United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017 No. 19

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

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

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

You are the source of life and love. Hear the prayers of Congress, both for the good of this Nation and the good of humanity around the world. Help this Congress and the President to discern Your will in our day.

By drawing on the truth taken from a diversity of opinions, may a solid foundation be formed upon which a stable future may be built.

May short-term gains or self-interest never prove to be an obstacle to true vision. Rather, Lord, grant depth perceptions, clear analysis, and creative response to the needs of our time for solidifying the common good, for we freely choose to be Your people and act accordingly.

And finally, may all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GARAMENDI 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 3, 2017, at 8:11 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H.J. Res. 41.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

LET'S WORK WITH PARENTS, NOT AGAINST THEM

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Randi Weingarten of the American Federation of Teachers spoke recently on valuing the input of parents in building great public schools, but the actions of one AFT affiliate stand in stark contrast to that vision.

As Chicago resident Michael Hendershot explained in The Wall Street Journal, his daughter's elementary school was forced to lay off its librarian last year. Fortunately, parents stepped up and volunteered their time to keep the library open. Unfortunately, the Chicago Teachers Union shut down the parents' plan and the library along with it. It seems anything that weakens union control over the school must be stopped, even if it denies students access to their library. How shameful.

If we want to build great public schools, then we must work with parents, not against them. So let's work together—Congress, the new administration, and the American public—to empower parents and help all children receive an excellent education.

MORE FLOOD PROTECTION NEEDED ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, feast or famine. California, for 5 years, had a water famine, and now we have a feast.

I want to shout out to the Army Corps of Engineers, to the local flood control districts in my district, in Sacramento, the Sutter Butte District I share with Mr. LAMALFA, and also other flood control districts. Despite the heavy water flows, the levees have held.

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I ask all of my colleagues here in the House and over in the Senate to keep in mind that we need more flood protection all across this Nation; otherwise, there will be great suffering.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

(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, this week many people and leaders from the USA and all around the world converged on Washington, D.C., for the National Prayer Breakfast.

Its tradition started 65 years ago under President Eisenhower and with partners in the Congress to take a little time to come together as leaders and a people in prayer and fellowship. It is a bipartisan effort—indeed, ideally, a nonpartisan coming together. Some might say a bunch of politicians coming together, well, but some very powerful testimonies come from this time together.

This year, from right here in this building, Senate Chaplain Barry Black, who also served as a Navy admiral, gave a strong message on the power of prayer, that our prayers are, indeed, heard in Heaven.

Two years ago, an amazing, humble, personal testimony delivered by NASCAR race driver Darrell Waltrip had everyone talking later. I would recommend anyone to find this video and enjoy that moving personal message of the lows and the highs, the lows and the highs of fame and celebrity and that you need God in your life.

This can also happen, and does, in local communities as tens of thousands of prayer breakfasts happen on the National Day of Prayer, which this year will be May 4, as it is always the first Thursday of May, as proclaimed by President Reagan.

I urge you as Americans, if you don't have one in your community, start one. If you do have one, please participate.

MUSLIM BAN IS AGAINST OUR FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against President Trump's Muslim ban, an executive order that emboldens our enemies, undermines our alliances, and offends our American values. This ban has, among other things, blocked visas for interpreters from the Middle East, people who risk their lives to save American lives.

When I was deployed to Afghanistan as an intelligence officer, I worked with many interpreters; and at first, I realized they not only provided accurate information, they kept us safe. As time went along and I got to know them, what I came to realize is that they were the ones who were unsafe. They were the ones who were risking their lives to save our lives.

When I got to know them, I would ask them: Why are you taking this risk? Why are you doing this? And the reason they gave me was similar to the one my grandfather gave me, my Italian immigrant grandfather, as to why he came here to America back in 1921, and that is they came here to give their children a better life.

Mr. Speaker, to me, that is the definition of the American Dream. President Trump's executive order not only makes us unsafe, it is against our fundamental values. If people are willing to take risks to live the American Dream, we don't stop them; we welcome them. That is why my family is here. That is why I am here.

TRIBUTE TO DAN HALLIBURTON

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a stalwart public servant. Dan Halliburton started his public service career as a law enforcement officer, eventually retiring in 2009 from the Ohio State Highway Patrol with over 32 years of service.

But he didn't stop there. He felt the call to serve more, and in 2010, Dan joined my team, tasked with representing the largest geographical and most rural district in the State of Ohio.

Very quickly, Dan distinguished himself as a man of and for the people. He expertly managed my transportation so that we could be out amongst the people I represent. He built lasting relationships with local elected officials, law enforcement, and business owners. But what set Dan apart, was his genuine care and concern for the people of Appalachia. It was reflected in the high level of service he provided them.

So on behalf of the hardworking people of eastern and southeastern Ohio, Godspeed to Dan Halliburton and his family as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

GI INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ACT

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, too many of our veterans struggle to find a job despite their unique leadership abilities and proven skill sets.

At the same time, I hear from small businesses that our economy skills gap is widening. Manufacturers want to hire, but positions sit unfilled because they cannot find qualified workers.

That is why I am proud to introduce, this week, the GI Internship Program Act. The bill brings together these two sides, veterans and our small businesses, to bridge the skills gap and expand the job opportunities available to those who served our Nation.

Since 1944, we have committed to providing our returning military men and women a quality education, but not every lesson is best learned in the classroom. This legislation allows veterans to receive their post-9/11 GI Bill benefit as a stipend while participating in a qualifying 6-month to 1-year internship or apprenticeship, at no additional cost to taxpayers.

I am proud to introduce this bipartisan bill with my colleague from Florida, Congressman TED YOHO. I encourage our colleagues to join us in support of our veterans and manufacturers on this win-win commonsense legislation.

IN MEMORY OF SERGEANT FIRST CLASS SEAN COOLEY

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

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I am humbled to rise in memory of Army Sergeant First Class Sean Cooley.

Sean was my friend, and on this day in 2005, he paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect our country. It was a privilege to serve with him during our deployment to Iraq and Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

SFC Cooley was assigned to the Mississippi Army National Guard's Company B, 150th Combat Engineer Battalion, headquartered in Lucedale, Mississippi.

SFC Cooley gave his life when an IED detonated near him on February 3, 2005, while on a combat mission in the Babil province, Iraq. SFC Cooley was the first 155th soldier from the Dixie Thunder Brigade to sacrifice his life in Iraq and was the 21st soldier with Mississippi ties to die in the war on terror.

SFC Cooley followed in the footsteps of both of his grandfathers by serving in the U.S. Navy. He joined the Seabees in 1991 and later joined the Mississippi National Guard in 1997. SFC Cooley was a platoon sergeant in B Company, 150th Engineer Battalion of the 155th Brigade Combat team that included 3,500 Mississippians.

SFC Cooley was a great NCO, a great leader, and a great soldier, both on and off the battlefield.

While serving in the Mississippi Guard, SFC Cooley obtained a degree in nursing and became an RN in 1996. His commitment to care for the needs of others will always be remembered, as remembered by Lieutenant Colonel Robinson, his commander, who said he was sick and down at one time during a training incident, and SFC Cooley gave him both medicine and water and made sure that he took care of him. SFC Cooley will forever be remembered for his random acts of kindness.

Sergeant First Class Cooley's mother, Kathryn, says her husband, Jerry; their son, Patrick; and Sergeant First Class Cooley's wife, Laura, could not be

more proud of his devotion to the military service and this Nation.

Sean Cooley embodied the characteristics that made him a great leader, soldier, and American.

OPPOSING THE BAN ON REFUGEES

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong opposition to President Trump's ban on the entry of refugees from around the world as well as the ban on refugees and citizens from seven select countries.

This ban, whether temporary or not, is shameful, and wholly un-American. There are better ways to protect our Nation, ways that are effective and stay true to our American values.

For example, in the 1970s and 1980s, thousands of my constituents fled the horrors of war and genocide in Vietnam and in Cambodia as refugees. Today, these immigrants and their children are doctors, lawyers, teachers, parents, students, all integral to the success of our Nation.

America has long endured as the shining beacon on the Hill. Sadly, that light was dimmed by the President's immigration executive order. Our Nation is great because it has been built by refugees and immigrants from every part of the world.

□ 0915

REMEMBERING EMILY HART

(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 remember Mrs. Emily Hart, who passed away on Monday, January, 23, 2017. She was 82 years of age.

Mrs. Hart was born in 1934 to her parents, Emily and Edwin Tribble, in Washington, D.C., where her father worked as an editor of the old Washington Star newspaper for nearly 40 years. She spent her early education in Washington, D.C., before she moved on to Vassar College in New York City, where she studied political science.

No matter where she was, Mrs. Hart dedicated her time and energy to bettering the community. In Washington, she was a proud member of the National Cathedral Foundation and the National Preservation Historical Society. In St. Simons, she joined the Coastal Georgia Historical Society; was a devout member of the Christ Church Frederica; and worked with the St. Simons Land Trust, which works to preserve the island's natural beauty and improve the quality of life in the community.

Although she was always aiding the community, her greatest joy came from her family, which included her husband—retired U.S. Marine Colonel Nick Hart—her three children, and her seven grandchildren.

Her sharp wit, passion for learning, and detailed stories of the past are what will be remembered most dearly. I express my condolences to Mrs. Hart's family for their loss. She will be missed.

SUPPORT SCIENCE FUNDING

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on the House floor on specific science topics ranging from twin primes to measuring atmospheric carbon. Modern society depends on science. Farmers are able to feed much of the world's current population because of science. Without science, we would further strip our forests and pollute even more of our precious water supplies; and our Nation has the strongest military in the world because of science. But science allows for far more than just furthering our survival as it provides leisure, communications, and all things Internet.

Today we depend on the science of yesterday, and, tomorrow, society will depend on the science of today. If we care about the short- and long-term future, then we need to support scientific research. We need to encourage collaboration with the scientists of other nations; we need an open and competitive science environment; and we need to make sure that all Americans have a basic understanding of science.

Science is a part of our Nation's critical infrastructure, and I ask my colleagues to continue to support science funding to keep America great.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A FINAL RULE OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 74, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 36) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation'', and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Pursuant to House Resolution 74, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 36

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation'' (published at 81 Fed. Reg. 83008 (November 18, 2016)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.J. Res. 36.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

For the last decade, there has been an ongoing renaissance in the United States in energy production. It has changed our geopolitics; our economy has been strengthened; our security has been enhanced; and there have been thousands of new, good-paying jobs that have been created from it. This energy boom, according to a 2015 survey, has saved the American family around $1,000 a year, and this growth of the last decade has come in spite of consistent anti-energy policies of the previous administration's. It has especially hit those of us in the West very hard—those who are public land States in the West—who use our resources to fund our infrastructure and to pay for our schools and our essential government services.

This rule, which is allegedly to help the environment, actually is designed to stop production; therefore, it becomes a prime candidate for a repeal under the Congressional Review Act, which was passed into law in 1996 and signed by President Clinton. At that time, Clinton said that this was a great way for Congress to be held accountable, and it truly is in that any rule is subject to this rule if it has one of three criteria: one, excessive costs; two, it was done beyond the particular agency's statutory authority; or, three, it is duplicative or unnecessary or redundant. With this particular rule, we have the trifecta because it is not just one of those criteria—it offends all of those criteria.

The Clean Air Act gives the Environmental Protection Agency, in its working with States, the authority to develop issues and regulations that address air quality. The Bureau of Land Management does not, and they are the ones who instituted this particular rule. In fact, the contortions the BLM went through to say they have the legal authority is almost embarrassing. The contortions they went through would qualify for an opening act on the Las Vegas Strip. Instead, it reminds us of when the BLM came up with the hydraulic fracturing rule only for them to

be rebuked by the courts for simply doing what they did outside their delegated authority.

This is the same thing. This is an illegal rule, and it is a costly one. Our effort to educate our children, to build infrastructure, to provide essential government services—in other words, to make people's lives better—depends on our ability to deal with our resources. This is a costly rule. On Friday, it was estimated by one source that it could cost the industry up to $20 billion; it was estimated to cost States up to $6 billion; and it was estimated to cost the Federal Government in lost royalties up to $600 million a year. It is a costly rule and is a totally unnecessary rule.

Without this rule, the American energy industry will continue to do what they have done for well over a decade—reduce methane emissions on their own by investing in technology that not only helps the environment, but that helps them grow their business, which will lead to more jobs for Americans and more funding for State education programs and infrastructure. Since 2005, methane emissions have actually decreased even as production has increased, and there is absolutely no reason to believe that this progress will suddenly stop because we strike this unnecessary rule, this illegal rule, this totally redundant rule.

There are some who will say: Well, we need this rule to protect the taxpayers because we are burning up the royalty payments.

Oh, really? If one looks at the BLM's actions—their management on sage-grouse, their lease cancellations, pulling acreage out of lease sales at the last minute, their constant barrage of revenue-reducing agency actions—you will realize that saving taxpayers money is not the real goal here.

Look, there are only three things you can do with the methane. You can build pipelines to capture it and take it away where it can be used for the benefit of mankind. Unfortunately, the agencies in the last administration refused to do that. Even though, legally, they had to make decisions on pipelines within 60 days, there is not a single BLM office anywhere in the Nation that was meeting that legal deadline. Instead, it was open for months afterwards when nothing was happening. If you can't have the pipelines to move it away, you have to burn it. So, if they won't give the pipelines and if now they are trying to stop the burning of it, the only other option is not to drill at all.

Our policy should be to fund and make sure those pipelines and those rights of ways are approved so that we can actually capture the methane and use it for productive purposes. Unfortunately, this rule's real goal is to do the third element—simply stop the production. That is counterproductive.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution because it will help people and it will support people. This rule's repeal is a vote for people and making sure that their lives are better, not worse.

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

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

I rise in strong opposition to this resolution, which would waste resources, waste money, pollute our air, and worsen the impacts of climate change.

When it comes to regulations that we should keep on the books, the BLM Methane Waste Prevention Rule is a no-brainer. Currently, oil and gas companies are venting, flaring, or leaking hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of natural gas each and every year.

People who are sitting at home may wonder: Why would a company simply waste or burn off such a valuable resource?

The answer is simple: They want the oil, and they want it now. To them, the natural gas that goes along with the oil is just a nuisance; so they burn it off or they don't make the effort that is required to ensure that their equipment isn't leaking.

The problem is, when they are operating on public lands, this isn't their natural gas to waste. They cannot waste this. This belongs to the American people. So when that gas is simply burned off or is allowed to escape, the royalties that are owed to the American people are gone with the wind; and instead of generating electricity or heating our homes, this wasted resource generates pollution and heats our planet.

For people who live near oil and gas wells, this is not just a climate problem. Methane contributes to low-level ozone, which causes a number of health problems, such as shortness of breath, more frequent asthma attacks, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. When the methane leaks, you also get leaks of benzene, which is a known carcinogen, and of other volatile organic chemicals that further contribute to ozone and smog and can contribute to liver and kidney damage, nausea, and other health problems.

Now, my colleagues on the other side say that this is exactly the problem—the Bureau of Land Management is trying to regulate air pollution, and that is the job of the Environmental Protection Agency. The fact is, though, that the Bureau of Land Management has very clearly written a waste prevention rule, as they are authorized and required. I will state that again—as they are authorized and required to do under the Mineral Leasing Act.

Section 30 of the Mineral Leasing Act reads:

> Each lease shall contain provisions for the purpose of insuring the exercise of reasonable diligence, skill, and care in the operation of said property; a provision that such rules for the safety and welfare of the miners and for the prevention of undue waste as may be prescribed by said Secretary shall be observed.

The BLM simply did its job by writing this rule, and now that they have done the job that Congress required of them, the majority is attempting to argue that Congress never gave the BLM that job in the first place. If you look at the statute, that claim is clearly an alternative fact. Just because preventing the waste of methane helps keep our air clean and moderates the severity of climate change, it doesn't mean the BLM is doing anything outside of their authority. The BLM is not regulating the quality of the air around oil and gas sites. It is just trying to make sure that methane stays out of the atmosphere and gets into the marketplace.

Another argument you have heard from the majority is that this is an effort to shut down oil and gas production on Federal lands. It is just another salvo in their war, which they claim is the Obama war on energy, except that that is simply not true. I am almost tired of having to say this, but the production of Federal onshore oil went up, not a little bit—it went way up under President Obama—but by 71 percent, as a matter of fact, between 2009 and 2015.

Now, would this Methane Waste Prevention Rule hurt production? Would it drive operators off Federal lands?

To answer that, let's just take a look at one of our States—Colorado, which, in early 2014, enacted methane venting and flaring regulations that the BLM used as a model in writing its own rule. I want to state this really clearly: after Colorado enacted their methane regulations, their production went up 47 percent from 2013 to 2014 and another 32 percent in 2015. Colorado's oil production from Federal lands has been up 28 percent over the past 5 years also.

Clearly, strong methane waste regulations do not scare away oil and gas companies.

What about the claim that companies have to burn off natural gas because the BLM takes too long to process pipeline applications?

If we look at a recent report from the Government Accountability Office just from last year, they found that only 9 percent of flaring was due to the lack of pipelines and that 91 percent had nothing to do with pipelines.

□ 0930

How about the point that is made at the oil and gas companies' insistence that they are making great strides in reducing their own methane emissions so they don't need additional oversight?

Members, that is a myth as well. Oil and gas producers in the field emitted 45 percent more methane in 2014 than they did in 1990. In fact, methane emissions from oil and gas producers went up 21 percent in the past 24 years.

The majority also says this is a power grab, an effort by BLM to take power away from the States, except that the BLM has regulated venting and flaring since the Carter administration. And this has not stopped States from setting their own regulations, as I have just said that Colorado

has done, which they will still be free to do under this rule. In fact, despite all the complaints about one-size-fits-all regulations, companies still have to follow State regulations when they operate on Federal land.

Mr. Speaker, none of these arguments against the regulation hold any water, but the benefits of this regulation would be huge: enough gas saved to supply up to 740,000 households each year; the reduction of an estimated 185,000 tons of methane emissions, which would have the same impact as taking nearly 1 million cars off the road; and up to $14 million each year to the American taxpayer from additional royalties, and that number could be even larger if the price of natural gas increases, which the majority is trying to do by expediting natural gas exports.

The BLM methane waste prevention rule is a win for the taxpayer, a win for the environment, a win for the climate, and a win for common sense. That is why it is supported by over 80 percent of voters in Western States, including both Democrats and Republicans, according to a poll just released this week. If my colleagues have not seen that poll, I would be happy to share it with them.

Unfortunately, the Republican antiregulatory, antitaxpayer, antihealth, antienvironment machine must be continually fed. Earlier this week, they voted to strip clean water and transparency regulations. Today, they are going after clean air.

I ask my colleagues to stand up and put a stop to this, to speak for the ordinary Americans who don't own oil and gas or coal companies, which those companies donate immense sums of money to politicians. The industry has to do its share and not simply demand that the farmers, the ranchers, the sportsmen, the conservationists, and all the rest of us have to put up with their waste in the name of higher profits. I ask my colleagues to do this by voting ''no'' on H.J. Res. 36.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), who knows exactly what this means to his State and his State's economy.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, New Mexico gets 40 percent of its State's revenues from oil and gas, that is, 40 percent of our teachers' pay, 40 percent of our government institutions, law enforcement, hospitals—40 percent. So when the Federal Government begins to adjust the rules, we in New Mexico take an interest because it provides our jobs and it provides the way we educate our children.

Now, we have two points of view being postulated on this argument nationwide. One says that the government is suddenly becoming the model of efficiency. I wonder where that efficiency is with regard to the $200 billion of fraud in Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The government hasn't suddenly gotten efficient about that. Or just your local post office, has it suddenly gotten efficient about that? Or you could listen to the argument that the government is suddenly interested in the environment and we are going to make it clean.

The BLM did not say a word when the Gold King Mine spill not only was allowed, but mandated to be turned loose by the EPA. The heavy metals ran down across those public lands and currently sit in the streambeds in New Mexico, and our friends say that the government is suddenly all worried about the environment.

When you look specifically at the venting and flaring rule, we are told that oil and gas production went up dramatically in the last years. The truth is, when you dissect it down, oil and gas production on private lands went up dramatically. Oil and gas on public lands, the government lands owned by the BLM and other agencies, went down dramatically.

So when the BLM decided to go in and control the venting and flaring of gasses, then we in New Mexico looked and said, is the government suddenly being more concerned about us or is it one more wink and nod to the special interests who want to kill the industries? They have already succeeding in killing the timber industry in this country. They have the coal industry on its back, and they want to kill the oil and gas industry that provides the jobs in New Mexico.

Yes, we have an opinion about that. Oil and gas production, again, educates our kids. Oil and gas production provides our jobs. It provides the way of life that we in this country are looking for. We contribute heavily to that, but we don't stand silently when the government suddenly decides our best interests are at stake.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, we could go through all of the examples. The truth is many reports say that over three-quarters of the marginal wells—those are the ones in New Mexico; we have the stripper wells, the marginal wells—will be shut in by this action.

You are going to take money away from our State government. You are going to take jobs away from the people. I support the resolution. We should back this regulation off, cut the red tape that is starving America's jobs out of this country.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS).

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution and efforts to roll back important protections for not only our environment, but for American taxpayers.

Our Nation's public lands belong to all Americans, and they are managed to balance many competing uses: recreation; responsible economic development; sustainable resource extraction; yes, renewable energy; military purposes; and conservation of historic American landscapes, just to name a few. As such, they should be subject to strong national standards that protect our shared water, shared lands, wildlife, and the multiple uses they support.

It is also critical to remember that use of our public lands is a privilege, not a right; and companies seeking to exercise that privilege, whether they be fossil fuel companies or clean energy companies developing wind, solar, and geothermal projects, should be held to a very high standard to preserve and protect resources that belong to all of the American people.

We must also make sure that the taxpayers get a fair return for the use and development of our commonly shared resources. The Mineral Leasing Act, as written by Congress, calls upon the Secretary of the Interior to prevent the waste of oil and gas resources on public lands.

The Bureau of Land Management's methane waste rule achieves all of these shared goals: the rule prevents the waste of resources that belong to all American people, which, by law, it is required to do; it reduces the amount of greenhouse gas pollution coming off our public lands; and it increases royalty payments to Federal taxpayers and the States.

The methane waste rule also supports job creation and American innovation in new technologies. The methane mitigation industry is a growing and emerging field that uses modern technologies to identify and capture wasteful emissions. In fact, a 2014 report commissioned by the Environmental Defense Fund found that methane mitigation companies provide jobs in 46 States and support 102 manufacturing and assembly locations, with 59 percent of all companies across the industry being small businesses.

If Republicans had brought this resolution before the House Natural Resources Committee, we could have more thoroughly examined its negative impacts on job creation. Instead, it was rushed to the House floor with only this 1 hour of debate.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, perhaps no aspect of America's economy has been as overregulated as energy under the Obama administration; so this week, the House has already acted to repeal two of the most damaging energy regulations.

This morning we continue the fight to reduce the unnecessary regulatory costs that are passed along to all Americans by repealing the Bureau of Land Management's venting and flaring rule. Some estimates show that this rule could inflict staggering costs

of $1.26 billion on national, State, and local economies, while generating less than $4 million in new royalties.

In addition, the legal basis for this rule is tenuous at best. The Clean Air Act authorizes the EPA, not BLM, working in conjunction with States, to make rules affecting air quality.

The BLM's venting and flaring rule's extreme compliance cost will force many companies to shut in their wells rather than to continue to operate them. This will be particularly true for marginal wells that are often run by family-owned businesses.

And beyond the loss of jobs in Colorado and elsewhere, State and Federal Governments would lose up to $114 million in tax receipts. This is money that States like Colorado depend on for funding education and other critical services.

The increase in natural gas production is to the benefit of everyday Americans. The U.S. energy boom saved drivers $550 in fuel costs each year and saved American households over $1,000 last year alone.

Affordable, environmentally responsible energy development is critical to the U.S. economy, but this rule is a needless burden on American families. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the joint resolution of disapproval.

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

I want to be very clear about the situation on public lands because there are a lot of misleading statements that are being thrown about. We heard that the majority insists that oil and gas production on Federal lands is down. To support this, they often show misleading charts that compare apples to oranges or use visual tricks to hide the facts.

The facts are Federal onshore oil production was up 71 percent between 2009 and 2015. All the panic that we have heard for years that President Obama is trying to shut down oil and gas was based on as much reality as the claim that he was coming to get everyone's guns.

I will say it again: there was a 71 percent increase in oil production on onshore Federal lands under President Obama's watch. And it is the oil producers that are wasting and leaking methane at a faster and faster rate since it is not a product they care about. They just want the oil.

With an unfortunate likely return to a drill-at-all-cost mentality under President Trump, we need the BLM methane waste prevention rule more than ever. I urge my colleagues to defeat H.J. Res. 36 and support cutting down on methane waste.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 0945

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), who also understands this issue because it is part of the livelihood of his constituency.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I know I, and many of my colleagues, share concern about a Federal regulatory code that has become so bloated with redundant, ineffective, and unnecessary rules that the sheer bulk of it threatens to suffocate American economic recovery and long-term prosperity.

The Bureau of Land Management's rule to reduce venting and flaring from existing oil and natural gas operations is one such example of duplicative and unnecessary regulation. Aside from the fact that the authority to regulate air quality does not rest with the BLM, we certainly don't need the BLM rule in addition to the EPA methane rule and State regulations, which our colleagues on the other side have noted and lauded that have come out of the State of Colorado.

For all of the costs this rule would impose on industry, the supposed benefits of the rule would be emission reductions in the neighborhood of less than one one-hundredth of a percent of global greenhouse emissions. That is the definition of an ineffectual rule.

Methane is a marketable resource, and the oil and gas industry would prefer to economically capture and sell that resource, rather than vent or flare it, which is a necessary safety procedure in the absence of other viable options.

Instead of using its authority to take actions that would effectively facilitate capture versus venting or flaring, like processing pipeline right-of-way permits in a timely manner, the agency has once again issued a rule that unnecessarily burdens energy development.

There are cost-effective strategies available that will achieve emission reductions, and it is those strategies that we should focus our efforts on, rather than duplicative regulations.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 15½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Utah has 17½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot from Members from Colorado about how this onerous methane rule will hurt industry in Colorado. I would like to read from a couple of Colorado editorials that came out this past week in support of maintaining the BLM methane rule.

On Saturday, The Denver Post posted an editorial entitled ''Congress shouldn't butcher federal methane rules.'' In it, they say: ''Congress is getting ready to use an ax where it needs a scalpel. . . .''

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Review Act is an ax. It is an ax being swung blindfolded after several shots of whiskey. It shows a complete lack of seriousness on the issue, and it could have serious, long-term consequences.

That is why The Denver Post editorial board asks Republicans to be surgeons and not butchers, and to avoid repealing what they call a thoughtful regulation.

This past week, another editorial was published on Wednesday by the Grand Junction, Colorado Daily Sentinel entitled, ''Stop methane leaks.'' Referring to their State's own methane waste rules, they say: ''We're fortunate to have the rule in Colorado. But if the federal rule isn't enforced, the results can undermine our own gains.''

Air quality does not recognize State lines. Under-regulated drilling in Utah produces bad air that blows into the western slope communities.

These editorial boards have seen firsthand that methane waste prevention rules work, and they know that it is in everyone's interest to keep the BLM rule in place.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the measure for congressional disapproval of the BLM's methane rule under this Congressional Review Act. This egregious rule passed in the last few days of the previous administration is yet another regulatory blow to responsible energy development on lands held by the Federal Government for the American people.

I think the American people have a right to expect that their Federal Government is not only holding these lands, but that it is utilizing this asset, an asset that can gain income to the Federal Government on their behalf to maintain more lands, and also to utilize the energy at low cost from domestically produced energy that comes from their lands, instead of importing it from somewhere else, et cetera. It goes without question that producing it here in this country is a giant benefit to the U.S. and its economy.

As a strong proponent of an all-of-the-above energy approach, I believe natural gas will continue to significantly transform and modernize our Nation's energy infrastructure. Domestically produced energy has so many positive effects it should be a no-brainer.

The BLM claims that this rule helps capture methane waste, resulting in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Let's face some facts. According to a report by the EPA, methane emissions from natural gas production have decreased by 38 percent in the last 10 years, while gas production on Federal lands has increased by 33 percent. Believe it or not, this reduction was done through voluntary action on behalf of industry, without changes to Federal regulations, in capturing and utilizing this asset.

Even in my home State of California, the oil and gas industry has created

tremendous opportunity for our workforce. A recent report shows that total economic contribution of oil and gas in California, in 2013, resulted in the creation of 455,000 jobs and $72 billion in value added to the State economy, approximately 3.4 percent of State GDP; indeed, no small numbers when the State of California is in big trouble fiscally, as it pursues more things like high speed rail and other nonsense.

Stifling this vibrant and booming economic driver in my State and others would be detrimental to the U.S. economy as a whole, while making us more reliant upon energy from unstable regions of the globe and the higher costs to consumers at home and in their workplace.

