condolences to their families and friends;

(3) desires that those injured in the attack make a full recovery; and

(4) commends the efforts of law enforcement and emergency response personnel who selflessly acted to secure the scene and assist those in need.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I have one request for a committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 23, 2017, at 4:30 p.m.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my Army fellow, CPT David Judson, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Eric Skidmore, Kailee Farrell, Benjamin Willis, Kelly Singleton, and Kathryn Haake, legislative fellows in my office, be given floor privileges for the rest of this Congress.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

DENOUNCING THE DEADLY ATTACK AT FORT LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 19, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 19) denouncing the deadly attack at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, honoring the lives of the victims, offering condolences to their families, friends, and all those affected, and commending the efforts of law enforcement and emergency response personnel in responding to the incident.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MORAN. 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. 19) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:45 a.m., Tuesday, January 24; 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 be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein, and with Senator ALEXANDER being recognized for up to 15 minutes, followed by 30 minutes for the Democrats; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:45 a.m. TOMORROW

Mr. MORAN. 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 8:20 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, January 24, 2017, at 10:45 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate January 23, 2017:

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MIKE POMPEO, OF KANSAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING DAVID NELSON, MENDOCINO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Honorable Judge David Nelson as he retires from Mendocino County Superior Court.

David Nelson was born in Rochester, Minnesota. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Stanford University in 1968 and received his Juris Doctorate in 1971 from Yale Law School. He began practicing law as the Deputy Public Defender for Contra Costa County for three years before eventually starting his private practice.

In 2003 he was appointed to a judgeship with Mendocino County Superior Court by Governor Gray Davis and was re-elected for two terms in 2004 and 2010. Over his thirteen years of service, Judge Nelson presided over criminal, felony criminal, and juvenile courts. Most notably, he has been an avid supporter for the Adult Drug Court serving as its judge throughout his career. This program, which provides treatment and rehabilitation for drug offenders, has helped many individuals across Mendocino County. In addition to his official duties, Judge Nelson has served as President of the Mendocino County Bar Association, President of the Mendocino County Criminal Defense Bar Association, and Board Member of the Law Library. He and his wife Judith are known for their active involvement with many groups throughout the community.

Judge Nelson's legacy is one of dedicated service to the County of Mendocino and worthy of distinction. Please join me in congratulating him on his retirement and expressing our deep appreciation for his long and exceptional career and outstanding contributions to our legal system.

CONGRATULATING THE REFUGIO BOBCATS

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, on a lighter note, I'd like to congratulate Coach Jason Herring and the Refugio Bobcats football team for winning their fourth state championship.

The Bobcats had a 15–1 record this school year and defeated Crawford in the championship game 23–20 in an impressive game-winning 18-yard field goal by kicker Diego Gonzales with only eight seconds remaining.

Quarterback Jacobe Avery was Championship Game offensive MVP and Linebacker Kobie Herring was named defensive MVP. This was an impressive year for the whole team. Winning is a Refugio tradition. The Bobcats have won the state championship in 1970, 1982, 2011 and have been in the state championship three out of the past four years and now in 2016 the Bobcats are once again state champions. Way to go Refugio.

Members of the 2016 Refugio Bobcat Championship Team:

Donavon Bailey, Dhaireus Nobbie, Jaylon Mascorro, Jeffrey Owens, Robert Ortiz, Juan Martinez, Trent Ross, Devon Tilley, Chris Moya, Jackson Carroll, Ysidro Mascorro, Tayvin Castellano, D'Mond LaFond, Jeremy Borjas, Casey Henderson, Kobie Herring, Armonie Brown, Jacobe Avery, Trey Upton, Prentiss Jones, Trace Mascorro, Kevin Plascencia, Gayton Wills, Austin Moya, Daniel Valdez, Trevor Ross, Oswaldo Martinez, Jared Kelley, Ivan Tagle, Russell Jaso, Matthew Castillo, Diego Gonzales, Chris Vela, Kaleb Henning, Cipi Solis, Jamel LaFond, Oscar Lerma, Michael Moore, Joseph Montemayor, Johnathan Havens, Thomas Keyes, Alex Rodriguez, Arthur Morales, Anthony Delgado, Alfredo Villarreal, Jonathan Flores, Robert Montalvo, Ruben Gallegos, Jake Tinsman, Jacob Thompson, Thomas Marsh, Tyler Repka, Kaleb Wright, Dareon Wills, Jarren Gonzales, Corbin Brown, Colten Hesseltine, Devin Flores, Sylvester Henderson, Fernando Cordero, Mikey Firova, Jordy Martinez, Daniel Bailey, Jaden Hubbard, Dillon Bailey, Eric Garcia, Daniel Quesada, Daryon Ramirez.

Head Coach: Jason Herring.

Assistant Coaches: Drew Cox, Eli Boxell, Anthony Quintanilla, Darren Hunkapillar, Cameron Cox, Kent Hawthorne, Joe Bob Ratliff, Jarod Kay.