Furthermore, the BLM falsely claims it has authority under existing law to regulate oil and gas emissions. Such authority already belongs to the EPA and the States under the Clean Air Act, not the BLM.

Indeed, the BLM needs to get its priorities and its jurisdiction in order. The agency spends valuable taxpayer resources developing a rule to prevent methane flaring, yet denies rights-of-way permitting for pipelines, which would help eliminate these kinds of releases altogether. That is one of the important benefits of the Congressional Review Act is accountability by an elected Congress over a bureaucracy.

Failure to reverse this rule would result in a net loss in royalties that would negatively impact not just the Federal Government but Indian tribes as well which rely on energy revenue to meet their health care, housing, and other needs of their members on their lands.

The abuses and overreach by a previous Obama administration have gone long enough. It is time we put an end to the senseless, counterproductive regulations, and restore commonsense solutions to energy development on the people's Federal lands.

The administration taking credit for increased gas production is disingenuous, as most of it occurred on private lands, leaving our public assets and potential unused.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LAMALFA. Indeed, it would be a loss for the American public to continue along that path.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the efforts in bringing this forward and the opportunity to have a Congressional Review Act for the accountability.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to reinforce a point that I made in my opening statement. Oil and gas companies and the industry would like to say they have done a tremendous job cutting methane emissions on their own.

In fact, just this week, the Western Energy Alliance spearheaded a letter saying: ''Methane emissions from oil and gas production have declined by 15 percent since 1990, without any Federal regulations.''

What we have been hearing today, and my friends on the other side, is continually using some variation of this reduction that they say occurs. The problem is, and I repeat that the problem is, is that claim is just flat out false. That is the definition of an alternative fact.

Methane reduction, since 1990, has come entirely from natural gas storage, from the distribution and the transmission of natural gas. Out in the field, however, what we are talking about, out in the field, where companies are actually drilling, methane emissions are up.

For natural gas production, methane in the field, methane emissions are up by 31 percent. For oil production, emissions are up a staggering 76 percent.

Mr. Speaker, the industry has not fixed this problem on their own, and they are not going to fix this problem on their own. Only strong rules and oversight are going to hold companies accountable to reduce methane waste and, for that reason, we must defeat this resolution.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), who lives in an area where he clearly understands what this issue is about.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, BLM's Methane and Waste Prevention rule really is an overreach of authority that is already held by the EPA and the States. In fact, in North Dakota, the Department of Mineral Resources has waste prevention or conservation rules in place and is the first in the Nation to set gas capture requirements and goals.

Requiring operators to meet yet another set of rules, in addition to States' permits, results in substantial increases in both time and cost without any additional benefit to the public or to the environment, and that would also subject operators to conflicting rules, which actually could have the adverse effect that this rule aims at.

Just in North Dakota alone, it is estimated this rule would cost $24 million in lost tax revenue, and $240 million per year would be lost in production, but $39 million, most importantly, would be lost in royalty revenues, not to big, rich oil companies who make large contributions, as our friends on the other side like to talk about, but to regular people, farmers and ranchers and landowners who own the royalty, who get the royalty. These are the very people the Democrats love to talk about but don't seem to know how to talk to.

Methane leaks are wasteful, but there is a natural incentive to capture it. Methane is not a waste product, it is a commodity.

The overall, best-case scenario impact of this rule would be a reduction of 0.06 percent. Now, if the BLM really wants to do something, they could streamline the permitting of the infrastructure that would capture it.

I know of two pipeline projects in North Dakota alone that, had they been allowed to move forward, at no expense to the government, had they been allowed to move forward by the BLM, without its heavy hand of regulation, would have reduced emissions 6 percent; 6 percent with the natural incentive, stopped by the BLM, rather than this rule, which would, perhaps in the best case scenario, reduce it 0.06 percent.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. CRAMER. In wrapping up, I thank the chairman for the time and for his leadership.

Let's pass this CRA and overturn this egregious, unproductive BLM rule and return the authority where it belongs, back to the States.

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

As I have mentioned before, Mr. Speaker, this rule will not just reduce waste and increase taxpayer revenues, it will also reduce air pollution and improve public health.

In support of that, we received a letter this week from 13 medical and public health groups, including the American Lung Association, the American Public Health Association, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, the Public Health Institute, and many more, pointing out the importance of the BLM methane waste prevention rule for cutting down on harmful methane emissions.

They write: ''. . . we strongly urge you to oppose any Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval . . .'' for the BLM rule.

They point to the volatile organic compounds that also pollute the air when natural gas leaks, saying that these chemicals ''include benzene, a known carcinogen; ethylbenzene, a probable carcinogen; and toluene, a neurotoxin that may also cause miscarriages and birth defects.''

□ 1000

Also, these chemicals are ''precursors to the formation of ground-level ozone, a dangerous air pollutant that causes permanent lung damage. By limiting emissions of volatile organic chemicals, oil and natural gas limits will reduce the risk of ozone formation in the air and, thus, the risk of ozone-related health effects, including asthma attacks, hospital admissions, and, unfortunately, premature deaths.''

These health impacts are just one more set of reasons why repealing the BLM Methane Waste Prevention Rule is the wrong way to go.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, American workers and American businesses are the most innovative and productive in the world. This is no more evident than in our oil and gas fields—the ones in my district, in my State, across our country, and offshore.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of the Obama administration's war on energy, our producers made huge gains in technology, production, and productivity to meet the needs and lower energy costs.

The gentleman from California is correct, energy production has increased during the Obama administration. According to this 2016 CBO report, both oil and gas production has increased on State and private lands both onshore and offshore. However, during the same time, under the heavy hand of the Obama administration, production on Federal lands has decreased. The Energy Information Administration reported that oil production on non-Federal lands has increased 89 percent while it has decreased 10 percent on Federal lands, while gas production has increased 37 percent on non-Federal lands and decreased 37 percent on Federal lands.

The Bureau of Land Management's venting and flaring rule is an overreach of the Obama administration. This is not about the environment. It is about extending the war on energy to private and State lands. The rule increases costs on producers, which are then passed on to customers, stifling job growth and hurting the economy.

The BLM, as it has already been said, does not even have the legal authority to regulate air quality. It is an authority expressly provided to the EPA by the Clean Air Act. Methane emissions are already on the decline, dropping 21 percent since 1990 to 2014. This drop occurred despite the rise in natural gas production by nearly 47 percent. If the venting and flaring rule goes into full effect, it will cost nearly $1 billion by 2025.

The result of overregulation is a decrease in domestic energy production, lost jobs, a battered economy, and an increased dependence on foreign energy sources. A repeal of the venting and flaring rule is necessary to protect our economy, the Constitution, and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, it may no longer be Groundhog Day, but it feels like we have been here doing the same thing over and over again.

Once again, Republicans are doing the bidding of wealthy fossil fuel companies at the expense of ordinary Americans. On Wednesday, we were here so our majority could strip away clean water protections from coal mining. Later on that day, the majority gave our new Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, the former CEO of ExxonMobil, a gift by repealing the requirement for oil and gas companies to tell the public how much money they paid to foreign governments.

Now, today we are here to shower more goodies onto the oil and gas industry by repealing a rule designed to keep them from wasting—and I urge you to hear that term, ''wasting''—natural gas and also polluting our air.

Really, Mr. Speaker? Less than 2 weeks into the new all-Republican government and they are already handing out early Valentine's Day gifts to their wealthy donors. Instead of chocolates and flowers, they are giving their oil and coal executives the right to pollute our air, dump waste into our water, and do it all under the cover of darkness. Republicans are using the Congressional Review Act so fast that I doubt they even know what they are repealing from day to day. It's Friday, so I guess it must be air pollution day.

Let me warn everyone that is watching this telecast that they are not going to stop at trying to destroy clean air, clean water, and transparency. Dozens of health, safety, transparency, and consumer protections are on the chopping block, and Republicans are more than happy to swing the ax.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to protect the BLM Methane Waste Prevention Rule and defeat this resolution.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I include in the RECORD two letters opposing this resolution and supporting the BLM Methane Waste Prevention Rule. The first is from 78 environmental, conservation, public interest, and sportsmen's groups urging a ''no'' vote on this resolution. The second is a letter from 13 public health and medical organizations strongly urging a ''no'' vote on this resolution because of the damage that it will do to public health.

JANUARY 31, 2017.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we write to urge you to oppose any effort to use the Congressional Review Act to overturn the Bureau of Land Management's Methane and Natural Gas Waste Rule. We rely on laws and regulations to protect taxpayer resources and to keep our air and water clean and healthy. While we oppose the use of the CRA for any rule, the BLM rule is one of the anticipated targets to be considered under a Congressional Review Act Resolution.

The BLM rule is a common sense policy that requires the oil and gas industry to reduce venting, flaring, and leaks at industry operations on public and tribal lands by deploying methane mitigation technology. Currently, more than $330 million worth of natural gas is wasted on public and tribal lands each year, meaning that taxpayers could lose out on $800 million in royalties over the next decade due to venting and flaring of this gas. Repealing this rule would harm public health and reduce revenue to the federal government and Western states. The BLM estimates the rule's net benefits range from $46 to $204 million per year. And economic studies have found the technologies and practices included in this rule to be very cost effective since the gas captured can be sold to the benefit of industry and taxpayers. Leaked natural gas contains volatile organic compounds, an asthma irritant; benzene; and other hazardous air pollutants that are known. carcinogens. After Colorado implemented a similar rule, natural gas production increased, and the standard has been popular.

The Congressional Review Act (CRA) is a blunt instrument that seeks to undermine the federal rulemaking process. It allows Congress to overturn a recently finalized rule—major or otherwise—through an expedited process called a Resolution of Disapproval. In the Senate, a Resolution of Disapproval requires only a simple majority vote, may circumvent the committee process and cannot be filibustered. If the resolution passes and is signed by the President, the rule becomes void and the promulgating agency is prevented from issuing a rule that is ''substantially the same'' in the future without an act of Congress. By essentially voiding the rulemaking process and mandating that substantially similar rules not be pursued in the future, the CRA on the BLM's Methane Rule wastes taxpayer money and defies the public interest.

We request that you vote in opposition to this attack on commonsense standards which limit wasted resources and protect the American taxpayer, public health, and the environment. Vote no on the BLM Methane CRA Resolution.

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environment—Colorado Chapter, American Family Voices, Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico, Bold Alliance, Californians for Western Wilderness, Center for Biological Diversity, Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility, Citizens for a Healthy Community, Clean Air Council, Clean Air Task Force, Clean Water Action, Coalition for Clean Air, Colorado Farm & Food Alliance, Conservation Colorado, Conservation Voters New Mexico, Dakota Resource Council, Demand Progress, Earth Action, Inc., Earthjustice, EarthRights International, Earthworks, Elders Climate Action, Environmental Defense Fund, Environmental Entrepreneurs, Environmental Integrity Project, Environmental Law and Policy Center, Environmental Working Groups.

Friends of the Earth, Grand Canyon Trust, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy, Hair on Fire Oregon, Hixon Center for Sustainable Environmental Design at Harvey Mudd College, Idaho Organization of Resource Councils, Institute for Science and Human Values, Interfaith Power & Light, Iowa Environmental Council, League of Conservation Voters, League of Women Voters of the United States, Los Padres ForestWatch, Mayor of Lafayette, Colorado, Montana Conservation Voters, Montana Environmental Information Center—MEIC, National Association of Consumer Advocates, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, National Parks Conservation Association, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Mexico Sportsmen, NextGen Climate, Northern Plains Resource Council, NW Energy Coalition, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter.

Pipeline Safety Coalition, Powder River Basin Resource Council, Public Citizen, Rachel Carson Council, San Juan Citizens Alliance, Sierra Club, SLO CLEAN WATER.

ORG, Southern Environmental Law Center, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Ohio Environmental Council, The Wilderness Society, Union of Concerned Scientists, US Human Rights Network, Voices for Progress, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Western Colorado Congress, Western Environmental Law Center, Western Organization of Resource Councils, Wholly H2O, WildEarth Guardians, Wilderness Workshop, Wyoming Outdoor Council.

FEBRUARY 1, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the tens of thousands of members of the undersigned medical and public health organizations, and the communities we serve, we strongly urge you to oppose any Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval that would block air pollution limits that address the leakage of methane, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Methane and Waste Prevention Rule.

The Congressional Review Act is a blunt tool that would permanently block actions by BLM to reduce dangerous and wasteful methane leaks from the oil and gas industries. Use of the Congressional Review Act would not only block current actions to solve manageable problems; it would also prevent BLM from moving forward with substantially similar actions in the future.

Methane fugitive emissions (leaks) occur from oil and gas wells, drilling-related infrastructure and natural gas pipelines. Estimates of the amount of methane lost to leakage range from 9.3 percent to about 12 percent. Not only are these leaks wasteful, but they also create dangerous threats to health.

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), gases recognized as hazardous air pollutants, accompany the methane extracted from deep underground wells. VOCs include benzene, a known human carcinogen; ethylbenzene, a probable carcinogen; and toluene, a neurotoxin (affecting the nervous system) that may also cause miscarriages and birth defects. Comprehensive methane limits would immediately reduce emissions of these life-threatening substances.

VOCs are also precursors to the formation of ground-level ozone, a dangerous air pollutant that causes permanent lung damage. By limiting emissions of VOCs, oil and natural gas limits will reduce the risk of ozone formation in the air and, thus, the risk of ozone-related health effects, including asthma attacks, hospital admissions and premature deaths.

Finally, methane itself is a highly potent driver of climate change, one of the greatest threats to public health in our time. Methane is an extremely powerful heat-trapping gas; over its first 20 years in the atmosphere, it is 84 times more effective at retaining heat than is carbon dioxide . . . The resulting higher temperatures mean longer and hotter heat waves and more ground-level ozone; these in turn contribute to asthma attacks, cardiovascular disease, heart attacks and premature death. Climate change also increases the frequency and intensity of storms, droughts, wildfires and flooding; these are associated with accidental deaths, crop losses, air pollution, water contamination, and the spread of disease-causing pathogens. If we as health and medical organizations are to protect the public's health, it is vital that our nation make progress in the fight against climate change.

The Congressional Review Act, if applied to BLM's Methane and Waste Prevention Rule, would block feasible, affordable steps to reduce methane leakage. It would deprive Americans of vital protections from carcinogenic and neurotoxic substances and from climate change. Please make the health of your constituents your priority and reject the use of Congressional Review Act resolutions on actions that would protect our health and our current and future wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Alergy & Asthma Network, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments, American Lung Association, American Public Health Association, American Thoracic Society, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Center for Climate Change & Health, Health Care Without Harm, National Association of County & City Health Officials, National Environmental Health Association, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Public Health Institute, Trust for America's Health.

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

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

Much has been said about what Colorado has been able to do as a State on this particular issue, and that's good because Colorado, as a State, has the legal responsibility and legal authorization to work with the EPA on this particular issue. Naturally, industry would be liking that because the States are far more effective in dealing with industry than the BLM ever is, which still does not have statutory authority in this particular area.

In fact, even Colorado has its limits. When they were cut out of the process on the stream buffer rule that we talked about earlier, they also joined the lawsuit against the EPA and against the Federal Government for that particular issue. It is simply hypocritical for BLM to pretend that this is about waste when they refuse to actually solve the problem by pipeline approval and rights-of-way approval, which is the total solution.

So what we come down to is that simply this is a rule that violates all three of the criteria set forth in the Congressional Review Act. It is a rule that is terribly expensive; it is a rule that is redundant; and it is a rule that exceeds the statutory authority of the entity that is making that particular rule, a prime candidate for use of the Congressional Review Act, which is our responsibility. It's a congressional responsibility to establish these standards, not the executive branch agencies.

If someone has decided not to vote for this resolution, to actually support this rule, I could ask: What is the deciding factor that pushed them over into accepting that position? Was it simply because this rule is redundant and unnecessary? That without this rule, emissions were being lowered and they were lowered before this rule was implemented and they will be lowered after this rule is decimated at the same time? Is it because of the redundancy? Did they decide to vote against this particular rule because, well, of the cost increase that it will bring?

The idea that affordable energy is being harmed by this particular rule is real, and that means that any person is going to feel an increased cost in their energy consumption. Whether it is trying to heat his or her home or every time they turn on a lightbulb, this rule raises that cost. Once again, it hurts the people who are at the bottom of our economic level who are the most vulnerable to these kinds of increases.

Is that what decided you to vote against this resolution or tipped you in the balance of trying to support the rule? Or is it simply the fact that it is an illegal rule? Is that the defining issue, that it simply is an illegal rule where they have no statutory authority to do what they did?

If those criteria are not good enough, then I ask you and urge you to do something that actually helps people and helps reduce the cost of energy and make sure that we have affordable energy so this economic and energy renaissance that we have had in the last decade can continue not just on State and private lands, but it can continue on Federal lands as well, which it has not done.

We need to do this to support people. We need to do this so that States can fund their infrastructure and States can actually fund their education system and people can turn on the lightbulb without having to take out a loan at the local bank to do so.

This rule repeal is the right thing to do. You should vote ''yes'' on this resolution because it helps people.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res 36, expressing disapproval of the Methane Waste Rule submitted by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

The Methane Waste Rule is a critical update to decades old regulation that provides clear and established requirements for the responsible extraction of methane gas ensuring that public health is not put at risk from these harmful emissions.

The rule, crafted in an extensive and transparent public process in line with the Bureau of Land Management's mandate to capture wasted methane, includes reasonable reforms to avoid and minimize waste of natural gas from flaring, venting and leaking from oil and gas production operations. Grounded in peer-reviewed, scientific evidence, the rule updates 37-year old regulations to keep pace with modern technological advancements. It promotes the replacement of older technology, with new, modern equipment that is cost effective, and, when combined with a broader scientific understanding of the deleterious effects caused by these activities both to public health and the environment, works to better protect the American people from these harmful emissions.

With methane emissions increasing by 45 percent since 1990 and a 319 percent increase in flaring from 2009, the United States must act swiftly to not only protect public health, but the environment too. When these natural gases are released, they emit ozone-destroying volatile organic compounds (VOCs) which are 86 times more destructive to the protective ozone in our atmosphere than carbon emissions.

During the development of this critical rule, the Department of Interior received over 200,000 public comments, hosted public meetings, and engaged in broad outreach to stake

holders nationwide over a 3-year period. This rule was carefully developed and thoroughly considered.

Furthermore, it is important that tax payers understand that this is also a cost-savings rule, mitigating the over $330 million worth of natural gas wasted every year as a result of flaring, venting, and leaking.

Ultimately, repealing the Methane Waste Rule would undermine the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of the American public and do nothing to combat the growing concern of climate change. I strongly urge my colleagues to reject H.J. Res 36. Any effort to undermine this important health, economic, and environmental protection results in a lose-lose situation for the American public and I oppose it.

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

Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

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

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

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

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on passage of the joint resolution will be followed by a 5-minute vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 191, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

YEAS—221

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Ferguson
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—191

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Faso
Fitzpatrick
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Mast
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reichert
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—20

Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Engel
Evans
Gosar
Hastings
Jackson Lee
Jones
Labrador
Mulvaney
Nunes
Price, Tom (GA)
Reed
Rush
Scalise
Walker
Zinke

□ 1034

Messrs. MAST, BLUMENAUER, and MEEHAN changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader and my friend, for the purposes of inquiring of the schedule for the week to come.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m.

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected during the evening hours on Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a number of suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business today.

Mr. Speaker, the House will also continue our work under the Congressional Review Act to undo onerous Obama administration regulations through three more joint resolutions. The first, sponsored by Representative BRETT GUTHRIE, will stop a rule that significantly expands the Federal Government's involvement in teacher education.

□ 1045

Without our action this could result in fewer teachers serving some of our

Nation's most vulnerable children, and it could make it harder for schools to recruit the best teachers. That is the exact opposite of what Americans want for their children.

The second, sponsored by Representative TODD ROKITA, would address how the accountability provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act are being implemented. This bipartisan law empowered States to hold schools accountable, but somehow, when the regulation came out, there was an expanded Federal role. This was not what Congress intended nor what is best for our students.

And the third, Mr. Speaker, sponsored by Representative LIZ CHENEY, addresses how the Department of the Interior regulates resource management plans. These plans guide how BLM manages all Federal lands. But the rule only addresses how BLM must deal with the public, as well as State and tribal governments. We are rightfully concerned that there is no process or procedure for local governments in these new rules.

Finally, my friend may notice that a familiar face is not sitting next to me today, but Ben Howard is up in the gallery today. After serving 8 years on Capitol Hill, the last 6 in my office, our friend Ben has left the job. He is now working in the White House Office of Legislative Affairs.

Ben was one of the first people we hired when I was elected majority whip. It was here that most people around the Hill got to know Ben through his always witty floor updates and always constant Penn State football commentary. When I was elected majority leader, I asked Ben to be the floor director, a position in which he has served well for the past 2-plus years.

My friend would be happy to know that Ben is from Maryland. He was born and raised and currently resides in Olney with his wife, Amy, and their two young sons, John and Daniel.

So on behalf of myself, our entire team, and the entire Republican Conference, I want to thank Ben for his years of service and for his hard work, and wish him many years of happiness.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the schedule of regulations to come. I am sure we will have some discussions about that next week. In fact, we are going to have some discussions about all of these regulations which we believe reduce the protections, according to the American people, by a number of the regulations that are sought to be repealed.

However, first, Mr. Speaker, let me note that, first of all, we have another Ben in Maryland. He is the senior Senator, a former colleague of ours, BEN CARDIN. He had a TV ad which ended with ''My Friend, Ben.''

I want to say hi to my friend Ben, who has—indeed, as all of you know, I think the staff that serve with us make such an extraordinarily positive difference, and they sometimes—or most of the time—rise above what might be the partisan confrontation that Members have and continue to try to reach consensus so that this institution will run positively and well for the American people. Ben Howard has been one of those people.

I know that Shuwanza Goff, who sits next to me and is my floor director, has worked very positively with Ben through the years and appreciates very much his working with us. Kelly also falls into that category.

But Ben, we are going to miss you. I am sure that wherever you go, you are going to advantage the enterprise that you associate with. Olney, Maryland, is one of our thriving communities in Maryland. We are always proud of our Marylanders, and they always do a good job.

So I will say to him, Godspeed. I don't want to wish Penn State a lot of success, but, nevertheless, I do want to wish you a lot of success, Ben. Thank you very much for your service.

Now let me move on to, perhaps, some subjects that we might not have as much agreement on as we do have on Ben Howard and his quality and the service he has given this institution.

One of the first acts of Congress, of course, as you know, Mr. Leader, which was the plan, was to begin the reconciliation process to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The budget resolution set a deadline of January 27 for committees to report legislation repealing the law. It is now the 3rd of February, and after voting 65 times to repeal the ACA, House and Senate Republicans, Mr. Speaker, do not have, as far as I know, and don't appear to have, a replacement and are, as I read in the papers, Mr. Speaker, divided on the path forward.

Repealing the ACA without replacing it immediately will not only cause 30 million Americans to lose their coverage, but it would increase the cost for tens of millions more and would, I suggest, disadvantage everybody who has insurance, and clearly those who do not and would not have access.

MARK MEADOWS, who chairs the House Freedom Caucus, said: ''We need to slow down the process so we can understand a little bit more the specifics and the timetable of replacement votes and reconciliation instructions. . . .''

That was in Politico on January 9 of this year.

Senator BOB CORKER, in the Senate, said: ''There's more and more concerns about not doing'' repeal and replace ''simultaneously. You would think after 6 years, we would have a pretty good sense of what we would like to do.''

We have not seen a repeal and replace bill. The President said it ought to be done contemporaneously. BOB CORKER and others have said it ought to be done contemporaneously. We haven't seen it. So my question, Mr. Majority Leader, is: Does the gentleman expect that if repeal does move forward, that a replacement bill would be considered simultaneously?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am not sure if, in the beginning of your question, you want us to speed up or slow down, but I thank the gentleman for the question.

Mr. HOYER. I can clarify that for the gentleman.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I heard your question. Your question asked it both ways.

Regardless of who won the election, the simple fact is ObamaCare is a failure. Regardless of who won the election, we would both be sitting here today having the same conversation about what we would replace it with.

Let's just simply talk about the facts.

There were 23 co-ops created in ObamaCare. They were given $2 billion. As of today, 18 of them have failed. There are roughly a little more than 3,000 counties in America; 1,022 of those counties, roughly one-third, now only have one insurance company. Five States only have one insurance company, thanks to ObamaCare.

All of America knows the old quotes: if you like your health plan, you can keep it—we know that is no longer true—or if you like your doctor, you can keep it—that is no longer true.

When the President said that our premiums would go down by $2,500, now we know that is not true. So, yes, we would have this discussion regardless of who won this election. ObamaCare has failed.

So, yes, we are going to work together, just as, after the last election, I put a letter out to every Governor, Republican or Democrat, every insurance commissioner, Republican or Democrat, to provide us with their ideas. We welcome every idea on the other side of the aisle, too, because we will do this differently. We welcome your ideas as well.

If you noticed in the Energy and Commerce Committee, they have the hearing schedule. We will begin, and it will be an open process. We welcome your participation because we want a system that works, we do not want a system that has failed, and I believe we have the ideas to make it work correctly.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

We are not in agreement, Mr. Speaker. What we will be doing would be 180 degrees different. We would not be pretending that we are going to repeal an Affordable Care Act that has been a success.

We do not agree, Mr. Speaker, that having 30 million Americans insured that were not insured before the Affordable Care Act is a failure. We do not agree that people with preexisting conditions who can now get insurance is a failure. We do not agree that people who are 26 or younger being on their family's policy when they don't have a job or alternative insurance is a failure. We do not agree that Americans having the security that their insurance will not be canceled because

they reached an annual limit is a failure. We do not agree that Americans having no lifetime limit so that if they have a catastrophic illness they will still have coverage—that is not a failure.

What is a failure is to have pretended for the last 6 years that they wanted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and have no replacement as of this time. That was a failure.

The President says, Mr. Speaker, that his plan is going to make sure that everybody is insured, comprehensive coverage, and that costs will come down. He, of course, Mr. Speaker, has now offered a bill to effect that objective. We would welcome such a bill so that we can consider it.

No, Mr. Speaker, had the 3 million additional people who voted for Hillary Clinton more so than voted for Donald Trump prevailed—the Electoral College prevailed, but the majority of the American people that voted, the plurality, voted for policies to keep the Affordable Care Act as Mrs. Clinton said she would do if she were elected.

So, Mr. Speaker, the majority leader is in deep error on we would be having the same debate. But he is right; we had an outcome of a party and a President who said they were going to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

GOP Conference Chair CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS stated: ''Let me be clear: no one who has coverage because of ObamaCare today will lose that coverage.''

The majority leader said something about the President saying, if you like your policy, you can keep it. In fact, the President was substantially right on that. Yes. Were there minimum coverages so that people weren't scammed by insurance companies saying you got insurance, but, oh, by the way, we don't cover that, by the way, we don't cover that? Have you seen those ads about, I bought a new car and I had a wreck a day later and, guess what, the insurance company wants to give me 80 percent, 90 percent, 70 percent less? That is what the insurance companies were doing. People thought they had insurance for something, and they didn't have it.

So CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS says you are not going to lose anything. Well, I don't know. If it was so bad, why don't you repeal it? Why don't you offer a bill to repeal it and to undermine all those factors of the Affordable Care Act that are now available to the Americans that I suggested?

President Trump—I said this, but I want to repeat it—said last month that Republicans were nearing completion of an ACA replacement that would provide insurance for everybody. Bring it on. Bring it on. Insurance for everybody. Let's see it.

He went on to say his plan would have lower numbers, much lower deductibles. God bless him. Bring it on. Let us see it. Let's vote on it. It is not on the floor, and I am not sure when it will be on the floor, but perhaps the majority leader could tell us.

My question to you is: When do you expect such a bill consistent with the President's representation to the American people of everybody having insurance and at lower cost and lower deductibles? When do we expect a bill like that on the floor?

I yield to the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Since ObamaCare has passed and now that we know what was in it, you would know that there are 1,400 pages in there that give a great deal, amount of power to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Unfortunately, today, that Secretary has not been confirmed.

That Secretary has not been confirmed simply because of politics. It is not on my side of the aisle. It is on the Democrats' side of the aisle over in the Senate.

□ 1100

Do you know how far they have gone? How much do they really want to work on health care when you actually said it needed to be reformed? They wouldn't even show up in committee. So how much do they really care about Americans? They don't even show up in committee to ask the questions. They wanted to run and hide. So how much do they really want to work?

If we want to go quote by quote, when we go back to what President Obama said when the premiums were going to lower by $2,500, what do we say to Arizona when they went up 116 percent or to Tennessee by 63 percent and then three-quarters of Tennessee counties only have one provider or to Minnesota by 59 percent or to Oklahoma by 59 percent or to Alabama, 58, or to Pennsylvania, 53, or to Nebraska, 51?

Can we stop this rhetoric, and can we now get to work? Because I will tell you this: next month is when we begin because I am hopeful that we will no longer put up with the political games on the Senate side and that we will confirm the new Secretary because you have to have a Secretary in place if you want to reform ObamaCare, because you gave so much power to the Secretary. We all know that. So let's work together on behalf of the American people and end this pain.

I will tell you this: the unfortunate reality, in today's system, is that coverage does not always mean care. The deductibles are so high that many people don't even go to their doctors. I can tell you that in States, prior to ObamaCare, their high-risk pools were cheaper then for their care than now in just buying ObamaCare. We all know it is a failure. So let's stop playing the political games, and let's put the people before politics, and let's put a system in that works. Our door is open, and the committee is open for all ideas. Let's work together to solve it.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the majority leader for his comments.

I don't think he wants me to delve very deeply into why we do not have a Secretary of Health and Human Services. It is because the Republicans have not produced nor has the nominee produced full disclosure, as the gentleman knows, of his financial dealings with respect to legislation that he introduced and supported. They want full information so that they can make a considered judgment. I won't go further into that deep well, however.

I will say to the gentleman that you don't need a Secretary to bring legislation to the floor, and this is not an issue that is new this year or that is as a result of the November election of last year. It is, frankly, after 65 votes on this floor, to repeal the Affordable Care Act without having an alternative.

I will tell my friend, the majority leader, with great respect, you have had 6 years. You can catalog all of the things that you think are bad. Obviously, you don't mention any of the things that are good except so many in your caucus—perhaps the overwhelming majority of the caucus—say we are going to keep preexisting conditions, and we are going to keep 26. Of course, we are not going to eliminate annual limits, because that will hurt people and force them into bankruptcy. I don't hear that discussion going on. But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Leader, you cannot get away from the fact that 6 years have gone by since we adopted the Affordable Care Act—6 years of complaining about how awful it is.

By the way, as the gentleman knows, the majority of people now have made it very clear they do not want to repeal the Affordable Care Act unless they see a replacement on the table that they can consider and look to for alternatives. And that, as you know, Mr. Leader, is the first time in the 6 years because people said, ''yes, we don't like the Affordable Care Act'' in a vacuum, but now, when it really may be repealed, they are looking at it much more closely, and they don't know what is going to replace it, and they are concerned.

I have, I will tell you, family after family after family—I had somebody come up to me in the grocery store two nights ago, at Harris Teeter—with tears in his eyes—who said: Don't let them repeal the Affordable Care Act. I have a son who has a dire illness; and but for the fact of the Affordable Care Act, he would not be covered, and we couldn't keep him alive—with tears in his eyes.

So, when I hear you cataloging some of the things, those cases aren't mentioned. The 30 million aren't mentioned. The preexisting condition isn't mentioned.

I will say to my friend that you don't need a Secretary of Health and Human Services to bring a bill forward.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Yes, you do.

Mr. HOYER. Going to go to another subject, Mr. Leader, obviously, we are very concerned about the Affordable Care Act, but we are also very concerned—as we talked about executive

orders on this refugee ban that were issued, according to almost everybody, without much consultation with anybody other than within the White House—of an order banning Muslim refugees from coming into this country even after very strong vetting.

I know that the position is, oh, this is not a ban. The complication you have to that representation is the President keeps mentioning it as a ban, as he said he was going to do in the election, and he referred to it as a ban just a few days ago. But I would point out to you, Mr. Leader—and I am sure you know this—not a single terrorist act—not one—has been perpetrated by a refugee coming into this country from any one of the seven nations mentioned in the ban. We believe this is not only contrary to the Constitution but that it is contrary to our principles.

Let me make it clear, Mr. Leader, so that there is no confusion: nobody on this side of the aisle doesn't want to make America's borders secure, America's land and assets safe, and the American people safe. Every one of us on this side of the aisle wants to make sure that that happens, and we certainly want to make sure that the vetting is appropriate. As the majority leader knows, the vetting today is a very long and very careful process. We believe this ban alienates our allies and emboldens terrorists who are now saying: See, this really is a war on Islam.

That will not be consistent with the safety of our men and women whom we have at the point of the spear and will not be consistent to the safety and security of our allies in the Middle East.

Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM have said exactly that.

They pointed out:

''Our government has a responsibility to defend our borders, but we must do so in a way that makes us safer and upholds all that is decent and exceptional about our nation.'' This is JOHN MCCAIN and LINDSEY GRAHAM. ''It is clear from the confusion at our airports across the nation that President Trump's executive order was not properly vetted.'' Senator GRAHAM and Senator MCCAIN, chairman of the Armed Services Committee and the gentleman from South Carolina.

They go on:

''We are particularly concerned by reports that this order went into effect with little to no consultation with the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security. Such a hasty process risks harmful results.'' This continues to be a quote by Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM. ''Ultimately, we fear this executive order will become a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism.'' Senator MCCAIN knows something about increased risk.

He went on to say, along with Senator GRAHAM:

''This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country. That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security.'' They said that on the 29th of January, just 4 days ago.

At least four times this week, Mr. Leader, we asked for the consideration of H.R. 724, which rescinds and defunds the refugee ban. The Speaker said, when he took office initially—and he repeated this year—that we were going to have an open, transparent process and that we would consider the important issues of the day on this floor, with an opportunity for every Member of this House to offer alternatives.

I know the committee would not report it out, but this is a critical issue to our country, to our safety, and to our values; and I ask the gentleman:

Is there a possibility that you would bring to the floor next week or the week thereafter—preferably next week—H.R. 724 so that the Members of this House—the people's Representatives—could speak to this critically important issue consistent with the observations of Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I listened to the Speaker when he took office, too, and he also said ''regular order.'' In the schedule for next week, it is not on the list.

The executive order signed by the President, really, as you know, is based on legislation that passed this House with overwhelming bipartisan support. It was following the attacks over the past 2 years. It was the SAFE Act that passed this House 289–137, and the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act that passed by 407–19. I will point out that these two bills received veto-proof majorities, and President Obama signed the visa waiver bill into law.

President Trump's actions are temporary pauses and reassess our vetting procedures to keep our country safe. While there was, certainly, some confusion with how this was implemented over the weekend, the Secretary of Homeland Security is effectively addressing key issues to ensure legal permanent residents who are returning to our country are allowed entry unless our security services have a compelling reason to suggest otherwise. America remains a place of refuge for those seeking peace, freedom, and opportunity across the world.

Now, my friend knows, because we have been in meetings this week, that our rhetoric matters. Other people listen to what we say. In these types of situations, especially with a new administration, I have always told my children: at any time in a situation, let's take a deep breath; let's not lose our heads. Especially with a brand new administration, I try to give them the benefit of the doubt. They don't have their Cabinet there yet. Let's let them get their footing. It is not a ban—it is a pause. It is based upon two pieces of legislation that passed this House.

You love to quote people; so if I may:

''House Democrats and House Republicans have no greater priority than keeping Americans safe. This is neither a partisan issue nor is it a partisan difference. Many Americans are frustrated with the pace of progress against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. I want to see the administration and Congress working together to protect our Nation. The reforms in this bill are an excellent start.

''This legislation will make it easier for law enforcement to vet those visitors who are coming from Visa Waiver countries, such as in Europe, to ensure that we are not admitting those who have traveled to places like Iraq and Syria and link up with ISIS.''

That was said by you.

Mr. HOYER. I think that is an excellent quote, which I still agree with.

Mr. MCCARTHY. So you know the importance.

What I would say to the gentleman is: let's work with this administration.

As we sat in our meeting this week with leaders of other countries, I thought their advice to us was good advice: let's not say what this is not, because we may get political points with one another, but it puts them in harm's way, and they know what the truth of this is.

I think you and I agree on a lot of different things, and we are cordial with one another when we disagree, and I think this is an area in which sometimes we may disagree, but sometimes we have shown we could agree.

□ 1115

I know you want to keep America safe, and I know we want to keep America safe.

I also know it is a brand new administration. I also know that when I go down to that White House—you have been there with me—there is not a lot of staff there. I know there are going to be a few hiccups along the way. I am going to work with them. I am going to help them, and I want you to help us help them as well.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, may I ask the gentleman from California to do something?

The advice that the gentleman gives to his children about taking a breath, perhaps before they tweet——

Mr. MCCARTHY. My kids don't tweet.

Mr. HOYER. That is good advice as well.

Would you give that advice to the President of the United States and tell him to take a breath before he makes policy or before he offends our allies or before he creates great fear in those who hear what he has to say off the cuff?

Yes, I understand that rhetoric counts. You might talk to him about that as well. He is the one that calls this a ban. I know that everybody else is trying to clean it up, and I hope that

is the case. In fact, I have seen the head of Homeland Security, Secretary Kelly, trying to clean it up.

It is a darn shame that it wasn't cleaned up before. It was a darned shame that the time was not taken to do an order that would make sure that vetting was appropriate, as my quote and our legislation that you talked about urged.

It is good advice to your children and good advice to this President: Take a breath. Just don't, as immediately it comes to mind, tweet it and have the impact not known to you, your staff, or to the country.

Almost invariably, we have seen this has a negative effect.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, President Obama said that he was rooting for President Trump's success.

I would also give the advice, let's not root against him. He still doesn't have his own Cabinet. When I watched and listened to what some on the other side of their own leadership say about some there, I could see where the rhetoric continues to rise. I think we should put that down. The election is over, and now is the time to govern.

There are big problems out there. We can score as many political points as we want back and forth, but there are challenges. You and I have worked together on so many issues out here, from opioids, from the visa waiver so many different times. And we have disagreed others times.

I think it would behoove us and the American public that we can show the leadership to do that, and I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comment. I think we have demonstrated over the years that we ascribe to that concept.

My point to you is, in the first 10 or 12 days of this administration, that concept has been put at great risk. I think the gentleman's advice is good, and we have pursued that.

I simply urge the gentleman from California to suggest to the President of the United States that he adopt that concept as well.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, it is good to have these colloquies back.

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

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017, TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday, February 6, 2017, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GARY ANDRES

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

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a very good friend, certainly a trusted adviser and, by everyone's account, one of the very best staff directors ever on the Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. Gary Andres.

I first met Gary when he was a young staffer working in the White House for President Bush 41. Over the years, I became so close with both Gary and his wonderful wife, Sue.

Gary came on board day one for my committee chairmanship, and we assembled an all-star staff of the most professional, talented, and kind people on Capitol Hill. In Gary, we got a trusted counselor with a strategic mind second to none. Gary also understands that sometimes you can't change the direction of the winds, but you can adjust your sails so that you are always going to reach that destination.

Nowhere was this more important than during our herculean, bipartisan 21st Century Cures Act effort. For more than 3 years, Gary was our five-star general; and thanks to his tireless leadership, we got the job done for patients and families across the country.

What drove us more than anything else was that the clock was ticking for folks with terrible diseases, and we couldn't waste a day to get this bipartisan bill to the President for him to sign into law. It ended up being what many say was the most significant legislation enacted in the 114th Congress.

But it went beyond the 21st Century Cures Act. There were 562 hearings, 354 measures through the House, 200 signed into law in the last 6 years, substantial legislative wins. Whether it be the doc fix, saving Medicare, pipeline safety, health reforms, opioids, so many more, Gary was with us at the table.

Gary understands how important this institution is. He has a reverence for the people's House. But Gary was also quick with a smile, a witty insight, or a laugh. He never lost his perspective, his temper, or eagerness to engage on an issue.

I know I speak for all of the Members and staff on both sides of the aisle when we say: Thank you, Gary. We are going to miss you, but we know that we are going to continue to lean on you for advice no matter what the issue is.

As Gary moves on to that next venture, I wish him the very best.

To his wonderful wife, Sue, who is in the gallery today, it has been an honor to work with this distinguished gentleman.

HONORING GARY ANDRES

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I second and reiterate what my colleague from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) just said about Gary Andres.

I actually remember, when I was first elected to Congress in 1988 and when the first President Bush was President, being outside of the Capitol, outside the House Chambers and talking to Gary. He was, I believe, the White House congressional liaison at the time.

I was a young Member and didn't really know what was going on around here with a Republican President; and Gary was so warm, so helpful, trying to help me out, even though I was of the other party, even though I was a freshman Member. And that continued on so many occasions, both under President Bush and, of course, afterwards and most recently, with the Energy and Commerce Committee as a staff director.

What Representative UPTON said is absolutely true, Gary was always the fighter for the Republicans, for the majority; but at the same time, he always wanted to work with Democrats.

Gary, like Congressman UPTON, believed very strongly that if we were going to accomplish anything, it had to be done on a bipartisan basis. I know Congressman UPTON mentioned in particular the 21st Century Cures Act, but it was true with everything.

One of the reasons that we were so successful, I think, in the last session in doing so many pieces of legislation that were important to the country was not only because of Congressman UPTON and his leadership, but also because of Gary and his working with Jeff Carroll, who is our minority staff director.

So I wish Gary well. There are very few people that I can say, over the last 29 years that I have been here, who was always trying to reach out and do the right thing. I think that is so important.

So congratulations and good luck in the future, Gary.

IN APPRECIATION OF GARY ANDRES

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

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, as the new chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, I, too, want to join in showing my appreciation and affection for Gary. He has given our committee and, dare I say, our country incredible service for many years.

I am grateful for his friendship, I am grateful for his guidance, his counsel and, as we have gone through this transition, his advice, a steady hand, incredible intellect, a curiosity about how to get policy done.

From his start on Capitol Hill working in both Bush administrations and then leading the Energy and Commerce Committee staff effort, he has this passion for public service. He is relentless in his devotion to serving the American people and to driving the committee over time and really putting together a great team.

As you have heard, because of his leadership, the committee successfully shepherded through dozens of pieces of really important bipartisan legislation for the American people that have made their lives better, such as the 21st Century Cures Act, modernizing our chemical safety laws, improving pipeline safety, among many others.

We are fortunate to have had such a gifted adviser, exceptional leader, tireless advocate at the helm of this committee staff for the last 6 years.

It has been a real honor, Gary, to work with you. I wish you, Sue, and your whole family the very best in the years ahead. You have given this country incredible service, and we appreciate you for that.

God bless you and Godspeed.

BABY FATEMEH

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, this is Fatemeh. She is not a terrorist. She is a 4-month-old baby girl who is in immediate need of open heart surgery. Her parents desperately want the best care for her, so they planned to bring her from their home in Iran to Portland, Oregon, to one of the best hospitals for pediatric heart surgery. That is where Fatemeh's uncle and grandparents all live. They are U.S. citizens.

Then President Trump hastily issued the executive order, and the family's plans were brought to a halt. The order is supposed to expire in 90 days, but Fatemeh's family does not know if she can wait that long.

Now, I don't know what the President had in mind when he signed that order, but it probably wasn't baby Fatemeh. Keeping 4-month-old babies out of our country does not make us safer. It puts her life in danger and it diminishes the United States in the eyes of the world.

My office has reached out to Fatemeh's family in Oregon to be of assistance, but it is heartbreaking and disgraceful that this even happened. I hope the courts invalidate this unconstitutional executive order soon, and I hope it is in time for baby Fatemeh.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the importance and impact of mentoring in our society.

I recently heard from a constituent, Karissa, who works with the Boys & Girls Club in my district in Bryant, Arkansas.

One of her mentees was struggling, having trouble in school, finding it difficult to build friendships with her fellow students. Karissa's guidance and encouragement helped build confidence, which led to participation in the school's JROTC program and improving her camaraderie with her fellow cadets.

At-risk youth face many difficult challenges, and life is infinitely more challenging without the support of caring adults.

With mentors, at-risk youth are less likely than their peers to skip school or use drugs and are more likely to go to college, play sports, and volunteer in our communities.

Whether it is through a mentoring organization like Scouting or the Boys & Girls Clubs, a nonprofit, a religious institution, or school, being a positive influence for our young people goes a long way in strengthening our communities and serving the best interest of our children.

□ 1130

DON'T REPEAL ACA WITHOUT A REPLACEMENT

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

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, Shirley is from my district, and I heard from her this past December when she told me about her daughter, Sarah. Sarah has had health problems all of her life and, unfortunately, because it has been too expensive, she has not been able to afford health insurance, but she was finally able to be covered under the Affordable Care Act because of the historic Medicaid expansion. It made a big difference in her life because just 2 years ago, she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer.

Now, Sarah may be just a statistic to some, and, indeed, she is 1 of 601,000 Washingtonians who have been covered under the Medicaid expansion; 20,000 of whom have been treated for cancer.

But to Sarah's mother, Sarah can't just be boiled down to an ACA statistic. To Shirley, Sarah is her daughter who will lose this coverage if Congress repeals the healthcare law without a comparable replacement. It would put Sarah, in her fight against thyroid cancer, back to square one.

Friends and colleagues, I plead with you, go to your districts. Talk to the Shirleys; talk to the Sarahs. Listen to them.

Their stories matter because they matter.

THE MENACE OF THE DESERT—WARMONGER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Ayatollah, the menace of the desert, had defied yet another U.N. resolution prohibiting missile tests. No surprise. Iran just can't follow the rules. Time and time again, Iran has tested ballistic missiles with no consequences. The last time, they launched two missiles with ''Israel must be wiped off the Earth'' written on them in Hebrew. Also, the Ayatollah has clearly stated numerous times he wants to destroy the United States.

Even worse, Mr. Speaker, we are paying him to do it. Yes, that is right. Obama slipped the rogue tyrant $150 billion hoping that appeasement would make the Ayatollah be nice. Well, guess what? Obama was wrong, and the U.S. is less safe. The Ayatollah, in my opinion, is using our money to build weapons to destroy us.

Mr. Speaker, there must be clear consequences for the dictator of Iran and his mullah cronies for warmongering. The people of Iran need to change this regime, and the menace of the desert just needs to go.

And that is just the way it is.

CONDEMNING ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN UKRAINE BY RUSSIAN-BACKED SEPARATISTS

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

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I strongly condemn the escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine by Russian-backed separatists and call for an immediate withdrawal of heavy weapons.

I am deeply concerned about the loss of life and deteriorating humanitarian conditions that exist there. There has been an ''uncountable'' amount of violations of the Minsk agreement according to the OSCE. Russian separatist forces must immediately honor the ceasefire to allow for humanitarian assistance.

I call on this administration to step up and see this through. Thousands have already died in this conflict, including at least eight in just the last 5 days. Seventeen thousand civilians, including 2,500 children, do not have access to water, electricity, or heat during the height of winter.

I urge Secretary Tillerson to provide Ukraine with defensive weapons—as Congress has already approved—and to provide meaningful support to our Ukranian allies against Putin's aggression.

When it comes to Russia, we must see this administration's true colors.

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

(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, today marks the conclusion of the annual Catholic Schools

Week in America, and I rise today to celebrate these quality educational institutions.

This year, the theme celebrated was ''Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.'' Schools across the country observe the week with masses, open houses, and other activities for students, families, parishioners, and community members. Through these events, schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and contributions to their church, communities, and to our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, Catholic schools provide an excellent education to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. These schools offer academic excellence and faith-filled education for students nationwide. National test scores, high school graduation rates, college attendance, and other data show Catholic schools frequently outperform schools in both the public and private sectors.

While there have been challenges to enrollment in some areas, the good news is that there is a strong demand and enthusiasm for the rigorous and quality education Catholic schools provide. Nearly 30 percent of the schools have waiting lists for admission, and new schools are opening across the country.

Congratulations to all involved in Catholic Schools Week and your efforts to educate the next generation.

ISIS AND FORCES OF DARKNESS

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as many have explained on this floor, Trump's executive order, his Muslim ban, repudiates our values and violates our Constitution.

After 20 years on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I think it is important to come to this floor and explain how that executive order is harmful to our national security. Trump's executive order plays right into the ISIS narrative. It says that there is a clash of civilizations and that all Islam is our enemy. ISIS, which has, perhaps, a few hundred thousand followers, dreams of convincing all of Islam—dreams of convincing 1.5 billion Muslims—that they are at war with America and the West.

We do not have a clash of civilizations. We have a clash between civilization and the forces of darkness bent on destroying civilization, whether they reside in Raqqa or at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

IN MEMORY OF GRANT RONNEBECK

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of a young man who would have been my constituent.

Two years ago last week, 21-year-old Grant Ronnebeck was manning the counter at a Mesa, Arizona convenience store. An illegal alien walked into the store and shot Grant in the head, killing him, over a pack of cigarettes that the man did not want to pay for.

The illegal immigrant, Apolinar Altamirano, had been out on bond awaiting deportation due to a violent criminal history. Grant had his whole life ahead of him, but lost it because of the failure of his government to protect him from criminally violent, illegal immigrants.

I have introduced H.R. 486, otherwise known as Grant's Law. This bill would end the practice of releasing illegal aliens guilty of deportable crimes so they are no longer a danger to innocent American citizens.

I was emboldened last week when President Donald Trump invited Grant's father, Steve, to the White House to witness the signing of an executive order administratively ending this dangerous policy. I am thankful for a President that protects Americans and seeks the rule of law. However, if Congress fails to pass H.R. 486, this policy remains a temporary Presidential order and does not carry the permanent force of law.

We must make sure that Grant's fate never again happens to any young man or woman. We must pass Grant's Law.

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, here it is, Friday. It has been a good week in Washington. We have gotten some of President Trump's nominees approved and through the Senate. Call them like you see them, I think.

Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL has done a great job this week. I applaud his efforts. And as a result of what President Trump has been doing—and actually part of it is just his getting elected—has done for our economy because people know—at least a lot of people know—he is going to keep his word. He is already showing he is doing that, and he has repealed some of the executive orders that have been doing so much damage to our economy.

And when we say economy, what we mean is, the rank and file people, the backbone of America who have been struggling, who have made less money than they did 8 years ago when adjusted for inflation. Those are the people we are talking about; those who have been out of work, the 94 or 95 million who have become so desperate, they pulled out of even applying for work.

I enjoyed, to an extent, the exchange between my friend, KEVIN MCCARTHY and my friend across the aisle Leader HOYER. And I get amused when I hear Democrats quoting Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM—wonderful people. LINDSEY GRAHAM, it is a real joy to be around talking to LINDSEY GRAHAM. But if you look at positions they have taken, it would make you think twice about quoting them as positions you wanted to have supporting yours.

I mean, nothing stands taller than the 30 million of the 90 million or so living in Egypt, when they rose up that June because a Muslim brother named Morsi was seizing power. He was on his way to becoming the Chavez in North Africa, and the people rose up. It was not only the largest peaceful demonstration in the history of the world, it was the largest demonstration in the history of the world.

All over Egypt, moderate Muslims, Christians, Jews, secularists, they all rose up, went to the streets and demanded the removal of the man who would be king, the Muslim brother named Morsi. The difference in this king is, as many of the Egyptians have pointed out when I have been in Cairo and other places, he wasn't just going to be king. He was going to be the puppet of the spiritual leader of Islam in Egypt.

Some of my Egyptian friends, when I have been over there, say: yeah, we have seen video of him taking his orders from the spiritual imam, and he followed his leadership. So if that is true, then he wasn't just going to be king. He was going to be a king puppet.

But the Muslim brother was removed as a result of 30 million people rising up peacefully. Morsi only, allegedly, got around 13 million to claim the win and made clear his opponent knew—for the original Presidential election—that if he raised a stink about any votes being fraudulent, they would burn the country down—that was some of his supporters. Because the Muslim Brotherhood, if you go back and check, when churches are burned, it is normally the Muslim Brotherhood over there.

In Egypt, they had been anathema to representative government, to civilized government, to nonsectarian government. They want a new caliphate to start with basically the old Ottoman Empire and Erdogan in Turkey; he is undoing all of the great reforms made by the great Ataturk nearly 100 years ago, and he is undoing them.

□ 1145

There are those in Turkey who would like to see a caliphate—a new Ottoman Empire—and it have its leadership in Turkey. They long for the days when they ruled an expansive caliphate.

I had a reporter say: Why would you say that?

I said: Go look at a map. I know you weren't ever taught what the Ottoman Empire was. Go look at a map and look at the countries where our President is supporting an uprising that eventually, if we don't stop it, will become anarchy or it will become part of the caliphate.

The new jobs report that is just out: 227,000 new jobs. And from what I'm hearing from constituents, these aren't just the part-time jobs or the minimum wage jobs that the previous President bragged about. He had to brag about it because he didn't have anything else to talk about. People lost their full-time jobs and could only acquire part-time jobs, and this administration bragged about those. If they got two part-time jobs to make up for losing their full-time job, this Administration bragged: We created two jobs.

I would submit that when you are creating two jobs by causing a person to lose all of their benefits and full-time employment, you haven't done such a good thing.

Fortunately, the people of Egypt did not listen to Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM when they flew to Cairo and begged for the people of Egypt to return the Muslim ''brother who would be king'' back into his royal kingship. I know they weren't intentionally supporting an evil ruler; it is just they didn't know. So, hopefully, they will become more aware that it is not a good thing to support the Muslim Brotherhood.

With regard to Australia and the alleged news about President Trump getting into it with the leader of Australia, well, to whom is the leader of Australia accountable? To whom does the leader of Australia owe his allegiance?

It is the people of Australia. So when he calls or talks to President Trump and begs or demands Trump to take these refugees that the Prime Minister in Australia knows are a threat to the safety of the Australian people, when he wants them out of Australia, there is a reason—because his allegiance is not to the people of the United States—his allegiance is to the people of Australia. So, naturally, being allegiant to the people of Australia, he wants the dangerous refugees out of Australia.

President Obama, basically by his actions, in effect, was saying: Give us not your tired, your poor, the people yearning to be free, but give us your people that yearn to destroy America because we're going to bring them in. We're not going to vet them properly because we have got no information to properly vet them. That's how we have been able to let people in who had their fingerprints on IEDs that killed Americans, and maimed Americans because we are not properly vetting them.

Oh, yeah, we compare any information we have against what we've got. But don't forget, as Phil Haney, the whistleblower from Homeland Security, pointed out, he was personally required to delete massive pages of information about terrorist ties of people coming into the United States because they did not want those terrorist ties in the Homeland Security database. Then he also, of course, was on his computer when he saw somebody above his pay grade deleting things that he personally put in about terrorist ties. They were deleting them.

So when Janet Napolitano talks about, We get a ping and we connect the dots, she caused massive numbers of dots to be deleted. They are not there. We don't know who we are getting. When anyone comes from Syria—we know ISIS has taken governmental printing areas before. They can produce official Syrian passports not with the support of the Syrian Government, but just because they have the equipment to do it. So when we get information saying, I am from Syria, maybe they are, and maybe they're not. We don't know where they're from.

The FBI Director created one of the most incredible political stunts of any FBI Director in history last summer when he stepped up and outlined that a crime had been committed by Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. But then he goes on to say: But no reasonable prosecutor would pursue this. It is incredible the extent he went to to help Hillary Clinton.

I know there were some of my Democratic friends that got mad at him when a week before the election he said that they were reopening the investigation. But if you look at the circumstances, it was information that we had FBI agents who were so upset that Comey wouldn't reopen the investigation. When they knew some of what was in the computers that they had gotten ahold of belonged to Anthony Weiner and Hillary Clinton's closest adviser and confidante, Huma Abedin Weiner, the word was we had FBI agents saying that: If you don't reopen, we're going to have a press conference, we're going to resign, and we're going to out you that you're protecting Hillary Clinton. So what could he do to help Hillary Clinton but say: ''I am going to reopen the investigation?''

I commented to somebody in the media back then:

> Well, of course, it may appear to help Hillary. We will know whether that was his intent or not because you can't examine tens of thousands of emails adequately. You can do an algorithm search, but you can't adequately investigate them for a crime, including false statements to the FBI, within a week. So if he comes out before the election and says that there is nothing here, then we know why he came out and said that we are reopening. It was to stop FBI agents from resigning and from outing him for protecting Hillary Clinton.

So what happens?

Two days before the election, he said: Yeah, we checked it all out.

He couldn't possibly have.

He said: We checked it all out, and there is nothing here to prosecute.

So that same FBI Director, though, didn't help the Obama administration. On occasion, he was calling them like he saw them; and that is:

> Yeah, we will vet these people, but when they give us information from Syria, we have no information against which to vet that. We have to accept it for what it is because, yeah, we're technically vetting it against what we have, but we have nothing, so we don't know who these people are.

So, in the meantime, the economy is turning around.

How sad is it when we have just lived through 8 years under a President's policies that were so abysmal for the good of America that the economy, when adjusted for inflation, was slower than it was in the 4 years of Jimmy Carter?

I know there are some in the media that would grab 1 month and say: See, this was a good month.

Let's look at the 8 years compared to the 4 years of President Carter, 4 of the worst years for the American economy in history since the Depression. President Obama, over 8 years, had a slower economy when adjusted for inflation. That is pretty sad.