CONGRATULATING THE ROTARY CLUB OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Rotary Club of Hilton Head Island on its fiftieth anniversary. It is my honor to recognize the club and all of its members on this important milestone, which marks the lasting contributions its members have made, and continue to make, toward the lives of a whole host of people through their work, most of whom they will never personally know. They range from buying the first ambulance for Hilton Head Island, to members providing dental care on trips to Chile and Romania. They have raised money and helped with many other local groups, such as the Deep Well Project, Happy Feet, and Memory Matters, but my point here is this is a group that has consistently done great work for others in our community.

Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders dedicated to high ethical standards and humanitarian service. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs located in 166 countries. Since receiving its charter on April 13, 1967, the Rotary Club of Hilton Head has embraced the high ideals of Rotary. The members of the club have developed opportunities for service and maintained high ethical standards in business and professional ventures, and done countless things to improve the quality of life on Hilton Head Island and beyond. With that, I would again ask that you please join me in congratulating the Rotary Club of Hilton Head Island on its fiftieth anniversary and in wishing its members the best of luck as they continue their work and service to others.

HONORING MR. EDWARD DIOKNO

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague Rep. MARK DESAULNIER, rise today to honor Edward Diokno upon his retirement after 12 years of service with Contra Costa County. Mr. Diokno currently serves as Deputy Chief of Staff to Supervisor Federal Glover and has been a thoughtful policymaker and committed voice for Filipino Americans in the County.

Mr. Diokno is a lifelong East County resident with a passion for serving our community. He served our country in the U.S. Army as a 2nd Lieutenant and later joined the Army Reserves. Mr. Diokno then worked as a journalist for 28 years with the Philippine News, Oakland Tribune, and Contra Costa Times where he reported on politics and policy-making.

Upon joining the County, Mr. Diokno served as a Senior Field Representative and then a Policy Analyst before stepping into his current position with Supervisor Glover. In his various roles, Mr. Diokno facilitated the County's first recognition of the contributions of Filipino Americans, developed small business initiatives, and worked with committees and advisory bodies developing health policy at the county level. He also served as the principal liaison to Bay Point, the County's largest unincorporated community.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Diokno has served our country and our county and his legacy sets a high standard to which other public servants should aspire. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and extend our best wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF MS. CARMEN SOLOMON-FEARS AFTER A 39-YEAR CAREER OF SERVICE AT THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE (CRS)

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my congratulations and best wishes to Ms. Carmen Solomon-Fears on the occasion of her retirement from a lifetime of dedicated service at the Congressional Research Service. Carmen's knowledge of American social policy, and especially in recent years involving the complex and important child support enforcement program, is nothing short of encyclopedic. Indeed, in stretching back to the late 1970s, Carmen's career at CRS spans most of the history of the child support enforcement program as well as other key social welfare programs of our time like SSI and TANF/AFDC. So if at times it seemed like Carmen was personally familiar with every word, comma, and footnote in the Social Security Act, it may be because she helped write so much of it during her outstanding career.

And what history she has seen and helped shape during that time. From the 1988 Family Support Act to the landmark 1996 Welfare Reform Law to the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act, Carmen has played a key role in all of the major social welfare reform legislation of the past generation. But she has done more than just assist Congress in crafting the law. She has worked diligently to help us explain what detailed provisions of law mean to real people, both through her interactions with our personal office staff as well as her summaries of child support and other program policies that appeared in CRS reports as well as literally dozens of issues of the Ways and Means Green Book. This all speaks to her outstanding skills in legislation and policymaking. But there is much more to Carmen than that. She is truly one of the nicest people you will meet on Capitol Hill, or any other place for that matter. Her ready smile, easy laugh, and thoughtful counsel are a key part of her success, putting people on both sides of the partisan aisle at ease in trusting her always sound guidance.

On behalf of especially the many Members of the Committee on Ways and Means who benefitted from her thoughtful work over her decades of service, I say thank you and congratulations to Carmen on an outstanding career. She truly has made a difference, which is a testament to her wisdom, hard work, and dedication in everything she does. I wish her nothing but the very best for all that awaits her in the future.

IN HONOR OF DAVID POYTHRESS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding civic leader, public servant of Georgia, and friend of longstanding, David Bryan Poythress. Sadly, David passed away on Sunday, January 15, 2017.

A Georgia man through and through, David Poythress was born in Bibb County on October 24, 1943 to John Maynor Poythress, head of Macon's water department, and Dorothy Bayne Poythress, a school teacher and the founder of Georgia's special education program. His parents' dedication to public service would inspire David from a young age to pursue public service himself.

David earned a political science degree, law degree, and commission as a U.S. Air Force officer at Emory University in the 1960s. In 1967, he entered active duty as an assistant staff judge advocate at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Texas. He served four years on active duty, volunteering for service in Vietnam and spending a year as defense counsel and chief of military justice at Da Nang Air Base. After active duty, he served in the Air Force Reserve, retiring in 1998 with the rank of Brigadier General.

Before seeking elected office, David made a name for himself serving as an assistant attorney general, Deputy State Revenue Commissioner, and chairman of a study committee formed by Governor George Busbee to study nursing home reimbursements from Medicaid. These roles, in addition to his tenure as the first Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Medical Assistance, led to him being nicknamed the ''Mr. Fix It'' of state government.