It is also sad this week to read this article from The Daily Caller: ''Laura Wilkerson, whose teenage son was tortured and murdered by an illegal alien in 2010, got into an emotional confrontation with House Democratic Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi at a CNN town hall event Tuesday night.

''Wilkerson told Pelosi, 'In 2010, one of the illegals slaughtered my son. He tortured him, he beat him, he tied him up like an animal, and he set him on fire. And I am not a one-story mother. This happens every day because there are no laws enforced at the border. We have to start giving American families first.'

''On the issue of Pelosi and Democrats' support for sanctuary cities, Wilkerson asked, 'How do you reconcile in your head about allowing people to disavow the law?'

'' 'There's nothing, I'm sure, that can compare to the grief that you have, and so I pray for you,' Pelosi said.''

PELOSI went on: ''But I do want to say to you that in our sanctuary cities, our people are not disobeying the law. These are law-abiding citizens. It enables them to be there without being reported to ICE in case of another crime that they might bear witness to.''

''Pelosi then asked if her son was murdered in a sanctuary city. Josh, Wilkerson's son, was murdered just outside Houston, Texas, which is a sanctuary city.''

So I believe in the power of prayer. I think it's one of the greatest gifts God gave us. C.S. Lewis talked about we are here on Earth behind enemy lines, if you would.

Can you imagine being behind enemy lines and getting messages from your home headquarters and you refuse to open them and read them?

He says that we have a Bible. Those are messages from our home headquarters. We ought to be reading them.

I do believe in the power of prayer, just like our minority leader, Ms. PELOSI; but we need to distinguish between things that we should pray for and things that we can fix ourselves. Things that are outside our control, we

ought to be praying about. Those things which are in our control—when it is within your control—to return to the rule of law, enforce the laws that exist, treat everybody fairly under the law, that's something you don't really have to pray about. You just help us do it.

I have not met Tommy Nelson, a pastor in Denton, Texas, but I listened to a 12-hour Bible study he did; and one of his comments on that study in Ecclesiastes was basically what so many people say: We don't have to worry; God is in control.

Tommy Nelson said: Yeah, God is in control, but just because He is in control doesn't mean He wants us to lean on our shovel and pray for a hole. When you have got a shovel in your hand, you don't have to pray for a hole; you just start digging.

When you have got the tools to protect the American people and enforce the rule of law, you just do it. Now, you can pray for wisdom to help you as you go.

I know it may have been a Freudian slip—may not have been—but when Minority Leader PELOSI was asked about illegal aliens, she referred to them as ''our people.''

I don't know; could that be because they know when illegal aliens vote, they vote Democrat?

We know that most dead people vote 100 percent Democrat. I have encouraged the Republican Party: Let's don't have any group that we're not willing to recruit votes from, and traditionally dead people vote 100 percent Democrat. Perhaps it's time that some of them started voting Republican for a change.

In any event, the minority whip, Mr. HOYER, was talking about a fellow with tears in his eyes saying: Please don't repeal ObamaCare because my son will be unable to get insurance if you repeal ObamaCare.

Well, that gets to all of us when somebody with tears in their eyes comes to us and begs for help. The only reason he had tears in his eyes is because of the false information being put out by the Democratic Party, because when we repeal ObamaCare, people are not going to lose their insurance. Some Americans have a right to be skeptical because they were told by President Obama and all of the Democrats: No, no, when we pass ObamaCare, nobody loses their insurance.

Well, we found out that that was a lie to millions of Americans. Some of them were able to get insurance. Some of it ended up being Medicaid. Most of the new people got Medicaid, which is not really the insurance they were hoping for, but that's the insurance most people got.

□ 1200

I had 17 people come to my office in Lufkin. They were looking to make a show and not so much to give information; otherwise, they would have called for an appointment.

My district representative there was at a service honoring her late father at a hospice and she forgot, in her emotional state, to put a note on the door that she was running to that. Anyway, they made a big deal, here is an office not occupied. Hopefully, they will have a little sympathy for somebody in her situation.

But they weren't looking to get information to me. That is why the reporter had more information about the meeting when my office had no information about the meeting. If they want an appointment, we make appointments. I am here most of the time, so I can't be there. I have got people to meet with them.

This article, February 1, Melissa Quinn, Daily Signal:

''Pamela Weldin's experiences with ObamaCare can be boiled down to just a few numbers.

Since the health care law's implementation 3 years ago, Weldin, 60, has lost her insurance four different times''—under ObamaCare. ''And the Nebraska woman is currently enrolled in her fifth new insurance policy in four years.''

She said: '''Yet again, and through no fault of my own'. . . . 'I'm just sitting here minding my own business, and here we go again.''' She gets thrown off another insurance policy.

Anyway, she goes on to explain she has been denied coverage because of a preexisting condition related to her career as a dental hygienist.

People are not going to lose their insurance. All we are going to do is create the opportunity to have far better insurance policies than you have got under ObamaCare. You are not going to get a penalty for having better insurance than what ObamaCare required. So you don't have to pay a penalty, and you can have good insurance and you won't be taxed for having better insurance. It is going to be a great day for America to do that.

That brings me to a point I want to get to next about the wall.

An article here, February 1, Virginia Hale from Breitbart, says: ''Smuggling Migrants to Europe Now a Major Funding Source for Islamic State.''

Well, it only makes sense that the Islamic State would figure that out, because we had information they consulted with the drug cartels in Mexico. As the Border Patrolmen have told me during the middle of the night the times I have been down there, there is not an inch of the Mexican border that is not controlled by some drug cartel. Nobody crosses that border illegally without paying something to the drug cartel or promising to work for them when they get to America.

What a great business model. You are selling drugs, making billions of dollars getting it across the border illegally into the United States, and, unlike most businesses where you have to pay the employee, they get the employee to pay them as part of their debt repayment to get them into the United States.

So, what a business model, making billions from selling drugs illegally gotten into the United States, and then the Department of Homeland Security, as one told me down on the border: They call us their logistics, in the drug cartels, because we ship people all over the country to cities where they need drug sales, prostitutes, mules. We send them there, and then they have got people selling drugs for them.

If we build a wall—and I know there are areas like where the Rio Grande is so wide you don't need a wall, you just have people guard the border—it cuts off the massive flow of drugs into the United States. It means the billions of dollars going to the drug cartels that they can use to corrupt the Mexican Government will dry up to thousands. Drug cartels know it.

So I would submit, Mr. Speaker, the only Mexican leaders that object to a wall and total security of our border between Mexico are either ignorant—they don't understand that the reason they are 60-something in world economies instead of being fourth or fifth or sixth is because of the corruption that comes from the drug cartels. You dry up the billions of dollars they are making with a wall and border security, and Mexico gets in the top 10 economies. But, yes, it means the drug cartels dry up. They are either ignorant of what will really happen when we secure the border or they are in the pocket of the drug cartels. Those are the only two choices.

If you are a Mexican leader and you oppose the United States enforcing our border, you are in the pocket of the drug cartels or you are just ignorant of why your economy is not one of the top 10 in the world. You have got the best location. You have got two continents north and south above you. They would be great markets. You have got two great oceans on either side to ship. You have got incredible natural resources. You have got some of the hardest working people in the world in Mexico.

So why is it so far down the chain of economies? Well, drug cartels. The wall and border security will dry them up and the Mexican people will be free with a vibrant economy, and they will take their appropriate place in the great economies of the world.

I have been joined by my friend from Florida, and I mean that truly. I think the world of MATT GAETZ.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ).

Mr. GAETZ. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the danger that is currently posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran and its fundamentalist government pose the gravest threat to global peace, stability in the Middle East, and Israel's existence.

Iran continues to extend its dangerous hegemony through the region in places such as Lebanon, by arming and training Hezbollah; in Gaza, by arming Hamas; in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.

Iran's taking hostage of U.S. sailors and its continued ballistic missile tests and death threats to Israel highlights Iran's evil intentions and the need for the United States to play a leading role in rolling back Iran's growing influence and its push to destabilize the Middle East and the world. These issues have been exacerbated by the irresponsible and catastrophic nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1.

It is obvious to anyone that the $150 billion given to Iran will be used to fund more terror and further Iran's destructive ambitions. In addition, the nuclear deal legitimizes Iran's ability to enrich uranium and functionally ensures Iran's path to a nuclear weapon within 10 years. The deal is structured to mask Iran's inevitable noncompliance.

As a member of the Florida Legislature, I had supported Florida's Iran divestment. As a Member of Congress, I very much look forward to reauthorizing the Iran Sanctions Act.

I am extremely proud of President Trump and his administration for enacting appropriate sanctions against Iranian officials who have been engaged in the most recent destructive and destabilizing nuclear tests.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Americans, Israelis, and all citizens of the world who aspire to peace continue to be harmed by the reckless and irresponsible foreign policy of the past President's administration. Former President Obama believed in a policy of appeasement toward Iran. This is not dissimilar to the policies of appeasement that Neville Chamberlain used when confronting the threats of Nazi Germany. But if President Obama was America's Neville Chamberlain, perhaps his time has given rise to Donald Trump and the opportunity to be America's Winston Churchill.

I support President Trump's efforts to send a message to Iran that ballistic missile testing will not be tolerated. Iran only understands strength. For the last 8 years, they have seen from this country far too much weakness and far too much willingness to accept their destructive role in the world.

Mr. Speaker, the way Iran operates is through a series of franchises for terror. Whether that is Hamas or Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, we see time and time again Iran acting as a neo-Persian, neo-Ottoman Empire. That cannot be tolerated in a peaceful world. It cannot be tolerated in the most dangerous neighborhood on Earth. It underscores the purpose of Americans speaking with resolve and with strength in condemning the most recent ballistic missile tests and in standing with our greatest ally, Israel.

It was shameful that, in the waning hours of the Obama administration, President Obama was willing to allow the United Nations to take action against Israel while continuing its furtherance of appeasement toward some of the most dangerous countries on the planet Earth who do not share our values or our interests.

So I am glad to see an American reset, a resurgent America again speaking to the great values that have functioned as a beacon of hope for the world for generations. That is what we must return to, and that is what President Trump is doing today. I applaud his administration. I applaud his Secretary of the Treasury for stepping forward and advancing these needed sanctions.

I am hopeful that this Congress will continue to take action to show support for President Trump in this endeavor, but we must also recognize that this is but a first step. So much damage has been done to the cause of peace for the last 8 years under President Obama, and we have much work to do in this Congress, whether it is rebuilding and restoring our military so that we can be a force for peace, whether it is making sure that our allies know that we will stand with them, or whether it is making sure that our adversaries know that we are very serious and there will be serious consequences for their bad behavior.

I am proud of this America that we are working toward together. I am proud of these policies.

The gentleman from Texas may now wish to speak to the importance of Americans speaking with a voice of clarity for peace, prosperity, and strength throughout the Middle East and the world.

Mr. GOHMERT. If the gentleman might take a question. I appreciate that clarity. It is clarity that has been missing for a long time.

We have people screaming that President Trump should not have put a temporary pause that was half as long as the pause President Obama put on. I understand there is so much stress and pressure when you are President; he probably just forgot he put a 6-month ban, previously, on a Muslim nation sending people in.

You made so clear the case for concern about Iran, and I am with you. I am thrilled that we have a President that is not choosing to give our lunch money, figuratively speaking, to the big bully in the schoolyard.

I don't know if my friend from Florida ever got bullied in elementary school. I did. I learned early on that it doesn't help to give bullies money. They are not going to leave you alone until you stand up to them. Maybe they whip you, but they don't want to go through what you put them through again by standing up to them, so they leave you alone.

In our case, we are strong enough to take on any bully; but instead, we paid the big bully, Iran, as you pointed out, massive amounts, billions and billions of dollars. We agreed to pay them up to $150 billion.

We have got some friends here in Congress in the House and Senate that were so upset with the President having this 90-day pause on seven countries. They didn't realize—I know we get so busy here that we don't notice a lot of other things, but they apparently hadn't realized that those seven countries were designated by the Obama administration. One of them, Iran, a country you have talked so eloquently about, we have people here in this body that don't think we should hold up refugees from Iran.

As the gentleman was talking about, the Government of Iran has not shown any good faith at all. Would the gentleman be concerned about having people that the Iranian Government allowed to slip out of the country and come into the United States? Do you have any problem with President Obama's pause on that refugee surge into the United States?

Mr. GAETZ. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Isn't it refreshing to have a President of the United States who is willing to do, in office, precisely the things he said he would do on the campaign trail, notably, putting the interests of Americans and the security of Americans first in a world that even former Secretary of State George Shultz said is more dangerous and perilous today than the highest tensions of the Cold War?

□ 1215

So to specifically answer the gentleman's question, I am grateful that President Trump is prioritizing the security of Americans. My hope is that in the 115th Congress, we will work with the President, with his administration to ensure that, as we continue to mature these policies and advance them, we do them in a way that is easily understandable for those enforcing them and for the American people, and that it sends a message to the world that America continues to be the most generous country on the planet when it comes to welcoming individuals who share our values and who aspire to be productive and prosperous and inclusive.

What we have no tolerance for are those who would want to come to the United States of America not to be part of the American experience, but to destroy it. Too often that has not just been the fear that we have felt from some who have been embedded by Daesh within refugees, but it is exactly what is preached by the Government of Iran.

How silly of the United States to think that we would give hundreds of billions of dollars to a nation that calls America the Great Satan, that seeks to wipe Israel off of planet Earth, and believe that that money will be used for peaceful purposes. It won't. Iran's desires for expanded hegemony are not to stabilize the Middle East, they are expressly to destabilize the Middle East. This regime in Iran will never share America's values, so America should not be funding the very destructive behavior that has done so much to harm the lives of so many people.

The gentleman from Texas brings up a great point. If we hadn't endured the

policies of appeasement for the last 8 years, if America hadn't withdrawn from the world stage so suddenly, then perhaps we would not have the conditions in the Middle East that have made life so difficult for people that they have wanted so badly to be refugees to Europe and to the United States. We should want countries to succeed that are willing to be stable and inclusive, but those who are our sworn enemies, those who do not share our values should receive no quarter from the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I have the great honor to serve on the House Committee on Armed Services. We received briefings this week, thanks to Chairman THORNBERRY, from General Petraeus and other national security experts. They reinforced the fact that the world is dangerous as a consequence of American withdrawal. I am grateful that the 115th Congress will stand with President Trump in his agenda to rebuild our military, to rebuild our standing, and to make very clear to the world that we will be with you if you want peace. But if you aspire to spread terror, there is no role for you on the global stage, and we will not do the things to elevate those terrible regimes to any place of prominence.

This is a great time for revival and renewal in this country, and as Americans do more to rebuild the country internally and grow our economy and achieve more prosperity with lower and fairer taxes, with a regulatory climate that is more acceptable for a prosperous country, we also have to keep an eye on the world and our position on the global stage. I think that it is refreshing that that is a time of revival and restoration of American prominence, because the world is a safer place when America is the strongest country in the world. President Trump's actions today to create sanctions against those who have been directly involved in ballistic missile tests send a clear message: We will stand with our allies, and we will stand against the enemies of peace.

Mr. GOHMERT. Those are such great points. The counterargument is made often to us: ''Other than the San Bernardino shootings, has there been a terrorist attack involving a non-U.S.-born attacker since 9/11?''

There was a great article in The Federalist by Kyle Shideler on January 30. He answers: Yes, but first of all, why exclude the San Bernardino killers, terrorists?

Tashfeen Malik was born in Pakistan, and that attack killed 14. As Phil Haney, the whistleblower from Homeland Security, pointed out, if he had not been removed from the line, he would have been allowed to secondarily question someone like Tashfeen Malik. It is worth noting, under the Obama administration, under Jeh Johnson, and before him, Janet Napolitano, they punished people who pointed out radical Islamists rather than giving them positions where they could recognize radical Islamists.

Phil Haney points out that Tashfeen Malik is actually a man's name. The woman came, and if she had come through him, he would have asked: Well, why do you have a man's name, and it happens to be a man who was a terrorist centuries ago?

Well, to ask a question like that, you have to be well educated into the history of radical Islam. Not Islam, but radical Islam.

We have spent so much money as a country and even as a Congress on countering violent extremism. We hear from Homeland Security whistleblowers—some of them don't want to go public yet, but we hear from them that so much of that money was spent on conferences and seminars teaching our Homeland Security agents, our FBI agents, our State Department people, our intelligence people to spot Islamophobes. They would teach them the phrases to look for when someone reported a potential radical Islamist so that they would know that that is an Islamophobe. That is exactly why in San Bernardino, when someone reported this guy as a potential radical Islamist, that he was crazy, that he was going to hurt somebody, they wrote him off as just being prejudiced against Islam. It is because of the money spent by this government intimidating people into refusing to notice radical Islam and getting them punished. If they didn't find people who they named Islamophobes, their career was over.

Mr. GAETZ. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. GOHMERT. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GAETZ. I thank the gentleman for yielding. The gentleman is from Texas. I am from Florida. Both of our States have seen many of the negative economic consequences of illegal immigration, but my question relates to the negative national security consequences that result from illegal immigration.

We are receiving more reports that ISIS, Daesh, other Islamic fundamentalists are exploiting America's weakness on our southern border with Mexico for their own economic gain, as well as to smuggle people into the United States who may function as lone wolves or even as a part of a coordinated terrorist attack against Americans.

So I would hope that the gentleman would speak to the interconnectivity between the need for strong border security and a wall on our southern border with Mexico and the risks posed by Islamic fundamentalism.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank the gentleman. I would also note, as this Federalist article points out, yeah, of course, when there is a terrorist attack, it also affects the economy. That is why Osama bin Laden wrote about how they had only spent a tiny amount of money to train their people from 9/11 and that it had clearly cost America trillions of dollars, that even if they couldn't bring us down any other way, if they could do other attacks like that, costing relatively low amounts to them but costing us billions and trillions, they could bring us down economically.

So it only makes sense, though, Iran wants to bring us down, so they ought to be one of the seven that the Obama administration named as a threat, and they were. But even just recently at Ohio State University, Abdul Razak Ali Artan ran over several students with a car before attacking them with a butcher knife. That was a refugee born in Somalia, one of the seven countries that the Obama administration named as a threat, and so President Trump took the Obama administration seriously and named them as one of seven, that we would have not a permanent ban but a temporary ban for 90 days. The guy ran over numerous students at Ohio State, but our friends on the other side of the aisle and their friends in the mass media, they refuse to notice what is going on.

Look at Tsarnaev, the Tsarnaev brothers in Boston. As we know, Russia notified the United States not once but twice that the older Tsarnaev had been radicalized, and he had been to a country, and the people he hung around with were radicals, and it seemed like they probably radicalized him.

So what happens? Well, they get information to our intelligence community, and, since, they have been trained for the last 8 years to only notice Islamophobes. You can tell someone is an Islamophobe if they complain about a radical Islamist, then you know you have got an Islamophobe. So of course if they want to stay in the intelligence community, they are not going to be looking. They are going to follow their training, look for Islamophobes instead of looking for radical Islamists. I am sure they looked into it, but, based on their training, they have no basis to work with.

So what happens? Russia notified us again. As I understand, they notified the FBI. And as the FBI Director commented, look, we sent an FBI agent to interview him, and he said, basically, he wasn't a terrorist, he was a good guy. Wow. Imagine that. Somebody who wants to kill Americans might also lie. Who would have ever thought? Except American juries. I have seen it as a judge. I have seen juries find that if you will lie to them, you may do a lot worse things as well. Well, the reverse is also true. Often, if you are willing to take someone's life, you might just be willing to lie about it as well.

So the FBI didn't even stop there, taking the word. They didn't take the word of Tsarnaev. They went to his mother, and apparently his mother said: No, my son is not a terrorist. He is a good boy. He is a good boy.

There you go, full FBI investigation. Not under the old FBI. Not the way most FBI agents have ever been trained. But, of course, under the last 8

years of training of the FBI, they were afraid to ask the tough questions.

The truth is, they don't know the questions to ask. They don't know that you should ask about whether there has been a tremendous increase in the amount of study of the Koran and a massive increase in the memorization of the Koran, and a change in the appearance, and knowing what to look for, and asking questions like: What do you think about Qutb, the Egyptian martyr, the Muslim brother who wrote the little book ''Milestones'' that Osama bin Laden said, along with Mr. Nasif, for whom Huma Abedin worked at one time according to the masthead of the publication, he credited Nasif and also Qutb's book ''Milestones'' to radicalizing him.

If you haven't been trained with Kim Jensen's 700 pages, which were outlawed by the FBI for a while, because he clearly explained what FBI agents should be looking for. Mr. Jensen told me that they banned his information, they struck it, and wouldn't allow anybody to be trained. Under incident information, they train people what to look for in a radical Islamist. But then they brought it back, but only for some of the leaders. The rank and file for so long under this administration did not get the benefit of his 700 pages that would help train. Why? Because CAIR, the Council on American Islamic Relations, who had implications in the Holy Land Foundation trial, the biggest supporter of terrorism ever prosecuted in the United States, convictions all around in November of 2008, and they should have gone on to prosecute the named co-conspirators. The only reason they didn't is because a new administration came in.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed—the mastermind of 9/11, of the brutal killing of about 3,000 Americans and other foreigners, innocent victims—has bragged about his planning. In a guilty plea where the judge went through, as I used to, to make sure they understood their rights, he bragged about that and some terrorist attacks they didn't even know he had involvement in. He was bragging.

□ 1230

And he says, if we have terrorized you, then praise be to Allah. And he says such things as we deserve attack, we deserve to be killed in America, anyone who is a low-life Jew or says that God has a Son.

So those of us who believe God had a Son, and He loved the world so much He sent His only begotten Son and whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life, anybody who believes that is worthy of death under the Koran, according to the brilliant teacher and mastermind of the 9/11 attack. And then he quotes from the Koran that anyone who tries to combine someone with Allah is worthy of death, and that means any Christian. They have explained these things.

But Khalid Sheikh Mohammed went through an expansive hearing with a judge explaining what all he was involved in and why he was guilty of 9/11 and praise be to Allah for all of the people that were killed on 9/11 at the Pentagon, at the World Trade Centers.

Why was he not sentenced? Because we had an election in 2008, and before the plea was made final, we had a new Attorney General named Eric Holder. At that point, all bets were off. They didn't follow up the plea was withdrawn, and he still hasn't been sentenced for the things he admitted to over 8 years ago.

Had they simply moved forward with the guilty plea, if we had had a President for the last 8 years that made clear ''you might as well plead guilty because nobody else is going to let you out,'' then we would have finished the guilty plea, and he would have been appropriately sentenced. But instead, this administration chose to send hope to Khalid Sheikh Mohammed he might end up being one of the people they release; because, if they close Guantanamo Bay, he either gets moved to the United States or we let him go, maybe like we have for some who went to Yemen and are back in the fight, or other people like Saudi Arabia and are back in the fight.

He had real hope once President Obama came in and Eric Holder became Attorney General, and Loretta Lynch after him, that he might get released even after he admitted to the most important role in the killing of 3,000 people on American soil on 9/11. He still has not been prosecuted. They didn't follow up on his guilty plea. The plea was withdrawn.

That man should not be allowed out of prison. He is a threat to the world, and he is a valuable tool in the hands of radical Islam.

Well, thank God, as President Obama said, elections have consequences. We have a President who didn't take an oath of office to protect all of the people of Australia. He made clear that our friends will know they are our friends, and I can see him working very closely with the Prime Minister of Australia in the future. But leaders around the world are now taking notice: Wait a minute. America has a President that is not coming to us and apologizing for America's goodness and their pursuit of freedom for as many people as they can—not apologizing.

He is making clear, if you are our friend, you are going to feel it. If you are our enemy, you are going to feel it. So I think Iran may have finally met their match. We don't have an apologist to come in and apologize for America's efforts, the blood, the treasure that has been spent on behalf of people around the world.

And now even our Australian Prime Minister understands: Look, I want to work with you—President Trump feels that way; he wants to work with them, and he will work with them—but my oath is to the United States of America and I know your oath is to Australia. I know because of your oath to help and protect the people of Australia you want to get rid of those refugees, some of whom may be dangerous.

I know President Obama said: Yeah, we will take the dangerous people that may hurt Australians. Never mind we have got Americans being hurt. We will take them.

Well, there is a different sheriff in town here in Washington, and leaders around the world need to know that starting on January 20, the United States is no longer going to take actions that are detrimental to our own well-being, to the well-being of Americans, and to the security of the United States under our Constitution. So thank God, thank Trump, thank those that are seeing with clarity what is going on.

We will look forward to working with the Mexican leaders that realize the only way Mexico ever achieves its rightful economic place in the world is if a wall is built where it can be so that our border is enforced and the drug cartels are impoverished. Then Mexico can be one of the top economies in all the world because of the best workers, some of the best workers in the world, and massive natural resources with which they have been blessed. They just, so far, have not had America be the kind of good neighbor that would help them stop the drug cartels. Instead, we would have Presidents, administrations like the past one, that would send 2,000 weapons to the drug cartels instead of stopping them.

It is a new day. Thank God it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. EVANS (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. CLARKE of New York (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of duties in congressional district.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, February 2, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and clause (b) of rule I of the Rules of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I submit the Rules of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the 115th Congress for publication in the Congressional Record. On January 31, 2017, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session and adopted these Committee Rules by voice vote with a quorum present.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

RULE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are non-debatable privileged motions in the Committee and its subcommittees.

(2) SUBCOMMITTEES.—Each subcommittee is part of the Committee, and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and its rules so far as applicable.

(3) INCORPORATION OF HOUSE RULE ON COMMITTEE PROCEDURE.—Rule XI of the Rules of the House, which pertains entirely to Committee procedure, is incorporated and made a part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable. Pursuant to clause 2(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee is authorized to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

(b) PUBLICATION OF RULES.—Pursuant to clause 2(a) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee's rules shall be publicly available in electronic form and published in the Congressional Record not later than 30 days after the Chairman is elected in each odd-numbered year.

(c) VICE CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman shall appoint a vice chairman of the Committee and of each subcommittee. If the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee is not present at any meeting of the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be, the vice chairman shall preside. If the vice chairman is not present, the ranking member of the majority party on the Committee or subcommittee who is present shall preside at that meeting.

RULE II. REGULAR, ADDITIONAL, AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) REGULAR MEETINGS.—Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held on the last Wednesday of every month to transact its business unless such day is a holiday, or the House is in recess or is adjourned, in which case the Chairman shall determine the regular meeting day of the Committee for that month. A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chairman, there is no need for the meeting. This paragraph shall not apply to meetings of any subcommittee.

(b) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.—The Chairman may call and convene, as he or she considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to the call of the Chairman.

(c) SPECIAL MEETINGS.—If at least three members of the Committee desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chairman, those members may file in the offices of the Committee their written request to the Chairman for that special meeting. Such request shall specify the measure or matter to be considered. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the clerk of the Committee shall notify the Chairman of the filing of the request. If, within 3 calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman does not call the requested special meeting to be held within 7 calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Committee may file in the offices of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Committee will be held, specifying the date and hour thereof, and the measure or matter to be considered at that special meeting. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the clerk of the Committee shall notify all members of the Committee that such meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered; and only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at that special meeting. Such notice shall also be made publicly available in electronic form and shall be deemed to satisfy paragraph (d)(1).

(d) NOTICE.—

(1) MINIMUM NOTICE PERIOD.—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee or subcommittee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third day on which members have notice thereof.

(2) CHANGES IN MEETING TIMES.—A meeting may commence sooner than announced if the Chairman, with concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause to begin the meeting sooner or the Committee or subcommittee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business. The Chairman shall make a public announcement of the meeting time change at the earliest possible opportunity.

(3) NOTIFICATION OF DAILY DIGEST CLERK.—The clerk of the Committee shall notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record as soon as possible after a public announcement of a time change for a Committee or subcommittee meeting is made under this paragraph.

(e) PROHIBITION ON SITTING DURING JOINT SESSION.—The Committee may not sit during a joint session of the House and Senate or during a recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress.

RULE III. MEETINGS AND HEARINGS GENERALLY

(a) MINIMUM PERIOD FOR AVAILABILITY OF COMMITTEE MARKUP TEXT.—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make publicly available, in electronic form, the text of any legislation to be marked up at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of legislation, or at the time of a meeting announcement under paragraph (d)(2) of Committee Rule II if made within 24 hours before such meeting.

(b) OPEN MEETINGS.—Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, and each hearing of the Committee or a subcommittee shall be open to the public, except as provided by clause 2(g) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(c) MEETINGS TO BEGIN PROMPTLY.—Each meeting or hearing of the Committee shall begin promptly at the time so stipulated in the public announcement of the meeting or hearing.

(d) ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE.—Except as provided under paragraph (e) of Committee Rule VI, a Committee member may address the Committee or a subcommittee on any bill, motion, or other matter under consideration—

(1) only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose; and

(2) only for 5 minutes, or for a period of time designated by the Chairman with concurrence of the ranking minority member, until such time as each member of the Committee or subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to address the Committee or subcommittee.

A member shall be limited in his or her remarks to the subject matter under consideration. The Chairman shall enforce this paragraph.

(e) PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS IN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS AND HEARINGS.—All members of the Committee who are not members of a particular subcommittee may, by unanimous consent of the members of such subcommittee, participate in any subcommittee meeting or hearing. However, a member who is not a member of the subcommittee may not vote on any matter before the subcommittee, be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum, or raise points of order.

(f) BROADCASTING.—Whenever a meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, or a hearing is open to the public, that meeting or hearing shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography in accordance with clause 4 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House. Operation and use of any Committee Internet broadcast system shall be fair and nonpartisan and in accordance with clause 4(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House. Further, pursuant to clause 2(e)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings. The Committee shall also maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

(g) ACCESS TO THE DAIS AND LOUNGES.—Access to the hearing rooms' daises and to the lounges adjacent to the Committee hearing rooms shall be limited to Members of Congress and employees of Congress during a meeting or hearing of the Committee unless specifically permitted by the Chairman or ranking minority member.

(h) USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES.—During a hearing, mark-up, or other meeting of the Committee, ringing or audible sounds or conversational use of cellular telephones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the Committee room.

(i) AVAILABILITY OF TEXT OF AMENDMENTS IN ELECTRONIC FORM.—Pursuant to clause 2(e) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, not later than 24 hours after the adoption of any amendment to a measure or matter considered by the Committee, the Chairman shall cause the text of the amendment to be made publicly available in electronic form.

RULE IV. POWER TO SIT AND ACT; POWER TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS; OATHS; SUBPOENA POWER

(a) AUTHORITY TO SIT AND ACT.—For the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and duties under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee and each of its subcommittees, is authorized (subject to paragraph (d)(1))—

(1) to sit and act at such times and places within the United States whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned and to hold such hearings; and

(2) to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memorandums, papers, and documents, as it deems necessary.

(b) AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee is authorized at any time to conduct such investigations and studies as it may consider necessary or appropriate in the exercise of its responsibilities under Rule X of the Rules of the House and (subject to the adoption of expense resolutions as required by Rule X, clause 6 of the Rules of the House) to incur expenses (including travel expenses) in connection therewith.

(2) MAJOR INVESTIGATIONS BY SUBCOMMITTEES.—A subcommittee may not begin a major investigation without approval of a majority of such subcommittee.

(c) OATHS.—The Chairman, or any member designated by the Chairman, may administer oaths to any witness.

(d) ISSUANCE OF SUBPOENAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A subpoena may be issued by the Committee or subcommittee under paragraph (a)(2) in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present. Such authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman of the Committee or by any member designated by the Committee. If a specific request for a subpoena has not been previously rejected by either the Committee or subcommittee, the Chairman of the Committee, after consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee, may authorize and issue a subpoena under paragraph (a)(2) in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, and such subpoena shall for all purposes be deemed a subpoena issued by the Committee. As soon as practicable after a subpoena is issued under this rule, the Chairman shall notify all members of the Committee of such action.

(2) ENFORCEMENT.—Compliance with any subpoena issued by the Committee or subcommittee under paragraph (a)(2) may be enforced only as authorized or directed by the House.

(e) EXPENSES OF SUBPOENAED WITNESSES.—Each witness who has been subpoenaed, upon the completion of his or her testimony before the Committee or any subcommittee, may report to the offices of the Committee, and there sign appropriate vouchers for travel allowances and attendance fees. If hearings are held in cities other than Washington, D.C., the witness may contact the counsel of the Committee, or his or her representative, before leaving the hearing room.

RULE V. QUORUMS AND RECORD VOTES; POSTPONEMENT OF VOTES

(a) WORKING QUORUM.—One-third of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action other than the closing of a meeting pursuant to clauses 2(g) and 2(k)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the authorizing of a subpoena pursuant to paragraph (d) of Committee Rule IV, the reporting of a measure or recommendation pursuant to paragraph (b)(1) of Committee Rule VII, and the actions described in paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of this rule.

(b) QUORUM FOR REPORTING.—A majority of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting of a measure or recommendation.

(c) APPROVAL OF CERTAIN MATTERS.—A majority of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for approval of a resolution concerning any of the following actions:

(1) A prospectus for construction, alteration, purchase or acquisition of a public building or the lease of space as required by section 3307 of title 40, United States Code.

(2) Survey investigation of a proposed project for navigation, flood control, and other purposes by the Corps of Engineers (section 4 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 4, 1913, 33 U.S.C. 542).

(3) Construction of a water resources development project by the Corps of Engineers with an estimated Federal cost not exceeding $15,000,000 (section 201 of the Flood Control Act of 1965).

(4) Deletion of water quality storage in a Federal reservoir project where the benefits attributable to water quality are 15 percent or more but not greater than 25 percent of the total project benefits (section 65 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974).

(5) Authorization of a Natural Resources Conservation Service watershed project involving any single structure of more than 4,000 acre feet of total capacity (section 2 of P.L. 566, 83rd Congress).

(d) QUORUM FOR TAKING TESTIMONY.—Two members of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

(e) RECORD VOTES.—A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present.

(f) POSTPONEMENT OF VOTES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with clause 2(h)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, after consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee or subcommittee, may—

(A) postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment; and

(B) resume proceedings on a postponed question at any time after reasonable notice.

(2) RESUMPTION OF PROCEEDINGS.—When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(g) AVAILABILITY OF RECORD VOTES IN ELECTRONIC FORM.—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(1)(B)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make the result of any record vote publicly available for inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee and in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote.

RULE VI. HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) ANNOUNCEMENT OF HEARING.—

(1) MINIMUM NOTICE PERIOD.—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee or subcommittee hearing, which may not commence earlier than the one week after such notice.

(2) CHANGES IN HEARING TIMES.—A hearing may commence sooner than announced if the Chairman, with concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner or the Committee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business. The Chairman shall make a public announcement of the hearing time change at the earliest possible opportunity.

(3) NOTIFICATION OF DAILY DIGEST CLERK.—The clerk of the Committee shall notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record as soon as possible after a public announcement of a time change for a Committee or subcommittee hearing is made under this paragraph.

(b) WRITTEN STATEMENT; ORAL TESTIMONY.—

(1) FILING OF STATEMENT.—So far as practicable, each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee shall file with the clerk of the Committee or subcommittee, at least 2 working days before the day of his or her appearance, a written statement of proposed testimony. The Chairman, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, may take the following actions for failure to comply with this requirement: (A) exclude such witness' written testimony from the hearing record; (B) bar such witness' oral presentation of the testimony; or (C) both (A) and (B). Each witness shall limit his or her oral presentation to a summary of the written statement.

(2) TRUTH IN TESTIMONY INFORMATION.—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, in the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof), or the amount and country of origin of any contract or payment originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION IN ELECTRONIC FORM.—Statements filed under this paragraph, with appropriate redaction to protect the privacy of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

(c) MINORITY WITNESSES.—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee or subcommittee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman by a majority of those minority members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon.

(d) SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER.—Upon announcement of a hearing, to the extent practicable, the Committee shall make available immediately to all members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject matter (including legislative reports and other material) under consideration. In addition, upon announcement of a hearing and subsequently as they are received, the Chairman shall make available to the members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on such matter.

(e) OPENING STATEMENTS; QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES.—

(1) OPENING STATEMENTS.—

(A) CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MEMBER.—At a hearing of the Full Committee, the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee shall each be entitled to present an oral opening statement of five minutes. At a hearing of a subcommittee, the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee and the Chairman and ranking minority member of the subcommittee shall each be entitled to present an opening statement for five minutes.

(B) OTHER MEMBERS.—At a hearing of the Full Committee or a subcommittee, other members of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, may submit written opening statements for the record. The Chairman presiding over the hearing may permit oral opening statements by other members of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member.

(2) QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES.—The questioning of witnesses in Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chairman, followed by the ranking minority member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority parties. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chairman shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority nor the members of the minority. The Chairman may accomplish this by recognizing two majority members for each minority member recognized.

(f) PROCEDURES FOR QUESTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A Committee member may question a witness at a hearing—

(A) only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose; and

(B) subject to subparagraphs (2) and (3), only for 5 minutes until such time as each

member of the Committee or subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to question the witness.

A member shall be limited in his or her remarks to the subject matter under consideration. The Chairman shall enforce this subparagraph.

(2) EXTENDED QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY MEMBERS.—The chairman of the committee or a subcommittee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee or subcommittee by motion, may permit a specified number of its members to question a witness for longer than 5 minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority party and minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(3) EXTENDED QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY STAFF.—The Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee or subcommittee by motion, may permit Committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority party and minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(4) RIGHT TO QUESTION WITNESSES FOLLOWING EXTENDED QUESTIONING.—Nothing in subparagraph (2) or (3) affects the right of a member (other than a member designated under subparagraph (2)) to question a witness for 5 minutes in accordance with subparagraph (1)(B) after the questioning permitted under subparagraph (2) or (3).

(g) ADDITIONAL HEARING PROCEDURES.—Clause 2(k) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House (relating to additional rules for hearings) applies to hearings of the Committee and its subcommittees.

RULE VII. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, AND REPORTS

(a) FILING OF REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairman of the Committee shall report promptly to the House any measure or matter approved by the Committee and take necessary steps to bring the measure or matter to a vote.

(2) REQUESTS FOR REPORTING.—The report of the Committee on a measure or matter which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within 7 calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the clerk of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure or matter. Upon the filing of any such request, the clerk of the Committee shall transmit immediately to the Chairman of the Committee notice of the filing of that request.

(b) QUORUM; RECORD VOTES.—

(1) QUORUM.—No measure, matter, or recommendation shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee was actually present.

(2) RECORD VOTES.—With respect to each record vote on a motion to report any measure or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(c) REQUIRED MATTERS.—The report of the Committee on a measure or matter which has been approved by the Committee shall include the items required to be included by clauses 2(c) and 3 of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House.

(d) ADDITIONAL VIEWS.—If, at the time of approval of any measure or matter by the Committee, any member of the Committee gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, all members shall be entitled to not less than two additional calendar days after the day of such notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) in which to file such written and signed views in accordance with clause 2(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(e) ACTIVITIES REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 2 of each odd numbered year, the Committee shall submit to the House a report on the activities of the Committee.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(A) separate sections summarizing the legislative and oversight activities of the Committee under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House during the Congress;

(B) a summary of the authorization and oversight plan submitted by the Committee under clause 2(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House;

(C) a summary of the actions taken and recommendations made with respect to the authorization and oversight plan specified in subdivision (B);

(D) a summary of any additional oversight activities undertaken by the Committee and any recommendations made or actions taken thereon; and

(E) a delineation of any hearings held pursuant to clauses 2(n), (o), or (p) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) FILING.—After an adjournment sine die of the last regular session of a Congress, or after December 15 of an even numbered year, whichever occurs first, the Chairman may file the report described in subparagraph (1) with the Clerk of the House at any time and without approval of the Committee, provided that—

(A) a copy of the report has been available to each member of the Committee for at least seven calendar days; and

(B) the report includes any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a member of the Committee.

(f) OTHER COMMITTEE MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All Committee and subcommittee prints, reports, documents, or other materials, not otherwise provided for under this rule, that purport to express publicly the views of the Committee or any of its subcommittees or members of the Committee or its subcommittees shall be approved by the Committee or the subcommittee prior to printing and distribution and any member shall be given an opportunity to have views included as part of such material prior to printing, release, and distribution in accordance with paragraph (d) of this rule.

(2) DOCUMENTS CONTAINING VIEWS OTHER THAN MEMBER VIEWS.—A Committee or subcommittee document containing views other than those of members of the Committee or subcommittee shall not be published without approval of the Committee or subcommittee.

(3) DISCLAIMER.—All Committee or subcommittee reports printed pursuant to legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report: ''This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (or pertinent subcommittee thereof) and may not therefore necessarily reflect the views of its members.''.

(4) COMPILATIONS OF LAWS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Committee shall publish a compilation of laws under the jurisdiction of each subcommittee.

(g) AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS.—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form to the maximum extent feasible.

RULE VIII. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEES; SIZE AND PARTY RATIOS

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be 6 standing subcommittees. These subcommittees, with the following sizes (including delegates) andmajority/minority ratios, are:

(1) Subcommittee on Aviation (39 Members: 22 Majority and 17 Minority).

(2) Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation (16 Members: 9 Majority and 7 Minority).

(3) Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management (15 Members: 9 Majority and 6 Minority).

(4) Subcommittee on Highways and Transit (50 Members: 28 Majority and 22 Minority).

(5) Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials (34 Members: 19 Majority and 15 Minority).

(6) Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment (32 Members: 18 Majority and 14 Minority).

(b) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee shall serve as ex officio voting members on each subcommittee.

(c) RATIOS.—On each subcommittee there shall be a ratio of majority party members to minority party members which shall be no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio for the Full Committee. In calculating the ratio of majority party members to minority party members, there shall be included the ex officio members of the subcommittees.

RULE IX. POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) AUTHORITY TO SIT.—Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the Full Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction. Subcommittee chairmen shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Full Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

(b) CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE.—Each bill, resolution, or other matter favorably reported by a subcommittee shall automatically be placed upon the agenda of the Committee. Any such matter reported by a subcommittee shall not be considered by the Committee unless it has been delivered to the offices of all members of the Committee at least 48 hours before the meeting, unless the Chairman determines that the matter is of such urgency that it should be given early consideration. Where practicable, such matters shall be accompanied by a comparison with present law and a section-by-section analysis.

RULE X. REFERRAL OF LEGISLATION TO SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) GENERAL REQUIREMENT.—Except where the Chairman of the Committee determines, in consultation with the majority members of the Committee, that consideration is to be by the Full Committee, each bill, resolution, investigation, or other matter which relates to a subject listed under the jurisdiction of any subcommittee established in Committee Rule VIII referred to or initiated by the Full Committee shall be referred by the Chairman to all subcommittees of appropriate jurisdiction within two weeks. All bills shall be referred to the subcommittee of proper jurisdiction without regard to whether the author is or is not a member of the subcommittee.

(b) RECALL FROM SUBCOMMITTEE.—A bill, resolution, or other matter referred to a subcommittee in accordance with this rule may be recalled therefrom at any time by a vote of a majority of the members of the Committee voting, a quorum being present, for the Committee's direct consideration or for reference to another subcommittee.

(c) MULTIPLE REFERRALS.—In carrying out this rule with respect to any matter, the Chairman may refer the matter simultaneously to two or more subcommittees for concurrent consideration or for consideration in sequence (subject to appropriate time limitations in the case of any subcommittee after the first), or divide the matter into two or more parts (reflecting different subjects and jurisdictions) and refer each such part to a different subcommittee, or make such other provisions as he or she considers appropriate.

RULE XI. RECOMMENDATION OF CONFEREES

The Chairman of the Committee shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees the names of those members (1) of the majority party selected by the Chairman, and (2) of the minority party selected by the ranking minority member of the Committee. Recommendations of conferees to the Speaker shall provide a ratio of majority party members to minority party members which shall be no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio for the Committee.

RULE XII. OVERSIGHT

(a) PURPOSE.—The Committee shall carry out oversight responsibilities as provided in this rule in order to assist the House in—

(1) its analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of—

(A) the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of the laws enacted by the Congress; or

(B) conditions and circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation; and

(2) its formulation, consideration, and enactment of such modifications or changes in those laws, and of such additional legislation, as may be necessary or appropriate.

(b) AUTHORIZATION AND OVERSIGHT PLAN.—Not later than February 15 of the first session of each Congress, the Committee shall adopt its authorization and oversight plan for that Congress in accordance with clause 2(d)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House.

(c) REVIEW OF LAWS AND PROGRAMS.—The Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of the Committee, and the organization and operation of the Federal agencies and entities having responsibilities in or for the administration and execution thereof, in order to determine whether such laws and the programs thereunder are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the Congress and whether such programs should be continued, curtailed, or eliminated. In addition, the Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study any conditions or circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation within the jurisdiction of the Committee (whether or not any bill or resolution has been introduced with respect thereto), and shall on a continuing basis undertake future research and forecasting on matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

(d) REVIEW OF TAX POLICIES.—The Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study on a continuing basis the impact or probable impact of tax policies affecting subjects within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

RULE XIII. REVIEW OF CONTINUING PROGRAMS; BUDGET ACT PROVISIONS

(a) ENSURING ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS.—The Committee shall, in its consideration of all bills and joint resolutions of a public character within its jurisdiction, ensure that appropriations for continuing programs and activities of the Federal Government and the District of Columbia government will be made annually to the maximum extent feasible and consistent with the nature, requirements, and objectives of the programs and activities involved.

(b) REVIEW OF MULTI-YEAR APPROPRIATIONS.—The Committee shall review, from time to time, each continuing program within its jurisdiction for which appropriations are not made annually in order to ascertain whether such program could be modified so that appropriations therefore would be made annually.

(c) VIEWS AND ESTIMATES.—In accordance with clause 4(f)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall submit to the Committee on the Budget—

(1) its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year which are within its jurisdiction or functions; and

(2) an estimate of the total amount of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction which it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

(d) BUDGET ALLOCATIONS.—As soon as practicable after a concurrent resolution on the budget for any fiscal year is agreed to, the Committee (after consulting with the appropriate committee or committees of the Senate) shall subdivide any allocations made to it in the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on such resolution, and promptly report such subdivisions to the House, in the manner provided by section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(e) RECONCILIATION.—Whenever the Committee is directed in a concurrent resolution on the budget to determine and recommend changes in laws, bills, or resolutions under the reconciliation process, it shall promptly make such determination and recommendations, and report a reconciliation bill or resolution (or both) to the House or submit such recommendations to the Committee on the Budget, in accordance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

RULE XIV. RECORDS

(a) KEEPING OF RECORDS.—The Committee shall keep a complete record of all Committee action which shall include—

(1) in the case of any meeting or hearing transcripts, a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved; and

(2) a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is taken.

(b) PUBLIC INSPECTION.—The result of each such record vote shall be made available by the Committee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition and the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members present but not voting.

(c) PROPERTY OF THE HOUSE.—All Committee records (including hearings, data, charts, and files) shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the member serving as Chairman of the Committee; and such records shall be the property of the House and all members of the House shall have access thereto.

(d) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVED RECORDS.—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman shall notify the ranking minority member of the Committee of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of such rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

(e) AUTHORITY TO PRINT.—The Committee is authorized to have printed and bound testimony and other data presented at hearings held by the Committee. All costs of stenographic services and transcripts in connection with any meeting or hearing of the Committee shall be paid as provided in clause 1(c) of Rule XI of the House.

RULE XV. COMMITTEE BUDGETS

(a) BIENNIAL BUDGET.—The Chairman, in consultation with the chairman of each subcommittee, the majority members of the Committee, and the minority members of the Committee, shall, for each Congress, prepare a consolidated Committee budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee.

(b) ADDITIONAL EXPENSES.—Authorization for the payment of additional or unforeseen Committee expenses may be procured by one or more additional expense resolutions processed in the same manner as set out herein.

(c) TRAVEL REQUESTS.—The Chairman or any chairman of a subcommittee may initiate necessary travel requests as provided in Committee Rule XVII within the limits of the consolidated budget as approved by the House and the Chairman may execute necessary vouchers thereof.

(d) MONTHLY REPORTS.—Once monthly, the Chairman shall submit to the Committee on House Administration, in writing, a full and detailed accounting of all expenditures made during the period since the last such accounting from the amount budgeted to the Committee. Such report shall show the amount and purpose of such expenditure and the budget to which such expenditure is attributed. A copy of such monthly report shall be available in the Committee office for review by members of the Committee.

RULE XVI. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) APPOINTMENT BY CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the employees of the Committee not assigned to the minority. The staff of the Committee not assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of such staff members and delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate.

(b) APPOINTMENT BY RANKING MINORITY MEMBER.—The ranking minority member of the Committee shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the staff assigned to the minority within the budget approved for such purposes. The staff assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the ranking minority member of the Committee who may delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate.

(c) INTENTION REGARDING STAFF.—It is intended that the skills and experience of all members of the Committee staff shall be available to all members of the Committee.

RULE XVII. TRAVEL OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

(a) APPROVAL.—Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolutions as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern travel of Committee members and staff. Travel to be reimbursed from funds set aside for the Committee for any member or any staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chairman. Travel shall be authorized by the Chairman for any member and any staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee and meetings, conferences, and investigations which involve activities or subject matter under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chairman in writing the following:

(1) The purpose of the travel.

(2) The dates during which the travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the travel is being made.

(3) The location of the event for which the travel is to be made.

(4) The names of members and staff seeking authorization.

(b) SUBCOMMITTEE TRAVEL.—In the case of travel of members and staff of a subcommittee to hearings, meetings, conferences, and investigations involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of such subcommittee, prior authorization must be obtained from the subcommittee chairman and the Chairman. Such prior authorization shall be given by the Chairman only upon the representation by the chairman of such subcommittee in writing setting forth those items enumerated in subparagraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) of paragraph (a) and that there has been a compliance where applicable with Committee Rule VI.

(c) TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of travel outside the United States of members and staff of the Committee or of a subcommittee for the purpose of conducting hearings, investigations, studies, or attending meetings and conferences involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of the Committee or pertinent subcommittee, prior authorization must be obtained from the Chairman, or, in the case of a subcommittee from the subcommittee chairman and the Chairman. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chairman, in writing, a request for such authorization. Each request, which shall be filed in a manner that allows for a reasonable period of time for review before such travel is scheduled to begin, shall include the following:

(A) The purpose of the travel.

(B) The dates during which the travel will occur.

(C) The names of the countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(D) An agenda of anticipated activities for each country for which travel is authorized together with a description of the purpose to be served and the areas of Committee jurisdiction involved.

(E) The names of members and staff for whom authorization is sought.

(2) INITIATION OF REQUESTS.—Requests for travel outside the United States may be initiated by the Chairman or the chairman of a subcommittee (except that individuals may submit a request to the Chairman for the purpose of attending a conference or meeting) and shall be limited to members and permanent employees of the Committee.

(d) REPORTS BY MEMBERS AND STAFF.—Within 15 legislative days from the conclusion of any hearing, investigation, study, meeting, or conference for which travel has been authorized pursuant to this rule, each member and staff member involved in such travel shall submit a written report to the Chairman covering the activities and other pertinent observations or information gained as a result of such travel.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS, RULES, POLICIES.—Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, or regulations of the House and of the Committees on House Administration and Ethics pertaining to such travel, and by the travel policy of the Committee.

RULE XVIII. COMMITTEE PANELS

(a) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with clause 5(b)(2)(C) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, may designate a panel of the Committee consisting of members of the Committee to inquire into and take testimony on a matter or matters that fall within the jurisdiction of more than one subcommittee and to report to the Committee.

(b) DURATION.—No panel designated under paragraph (a) shall continue in existence for more than six months after the date of the designation.

(c) PARTY RATIOS AND APPOINTMENT.—The ratio of majority members to minority members on a panel designated under paragraph (a) shall be as close as practicable to the ratio of the Full Committee. All majority members of the panels shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee, and all minority members shall be appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee shall choose one of the majority members so appointed to serve as Chairman of the panel. The ranking minority member of the Committee shall similarly choose the ranking minority member of the panel.

(d) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee may serve as ex-officio members of a panel designated under paragraph (a). The Chairman and ranking minority member are authorized to vote on matters that arise before the panel and shall be counted to satisfy the quorum requirement for any purpose.

(e) JURISDICTION.—No panel designated under paragraph (a) shall have legislative jurisdiction.

(f) APPLICABILITY OF COMMITTEE RULES.—A panel designated under paragraph (a) shall be subject to all Committee Rules herein.

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled joint resolutions of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule.

H.J. Res. 41. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers''.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, February 6, 2017, at noon 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:

476. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act- Accountability and State Plans; Open Licensing Requirement for Competitive Grant Programs;Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [Docket ID: ED-2016-OESE-0032; Docket ID: ED-2015-OS-0105] (RIN: 1810-AB27; 1894-AA07; 2017-00958) received February 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

477. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act- Accountability and State Plans; Open Licensing Requirement for Competitive Grant Programs; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [Docket ID: ED-2016-OESE-0032; ED-2015-OS-0105] (RIN: 1810-AB27; 1894-AA07; 2017-00958) received February 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

478. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act received February 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

479. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Test Procedure for Walk-in Coolers and Walk-in Freezers [Docket No.: EERE-2016-BT-TP-0030] (RIN: 1904-AD72) received February 1, 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.

480. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Ceiling Fans [Docket No.: EERE-2012-BT-STD-0045] (RIN: 1904-AD28) received February 1, 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.

481. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Enterprise Assessments, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedural Rules for DOE Nuclear Activities [Docket No.: EA-RM-16-PRDNA] (RIN: 1992-AA52) received February 1, 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.

482. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Congressional

Relations, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2016 Agency Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

483. A letter from the Director, Office of White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a notification of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

484. A letter from the Director, Office of White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a notification of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

485. A letter from the Director, Office of White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a notification of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

486. A letter from the Director, Office of the White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a notification of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

487. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting two notifications of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

488. A letter from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's annual report on the activities of the Community Relations Service for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000g-3; Public Law 88-352, Sec. 1004; (78 Stat. 267); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

489. A letter from the Program Specialist, LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rules of Practice and Procedure; Rules of Practice and Procedure in Adjudicatory Proceedings; Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustments [Docket ID: OCC-2017-0002] (RIN: 1557-AE14) received February 1, 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.

490. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Lower Mississippi River, Natchez, MS [Docket No.: USCG-2016-1017] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 1, 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.

491. A letter from the Attorney, CG-LRA, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Pipeline Canal, Orange, TX [Docket No.: USCG-2016-1051] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 1, 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.

492. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Pleasure Beach Bridge, Bridgeport, CT [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1088] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 1, 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.

493. A letter from the Attorney, CG-LRA, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0987] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 1, 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.

494. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: 150121066-5717-02] (RIN: 0648-XE930) received February 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

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. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 843. A bill to provide for a safe harbor for reports to potential employers by current or former employers of violent behavior or threats thereof by employees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BRAT, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 844. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to facilitate the removal of aliens identified in the terrorist screening database, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARBAJAL (for himself, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. KEATING, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HECK, and Ms. BONAMICI):

H.R. 845. A bill to provide for ocean acidification collaborative research grant opportunities; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 846. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan for military surviving spouses to offset the receipt of veterans dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 847. A bill to preserve the name of the Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LONG, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. VELA, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. NUNES, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KIND, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 848. A bill to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to incentivize efficient nutrient management practices and to clarify the citizen suit provisions of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HURD, Mr. BOST, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. HENSARLING, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. ALLEN):

H.R. 849. A bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Rules, 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. PALMER (for himself, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BABIN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. BUCK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DUNN, Mr. EMMER, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Ms. FOXX, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. PERRY, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ARRINGTON, and Mr. BUDD):

H.R. 850. A bill to require the appropriation of funds to use a fee, fine, penalty, or proceeds from a settlement received by a Federal agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, the Budget, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. HECK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. MEEKS):

H.R. 851. A bill to require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to discount FHA single-family mortgage insurance premium payments for first-time homebuyers who complete a financial literacy housing counseling program; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HECK, Mr. WELCH, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. SOTO, Mr. TONKO, Mr. COHEN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SARBANES, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BRADY

of Pennsylvania, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. KIND, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. SIRES, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. WALZ, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. KEATING, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LEE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. TITUS, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 852. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that an alien may not be denied admission or entry to the United States, or other immigration benefits, because of the alien's religion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 853. A bill to prohibit Federal funding to entities that do not certify the entities will not perform, or provide any funding to any other entity that performs, an abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 854. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the qualification requirements with respect to certain multiple employer plans with pooled plan providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. NEAL, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 855. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide for the purchase of paper United States savings bonds with tax refunds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 856. A bill to reauthorize the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, to provide assistance to small businesses owned by veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, the Judiciary, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 857. A bill to provide for conservation and enhanced recreation activities in the California Desert Conservation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORREA (for himself, Ms. HANABUSA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. LEE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. NADLER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. SOTO, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. VELA, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. RASKIN):

H.R. 858. A bill to require the Attorney General to make grants to nonprofit organizations to offer legal assistance to certain aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence, DACA recipients, and refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 859. A bill to prevent conflicts of interest that stem from executive Government employees receiving bonuses or other compensation arrangements from nongovernment sources, from the revolving door that raises concerns about the independence of financial services regulators, and from the revolving door that casts aspersions over the awarding of Government contracts and other financial benefits; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 860. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a grant program for States that provide flexibility in licensing for health care providers who offer services on a volunteer basis; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GAETZ (for himself, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. LOUDERMILK):

H.R. 861. A bill to terminate the Environmental Protection Agency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIFFITH (for himself, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 862. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to transition the Medicaid thresholds applied for determining acceptable provider taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 863. A bill to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. LOVE (for herself, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HILL, and Mr. CLEAVER):

H.R. 864. A bill to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to restrict the debt collection practices of certain debt collectors; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK (for himself, Mr. COOK, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. STEWART, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. MCCARTHY, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. NUNES, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 865. A bill to make a categorical exclusion available to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to develop and carry out a forest management activity on National Forest system lands derived from the public domain or public lands to address insect or disease infestation declared as an emergency in a State by the Governor of such State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. KEATING, Mr. ISSA, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. ROYCE of California):

H.R. 866. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to extend the coverage of the Federal prohibition against stalking in order to provide protection to friends and co-workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 867. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to allow workers who attain age 65 after 1981 and before 1992 to choose either lump sum payments over four years totaling $5,000 or an improved benefit computation formula under a new 10-year rule governing the transition to the changes in benefit computation rules enacted in the Social Security Amendments of 1977, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 868. A bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 869. A bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture, and for other purposes;

to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POSEY (for himself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 870. A bill to direct the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to plan to return to the Moon and develop a sustained human presence on the Moon; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. GRAVES of Georgia (for himself, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mr. HUIZENGA):

H.J. Res. 62. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to prepaid accounts under the Electronic Fund Transfer Act and the Truth in Lending Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KINZINGER (for himself, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. WENSTRUP):

H.J. Res. 63. A joint resolution to authorize the use of the United States Armed Forces against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. FOXX (for herself and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H. Res. 86. A resolution providing amounts for the expenses of the Committee on Education and the Workforce in the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. MOORE):

H. Res. 87. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a Global Marshall Plan holds the potential to demonstrate the commitment of the United States to peace and prosperity through poverty reduction in the United States and abroad; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HARRIS (for himself, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. LEVIN):

H. Res. 88. A resolution calling on the Russian Federation to stop the violence in Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself and Mr. DONOVAN):

H. Res. 89. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the recent presidential elections and transfer of power in The Gambia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. KEATING, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H. Res. 90. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that gun violence is a public health issue and Congress should enact by the end of the 115th Congress comprehensive Federal legislation that protects the Second Amendment and keeps communities safe and healthy, including expanding enforceable background checks for all commercial gun sales, improving the mental health system in the United States, and making gun trafficking and straw purchasing a Federal crime; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

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. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 843.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to provide for uniform laws that remove barriers to trade and facilitate commerce nationwide; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 9; Article III, Section 1, Clause 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts,

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H.R. 844.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 grants Congress the right to set forth rules for Naturalization.