In 1979, Governor Busbee appointed David Secretary of State after the death of incumbent Ben Forston. In 1982, David ran for a full term as Secretary of State but was defeated in the Democratic Primary. He took a 10-year break from politics to practice law in Atlanta.

In 1992, he won a special statewide election for Labor Commissioner and two years later, he was elected to a full four-year term. In 1999, Governor Roy Barnes appointed David to lead the Georgia Army and Air National Guard. In 2002, Governor Sonny Perdue reappointed him and promoted him to Lieutenant General, making him Georgia's first three-star Adjutant General.

George Washington Carver once said, ''No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.'' We are all so blessed that David Poythress passed this way and during his life's journey did so much for so many for so long. He devoted many years of dedicated service to the people of Georgia through his meaningful contribution of energy, skill, and genuine passion, and for it, he will be remembered for years to come.

David Poythress accomplished much in his life but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his wife, Elizabeth; son, Cullen Gray Poythress; stepdaughters, Candace Pinnisi and Kristin Placito; eight grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, my wife Vivian and I, along with the more than 730,000 residents of Georgia's Second Congressional District, salute David Bryan Poythress for his outstanding public service and his everlasting commitment to improving the quality of life for our citizens. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in extending our deepest condolences to David's family and friends during this difficult time. We pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

HONORING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON, CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 250th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of East Hampton, Connecticut. The citizens of this community will celebrate this anniversary with a series of festivities occurring over the course of the year.

East Hampton's resiliency has been demonstrated since their earliest days. In 1739, the original settlers, led by Isaac Smith, braved the wilderness of the Northeast to settle along the east bank of the Connecticut River. The town was originally named Chatham in 1767, commemorating its robust shipbuilding economy, but was later renamed to East Hampton in 1915.

The Town of East Hampton has retained much of its old-time charm and beauty for which many New England communities are so famous and it remains the embodiment of community and tradition. Since its resurrection in 1978, thousands of residents and visitors attend the town's Old Home Days glorious celebration. The celebration, which spans three days, fills the streets of East Hampton with live music, delicious food, carnival rides, and concludes with the highly anticipated Old Home Day parade.

East Hampton also has a rich history of honoring its military community. From hosting Yellow Ribbon Ceremonies for departing and returning veterans to erecting the Veterans Memorial Monument, which honors over 2,000 East Hampton veterans, East Hampton has always bestowed the greatest honor upon their veterans.

East Hampton was also the hometown of Connecticut's 84th governor William O'Neill who served in that position from 1980 to 1991. Governor O'Neill was a leader in strengthening Connecticut's public education system, healthcare for seniors, and fixing Connecticut's roads. He was a Korean War Veteran and longtime legislator before ascending to the governor's office. Despite his amazing service he never lost touch with regular people, and I believe it was due to the fact that he and his wife Nikki, always kept their home in East Hampton, where Nikki still resides today.

Mr. Speaker, for 250 years East Hampton and its residents have persevered and flourished through shifting economic, political, and social landscapes. The enthusiasm and amiability from East Hampton's citizens is truly telling of their pride and sense of community. On this anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me and my constituents with honoring and celebrating this 250th Anniversary.

HONORING ELK RIVER'S FIRST NATIONAL BANK

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate First National Bank in Elk River, for receiving a PACE Business Award from the Elk River Chamber of Commerce.

Each year the chamber awards businesses in the area who have excelled in the private sector, and this year First National Bank received the prestigious Business of the Year Award. This award could not have gone to a more deserving business.

As time passes, businesses come and go, but not the First National Bank. This family run business has been serving Minnesotans for an astonishing one hundred and fifteen years.

The key to their success has not only been their wonderful customer service, but their ability to adapt. They constantly offer the most up to date services so that their customers remain happy and loyal.

I want to congratulate First National Bank for this incredible honor, and I wish them nothing but success in 2017.

HONORING MAYOR OSBY DAVIS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Osby Davis, the Mayor of Vallejo, California, upon his retirement from an impressive career as a public servant.

Mr. Davis has been a resident of our Vallejo community for 58 years. He graduated from Vallejo High School in 1963, completed his A.A. at Vallejo Junior College and his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering at Fresno State College. He then earned his J.D. from the University of California at Berkley Boalt Hall School of Law in 1973.

Mr. Davis served on the Solano County Board of Supervisors from 1979 to 1993, the first person of color to do so. As Supervisor, he established the "I CAN BE" program for elementary school students in 1988. With this program, Mr. Davis mentored 5th and 6th grade students to encourage them to work to their full potential and cultivate positive self-esteem. He has also served as a mentor and legal counsel for the Continental of Omega Boys and Girls Club for over 25 years. His service and leadership set an excellent example for young people in our community. As Supervisor, Mr. Davis initiated monthly breakfast meetings with the African-American business community and formed the Black Chamber of Commerce in Vallejo.