By Mr. CARBAJAL:

H.R. 845.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 846.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

The Congress shall have the power to provide for the common defense.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 847.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3

''The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. . .''

The outgoing Administration changed the name using prior executive authority despite the public support for the current name—Squaw Creek. Therefore, as Congress, we are using our authority and prerogative under the Constitution with regard to federal lands.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.R. 848.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, commonly referred to as the ''Commerce Clause'' of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 849.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The repeal of this provision is consistent with the powers that are reserved to the States and to the people as expressed in Amendment X to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PALMER:

H.R. 850.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 provides, ''No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be pucblished from time to time.''

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 851.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution which grants Congress the power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 852.

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. BLACK:

H.R. 853.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 854.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 855.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 2: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 856.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 857.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CORREA:

H.R. 858.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(1) The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 859.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 860.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power *** To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. GAETZ:

H.R. 861.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States 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 of Officer thereof.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 862.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 863.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution;

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution;

Clause 2 of Section 3 of Article IV of the Constitution.

By Mrs. LOVE:

H.R. 864.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.R. 865.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statement is submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause), which confers on Congress the power to make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the property belonging to the United States.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 866.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 867.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 868.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 869.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. POSEY:

H.R. 870.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States:

The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States

The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the forgoing 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. GRAVES of Georgia:

H.J. Res. 62.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. KINZINGER:

H.J. Res. 63.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 11 of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. TROTT, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 38: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.

H.R. 40: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 82: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 112: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 113: Mr. CRIST, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. FASO.

H.R. 173: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. HIMES, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 179: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 202: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 217: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 267: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 298: Mr. MASSIE.

H.R. 328: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 329: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 336: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 367: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 380: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 387: Mr. MESSER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LONG, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BERGMAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. BRAT, Mr. PALMER, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 392: Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 400: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 428: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 431: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 468: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 475: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 485: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 564: Mr. ROUZER and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 568: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 578: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 617: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 627: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. VELA.

H.R. 628: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio and Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 637: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 639: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. DENT, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 656: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 657: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 664: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

H.R. 673: Mr. BABIN, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 676: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 681: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 696: Miss RICE of New York, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 715: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 724: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 746: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 747: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 749: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 771: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 786: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 787: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 793: Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 804: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 812: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 813: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 825: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 828: Mr. CURBELO of Florida and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 831: Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 841: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Mr. TONKO.

H.J. Res. 6: Mr. MOONEY of Virginia and Mr. HUDSON.

H.J. Res. 26: Ms. JAYAPAL and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.J. Res. 31: Mr. BEYER.

H.J. Res. 33: Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. POLIS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mrs. DEMINGS.

H.J. Res. 39: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.J. Res. 43: Ms. CHENEY and Mr. BACON.

H.J. Res. 51: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.J. Res. 57: Mr. BYRNE.

H.J. Res. 58: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. BYRNE.

H.J. Res. 59: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.

H. Res. 28: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COSTA, Ms. MATSUI, and Mrs. TORRES.

H. Res. 78: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

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 OF TEXAS

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.J. Res. 42 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017 No. 19

Senate

The Senate met at 6:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RON JOHNSON, a Senator from the State of Wisconsin.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who has ordained the seasons of our lives, thank You for the steadfastness of Your mercy and long-suffering. Inspire our lawmakers to open themselves to the gift of Your presence, remembering that You are always with them. Where there is fear, give courage. Where there is anxiety, give peace. Where there is despair, give hope. Where there is sadness, give joy. May our Senators joyfully encounter You on a daily basis. Inspire them to hear Your words and obey Your commands.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RON JOHNSON, a Senator from the State of Wisconsin, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. JOHNSON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF BETSY DEVOS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, very briefly because I know we have to vote, the nominee for the Secretary of Education is one of the worst nominees who has ever been brought before this body for a Cabinet position. On the grounds of competence, on the grounds of ideology, and on the grounds of conflict of interest, she scores very, very low. That is why my good friend, who has great integrity, the Senator from Tennessee, had to rush her hearing through. Five minutes of questions and nothing else—they were so afraid to hear what she might or might not know.

So I would urge my colleagues over the weekend—those who have committed and those who have not—to look into their consciences. Sometimes loyalty to a new President demands a bit too much. With this nominee, it does. Please think about it over the weekend. This person, Mrs. DeVos, does not deserve to be Secretary of Education.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 41, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 41) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers.''

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. All time is expired.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) is necessarily absent.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Collins	Ernst
Barrasso	Corker	Fischer
Blunt	Cornyn	Flake
Boozman	Cotton	Gardner
Burr	Crapo	Graham
Capito	Cruz	Grassley
Cassidy	Daines	Hatch
Cochran	Enzi	Heller

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
McCain
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul
Perdue
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Wicker
Young

NAYS—47

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Donnelly
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Franken
Gillibrand
Harris
Hassan
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Hirono
Kaine
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Manchin
McCaskill
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Nelson
Peters
Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Markey

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 41) was passed.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Johnny Isakson, Tom Cotton, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, John Boozman, Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, Orrin G. Hatch, Jeff Flake, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, John Thune, Richard Burr.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Cochran
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Cotton
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Enzi
Ernst
Fischer
Flake
Gardner
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
McCain
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul
Perdue
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Wicker
Young

NAYS—48

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Donnelly
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Franken
Gillibrand
Harris
Hassan
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Hirono
Kaine
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Manchin
Markey
McCaskill
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Nelson
Peters
Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 48.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, with this vote, the Senate will move early next week to confirm the nomination of Betsy DeVos to be the U.S. Education Secretary. In my judgment, she will be an excellent and important Education Secretary for this country.

The No. 1 job of the U.S. Education Secretary is to help create an environment in which our 100,000 public schools succeed, because that is where 9 out of 10 of our children go.

When I was Education Secretary for President George H.W. Bush in the early 1990s, I had the privilege of working with a man named David Kerns, who had been the chief executive officer of the Xerox Corporation. He came in as the Deputy Education Secretary at a time when he was not only one of the country's leading businessmen, but he was also the leading businessman who tried to help change public education. David Kern's belief was that it was very difficult to help children by changing public education if you try to do it from within. As all of us do, he respected the teachers, the parents, and the students who work within the public education system, but over the last 30 years, as this country has worked to try to improve our public schools, much of that energy has come from outside the public school establishment. Among those were the Governors of the country.

In the mid-1980s, all of the Governors met together—in 1985 and 1986—on one subject for a whole year. The purpose was, how can we help improve our public schools? I was chairman of the National Governors Association that year, Bill Clinton was the vice chairman, and we did that in a bipartisan way. We did that from outside the schools. Since that time, many Governors and many business leaders have worked hard in support of our public schools, trying to help them have even better opportunities for our children. Among those has been Betsy DeVos. The Governors I spoke of are Governors who are familiar names in this country. I think of Gov. Jeb Bush, Gov. John Engler of Michigan, Gov. Mitt Romney, and the work they did in their respective States to make their public schools better and to create other opportunities for children. All of the three Governors I mentioned—Bush, Romney, and Engler—support Betsy DeVos.

As chairman of the Senate's Education Committee, there are 22 Governors who have written letters to me supporting Betsy DeVos. They see her as someone from outside the system of public education who, as they worked for 30 years, can help change and improve it.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following my remarks the names of the 22 Governors who support her. They come from Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin.

The Governors of all those States support Betsy DeVos. Four of the last Education Secretaries support Betsy DeVos. Bill Bennett, Rod Paige, Margaret Spellings, and I support her. Joe Lieberman, who served in this body and worked on the DC voucher program for many years, endorsed her. She has strong support from the Governors who for 30 years have been working hard to successfully improve our public schools.

Some have said: Well, she has spent her time working on giving children choices of schools other than public schools.

She has done that, and it has always puzzled me as to why anybody would criticize that. The idea that a low-income child should have the same opportunity or more of the same opportunities as a wealthy family has would seem to me to be a very all-American idea. Not only does it seem to be, it is an idea that underlies the most successful piece of social policy our country has ever enacted, arguably—the GI

bill for veterans in 1944. Think about that. The veterans came home from World War II. We gave them a scholarship. It followed them to the college of their choice. Ms. DeVos has argued for the same thing for children. Why is an idea that has helped to create the greatest generation and the greatest colleges of the world so dangerous for schools?

I would argue that she has been among the forefront of the leaders—like the Governors—for the most successful reform of the last 30 years to change and improve public education, and that would be the public charter schools. Those began with 12 schools in Minnesota created by the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party in the early 1900s. Since then, charter schools have been supported by every President—President Obama, President Clinton, Presidents Bush. President Obama's most recent Education Secretary was a founder of charter schools. Four times, this Congress, by big bipartisan majorities, has supported charter schools. The last six U.S. Education Secretaries have supported charter schools. Charter schools have grown from 12 Democratic-Farmer-Labor schools to 6,800 today, and 2.7 million children attend them. Teachers have more freedom and parents have more choices. They are public schools, and Betsy DeVos was in the forefront of helping to create that opportunity for public education.

Finally, she believes what 85 of us voted for in the law that President Obama called a ''Christmas miracle'' in December of 2015, and that is to reverse the trend from a national school board and restore control of our children and our schools to those closest to the children. There will be no mandates for common core, no mandates for teacher evaluation, no mandates for vouchers, and no mandates for anything else from a U.S. Department of Education headed by Betsy DeVos. We will be swapping a national school board for what she believes in, which is a local school board, which is what 85 of us voted for.

I am pleased to support her.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following my remarks an article published by Max Eden on January 29, 2017, which shows Detroit charter schools—by three major studies—are better and children perform better than the traditional schools of Detroit.

I look forward to casting my vote for Betsy DeVos for U.S. Education Secretary early next week.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HIGHLIGHTS AMONG DEVOS SUPPORTERS

22 State Governors, including:

Gov. Robert Bentley, Alabama; Doug Ducey, Arizona; Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Arkansas; Gov. Rick Scott, Florida; Gov. Bruce Rauner, Illinois; Gov. Eric Holcomb, Indiana; Gov. Sam Brownback, Kansas; Gov. Matthew Bevin, Kentucky; Gov. Paul LePage, Maine; Gov. Rick Snyder, Michigan; Gov. Phil Bryant, Mississippi.

Gov. Eric Greitens, Missouri; Gov. Doug Burgum, North Dakota; Gov. Pete Ricketts, Nebraska; Gov. Brian Sandoval, Nevada; Gov. Chris Christie, New Jersey; Gov. Susana Martinez, New Mexico; Gov. John Kasich, Ohio; Gov. Mary Fallin, Oklahoma; Gov. Bill Haslam, Tennessee; Gov. Greg Abbott, Texas; Gov. Scott Walker, Wisconsin.

Former Governors:

Jeb Bush; Mitt Romney; John Engler.

Four Former Education Secretaries:

William Bennett; Rod Paige; Margaret Spellings; Lamar Alexander.

Former Senators:

Joe Lieberman; Bill Frist.

Democrats including:

Eva Moskowitz, founder and CEO of Success; Academy Charter Schools; Anthony Williams, former Mayor of Washington, D.C.

EDEN: WHEN THE NEW YORK TIMES'S REPORTING ON DEVOS AND DETROIT CHARTERS LOOKS LIKE 'ALTERNATIVE FACTS'

(By Max Eden)

The campaign against Education Secretary—designate Betsy DeVos has been both predictable and extraordinary. It's no surprise that the education establishment was perturbed by the selection of a school choice advocate, and opposition from interest groups is to be expected.

But in an era when the president of the United States has declared a ''running war'' on the media, accusing reporters of distorting facts to attack him, the work of one education journalist unfortunately lends some credence to that argument.

Some critical coverage has been responsible and fair, but DeVos was sadly not ''spinning'' when she told the Senate that there's been a lot of ''false news'' about her record. The New York Times has been most conspicuous in this regard. The editorial angle of its national education correspondent Kate Zernike was clear from her first piece on the nominee, ''Betsy DeVos, Trump's Education Pick, Has Steered Money From Public Schools.''

Liberal bias at the Times is less than a non-story; if anything, I'd argue a partisan press is healthy in a pluralistic democracy. But when America's ''paper of record'' makes verifiably false claims, they must be checked and corrected. Here are two significant ones.

In a front-page June article titled ''A Sea of Charter Schools in Detroit Leaves Students Adrift,'' the Times education correspondent asserts that ''half the charters perform only as well, or worse than, Detroit's traditional public schools.''

That claim was echoed by a Times editorial and would be big, if true. DeVos was nominated based on her school choice advocacy. If that work helped foster charter schools that are worse than the worst-in-the-nation Detroit Public Schools, that would be profoundly troubling. But if Detroit's charters are better (even if not as much better as we'd desire), then it's a different story entirely.

Fortunately, they are better.

There are three key studies that compare Detroit's charter and district schools: one from Stanford University, one from the center-right Mackinac Center and one from Excellent Schools Detroit (ESD), a local education nonprofit. As Jason Bedrick, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom, and I demonstrated in Education Next, all three show that charters significantly outperform district schools. Perplexed at how the Times reached the opposite conclusion, I reached out to Zernike.

Some critics assumed that Zernike was twisting data from the Stanford study, the presumptive source of district-to-charter comparisons. But Zernike informed me that she chose to use the ESD study after contacting the Stanford study's author and determining that the data was too outdated for her purposes.

I asked why she chose the ESD data over the Mackinac Center's. Mackinac grades schools using a complex regression taking into account students' socioeconomic background. ESD grades on a combination of raw test scores, test-score growth and a school climate survey, but it doesn't consider socioeconomic status.

She explained that Mackinac is ''a partisan group that is pro-school choice and anti-DPS. ESD, despite how GLEP [the DeVos-backed Great Lakes Education Project] will characterize it, supported charters and traditional public schools, and the measures seemed broader.''

When I told her that sounded more like political than methodological reasoning, she countered, ''It's not politics, it's methodology. I think graduation rate was the only thing Mackinac used to compare,'' and added that she thinks the ESD data ''do break down for demographics.'' Wrong and wrong.

Now, it's possible that she didn't simply default to the politically congenial option without further scrutiny. Perhaps she just failed to properly recall the details several months later. Whatever the case, the ESD data also show charters outperforming district schools.

So, how did the Times national education correspondent reach the opposite conclusion?

Now, bear with me, here because it's complicated and it makes no sense.

First she separated out K–8 district schools and high schools, calculating their respective average scores, weighted by student enrollment. She included high-performing selective-admissions district schools and excluded low-performing Detroit public schools that have been taken over by the state. (Neither decision is justifiable in a traditional-to-charter comparison.)

Then she saw that for both K–8 district schools and high schools, the (inflated) weighted average score was higher than the median charter school score, and concluded that ''half the charters perform only as well, or worse than, Detroit's traditional public schools.''

On the high school side, the unweighted average score of .33 is significantly lower than the weighted average of .41. It's worth noting that the .41 is above the charter median score and the .33 is below it. So going by the weighted average was the only way to arrive at that result for high schools.

On the K–8 side, the weighted and unweighted averages are essentially equal. That average is indeed slightly higher than the median charter score, but it's much higher than the district's median score. So on K–8 schools, by her same faulty logic, it would also be accurate to say that ''two thirds of the public schools perform only as well, or worse than, Detroit's traditional public schools.''

If that sounds silly, it's because comparing an average to a median is statistical nonsense. The ''apples to oranges'' metaphor is apt but insufficient here. Essentially, Zernike took a basket of apples, pulled out the rotten ones, kept the genetically modified ones, made statistically weighted applesauce, and plopped that applesauce in the middle of a row of organic oranges. Then she drew a false conclusion that's become central to the case against Betsy DeVos's nomination for secretary of education.

Personally, I doubt the mathematical mistakes were conscious or intentional. But what really matters is that the ESD, Mackinac and Stanford studies all show Detroit charters significantly outperforming traditional public schools.

The second claim also involves the Times's editorial against DeVos, in this case lamenting that she funded charter advocacy efforts, ''winning legislative changes that have ''reduced oversight and accountability.'' The editorial linked to a December article by Zernike covering a legislative debate on Detroit charter regulation wherein ''Ms. DeVos pushed back on any regulation as too much regulation.''

Whatever the rhetorical merit of that editorial claim, it is flat false. In a Detroit News op-ed, to which the article later links, DeVos called for two additional regulations: A–F school accountability grades and default closure for failing schools, both charter and district. She certainly pushed back on some regulations as too much. But the bill that passed included the additional accountability regulations for which she advocated. In fact, the final legislation boosted Michigan's accountability score on the National Alliance of Charter School Authorizers index.

Given the fact that the main subject of her article was a net increase in charter accountability, Zernike admits on Twitter that she's ''not sure what the ed board meant by that,'' but notes that ''MI legislation in 2011 (not June bill) did weaken oversight.'' Zernike's December article refers to the 2011 legislation in one passing sentence. Her June article noted that ''the law repealed a longstanding requirement that the State Department of Education issue yearly reports monitoring charter school performance.'' While true, that provision didn't merit mention among the 12 key changes in the official legislative summary (five of which increased charter regulation).

It's possible that the Times's editorial was referring to that repealed reporting requirement from 2011 when it claimed that DeVos backed ''legislative changes that have reduced oversight and accountability.'' But that seems unlikely, given that the editorial linked to Zernike's December article on the 2016 legislative debate and that piece doesn't even mention the 2011 provision. It seems more likely that the editors honestly confused an increase in accountability that was smaller than some stakeholders wanted with an actual, absolute reduction. And given the reporting they relied on, it would be hard to blame them.

Education blogger Alexander Russo has skillfully outlined the ''problematic media coverage'' of Betsy DeVos, in which journalists have latched onto hyper-simplified story lines while ignoring complexities and eschewing nuanced criticism.

Whatever your take on DeVos or the media, everyone loses when the line between fact and falsehood is blurred beyond distinction. At a time when the president's advisers proudly tout ''alternative facts,'' critical, fact-based reporting is more necessary than ever, especially from outlets with the weight and influence of The New York Times. Their readers, and America's schoolchildren, deserve better. Correcting the record would be a good start.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I am on the floor today to stand with parents, students, teachers, families, and communities across our country to make sure they have a voice to strongly oppose Betsy DeVos and her plans to privatize public schools and destroy public education in America. I urge my colleagues to stand with their constituents and join Democrats and Republicans in rejecting this nomination.

I come to the floor as a former preschool teacher, someone who got my start in politics fighting for strong public schools, a former school board member, a Senator committed to standing strong for public education in America, and a mother and grandmother who cares deeply about the future of our students in our schools.

Like so many people across the country, I am someone who owes everything I have to a strong public education I received growing up in this country. I believe it is my responsibility to do everything I can to make sure the opportunities that were there for me and so many others are open to every student in this country, no matter where they live or how they learn or how much money their parents have. In general, I believe the Federal Government and specifically the Department of Education has an important role to play in making that happen.

I take the position of Secretary of Education very seriously. Leading this agency in this moment is a critical job. I consider it to be my job to do everything I can to make sure the person who fills it is truly committed to putting students and families first. As I will discuss in detail today and in the coming days, I do not believe Betsy DeVos is the right person to do that.

Before I get into Ms. DeVos's failed record and her lack of experience, I wish to make a point about how I approach nominees and how that impacts my perspective on this one.

Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are going to spend their time in this debate trying to impugn the motives of Democrats and Republicans who are trying to stop this nomination. They will try to say that President Trump won the election and he should be able to pick anyone he wants to fill this position and that we should all sit down and be quiet. I reject that. I believe the Senate has an important role to play in this process. It is our constitutional duty to take these nominations seriously, and I refuse to stand by and just watch.

President Trump absolutely has the right to nominate people for his Cabinet who he thinks will carry out his vision for the country, but that does not mean the Senate should be a rubberstamp. To the contrary, we owe it to the people we represent to make sure every nominee is not only qualified for the position and free of conflicts of interest but that he or she will put families and workers first and not millionaires and billionaires or big corporations.

President Trump was the first Presidential candidate in decades to not release his tax returns, and he is openly flouting ethics conventions regarding his personal and family businesses.

I believe that in an administration where lines around potential conflicts of interest are very likely to be blurred at the top, they need to be even clearer at the individual agencies. So I will not apologize for demanding that the Senate do its job when it comes to doing our due diligence with these nominees. I will not back down from asking my questions for my constituents—the ones they would want me to ask. I will not stop fighting as hard as I can to oppose a Secretary of Education who doesn't stand with them.

I am extremely disappointed at how this process has gone so far. I have great respect for the chairman of our committee, but I have never seen anything like it, especially coming out of our Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, where until now we have worked together across party lines so well. Right from the start, it was very clear that Republicans intended to jam this nominee through the process as quickly as possible. Corners were cut, precedents were ignored, debate was cut off, and reasonable requests and questions were blocked. Again, I have never seen anything like it on this committee, Democratic administration or Republican, Democratic majority or Republican. It has been truly frustrating and deeply disappointing.

I believe it is our job in the Senate to scrutinize nominees, but Republicans were acting like it was their job to protect Ms. DeVos, to shield her from questioning. First, Republicans rushed us into a hearing before we had Mrs. DeVos's ethics paperwork in. That might seem like a small thing, it may seem like a procedural issue, but it was important.

Every single nominee during the Obama administration had their ethics paperwork in before a hearing in our committee. The Republican majority leader made having ethics paperwork in before a hearing a core demand of his during the Obama administration. The reason for this is simple: Senators should be able to ask nominees questions about their finances, their potential conflicts of interest, how they plan to avoid them, and how they plan to uphold the letter and spirit of our ethics laws. But without the Office of Government Ethics financial disclosure and without their review, Senators go into a hearing in the dark on a nominee's ethics and finances, and that is exactly what we were pushed into with Mrs. DeVos.

Secondly, when we got into that hearing, we were told that Democrats would only have 5 minutes each to ask questions—5 minutes to ask about Betsy DeVos's finances, her long record of privatization of public education, her vision for this Department, and the many, many issues in this Department's jurisdiction—5 minutes and, then, cut off.

Now, this was completely unprecedented and absolutely wrong. Never before had it been the case in our committee—not a single time that I recall—that a Senator, who had a question for a nominee, was cut off and blocked from asking it. Democrats were sitting in the hearing, waiting, hoping the chairman would change his mind, but we were shut down and we

were silenced, and Mrs. DeVos was protected from answering additional questions.

Third, after we finally got Betsy DeVos's ethics paperwork and had a number of questions about it, I requested another hearing where we could ask her those questions. That was a reasonable request. It was rejected.

Fourth, I had a number of questions for Betsy DeVos about missing information in her paperwork to the committee, and she has simply not provided the committee with the required financial disclosures.

We have a strong tradition in our committee of not moving to vote until the ranking member's questions are answered to satisfaction, and that tradition was ignored as Betsy DeVos was jammed through.

Then, finally, after a vote was pushed through the committee as quickly as possible, with questions about rules being bent or ignored to get that done, this nomination is now being rushed to this floor, and Republicans are attempting to jam it through here as well. It is pretty clear to me why. The more people learn about Betsy DeVos, the more they realize how wrong she is for our students and our schools. The more they hear about her background, the more they see her as one more way President Trump has broken his promise to ''drain the swamp.'' The more that comes out about her failed record, her tangled finances, conflicts of interest, and her lack of understanding or experience, the more the pressure increases on Republicans to put their allegiance to President Trump aside and stand with their constituents.

So I understand why some Republicans want to rush to get this through. I think it is absolutely wrong, and I know people are paying attention.

I want to make one final point on this. The chairman of our committee, the senior Senator from Tennessee, has brought up the idea of ''fairness'' when it comes to how we should approach this nomination—that he believes President Trump's nominees should be treated ''fairly.'' But my friend, the senior Senator from Tennessee, is defining fairness in an interesting way. He is saying that, if Republicans didn't scrutinize President Obama's nominees and if they didn't take the time to do their due diligence, then, it would be unfair for Democrats to do that for President Trump's.

Well, I don't agree with that. I define fairness very differently. I believe the fair thing to do is what is fair for our constituents, that we work for them and should do right by them—not for a party, a nominee, or an administration. I believe the ''fair'' thing to do is to scrutinize these nominees, ask tough questions, and push for real answers, and that we should err on the side of deeper review and more robust questioning, rather than on the side of pointing to how Democrats and Republicans were treated in the past and ''fairness'' to nominees.

So I think it is clear that this nominee is being rushed through and corners are being cut.

I want to take some time now to talk about why I will be opposing her and urging all of our colleagues to do the same. I have three main reasons, and they are these: open questions about her tangled finances and potential conflicts of interest; strong concerns with her record, her lack of experience, and her clear lack of understanding of basic education issues; and the belief that her vision for education in America is deeply at odds with where parents, students, and families across the country want to go.

First of all, there is her tangled finances and potential conflicts of interest. I mentioned this a bit before. I have never seen a nominee with such tangled and opaque finances and who is refusing to shine anything close to an appropriate level of light on them.

Mrs. DeVos is a billionaire, and her inherited money is invested, along with other members of her family, in potentially hundreds of holding companies. Now, these holding companies often invest in other holding companies, and it is often very hard to untangle the individual companies in which she and her family actually own stakes. That is very relevant because we know her family has had significant education company holdings in the past, and they would be impacted by the decisions she made if confirmed.

Mrs. DeVos has told us that she will comply with all ethics rules should she be confirmed, but we still have questions, and she still has not fulfilled the committee requirements. We have questions about areas in Mrs. DeVos's ethics paperwork, where it is simply unclear if assets she continues to hold have potential conflicts of interest, and we have not been given the full answers.

We also want to know more from her about the family trusts she is maintaining positions in, and we have not been given the full answers.

Finally, as I mentioned before, I have raised a number of questions about Mrs. DeVos's failure to provide the required financial disclosure to the committee, and I have not been given full answers there either.

Secondly, I have very strong concerns with Betsy DeVos's record, her lack of experience, and her clear lack of understanding of basic education issues. I will take these one at a time.

Nominees for this position have generally been people who were committed to students, had a long career dedicated to education, and were focused on keeping public education strong for all students and all communities.

Betsy DeVos is very different.

First of all, she is first and foremost a Republican and conservative activist and megadonor. She was chair of the Michigan Republican Party, and she and her family have reportedly donated hundreds of millions of dollars to Republicans and conservative groups over the years.

Second of all, Betsy DeVos has spent her career and her fortune rigging the system to privatize and defund public education and hurt students in communities across our country. She has no experience with public schools, except through her work trying to tear them down.