When Mr. Davis was first elected Mayor of Vallejo in 2007, and re-elected in 2011 by three votes, he became the city's first African-American mayor. Mr. Davis was instrumental in leading the city through bankruptcy and developing a plan for economic recovery. He established the Mayor's Cup Golf Tournament, and served on numerous regional boards and commissions that addressed issues relevant to Vallejo and its citizens. He will also be remembered as the "best dressed" man in any meeting room.

Mr. Davis and his wife Terrye practice law as Davis & Davis, and they are both engaged business leaders in our community. Mr. Davis has previously served as a director for the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce and chaired the Chamber's Educational Roundtable. He and his wife are also active at Lighthouse Covenant Church, where they perform premarital counseling and teach Sunday school.

Mr. Speaker, by attempting the impossible, Mayor Davis has made our Vallejo community stronger as both a public servant and business leader. He is a true friend of Vallejo and a good friend of mine. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and extend our best wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

RECOGNIZING NICHOLAS AND ALISON ST. CLAIR

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and dedication put forth by Nicholas and Alison St. Clair, the owners of Antebellum, a restaurant located in Flowery Branch, Georgia. As a testament to their diligence and culinary talent, Antebellum was recently named one of the top 100 restaurants in America by Opentable.com—an honor that has been bestowed upon the restaurant for two out of the last three years.

Combining the savory tastes of traditional Southern cooking with classic American food, Antebellum has been a go-to for the residents of Hall County for the five years its doors have been open. Having had the opportunity to eat there myself, I can attest to their supreme service and re-imagined Southern fare—especially their take on country fried steak. Starting a business can be a daunting decision, but the St. Clairs' entrepreneurial spirit and passion for culinary excellence has given rise to a dining experience that all residents of the Ninth District of Georgia can enjoy.

Nicholas St. Clair has worked as a chef for almost 20 years and credits his education and creativity with the success of Antebellum. Northeast Georgia is lucky to have business owners like the St. Clairs, who invest in their products in order to serve their clients.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the St. Clairs' commitment to their craft and to congratulate them on the outstanding success of Antebellum. I am looking forward to my next visit to their restaurant to see what's new on the menu, and wish the St. Clair family continued success in Flowery Branch and beyond.

RECOGNIZING STATE REPRESENTATIVE DON MOFFITT FOR HIS SERVICE TO ILLINOIS

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize State Representative Don Moffitt, who retired from the Illinois House of Representatives after finishing out his final term in office. Mr. Moffitt has led a life dedicated to public service, honorably serving in various levels of government for more than four decades.

Mr. Moffitt began his career in public service as an Alderman in the City of Oneida, Illinois, the city he soon became the Mayor of. Mr. Moffitt continued to serve his community through his time as the Knox County Board Chairman, and Knox County Treasurer from 1984 to 1993. Mr. Moffitt became a member of the Illinois State Legislature representing the 74th District in Illinois in 1993, where he has served more than 20 years as a State Representative.

Mr. Moffitt has dedicated his time in public office to strengthening our region by always placing the safety and well-being of our communities first, and serving as a strong advocate for rural communities in the State Legislature. I was pleased to learn he will continue being an advocate for our rural economy in a new position as the Assistant Director at the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. Moffitt for his commitment to public service, and for all that he has done to strengthen our region. I congratulate him again on his retirement from the State Legislature and wish him well at the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

HONORING SERRANO BROTHERS CATERING

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Serrano Brothers Catering in Elk River for receiving a PACE Business Award from the Elk River Chamber of Commerce.

Every year the Elk River Chamber awards businesses in the area for excellence in commerce, and this year, Serrano Brothers Catering received the New Business of the Year Award.

Serrano Brothers Catering has added a unique touch to the Elk River community. Their eclectic menu includes homemade Italian food, authentic Polish food, as well as American BBQ. This diversity in addition to their excellent service is undoubtedly why they have been so successful.

When opening a new business, the business owners do so at a personal risk, so that they may offer a new product and service to the community.

Serrano Brothers Catering took this risk and it has paid off, making them incredibly deserving of this award. I wish them nothing but luck in 2017.

HONORING AMBASSADOR KAIRAT UMAROV FOR HIS SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP TO THE UNITED STATES

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my heartfelt thanks to Ambassador

Kairat Umarov for his service and friendship to our country, while serving as Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United States.

For the past 25 years, Kazakhstan and the United States have developed an enduring relationship built on nuclear nonproliferation and security. This association has evolved to include a strong relationship on trade, economic integration, and the support of democracy. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has been a strategic partner to the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The diplomatic cooperation between our two countries has contributed to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and strengthened security in the Central Asia region—accomplishments that were greatly served by Ambassador Umarov's dedicated work.

Mr. Umarov has served as Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the United States since 2013, and his steady leadership over the past four years has enhanced ties between our two countries. Ambassador Umarov's focus on commercial and technological cooperation has solidified Kazakhstan's path as a future trade hub for the entire New Silk Road region. His significant contributions to the upcoming EXPO 2017 event will prove to be essential to its success. Ambassador Umarov's time in Washington has shown him to be a gracious and gifted diplomat, and although I am sad to see him leave, I am confident that he will remain a true champion for the people of Kazakhstan as he assumes his new duties on behalf of his country at the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, I once again want to thank Ambassador Umarov for his hard work and friendship as Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United States, and I wish him the best of luck on all his future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE REVEREND RICHARD GAMMAGE

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding spiritual and community leader, the Reverend Richard Gammage, Pastor of New Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia. Sadly, Reverend Gammage passed away on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at the age of 85. A memorial service was held in his honor on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at his church in Macon, Georgia.