She has committed herself for decades to an extreme ideological goal: to push students out of public schools and weaken public education, no matter what. She has spent millions of dollars in political donations, organizations, and super PACs to try and influence elections and policies to accomplish that goal.

It is not difficult to pick out where Betsy DeVos has focused. The signs are usually pretty easy to see. Where she has succeeded in getting her way, too often there are weaker public schools, worse outcomes, and fewer true opportunities for students.

In fact, the only people guaranteed to benefit when Betsy DeVos focuses her attention on a community or a State are the TV stations who see hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars in money pour into attack ads against her political opponents.

But all people need to do is watch her hearing in our committee, and they can learn everything they need to know. This is a hearing that people across the country heard about—and for good reason. From local newspapers to local news to the ''Daily Show'' to ''The View'' and posts that went viral on social media, a whole lot of people heard Betsy DeVos herself for the first time in that hearing, and they were not impressed, to put it mildly. They watched as Democrats were blocked from asking questions in an unprecedented and disappointing attempt to protect this nominee. Then, on the questions we were allowed to ask, they saw a nominee who was clearly ill-informed and confused and gave a number of very concerning responses to serious and reasonable questions.

Let's go through what Betsy DeVos said to us. She refused to rule out slashing investments in or privatizing public schools—privatizing public schools.

She was confused that Federal law provides protections for students with disabilities.

She did not understand a basic issue in education policy—the debate surrounding whether students should be measured based on their proficiency or their growth.

She argued that guns needed to be allowed in schools across the country to ''protect from grizzlies.''

Even though she was willing to say President Trump's behavior towards women should be considered sexual assault, she would not commit to actually enforcing Federal laws protecting women and girls in our schools.

Her hearing was such a disaster, and it was so clear how little she understood about education issues, that a

number of people and groups who usually stay on the fence—or even sometimes stand with Mrs. DeVos on some issues—could not stand with her anymore.

Parents watching across the country saw a nominee who doesn't seem to care about or understand the education issues that impact them and their kids.

This takes me to my final point right now on Betsy DeVos. Her vision for education in America is one that is deeply at odds with where parents and students and families across the country want us to go. At a time when education and the opportunity it affords is more important than ever, she would take our country in the absolute wrong direction.

Eli Broad, a philanthropist and a strong charter school advocate, put it very well when he said: ''At the risk of stating the obvious, we must have a Secretary of Education who believes in public education and the need to keep public schools public.''

He went on to say: ''With Betsy DeVos at the helm of the U.S. Department of Education, much of the good work that has been accomplished to improve public education for all of America's children could be undone.''

I completely agree. Parents across the country want their government and their representatives fighting tooth and nail to improve public schools for all students in every community, while Betsy DeVos is committed to privatizing public schools and diverting public funds into taxpayer-funded vouchers that will leave far too many of our students behind.

I will add that I have many friends here in the Senate representing rural States that will be severely impacted by a Secretary of Education who implemented a radical agenda like this.

The bottom line is that strong public education is at the heart of true opportunity in America—something we all strive for and work for every day. People understand that. They see that Betsy DeVos's vision for this job is a direct attack on that core national value.

I truly believe this is what has motivated so many people around the country to stand up and speak out. They saw her disastrous hearing on the news and going viral on social media. It is clear that people across the country care so deeply about education and are so passionate about making sure we have strong public schools that seeing President Trump nominate someone like Betsy DeVos to run this Department just hits very close to home to a whole lot of people, and it is so deeply offensive to them. For parents of students in our public schools, it is very hard to see a billionaire—who never went to public school, who didn't send her children to public school—put in a position to work against your interests.

For teachers who work so hard every day in our public schools, it is hard to see your work denigrated.

For so many others in communities across the country, something about Betsy DeVos has lit a fire underneath them, as well, and they have all decided to do something about it. Senate office phone lines have been shut down over the past week with so many callers weighing in against Betsy DeVos. Every office is receiving tens of thousands of letters asking the Senate to reject her. Almost 40,000 have come in to my office alone. Millions of people have signed petitions with the same message. There have been rallies and protests across the country and millions more posting on Facebook, sharing it with their friends, tweeting, and doing everything they can to make their voices heard.

I wish to share just a sample of what I have heard from my constituents.

One teacher from Mukilteo School District, a 26-year veteran of Washington State public schools, said she has worked tirelessly at title I elementary schools to help children achieve their greatest potential. If DeVos is confirmed, this teacher is terrified her school will lose its funding.

Another constituent of mine from Federal Way tells me she has grandchildren in Michigan who are at risk because of Mrs. DeVos's reckless policies there, and she does not want to see this disaster repeated throughout our country.

The regional superintendent in Wenatchee, a small city in North Central Washington, told me that he and his colleagues didn't even know where to begin laying out their concerns about Betsy DeVos.

A fourth grade teacher from Spokane, WA, reached out to tell me she watched the confirmation hearing and was shocked at how little Betsy DeVos seemed to understand about the issues she faces every single day in her classroom.

Those are just a few examples. There are thousands upon thousands in every community, in every State, and it is having an impact. Every Member of this body has felt the pressure. Already, two Republicans have made it clear that the voices of their constituents have pushed them into the ''no'' column, and I know there are other Republicans who take seriously what their constituents have to say and who have serious concerns about putting partisanship ahead of their States' and their constituents' interests.

I don't like that we are rushing into this without the information we need. But if the majority is going to jam this through, we are going to do everything we can to have a robust debate over the next few days.

So I am here to say: I am proud to stand with parents; I am proud to stand with students; I am proud to stand with teachers; I am proud to stand with those in my home State of Washington and across the country who support strong public schools and true education opportunities for all; and I am proud to stand up and fight back against Betsy DeVos.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF NEIL GORSUCH

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I rise to talk about what is going on in the Senate right now and the work that is done. It is early in the morning right now. It is 8 a.m. In Senate time, we have already done a series of votes that started at 6:30 this morning to be able to work through some of the nominations, and we have a great deal of work to be done.

In the middle of the work that we are taking on right now, there is a lot of conversation about personnel. As you know well, the Senate is in the personnel business as much as we are in the legislative business, especially at the beginning of a Presidential term. One of the biggest decisions that we will make in the Senate will be the Supreme Court.

Americans voted last year, in great measure, about the Supreme Court—in the direction of the Supreme Court. President Trump put out a list of 21 individuals he said he would choose from so the American people would be fully aware that this is the type of individual he would go after, and you can look at any of these to be able to evaluate it.

As I looked through that list of 21, one name stuck out to me. It is the name Neil Gorsuch, who is from Oklahoma, as many people in this Chamber know. Neil Gorsuch represents the Tenth Circuit. He served on that circuit with great distinction, which includes Oklahoma. We have been able to see his work in what has happened on the bench, the opinions he has put out and the consistency, how he has been respected by individuals on both sides of the aisle throughout Oklahoma and across the Tenth Circuit.

Neil Gorsuch went onto the bench in 2006. He was put on the bench by President Bush. What is interesting is this body, when they debated Neil Gorsuch in 2006, unanimously approved him with a voice vote. Not a single Senator opposed Neil Gorsuch when he went onto that Tenth Circuit bench in 2006. That means at that time Senator Barack Obama supported him. Senator Hillary Clinton supported him. Senator Joe Biden supported him. Senator CHUCK SCHUMER supported him in 2006. All these individuals looked at who he was, what he was about, and supported him going on the Tenth Circuit bench.

What has he done since that time? He has been a remarkable judge. He has advocated for something very clearly; that is, the role of each branch of government and each branch of government doing its job and only its job. He

has spoken out on an issue I have spoken out on this floor about several times and oftentimes in committee, an issue called Chevron deference. It is one of those issues that most people don't track, but I hear a lot of people say the Executive orders are out of control and the executive branch is putting all these Executive orders out. I will typically smile at folks and say, actually, if you want to go down into the heart of it, it is not Executive orders, it is Chevron deference.

In the 1980s, the Supreme Court gave the ability to every President to interpret the law as they choose to and to be able to put regulations in if under this term they were reasonable in interpretation. In other words, if a piece of legislation mentioned a topic, then a President could create regulations around it.

It started slow, but I will tell you that has accelerated in the last several years. What has happened in the last several years is, Presidents have reached in, looked at a statute, tried to find a gray area of the statute, and used their deference ability to be able to interpret it.

In his writings, Neil Gorsuch has stepped out and said what that does, to be able to give that kind of deference to any President, is to give the President the ability to literally legislate an issue and then implement the issue and do his own interpretation of the issue. That is all three branches all piled into one. That is the President having the ability to say I am also the Court, I am also the legislative branch, and I am going to execute this out. That is a government out of balance.

What Judge Gorsuch has done is over and over again pushed out this basic judicial philosophy that our Nation was founded on three separate parts of government; that the legislative branch is the only branch that legislates; that the executive branch carries it out; and there is only one branch that interprets the law, and that is the courts.

If we were to move back to that simple model, it gives balance and consistency to all individuals to be able to know what the law says, what is the law, and to be able to actually push that out in such a way that people can trust it stays consistent.

I am proud to be able to sit down and have conversations with Neil Gorsuch in the days ahead. I am looking forward to getting a chance to meet with him in my office and to be able to work through other areas and issues he faces.

When President Trump selected Neil Gorsuch and suggested him for the bench, as I have mentioned before, my first thought was we couldn't have a better judge to be able to come out of the Midwest and to be able to speak out for the issues that real Americans want to be able to speak out for and to be able to have a Court that is consistently speaking, ''What did the law say when it was written? Let's just do that.''

There are a lot of other personnel issues that are in front of the Senate right now. Betsy DeVos is in the process of what is called a cloture vote right now for Secretary of Education. That is final closing of debate and to be able to move to a vote that will happen Monday or Tuesday of next week.

I will tell you, there has been a lot of conversation about Betsy DeVos, and I have heard the debate on this floor and in conversations and things I have read. What is interesting to me is, to be able to hear person after person stand up and say she is not for public education.

Let me tell you where I am on this. Nine out of ten students in our Nation are in public schools. I grew up in public schools. My kids attend public schools. Many of my family members work in public schools or have worked in public schools. I am very passionate about what happens in our public schools because the vast majority of our students will be influenced and will be trained in our public schools. That has to be a primary focus of what we do.

What is interesting to me is, Betsy DeVos was very outspoken during her confirmation process about her support for public schools. Did her children attend public schools? No, they did not, as Barack Obama's children did not attend public schools, as many other wealthy families' children did not attend public schools. Many wealthy families choose to do that because they have that option. Betsy DeVos, though, has been a person to raise her hand and say: Why do only wealthy families get to choose where their kids go to school? Why is that? Why don't other families have the same option that wealthy families have? But Betsy DeVos has been outspoken in saying it is a main responsibility to be able to focus on the improvement of our public schools because, again, that is where the vast majority of our students attend school.

It has also been interesting to me that all of these statements against Betsy DeVos often don't take into account this basic thing: Betsy DeVos for decades has been passionate about trying to help students in the inner city, students who are in poverty—any student—to be able to have every opportunity in education they can possibly have. I would think that as a nation we would encourage that, and that would be a positive thing rather than a negative thing.

In 2015, this body looked at a public school education law called No Child Left Behind and said that the direction of public school education was going the wrong way. And for 15 years, we have had mandates coming down on our schools from Washington, DC, mandating what type of curriculum they use in their school, what kind of teacher evaluation is done for our public school teachers, what kind of testing requirement will come down on our schools. This body, with 85 of 100 voting for it, said that No Child Left Behind is putting Federal mandates on every school. The place where those decisions should be made is not Washington, DC; it is in local districts—done by parents, done by teachers, done by superintendents, and done by State legislators. That is exactly what Betsy DeVos has said as well.

Betsy DeVos has been very clear. She is not trying to promote every State and every district doing charter schools, allowing vouchers for private schools, allowing other options. That is completely the decision of the school. While I have heard people say that if she is put in place, she will take away all this money from the schools, it is not her role nor her capacity to even do that. She has been very clear in saying that all of those decisions are made by local districts and by State legislators and by parents—where the decisions should be made.

Betsy DeVos has been very clear that No Child Left Behind was the wrong direction. In a very bipartisan way, 85 Members of this body agreed with that 2 years ago. President Obama agreed with that 2 years ago. And we all said that the best place for education decisions to be made is at the local level.

Betsy DeVos was asked very directly: Will you go to these districts and try to impose on them to be able to put charter schools and private school access there? Her answer was: No, it is up to that local district what they choose to do—but nor would she try to stand in the way. If a local district or if a State chose to provide other options, it is not her role in the Federal Government to try to stand in the way of that. Quite frankly, I find it refreshing that someone would say: We are not going to run your school from Washington, DC. What you choose to do in your schools, you are allowed to do.

Again, there has been a lot of conversation about charter schools and other options that are out there. I hear people all the time say that there is a problem with vouchers. How could the Federal Government be involved in any money going to private schools or public schools or whatever that may be? We settled that issue decades and decades ago. It is called the GI Bill. When the GI Bill was passed after World War II, the Federal Government told those veterans coming back from the war: You can choose to go to any school you want to go to—public school, private school, wherever it may be. The GI Bill is still considered one of the most effective tools that our Nation has ever done in higher education. It is a voucher program. And many people have not had the opportunity to think through: What does this mean?

Again, Betsy DeVos has been very clear in saying it is not her desire to be able to impose that on every State, but if a State chooses to do that, why would we stop them when we have already seen clear evidence that the GI Bill was already successful in its time, going back now 60-plus years? It is an

issue that we look at and say: Why would we stand in the way of charter schools when, in the past, they have been very well received by Republicans and Democrats alike?

President Obama was a supporter of charter schools. Both of his Secretaries of Education were outspoken supporters of charter schools. In fact, one of them helped found a charter school. Charter schools are public schools, and they are received well.

In my State of Oklahoma, we just had another school that came online that is a charter school that has been approved by our State board of education in a unanimous vote just a few weeks ago. These are decisions that are made by local districts. These are decisions that don't work in every area, in every location, especially in many rural areas. It doesn't work the same way. So why don't you allow that local district to make those decisions? Why don't you allow that State to make that decision? Why don't you give the authority to Oklahoma to do it? Let's not ask Betsy DeVos; in fact, allow Congress to hold her to account to make sure that our Secretary of Education is not trying to impose on our States what she wants to do but is allowing our State to do what we want to do. What we ask of a Secretary of Education is not to run our schools but to stay out of our schools' business and to allow us to be able to make those decisions.

She is not going to step in and try to take funds away. Those are not her funds to give and to be able to monitor. Our decision is—what do we want to do as a State in education? What options do we want to provide to our kids? What I would ask most of a Secretary of Education is to leave us alone and allow us to do what we can for our kids.

Quite frankly, I don't have a problem with school choice, even as a parent who sent my kids to public schools when I could have sent them to private schools. I thought the school was doing a great job in my area. I was glad for my kids to be able to be involved in it.

But why would we ever tell a parent: If you will give us just 5 more years, we will get this school cleaned up and turned around. Their child doesn't have 5 more years. Their child has one shot. And if they wait 5 more years, they graduate from high school and without the opportunities they needed. It may work for their younger brother, but they couldn't wait.

Why don't we give that ability back to the parent? As an avid supporter of public education, as a person with deep respect for teachers in my school, as a person who—I myself have a secondary education degree from college; I spent 22 years working for students, and I cannot tell teachers enough: Thank you for your thankless service. They spend all day with students who don't want to be there most of the time. They deal with parents at night who are upset that their child got a B-plus rather than an A. And they work tirelessly through a lot of bureaucracy. We are grateful for that. I can assure them that this Congress will make sure that no Secretary of Education, including the next one, reaches into any classroom and tells them how to do their business.

NOMINATIONS OF JEFF SESSIONS AND SCOTT PRUITT

Madam President, we have a couple of others I want to mention, as well. JEFF SESSIONS, who is coming out of this body, will be the next Attorney General. He will be a great Attorney General because JEFF SESSIONS has proved over the years that he is passionate about the law. He did it when he was in Alabama. He has done it here in the Senate. He has been an individual who is very focused: What does the law say? Let's do that.

He has been a person who is a lover of all people but also a person who is not opposed to confronting people when they need to be confronted. It is a good role for an Attorney General. I look forward to seeing him in that spot.

We have a favorite son in this fight as well. His name is Scott Pruitt. Scott Pruitt has been beat up a lot by the special interest lobbyists and environmental lobby. They put out all kinds of stuff about him. I encourage them to actually meet Scott Pruitt and to hear from him. Scott Pruitt has been passionate about the environment. Scott Pruitt actually likes breathing clean air. I know that may be shocking to people, but he actually likes clean air. In fact, he likes clean water as well. I don't know if you knew that or not.

Scott Pruitt has been a very good attorney general for us and has also been very focused on doing this one thing: What does the law say? Let's do that.

Some of the pushback that Scott Pruitt has had is not that he is opposed to the law; it is that he is not willing to push beyond the law, to be more creative with the Clean Water Act, and to be more creative with the Clean Air Act. It is not the job of the executive branch to be creative with an old law; it is to implement the law and to do it well.

I fully expect Scott Pruitt to hold every person and every company that are polluters to account because we as a nation all want clean air and clean water. But I also fully expect him to push back when someone says to him ''You ought to do this,'' and for him to respond ''That may be nice, but that has to pass Congress because the Environmental Protection Agency can't make up the rules; they can only implement the rules that have been given to them by Congress.'' I am looking forward to Scott Pruitt serving in that role.

In the weeks ahead, as he has advanced out of committee, he will come to the floor, and we will have a full vote here. I am willing to tell all of my colleagues that when Scott Pruitt is at the Environmental Protection Agency, you will be pleasantly surprised with how fair he is, how responsive he is, and how passionate he is about actually implementing the law.

These are long days for us because there are an awful lot of stall tactics going on. President Trump is trying to put his Cabinet together. By this point, 2 weeks in, President Obama had almost all of his Cabinet done already. Over 20 individuals were already in place in President Obama's first term. The other party has blocked as many as they possibly can so that President Trump can't get to work. You may think that is a nice political thing to do, but the Nation had an election. And as President Obama said, elections do have consequences.

President Trump should be allowed to put together his Cabinet just as Republicans allowed President Obama to put together his Cabinet before. It is a fair thing, and it is the right thing to be able to do. We all need to be able to get our work done, President Trump included. Let's let him put his team together and get to work as the American people have asked him to do.

Madam President, with that, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I come to talk about a topic that is near and dear to my heart. Although I don't serve on the committee of jurisdiction, I will tell some stories today that will demonstrate to you about why I feel so strongly about this nominee and so strongly about this position.

I want to start with my dad's story. My dad grew up on a small family farm outside the town of Barney, ND, not that you would know where that is. When he became an eighth grader—when he graduated with an eighth-grade education, he wanted to go to high school in Wyndmere, but as was the custom at the time, the oldest son was expected to stay on the farm and not get an education beyond the eighth grade and help support the family. That is not unusual. There is probably a number of people in this body whose parents have a similar experience, but this story really came home to me when my dad was diagnosed with melanoma.

Unfortunately, with part of that disease, the cancer moved to his brain and something remarkable happened for all of us, and that was that he would relive parts of his life. He would believe—as the cancer took over his brain, that part would activate his memory, and he would be doing things like calling bingo in the middle of the night during this time when he was in hospice care. It would alarm us, and maybe sometimes even amuse us, but he would

truly believe he was calling bingo at the Mandan VFW Hall.

I remember taking care of him one night, when he started reliving the experience of not going to high school and started really talking about how that affected his life, begging his father. I would never have known that without the cancer, but that education experience was so critical to his future and the future of his children. That experience that he had taught us and informed us and mandated that we appreciate public school education and the opportunity that came with it.

That leads to our story, the seven children of Ray Heitkamp who had a great public school education in Mantador, went to high school in Hankinson. Some of my siblings were fortunate enough to go to parochial school before St. Francis closed down, but we all graduated from Hankinson High School. Then something truly remarkable happened in this country—truly remarkable because we had a chance to go to college. From the time we were just children, my mother would tell us we were going to college. We would wonder, back in the sixties, how that was ever possible.

Then the Federal Government did something truly remarkable. It said our most important asset and our greatest future lies in the education of our children, and we want to help our children advance with that education. We saw what happened with the GI bill when GIs came home from World War II and went to college and became doctors and lawyers, became bankers, became businessmen, and worked to build their communities. We saw that.

We said: Wouldn't it be great if every kid had that opportunity, not just returning veterans but every kid.

So I remember coming here, my first day that I presided in the U.S. Senate after I was elected in 2012, and I was so busy getting ready to serve that I hadn't really gotten to that spot where I realized: Wow. I am standing in the most deliberative body in the world, and I am a U.S. Senator. I remember gaveling in, asking Pastor Black to come forward and give the prayer, and then we turned—as the pages know, we turned to say the Pledge of Allegiance. It was at that moment when I asked myself, ''In what country can the daughter of a school cook and a construction worker serve in the U.S. Senate?''

We are blessed in this country to have opportunity, but that opportunity is diminished if we don't support public school education. That opportunity will not be available to future generations. We will continue to divide this country in ways that will destroy our democracy.

So where do we go today and how does this have anything to do with today?

This is our Nation's story. Public school education, which began in Massachusetts, and every step and every development of public school education has expanded the opportunity for children with disabilities to achieve their highest calling through public school education. Children of a school cook and a construction worker can become a U.S. Senator. Any achievement we all have is because someone cared about our education and cared about our opportunities.

I was fortunate, I had parents who believed in education. Way too many children today are in homes where education isn't a priority. Maybe that home is racked with poverty, addiction, huge challenges. Even homeless children deserve a public school education, deserve access to education.

We are the envy of the world. Children in other countries die for the opportunity for public school education. This is foundational, not just to the individual development but to the future of our country.

So where are we today? Sure, we have challenges in education. No one is denying that. No one is saying our public school education, our entire education system is perfect. The challenge I have in North Dakota is achieving quality education in a rural setting. How do we do that when maybe there are only two high school seniors, and if they are going to go to the next school, they are going to drive at least an hour and a half a day. That is not unheard of. I can only imagine what that looks like in Alaska.

There are parts in our State where we are challenged every day to deliver high-quality education. We have a technology barrier. Fortunately, in North Dakota, we have technology and broadband in many of our schools. That is not true across this country. We need to do more in broadband, bringing high-quality education tools to schools. We need to recruit the best teachers for our rural schools, the best teachers for our urban schools—the best people.

During my time as Attorney General, I did a project involving juvenile justice. We went around to all of the schools, mainly talking to junior high kids because we believed that was the point at which they were making choices that may change the trajectory of their life. We were going around high schools talking to junior high kids. One of the things that kids told us over and over again is, they did not want their teachers to know when they had done something illegal. Why is that? It is not because they didn't trust their teachers with that information. The other group they didn't want to know was their parents because they didn't want to disappoint the heroes in their lives. Contrary to what people think—because they think children's heroes are some sports hero or some rapper or some performer, and that is absolutely not true. Do you know who kids' heroes are? First, they will say their grandparents or parents or a sister or a brother, one of their family members. Next what we hear is their third grade teacher, their seventh grade math teacher, their high school coach who maybe made their life a little bit easier when they were in school. Those are their heroes. These are the people who are doing the critical work all too often of helping to raise our kids in very challenging circumstances.

So when we do not support public school education with highly qualified nominees for the highest education job in the country, what does that say to people who may choose an opportunity in education? It says we don't think very much of them because we are just willing to go ahead with a D-minus applicant because maybe that applicant had a big checkbook.

I want to talk a little bit about my colleague who is on the floor today, PATTY MURRAY, and a colleague who is not, and that is Senator ALEXANDER. I can state that I was in State office when No Child Left Behind was passed. It was so apparent to me and everyone at that level that this was not a public policy that was going to achieve the intended results, but yet we maintained that public policy for decades—through gridlock, through the inability to sit down and compromise, through the inability to put politics aside and put children first.

Then something remarkable happened in the last Congress. In a highly contentious partisan environment, two great leaders, Senator MURRAY and Senator ALEXANDER, sat down, and they knew the time had come to reverse the No Child Left Behind Act and replace it with something that was going to be much more successful so the Every Student Succeeds Act was passed, and we are now on the path of implementation. We set a new policy for public school education.

We need a leader in the Department of Education who believes in public school education and who can administer that policy, who can leave policy to the local and State school boards, to parents, to PTAs, and to local folks. We want policy. We need someone who can collaborate and implement and work with schools across our country to make this policy work and then report fairly back to us when something is not working to tell us that wasn't a good idea. We need more afterschool programs. We need a hot lunch program that actually serves more kids in the morning so kids are ready to learn. That is what we need.

So what did we get with this nominee? In my opinion, we got a highly unqualified nominee for one of the most significant positions in government for our most precious resource, our children. That is what we got.

So I am standing today, explaining my belief that we need to do something different than approve this nominee. We need to send the right message to all of those educators, all of those State officials, and all of those parents who came together and worked with Senator MURRAY and Senator ALEXANDER to form a policy. Dissent was hardly anywhere. If it was, it was whispered on the edges. We need somebody

who appreciates that work, who understands that work, and who would never say public schools are a dead end.

Public schools are not a dead end. They are the beginning of opportunity. We have to work hard to make sure that happens, but we have to start from a foundational belief that public school education is critically important and needs to be protected, supported, and advocated for. We have to start there, and I think we are not there with this nominee.

I wish to say it is not just my judgment that I bring to the floor of the Senate today. I bring to the floor the judgment of thousands of North Dakotans who have called me.

Hopefully, I did something to give people greater access to my advocacy in the Senate for them. I opened a portal on my Web page and asked people to tell us what they wanted to have done with these nominees. I have received thousands—in fact, 4,600. It may not sound like a lot to other offices, but that is a lot from a State of only 730,000 or 740,000 people. Of those 4,600, over half were on this nomination. Of those who called this office or sent a message to the portal, 92 percent of them said: Please, do not vote to approve Betsy DeVos. These are incredible statistics, very telling statistics.

I wish to read some of the comments I received from North Dakotans. I received a comment from Amber of Burleigh County, who said:

> My husband and I are both public educators and we know how critical a good public school education is for students all across North Dakota, including our two daughters. We need a leader at the U.S. Department of Education who supports students, teachers, and public schools. Unfortunately, Betsy DeVos wants to dismantle public schools.

Judith from Cass County said:

> DeVos has no public education experience or training of any kind; she has never been a teacher or school administrator, served on any public board of education, or even attended a public school. It is clear DeVos is not qualified to be the head of the U.S. Department of Education.

Patricia from Bottineau County told me:

> As a former public school teacher and grandmother of 6, I do not support Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education. She should not get this job with no experience in education other than trying to get rid of public schools.

An editorial today in the Fargo Forum, a very conservative newspaper in my State—I might say, it is not known for its liberal bias—said:

> Of Trump's Cabinet nominees, DeVos is among the least qualified for the intended job because of her uninformed and ideologically skewed views of public education. Her ignorance was on display during her Senate committee hearing during which she was unable to answer even softball questions about long-standing education policies.

If we were inclined to support Ms. DeVos, I felt it was my job to watch the hearings. By anyone's measure, I think the hearings were clearly a disaster for this nominee. But I think it also represented—more than the lack of knowledge and qualifications—an attitude. That attitude is that it is clear she doesn't understand the importance of public schools and refused to rule out taking Federal investments away from public schools. In fact, I think it was very clever in not revealing the true agenda, which is to privatize—not just charter schools. In fact, some of the greatest charter school advocates in this country do not support her nomination.

She doesn't understand basic education policy, yet she wants to lead the Federal agency overseeing education in our country. She doesn't understand or know of current Federal laws that support and protect students with disabilities. She has shown her severe lack of knowledge about rural schools, which represent about one-third of the public schools nationwide. She never attended or taught in a public school or had any of her children in a public school.

Students, parents, and teachers across North Dakota have stood up to say no to Betsy DeVos. In the Senate, only one more vote is needed to stop this nomination from proceeding.

I ask my colleagues who have not made up their mind, my colleagues whom I know care deeply about children to think about the great history of our country and think about the enormous privilege we had as children and as young adults to access that public school education. I ask them to think about how else someone who is the daughter of a school cook and a janitor and a seasonal construction worker could be in the Senate if it weren't for public school education.

Please, we can find someone so much better—someone who understands the new Federal policy, who has the ability to collaborate with public officials and not criticize, someone who hasn't said the work of these people who have dedicated their lives is a dead end, and someone who has respect for public school education.

We can do so much better. Our kids need it and deserve it. Children in the most precarious and difficult situations need a champion, whether it is because they have disabilities or whether they come from poverty and don't have a parent who really cares about their education or is too busy trying to put food on the table to worry about whether the homework gets done. We can make a difference here. We can send a message out to all of those school teachers who have dedicated their lives, who are our kids' heroes, that their life work matters. We are going to send them the best this country has to offer to be their leader.