Richard Gammage was born in Sylvester, Georgia in 1931. He accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior at the young age of twelve. He was a member of Beulah Missionary Baptist Church and served in the various roles of deacon, Sunday school teacher, choir president and Chairman of the Sick Committee.

Always seeking to improve his craft of Christian ministry and discipleship, he furthered his education at Carver Bible College, the Morehouse School of Religion, and the Interdenominational Theological Center. He earned a Master's degree from Brown College of Transoral Science.

For the past 37 years, Reverend Gammage pastored the New Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Macon. He loved each member of his congregation, and they loved him back. He believed that in addition to existing in a building, the church should exist in a community. The church took pride in serving breakfast on Sunday mornings to many homeless people and people in need who were able to eat a good meal immediately after the early service.

In Reverend Gammage's many years of service, he ordained more than one hundred deacons, including seven women to preach. He served as President of the Evangelical Ministers Alliance for several years and most recently held the title of President Emeritus. Reverend Gammage also stood firm as a strong believer in Christian education, providing Bibles and other instructional materials to every individual who attended his Bible studies.

Reverend Gammage made a difference both in and out of the pulpit. He was a renowned and passionate community leader in Macon, Georgia. For more than three decades, he led the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom March in Macon. He also hosted forums at New Pleasant Grove during nearly every political election for candidates to discuss issues and their campaigns.

Acts 20:35 says, ''I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' '' Truly, Reverend Gammage abided by this scripture, understanding his calling and purpose to serve God's people and his community.

Reverend Gammage achieved much in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his wife, Myra Gammage, and their three children.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife Vivian, and the more than 730,000 residents of the Second Congressional District of Georgia in extending our sincere condolences to Reverend Richard Gammage's family, friends, and followers during this difficult time. I pray that we may all be comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

TRIBUTE TO ELLYN McKENZIE

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ellyn McKenzie, Vice President of Government Affairs for Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers. She is retiring on January 31, 2017. She has served the organization beginning in 1997 and retires exactly upon her 20th anniversary date.

Ellyn started with the agency as a grant writer and project director for the agency's first two grants to support Environmental Justice Activities. Sixteenth Street's Department of Environmental Health was formed based upon those two grant projects: 1) to support a community-based approach to lead poisoning prevention and 2) to collect information and catalog information about and features of the neighborhood that could pose a hazard to the health of children. In fact, the Department of Environmental Health continues its work to prevent lead poisoning, and has grown their environmental justice activities into successful sustainable re-development projects for Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley and Kinnickinnic River Corridor.

Ellyn transitioned to the position of Communications and Development Director as the agency expanded and upon her retirement held the title of Vice President of Government Affairs. She produced five successful fundraising events for Sixteenth Street's signature Celebrity Roast—the agency's once a year fundraiser. Honorees for events on her watch were for Milwaukee Buck's Coach George Karl, Milwaukee Brewer's President and Chairman Wendy Selig-Prieb, former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, Milwaukee developer Gary Grunau and Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle.

Ellyn produced 15 Annual Reports, a publication for donors, community partners and staff compiling successes, new challenges and strategic growth of the agency. She was also responsible for government relations activities for the agency over the years.

Prior to joining Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, Ellyn held several positions in Wisconsin State government, serving as legislative assistant to the State Senate Organization Committee, as an aide to Wisconsin Governor Tony Earl and as coordinator for a statewide Energy Conservation Plan in the Department of Administration.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to know and work with Ellyn since her days in Wisconsin State Government. I join with friends and colleagues to congratulate her on her retirement. I wish her much success as she transitions into a different phase of her life. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Ellyn McKenzie and I am proud to call her a friend. The citizens of the Fourth Congressional District and the State of Wisconsin are privileged to have someone of her ability and dedicated service working on their behalf for so many years. I am honored for these reasons to pay tribute to Ellyn McKenzie.

HONORING ELK RIVER'S SPORTECH

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Sportech in Elk River, for receiving a PACE Business Award from the Elk River Chamber of Commerce.

Every year the Elk River Chamber awards successful businesses in the area, and this year Sportech received the Employer of the Year Award.

Sportech maintains high spirits among their two hundred and fifty employees by providing flexible hours so they can spend time with their loved ones, giving them quality equipment to work with, and by raising overall morale with fun team building activities.

The happiness of their employees is surely the reason that Sportech produces quality products every year, making over two hundred million dollars last year alone.

The employees are the backbone of each and every company. They are the ones who work tirelessly to ensure that the business that

they work for remains successful and I commend Sportech for recognizing that important fact.

Sportech is more than deserving of this award, and I wish them continued success in 2017.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN GENE CERNAN

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I join millions around our country and in NASA and the space industry who are mourning the loss of one of a dozen Apollo space legends, Capt. Eugene ''Gene'' Cernan.

As the Commander of the *Apollo 17* mission, and the most recent man on the moon—as he put it—he remained a tireless and outspoken advocate for NASA and America's manned space exploration program. Captain Cernan testified before Congress numerous times, and took a leading role in promoting human spaceflight.

Captain Cernan had an unshakable conviction that it was mankind's destiny to explore and that the U.S. must take the lead, for the benefit of all mankind. He conveyed these sentiments as he left the lunar surface, ''. . .as I take man's last step from the surface, back home for some time to come—but we believe not too long into the future—I'd like to just (say) what I believe history will record: that America's challenge of today has forged man's destiny of tomorrow. And, as we leave the Moon at Taurus-Littrow, we leave as we came and, God willing, as we shall return, with peace and hope for mankind. . .''

I first met Capt. Cernan here in Washington D.C. about one year ago, and I was inspired by his incredible passion for human space exploration and conviction that the United States must lead in this world-changing endeavor. God speed Capt. Cernan, I promise that I will continue your fight in the Congress to establish a bold and purposeful human space exploration program.

My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Captain Cernan.

TRIBUTE TO JOANN AND ANDY GOHLINGHORST

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate JoAnn and Andy Gohlinghorst of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for their many years of volunteer services at Christian Home Association—Children's Square USA in Council Bluffs. JoAnn and Andy started volunteering at Children's Square in 1985. JoAnn

JoAnn and Andy have spent the past 31 years volunteering at Children's Square, where they have sorted, organized, and displayed donated clothing and toys. These items are available to children in need on the Children's Square campus as well as foster families served by Children's Square. The Christian Home Association—Children's Square USA is a private, not-for profit organization founded on December 23, 1882. Children's Square USA has a rich history of caring for children from birth to 21 years old and their families, meeting their individualized needs, instilling hope and helping restore lives.

Mr. Speaker, I commend JoAnn and Andy for the dedicated service they have provided to Children's Square and for their care and concern for children in need. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating JoAnn and Andy for their many years of volunteer service and in wishing them nothing but the very best.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF IVELISSE R. ESTRADA, MA, BA

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ivelisse R. Estrada on the end of her tenure as Senior Vice President of Corporate and Community Relations for Univision Communications Inc. (UCI).

In her role as Senior Vice President, Ms. Estrada was responsible for the overall development and coordination of community relations strategies for the company, including the Univision Network, UniMás Network, Univision Cable Networks, as well as Univision Local Media, including TV, radio, and digital. She coordinated all philanthropic contributions and served as a liaison between UCI and community organizations. She also planned, directed, and supervised the execution of the company's community empowerment platform Univision Contigo, promoting awareness and providing greater access to Education, Health, Prosperity, and Civic Participation resources.

Ms. Estrada developed and launched Univision Educación, a comprehensive, multi-year national education initiative, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, educators, and civic and community leaders from around the country. The initiative was aimed at improving academic achievement among K–12 Hispanic students with a specific focus on high school graduation and college readiness.

In 2007, she worked with the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) in an unprecedented national civic engagement campaign developed to inform, educate, and motivate Hispanics to participate in the American political dialogue. ''Ya es Hora . . . ¡Ciudadanía!'' (''It's Time . . . Citizenship!'') was done in collaboration with hundreds of Hispanic-serving organizations across the U.S. and mobilized more than one million eligible immigrants to apply for citizenship. In 2008, the campaign was honored with a Peabody Award.

In 2003, she was responsible for the creation of a multi-year, cross-platform health initiative entitled ''Salud es Vida . . . ¡Entérate!'' (''Lead a Healthy Life: Get the Facts!'') to promote healthy lifestyles and encourage the early detection and aggressive management of chronic health conditions affecting U.S. Hispanics. In 2004, ''¡Entérate!'' was honored with a Peabody Award, the first ever for a Spanish-language broadcast company.

Ms. Estrada started her career with Univision in 1991, where she initiated her career as Director of Communications at KMEX–TV, Channel 34, the flagship station of the Univision Television Group, Inc. in Los Angeles. During her tenure at KMEX, she launched numerous community projects that focused on health, education, and art initiatives. She also served as Director of Corporate and Community Relations for Univision Television Group, where she supervised the public affairs and community efforts of the company's owned and operated stations.

Outside of UCI, Ms. Estrada is a prominent advocate and supporter of the community. She serves on several boards, including the Board of Directors of the Washington Center, the Women's Leadership Board at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, the Los Angeles Fund for Public Education, Friends of the National Museum of the American Latino, and the Smithsonian Latino Center. She also serves on the Excelencia in Education Honorary Board, the Corporate Board of Advisors of the Cuban American National Council, the Latino Communications Initiative Roundtable, College of Communications at Cal State Fullerton, the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame, and is a member of the International Women's Forum, where she serves in the Hall of Fame Task Force. In addition, she was a member of the National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics.

Mr. Speaker, as Ivelisse Estrada leaves her position at Univision Communications Inc., I want to recognize her long and distinguished career of empowering Latinos across the United States. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the outstanding work she has done to empower and advocate for our Latino community, not only in Los Angeles, but across the U.S. at large. We wish her the very best as she moves on to new and exciting endeavors.

THE 58TH INAUGURATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a person of faith, I wish President-elect Donald Trump nothing but the best as he becomes the Commander-in-Chief of our nation.

On November 8th 2016, many of us were deeply wounded and it was a very difficult time. For me, the concern was for so many of my constituents who had worked so hard for a different result; and the many young people who were for the first time engaged in the democratic process that were seemingly so disappointed. They were looking for hope.

After the election, although still very concerned, I was willing to give the President-elect the appropriate time, as he moved through his transition, to address the American people with a message of unity. Unfortunately, the transition was not as smooth as I believe many of us, as Americans, would have wanted it to be. The call for unity and the embracing of all Americans simply did not come. The moments of attack continued. However, many of us still continued to listen.

As a senior Member of the Homeland Security Committee and Ranking Member on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Homeland Security, Terrorism, and Investigations, I take national security very seriously. I was appointed to the Homeland Security Committee in the aftermath of the heinous, murderous, and horrific terrorist attack on September 9, 2011. The intelligence community is part of my day to day work.

In the midst of moving toward the inauguration, stark, provocative, sobering, and difficult facts came to our attention. All of America's intelligence agencies confirmed the detrimental cyber-attack by high Russian officials, including President Vladimir Putin, to steer the election toward one candidate, Mr. Trump, and away from the other candidate. Rather than accept their report, President-elect Trump chose to make a full force attack on the brave men and women serving in our intelligence community and disparaged their commitment to serving our nation. There are moments in a public official's life that you always put country over self. That did not happen and the disappointment was piercing.

As a Member of the Judiciary committee, one of my proudest moments was the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But an even prouder moment was the enormous number of votes the legislation received from both Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate. And when all the Members went to the White House for the signing of the legislation by a sitting Republican President, we celebrated America's love affair with the precious right to vote. President George W. Bush signed that legislation into law only to now come to 2016 to face huge examples across the nation of voter suppression in this election with newly minted laws that suppressed the voting rights of so many Americans and particularly many in minority communities. The President-elect gave these voting abuses no credence.

Further, the President-elect has every right to select his or her cabinet. However, it is very difficult when his choice for the nation's highest law enforcement officer, who is supposed to be the arm of justice for the most vulnerable in our nation, and that person holds consistent positions against civil rights and against voting rights.

So, I deliberated on my decision over a period of time. I did not boycott this ceremonial inaugural event. I have decided in good conscience I could not go. JOHN LEWIS, a man who bled for freedom made his choice and made his decision without rancor or hysteria. But that was not the tone of the response he received; and JOHN did not call for any boycott. This is not a boycott. This is an act of conscience. The President-elect could not refrain from a full-fledged personal attack on Congressman JOHN LEWIS. He failed to offer even a small olive branch.

The State of the Union will be the President's first message directly to Congress and the American people on how he will lead—that I will attend—and I am committed to working for my constituents and all of the American people. I hope the new President will do the same.

So my principles revolving around justice and fairness, an unfettered election, the duty that I have to the national security community and the recognition of the provocative and criminal intrusion by the Russians into our election causes me to be reflective on January 20.

Finally, I did enjoy greeting my constituents as they came to the inauguration. But as so many Americans, I will be waiting on that olive branch to be extended to all of us by this President; thereby giving us an opportunity to heal, to mend, and for him to recognize that Americans have very similar aspirations and values, and to remember that those who did not vote for the ultimate victor still deserve dignity and respect in this country.

TRIBUTE TO PAT AND JOHN MONTGOMERY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Pat and John Montgomery of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for their many years of volunteer services at Christian Home Association-Children's Square in Council Bluffs. They began volunteering at Children's Square in 1989.

Pat and John have spent the past 28 years volunteering at Children's Square, where they have sorted, organized, and displayed donated clothing and toys. These items are available to children in need on the Children's Square campus, as well as foster families served by Children's Square. The Christian Home Association-Children's Square USA is a private, not-for profit organization founded on December 23, 1882. It has a rich history of caring for children from birth to 21 years old and their families, meeting their individualized needs, instilling hope and helping restore lives.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Pat and John for the dedicated service they have provided to Children's Square and for their care and concern for children in need. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Pat and John for their many years of volunteer service and in wishing them nothing but the very best.

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 Tuesday, January 24, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 31

10 a.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Organizational business meeting to consider committee rules and subcommittee membership during the 115th Congress, and the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

SD–430

FEBRUARY 1

9:40 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress.

SD–342

2:30 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

Organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine stopping senior scams, focusing on developments in financial fraud affecting seniors.

SD–562

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S367–S405

Measures Introduced: Ten bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 185–194, and S. Res. 18–19. **Pages S398–99**

Measures Passed:

Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport Deadly Attack: Senate agreed to S. Res. 19, denouncing the deadly attack at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, honoring the lives of the victims, offering condolences to their families, friends, and all those affected, and commending the efforts of law enforcement and emergency response personnel in responding to the incident. **Page S404**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 66 yeas to 32 nays (Vote No. EX. 32), Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. **Pages S369–85, S405**

Executive Communications: **Pages S395–98**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S398**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S399–S400**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S400–04**

Additional Statements: **Pages S393–95**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S404**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S404**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—32) **Page S385**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 8:20 p.m., until 10:45 a.m. on Tuesday, January 24, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S405.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 17 public bills, H.R. 599–615; 1 private bill, H.R. 616; and 3 resolutions, H.J. Res. 30; H. Con. Res. 11; and H. Res. 54, were introduced. **Pages H607–08**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H609**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 55, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions (H. Rept. 115–5). **Page H607**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Meadows to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H563**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:11 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H564**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:16 p.m. and reconvened at 3:29 p.m. **Page H566**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Power And Security Systems (PASS) Act: H.R. 511, to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems; **Pages H566–68**

Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act: H.R. 587, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; **Pages H568–69**

Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act of 2017: H.R. 590, to foster civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and enhance the licensing and commercial deployment of such technologies; **Pages H569–71**

EPS Improvement Act of 2017: H.R. 518, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies; **Pages H571–72**

Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2017: H.R. 290, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission; **Pages H572–76**

Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017: H.R. 423, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 398 yeas to 5 nays, Roll No. 60; **Pages H576–79, H591**

Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act: H.R. 588, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a study on network resiliency during times of emergency; **Pages H579–81**

Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2017: H.R. 555, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to amend its rules so as to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land use restrictions; **Pages H581–83**

Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017: H.R. 460, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications; **Pages H583–86**

Amending the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens: H.R. 599, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens; and **Pages H586–88**

Kari's Law Act of 2017: H.R. 582, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 408 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 61. **Pages H588–90, H592**

Recess: The House recessed at 5:41 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m. **Pages H590–91**

Governing Board of the Office of Congressional Ethics—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's reappointment of the following individuals to serve as the Governing Board of the Office of Congressional Ethics, pursuant to section 4(c) of H. Res. 5, 115th Congress, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017: Nominated by the Speaker after consultation with the Minority Leader: Mr. Richard Norman "Doc" Hastings of Washington, Chairman; Mr. James M. Eagen III of Colorado; Ms. Allison R. Hayward of Virginia; and Ms. Judy Biggert of Illinois, Alternate. Nominated by the Minority Leader after consultation with the Speaker: Mr. David Skaggs of Colorado, Co-Chairman; Brigadier General (retired) Belinda Pinckney of Virginia; Ms. Karan English of Arizona; and Mr. Mike Barnes of Maryland, Alternate. **Page H594**

Member Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Pompeo, wherein he resigned as Representative for the Fourth Congressional District of Kansas, effective upon confirmation as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. **Page H606**

Whole Number of the House: The Chair announced to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Pompeo, the whole number of the House is 434. **Page H606**

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Representative Hurd. **Page H606**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H591 and H591–92. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Committee Meetings

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 7, the ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017''. The committee granted, by record vote of 8–4, a closed rule for H.R. 7. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their respective designees. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Representatives Blackburn, Schakowsky, Smith of New Jersey, and Lee.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the defense budget for fiscal year 2018 and onwards, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, subcommittee assignments, an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, and the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Mick Mulvaney, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, S. 19, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, S. 81, to establish an advisory office within the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Federal Trade Commission to prevent fraud targeting seniors, S. 88, to ensure appropriate spectrum planning and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things, S. 89, to amend title 46, United States Code, to exempt old vessels that only operate within inland waterways from the fire-retardant materials requirement if the owners of such vessels make annual structural alterations to at least 10 percent of the areas of the vessels that are not constructed of fire-retardant materials and for other purposes, S. 96, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications, S. 102, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to commence proceedings related to the resiliency of critical communications networks during times of emergency, S. 110, to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, S. 118, to make exclusive the authority of the Federal Government to regulate the labeling of products made in the United States and introduced in interstate or foreign commerce, S. 123, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a default configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1-1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, S. 129, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, S. 134, to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, S. 141, to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, H.R. 255, to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women, H.R. 321, to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach, an original bill entitled ''Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act'', an original bill entitled ''National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments and Hydrographic Services Improvement Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2017'', and an original bill entitled ''Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act'', 10:15 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Thomas Price, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: business meeting to consider the nomination of Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, and to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the

United Nations during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, 12 noon, S–116, Capitol.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Mick Mulvaney, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, subcommittee assignments, an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, and the nomination of Jeff Sessions, of Alabama, to be Attorney General, Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Linda E. McMahon, of Connecticut, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration, 10:30 a.m., SR–428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, 3 p.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress; hearing entitled ''The Failures of Obamacare: Harmful Effects and Broken Promises'', 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 11:15 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 1 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 10:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 11 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Oversight, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress; hearing on examining the effectiveness of the individual mandate under the Affordable Care Act, 2 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities'', 10 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10:45 a.m., Tuesday, January 24

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will be in a period of morning business.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, January 24

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of H.R. 7—No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017 (Subject to a Rule). Consideration of the following measures under suspension of the rules: (1) H.R. 589—Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act, (2) H.R. 600—Digital GAP Act, and (3) H.R. 601—READ Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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