Madam President, with that, I yield the floor, and I yield my time to Senator MURRAY.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I yield the remainder of my postcloture debate time to Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam 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. TESTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I rise today to address the potential confirmation of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education. I rise today not just as a Senator from Montana; I am a former public school teacher, a former public school board member. I have a mother who was a teacher and an aunt who was a teacher. I have a daughter who is a teacher. I have a sister-in-law who is a teacher. I have a number of teachers in my family. They all have either taught at or currently teach at public schools. When I was growing up, education was a critical part of what we developed into. Public education was something that my parents thought was very important. That was instilled in them by my grandmother, who over 100 years ago immigrated to this country from Sweden, due in part to the public education system we have in this country today.

When I came home from school every day, my mother would quiz me on what went on in public education. By the way, I went to the same school she did. She would find out what had transpired, both the interactions with the kids and what went on academically in the school, and also offer me a hand if I needed help with the academic portion. We would talk about my experiences in the public school because it was important. She knew it was important.

She was the daughter of a homesteader. When she was a child, homesteading wasn't exactly looked upon kindly by the ranchers of the community. They thought homesteaders were taking away their right to make a living—breaking up that good grass and putting wheat on it, making it so cattle couldn't continue to graze there. There was a lot of friction between ranchers' and farmers' kids. They all went to the same public school. In my particular case, it was Big Sandy Public Schools. In the environment of that public school, those kids learned to get along. What resulted from that was the ''greatest generation.'' We live in a world today due in much part to their figuring out a way to get along, figuring out a way to communicate, figuring out a way to make the world a

better place. That was due I think entirely because of the public education system we have in this country today.

Our public education system is—and this cannot be argued—the foundation of our democracy. When I was growing up and the Vietnam conflict was going on and there were conflicts around the world, everybody said: You know, these countries need to have a democracy. And then there was a realization that without an educated population, democracies really don't work.

We have had a democracy in this country for nearly 250 years because of the success of our public education system. We have had a middle class in this country that has been the envy of the world because of our—listen to me—public education system. It is the foundation of our democracy, it is the foundation of our economy, and it is a place where we learn to live together peacefully.

What is troubling about the nomination of Betsy DeVos as Education Secretary is that she wants to privatize this public education system we have. I had her in my office. We talked about vouchers, and we talked about privatizing education. We talked about accountability. Her response to the public education system was that it was failing. Her response to that was, pull a few kids out. Pull the kids out who don't have any disabilities, pull the kids out who are a little smarter, and put them into a classroom, and that will be what makes this country great again. This country is already great, and if we do that, I am here to tell the people of the Senate today that we will destroy the foundation of this country and we will destroy—it may take a few years—we will destroy our democracy.

It would be different if Betsy DeVos had spent 1 hour, 1 minute, 1 second in a public education classroom. She was not educated in public schools. She has not dealt with public schools. I dealt with it as a teacher. I dealt with it as a school board member for 9 years. In fact, my second public service job was on the Big Sandy School Board. It is important because my first one dealt with soil and soil conservation, and my second one dealt with education. She has been in neither of those positions. Quite frankly, it doesn't matter that she wasn't in those—except it does because if you don't touch base with what is going on and see the successes that are happening in public education, you can have a warped view of what is going on in this country right now, and that warped view will cause you to do things like say ''You know what, we are going to put up charter schools, we are going to have vouchers, and ultimately we are going to take away public education as we know it today.'' Instead of saying ''You know what, we are going to invest in accountability, we are going to invest in teachers' salaries, and we are going to invest in a 21st-century education system so our kids can compete,'' the answer is ''No, we are going to pull kids out of the school.''

I am going to tell you a secret. I taught in the late seventies. I am far from a master teacher; I taught for a couple of years. I quit teaching because I could do anything else in society and make more money. I could cut meat for a day and make as much money as I made teaching school for a week.

Wouldn't it be a little bit smarter, instead of privatizing the schools, as Betsy DeVos wants to do, to invest in those schools? Let's give the kids the maximum opportunity we can give them. Let's value public education, and let's value education.

I am going to tell you what happens in a rural State like mine with privatization. My school system in my hometown of Big Sandy has about 175 kids. That is not an exception for Montana; there are a lot of schools that have 175 kids or fewer. By the way, that is not high school; that is K–12. Let's say that for whatever reason, somebody wants to set up a charter school a few miles down the road and suck a few kids out of Big Sandy and maybe suck a few kids out of the Fort Benton school system and a few more out of the Chester system. Pretty soon, they have their little charter school, and there is less money to teach the kids who are left in those public schools. What do you think is going to happen to those kids who are left there? That is going to take away from our public education system. Ultimately, it will cause those schools to close because the money that funds our education is at a bare minimum right now.

The other thing that has happened in our public education system is that Congress—people here—has made the promise to local schools to fund kids with disabilities, the IDEA Program, things we can do to help fix public education. Let's fund what we promised—40 percent. It is funded at 16 percent right now. So if we had a person who was going to go in as Secretary of Education and said: You know what, this is a problem, and we are going to fight to make sure that folks have the money from the Federal level to be able to teach the kids; and we are going to live up to our promise; and, by the way, IDEA is a good program that needs to be fully funded, and the Federal Government needs to do their part at 40 percent, I may have a different opinion. But that is not what she wants to do. She, in fact, wants to do something far worse than that.

She told me she wanted to block grant the money for IDEA, which would further put another nail in the coffin of schools around the country, and then put three or four in the rural schools.

It has been documented here earlier this morning that the phones have been ringing off the hook. They have been ringing off the hook opposed to Betsy DeVos. There are 1 million people who live in Montana. Over 3,000 people have contacted me opposing her. I have had 20 contact me to support her. Phones are ringing off the hook. In fact, the phones are ringing to the tune of 1,200 to 1,500 calls a day. The phone system has shut down. There are some Senators who aren't even answering their phone because they don't want to hear it. But the truth is that public education is important in this country. People know what is at risk here. To have somebody who has never spent any time in the classroom of a public education system is asking for catastrophic results.

I am going to read a few comments from people in my great State who have sent me emails and letters about Betsy DeVos. Here is one from Melee in Missoula:

> Mrs. DeVos has no place in our national education system. She is clearly not prepared nor does she even have the most basic experience to do this job well. Our students, teachers, and parents, deserve an excellent candidate, and she is not it.

Kelly from Laurel:

> As a mother of an 11-year-old daughter, the thought of this woman in charge of our Nation's school system scares me.

Sandy from Billings:

> It would be nice to have an Educational Secretary who has actually worked, I say WORKED, in education instead of some rich woman who has never spent a day in public schools.

Kim in Kalispell:

> We need an Education Secretary that knows what the I-D-E-A Act actually is and the needs of rural school districts. We can do better and our kids deserve better.

Jenessa from Froid wrote me quite a long letter. I think it is particularly poignant, so I want to read this to you. It is a little bit long, but I think it is very clear. I want to back up a little bit and tell you that Froid is a very small town, not unlike Big Sandy. It doesn't have a lot of kids, but it has great people. Here is what Jenessa says:

> After marrying my husband, a local farmer, in August 2010, I put down my roots with plans to spend my entire teaching career in Froid. With Mrs. DeVos pushing for private school funding, our small school will be one of the first to suffer.
>
> Having two small boys that will be soon entering into their school years, they will be the third generation to walk the halls of Froid Public School. I want them to be able to spend all 13 of their public school years in the same school.
>
> As an educator, I have seen what a small rural school can do for a student. While we may not get the same opportunities as large schools, when the opportunities knock on our door, we have a large percentage of students take advantage.
>
> They have pride in their school and their community. Montana is currently suffering from teacher shortage. With a lack of funding, this shortage will only get worse.
>
> I am currently in the process of earning my Masters degree in Educational Leadership. With this degree, I have been given the opportunity to become the principal of our small school. A school my family attends, my roots are dug, and I do not want a woman like Betsy DeVos having control over [our school].
>
> Please vote no. A vote for Betsy is a vote for private control. A vote for Betsy is against the community of Froid.

A vote for Betsy is against Froid Public School. A vote for Betsy is a vote against public school teachers across this country and against the great State you represent. A vote for Betsy is a vote against my family. A vote for Betsy is a vote against me.

Mary from Red Lodge:

As a 32-year veteran educator in a rural public school, I am deeply concerned about the appointment of Betsy DeVos as Education Secretary. I'm inclined to say that her loyalty and financial backing of Mr. Trump were the reasons for the misguided appointment and not her experience and knowledge in education issues.

To be in such an esteemed position as Education Secretary, one would expect years of experience and an advanced degree to understand the ongoing issues we face in U.S. education.

Sara from Billings:

As a first grade teacher in a low-income school, I believe wholeheartedly in Montana's public schools.

Betsy DeVos believes in school privatization and vouchers. She has worked to undermine efforts to regulate Michigan charters, even when they clearly fail.

The marketplace solution of DeVos will destroy our democratically governed community schools. Her hostility towards public schools disqualifies her.

She will not work to provide a free and fair education to my students who struggle every day with hunger, with homelessness, and more. I am asking you to vote against the confirmation of Betsy DeVos.

But I have heard from far more than that—from parents to grandparents, to doctors, to average Joes who oppose this nomination. Education is something that affects everybody's life. In my opening remarks, I talked about the need for public education for democracy to work and exist. As a former school teacher and as a former board member, I can tell you that there are a lot of things we can do to make public education better, and we ought to do it.

There are hard things to do. It is much easier to say: Let's just destroy the program and privatize it, and then see what we end up with. That would be a bad decision, and that is why we should not vote for Betsy DeVos.

The impacts are huge. They are huge on our economy, they are huge on our form of government, and they are huge for us being a leader in this free world we live in.

In closing, I want Montanans to know that we have heard you. You called, you wrote, and you contacted me on Facebook and Twitter. Your message has been loud and clear. It is a message that we are hearing all across this country. It is a message that, quite frankly, if we confirm this lady, will not make America great again. In fact, it will, over time, destroy this very country that we love.

As to people who I talk to who say: The Secretary of Education doesn't matter; it is not going to affect me—I don't know whom you are kidding. The fact of the matter is, this will affect every school in every community in this country.

We can say President Trump got elected, and he needs to have the team that he wants. I am not going to vote for a team that destroys the public education system in this country. I would not be doing a service to the people who came before me—the previous generations—and I certainly would not be doing a service to my kids and my grandkids and the generations to come after. This is a very important decision. If we want to do the tough work of debating our public education system and determining how we can make it better, get the best people in the classrooms, and get the best academic material in there for them to work off of, let's do that. But let's not destroy the public education system that has made this country great for generation after generation after generation.

I urge my colleagues to stand with the thousands of Montanans and the millions of Americans who have told us to vote no on Betsy DeVos.

Madam President, I yield my remaining postcloture debate time to the Senator from Washington, Mrs. PATTY MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

Mr. TESTER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, why are we even debating the nomination of a person who clearly does not believe in our Nation's public schools? No matter whether you are a Democrat, Republican, Independent, no matter what part of the country you live in, whether rural or city, whether you have children or not, who would say that education is not important or valuable? Who would say that education is not foundational to success in life?

Nine of every 10 students in the United States attend a public school. Who among us would say those students should be led by a person who does not believe in public schools? Who among us would say that we should have an Education Secretary who does not commit to making public schools better for the sake of all of our children?

Then we should ask ourselves: Is Betsy DeVos the best that we can do for our children and young people? Does Betsy DeVos believe in public schools? No. Has Betsy DeVos ever been a teacher, a principal, or even attended public school? No. Does Betsy DeVos believe that we should hold charter schools—which are public schools, by the way—equally as accountable as other public schools? No. Does Betsy DeVos understand educational civil rights laws that provide all children with disabilities the opportunity to pursue a free and appropriate public education? No. Did Betsy DeVos commit to holding schools accountable for campus sexual assault? No. Again, I ask: Is Betsy DeVos the best that we can do for our children and young people? No.

Again, why are we even here to debate whether such a person should lead the Department of Education? I feel as though we are going down a rabbit hole where up is down and down is up. It should not be asking too much to have an Education Secretary who will stand up for public schools and the millions of our children and young people who attend our public schools all across our country.

Education is foundational. I think we all acknowledge that. I speak from experience. When I came to this country at almost 8 years old, I did not speak a word of English. I attended public schools where I learned how to speak English, developed my love of reading, and ultimately prepared for college. Public schools really helped prepare me for life.

I had a great sixth grade teacher. His name is Yoshinobu Oshiro. Before he was a teacher, Mr. Oshiro served in the military intelligence service during World War II, one of the segregated Japanese-American units that went on to earn the Congressional Gold Medal. He really cared about his students, and he encouraged me to study hard.

I have stayed in touch with Mr. Oshiro for decades. When I was last home in Hawaii about a month ago, I invited him to the historic meeting of President Obama and Prime Minister Abe of Japan at Pearl Harbor. I wanted to make sure that Mr. Oshiro met both Prime Minister Abe and President Obama. This happened. Today, I have a photo of Mr. Oshiro. There he is, meeting President Obama on that historic day in Hawaii.

Mr. Oshiro was a very important part of my life. In public schools across the country, there are many more Mr. Oshiros, teachers who go out of their way to support and encourage their students. They deserve a leader who will fight for them, who understands the challenges our public schools face, and who is committed to meeting those challenges. They deserve a leader who wants all of our children in public schools to succeed. If you can truly say that Betsy DeVos is that leader, that she is the best we can do for the millions of children attending public schools in our country, then vote for her. But I cannot. Thousands of my constituents agree.

I yield the remainder of my postcloture debate time to Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator may receive up to 40 minutes.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING LAVELL EDWARDS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to honor the memory of LaVell Edwards, a giant of the gridiron who guided the Brigham Young University football program through decades of unprecedented success. Surrounded by his family, Coach Edwards passed away peacefully on the morning of December 29, 2016.

Born to Philo and Addie Edwards in 1930 in Orem, UT, he excelled in football and basketball at Lincoln High School.

Following graduation, he decided to attend Utah State University to play football. LaVell figured that if he played for BYU, the hometown school, he would have lived at home and been required to milk the family cows, so he went north to Logan. At Utah State, he met the love of his life, Patti Covey. A few months after the two went on a blind date, they were married in Beaver Dam, UT.

Following graduation, LaVell served in the Army for 2 years. After receiving an honorable discharge from the military, he became head football coach at Granite High School in Salt Lake City.

After eight seasons as head coach, LaVell was hired at BYU by Hal Mitchell in 1962. LaVell humorously remarked that he was hired only because Coach Mitchell wanted to run the single wing offense and Coach Edwards was the only Mormon running that offense at the time.

After 10 seasons as an assistant coach at BYU, he was promoted to head coach in 1972. Prior to his promotion, BYU had never achieved much success in football. In LaVell's words, it was a matter of when, not if, he would be fired. So he decided to do something that few other coaches were doing at the time: make the forward pass the focal point of the offense. LaVell's bold move revolutionized the game of football. His quarterbacks ended up throwing for over 100,000 yards, and four of them won the Davey O'Brien Award, given annually to college football's best quarterback. One of his quarterbacks even won the Heisman Trophy, which is awarded each year to college football's best player. LaVell's high-powered offense boosted the team to national prominence and culminated in BYU's 1984 national championship victory.

Following this historic season, Coach Edwards was named the AFCA National Coach of the Year. With LaVell at the helm, BYU consistently finished in the top 25. He would eventually lead the Cougars to 19 conference championships and 257 victories, making him the seventh winningest coach in college football history. He coached 31 all-Americans, 6 College Football Hall of Famers, and 2 Outland Trophy winners. Coach Edwards himself was ultimately inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2004.

Despite his tremendous success on the field, LaVell always remained humble. He also never lost his sense of humor. Although college football fans typically remember Coach Edwards for his trademark sideline scowl, he was renowned for his wit. He quipped on this fact, saying, ''Someone once said I'm a happy guy; I just forgot to tell my face.'' With his disarming humor and clever one-liners, LaVell could lighten the mood and make almost anyone laugh.

Coach Edwards also had a remarkable ability to delegate. Although he knew football forward and backward, he surrounded himself with capable coaches and he let them do their jobs. His assistants were some of the best ever in college football, partially because he let them have free reign. This quality allowed him to focus on the personal element of football.

He valued all of his players, and by all accounts, his door was always open to them. Indeed, many of his players have spoken about having frequent meetings with him that helped change their lives for the better. At his funeral, hundreds of former football players showed up—Hall of Famers, top-notch-rated people in almost every case. I was there at the funeral on Saturday.

Coach Edwards simply cared about people, and I was fortunate to witness this up close. In the 100th Congress, I had the pleasure of working with him when he was president of the American Football Coaches Association. Together, we helped to pass legislation that allowed the AFCA to establish multiemployer pensions for college football coaches. Given the uncertain nature of the coaching profession, this legislation was an important achievement for coaches and their families across the country.

Although football was important to LaVell, his faith was first and foremost. While he was coaching at BYU, LaVell served as a lay bishop in a Mormon student congregation. He thoroughly enjoyed the interactions he had with those students.

Throughout his life, he served his church in many other positions of responsibility. Following his retirement from coaching in 2000, LaVell and Patti served a public affairs mission in New York City for the Mormon Church. He served honorably in that capacity and even put his experience as a football coach to good use.

I might add that he invited me to come up and go to dinner with a number of dignitaries in that area so that he could chat with them and tell them a little bit about his faith and his beliefs, and it was a privilege to do so.

He and Patti were terrific missionaries and good people. While a missionary, LaVell aided in the establishment of Harlem's first high school football program in decades.

Coach Edwards and Patti also met with many different political and religious leaders, and, as he put it, they looked to ''build bridges'' between these leaders and his church.

Madam President, LaVell Edwards was a champion on and off the field. Not only was he one of the most successful coaches in college football history, he was also one of the greatest men I ever knew. I will be forever grateful for my own friendship with LaVell, and I pray that we will always remember the humility and humor that were the hallmarks of his life. It was one of the privileges of my life to have a personal relationship with him and Patti. They are two of the finest people I have ever met.

I have to say that LaVell would drop anything to support his religious beliefs, and he was a tremendous influence on literally hundreds, if not thousands, of football players and others who watched what he said, watched what he did, and loved how well he did those things.

I personally was befriended by him on a number of occasions, and it meant a lot to me. It means a lot to me to this day not because he was so important, he was one of the greatest coaches who ever lived, and he was in the Hall of Fame, but because he was down-to-earth, a person who loved to play golf, loved all sports, and loved being with people. And when he supported you, it was really support.

All I can say is, he is one of the greatest men I have ever met in my life. He had a great influence on so many people—still does. His wife is every bit as great as he has been. Both are tremendous human beings who have made this world a better place to live.

From a football standpoint, I think most coaches who knew him would say he was unexcelled, and I agree that is true, but that was minor compared to the type of life he lived, the type of things he did, the type of honors he shared, the type of kindness he showed, the ability to talk to people and help them through the problems they had, and, of course, the overall genuine goodness of a fellow whose life was well spent, who touched so many lives, literally hundreds of thousands of lives over the years, and who had this tremendous sense of humor that made being around him a real pleasure.

I am grateful I knew LaVell Edwards well. I am grateful for the life he lived. I am grateful for the example he set. I am grateful for the joy he brought to so many people. And I wish his dear wife Patti well. I just hope that these words will be a little bit of consolation for her.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to strongly oppose the nomination

of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education.

I want to start by just reading from some letters from some young constituents that I received.

From one little boy named Theodore:

Dear Senator Gillibrand, I am a public student in PS 3. I love my school.

Please vote against Betsy DeVos because she's against public schools. I'm happy here.

From Felix:

Dear Senator Gillibrand, I am a public school student in New York, and I love my school. Please vote against Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education because she is prejudice against public schools. I am in third grade and am a boy. Love, Felix.

Dear Senator Gillibrand, my name is Mina, and I am a public school student. I love my school (PS3), and I hope you vote against Betsy DeVos because she does not support public schools. Sincerely, Mina.

These are just three letters out of thousands of letters, phone calls, and emails from my constituents. I have never heard so much from my constituents about someone so ill-prepared for the job they have been nominated for.

I am unconvinced that this nominee in any way would use her position to actually fight for the 2.6 million students and 200,000 teachers in the public schools in my State.

She refused during hearings to commit to protecting the Federal funding that goes to our title I schools which serve students from our lowest income families. She refused to uphold critical Federal laws, like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, in schools that receive this absolutely necessary Federal funding. She refused to commit to upholding title IX guidance from the Department of Education, which has played an instrumental role in addressing the problem of sexual assault in our schools across the country. She even wavered on whether guns have any place in and around our schools, she said she would oppose gun-free school zones. She doesn't have any experience working as a teacher or as a school administrator at any point in her career. Instead, she has spent decades advocating for education policies that would fundamentally undermine our public school education system.

What kind of message does this send to our students and their families and our teachers if we put our trust in a person who has worked so tirelessly throughout her career to weaken public schools?

I am astonished by how little the nominee seems to understand about the basic needs of New York's schools, teachers, and parents. I am very disturbed about how out of touch her statements are with basic values.

In New York, we have over 2.6 million students who attend public schools, including 450,000 with disabilities. We have over 200,000 public schoolteachers.

Ninety percent of all students in our country go to public school. Public schools serve all kids. They feed them if they show up hungry. Public schools help all kids with disabilities and don't send them somewhere else. Public schools help all students reach their God-given potential, and public schools are held accountable for meeting the requirements of our Federal education system and essential civil rights protections, but this nominee has vilified public schools.

Teachers and students around the country have raised their voices about this nominee, and they have made their views very clear. They do not want us to confirm Betsy DeVos to lead the Department of Education because they feel she is not an Education Secretary for all of America. I have heard from tens of thousands of them. Listening to what my constituents say, they are pretty concerned.

I would like to read a couple more letters. This one is from a school social worker in a middle school. She was hired to help underserved children develop effective executive functioning skills and survive their day-to-day lives.

My students are resilient, intelligent, loving young women and men, and they face indescribable hardships that no child should have to experience.

The ideologies and policies represented by Betsy DeVos and the Trump administration put my students' futures on the line.

Please continue to represent and fight for my students by denying the confirmation of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education.

Here is another letter:

While I teach in a private school setting, my sixth grade daughter attends a public middle school, and my second grade son attends a funded special education school to address his speech and language delays.

We rely on the excellent public schools in our community to support the learning needs of our children, as do hundreds of thousands of other families in New York City and millions of families across the Nation.

Here is another letter from a teacher in one of the poorest school districts in my State. He wrote:

I not only teach the State-mandated curriculum—we offer elite educational programming to all those who reside in our district.

I am honored on a daily basis to know that I have been able to level the playing field for many students by offering them the keys to success through their education.

Students who come to us homeless, underfed, victims of poverty and trauma are given the same access to success as those more fortunate.

Because of our public school systems, they have been able to achieve the American dream and achieve all their dreams.

These are real concerns. These are heartfelt worries. This is what the people of New York are saying and people across this country. We need to listen to our constituents. We need to serve them. We need to represent them. We need to listen to our teachers across our States who work so hard every day to make sure our children can learn and reach their potential. We need to listen to our families and our students who have expressed very real fears that this nominee will cause damage to our public schools.

So I stand with my colleagues from both parties to oppose this nomination. I will not support the confirmation of someone who is such a threat to our public school system.

I encourage everyone in this Chamber to think about the students and teachers in their States who desperately need a leader to run the Department of Education. I urge all of my colleagues to vote this nominee down.

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. REED. 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. REED. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Betsy DeVos to be the Secretary of Education. This is not a position I take lightly. I have never opposed the confirmation of a nominee for Secretary of Education. I also have never seen the intensity of opposition to a nominee for this position as we have witnessed with Mrs. DeVos.

Thousands of Rhode Islanders—educators, parents, community leaders—have written or called to express their dismay that a person with Mrs. DeVos's record and background would be chosen to lead the Department of Education. What I have seen and heard about Mrs. DeVos leads me to agree with my constituents—she is uniquely unsuited and unqualified for this critical position.

The U.S. Secretary of Education oversees the Federal Government's role in ensuring educational equity in our public schools regardless of family income, race, ethnicity, language, or disability. Mrs. DeVos's work has been in the opposite direction. She has dedicated her time, political capital, and personal fortune to creating private sector alternatives to public education.

She has also fought to shield those alternatives from the same standards and accountability that apply to public schools. For example, she spent a reported $1.45 million to reward or punish Michigan legislators as part of her effort to kill an accountability plan that would have included charter schools. This hostility to public schools and affinity for using public dollars to fund private schools or for-profit education companies makes her, in my estimation, a poor choice to lead the U.S. Department of Education.

Mrs. DeVos's crusade for vouchers raises another fundamental question about whether she respects the separation between church and state. This is a founding principle of our Nation. However, in the past, she has talked about her education reform efforts in religious terms as advancing God's Kingdom and reversing what she feels is a trend of public schools displacing church in community life. In an administration that has signaled a willingness to discriminate based on religion,

these views are cause for real concern and they have no place at the U.S. Department of Education.

Mrs. DeVos's crusade for school choice in Michigan has been a failure for students. Since 2000, student achievement in that State has fallen. In 2000, Michigan students scored above the national average on the National Assessment of Education Progress in fourth grade reading and math. By 2015, they were below average.

As a single-issue educational reformer, Mrs. DeVos does not have the breadth of knowledge necessary to oversee our national education policy from preschool through adult education and postsecondary education. Her policy solution for education is choice. As they say, when all you have is a hammer, everything is a nail. This one-size-fits-all approach is a real danger given the diversity of our students, our institutions, our communities, and the different educational challenges across the lifespan of individual Americans.

I know many parents and students and employers are worried about our schools. I share that worry, and we need to do more, but Mrs. DeVos's plan to eliminate those neighborhood schools rather than do the hard work of repairing, renovating, and providing the supports that enable all schools to be ready to learn at school is cause for alarm.

During her hearing, Mrs. DeVos displayed little understanding of the Federal student aid programs that provide approximately $150 billion in assistance to students struggling to pay for college. So not only does she have a single-minded focus on private charter elementary schools, she has very little grasp—from her hearing testimony—on the challenges for postsecondary education in the United States.

She also appeared confused about questions regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—the landmark law enacted in 1975, and updated many times since, that protects the rights of children with disabilities to a free and appropriate education. At first, she suggested that States should be allowed to decide whether or how to enforce the law, and that, in my view, is a disqualifying answer. This has been a Federal initiative that has proved successful.

Indeed, many of us can recall when students with special needs were ignored—totally ignored—until the IDEA, and now they have been incorporated into our public school systems and into our educational system, which has benefited these students, their families, and our country.

I also share my colleagues' concerns about Mrs. DeVos's finances and her ability to carry out her duties as Secretary free from conflict of interest. Her ethics disclosures show investments and relationships across a range of education interests from for-profit early childhood education companies to for-profit education management entities, advocacy organizations, education software, campus services, private student loans, and student loan debt collectors. She has not fully disclosed her assets to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and has declined to provide information on the holdings in two family trusts that she will retain if she is confirmed. This lack of transparency raises real questions about whose interests will be served under her administration at the Department of Education.

Education is really the launching pad for the American dream. It is the engine that drives this country forward. The Secretary of Education must be a champion for public education.

As we have seen from the Office of Civil Rights data collection, we have significant gaps in opportunities and resources in schools across this country. Our Secretary of Education must be dedicated to helping States and school districts close those gaps. These children cannot afford to have resources drained from their public schools for vouchers that will do little to improve the quality of education in their communities.

And as many of my colleagues in rural States have indicated, there is just, in many places geographically, the inability to substitute a public school with a vouchered charter or private school. If we break faith with these public schools, we will leave thousands of Americans, particularly in rural communities, without any real choice.

The Secretary of Education should be working toward helping our teachers, principals, school leaders, and parents ensure that we are reaching all students and helping them succeed. All students include students with disabilities and English language learners. All students, together, learning from one another and not in separate and, indeed, perhaps inherently unequal environments. Our goal should be equal opportunity. And if we pursue that goal, we will see the progress and success of America continue.

We need a Secretary of Education who is prepared on day one to lead our Federal student aid system that includes a student loan portfolio of over $1 trillion with more than 40 million borrowers. This is another aspect of the responsibilities in postsecondary education that, in her testimony and in her presentation, Mrs. DeVos appeared to be ill-informed about. Our Secretary of Education must be at the forefront of expanding college access, improving affordability, and ensuring that students' educational and financial interests are protected.

We need a Secretary of Education who is prepared to address the needs of adult learners, especially those who have been left behind in a changing economy. Mrs. DeVos has provided no insight as to how she will lead the Department of Education's efforts to support adult learners.

In fact, one of the realities of this economy is that learning today is lifelong, lifetime learning. We have left the period in which a high school diploma would be adequate for a person to get a good job, move up through the ranks in a company, retire comfortably, and provide for the next generation. Now, the intensity of education and the duration of education has to be for a lifetime. And, once again, that knowledge, that expertise, was not demonstrated in her testimony.

Sadly, I do not believe that Mrs. DeVos is the Education Secretary that we need. She has dedicated her time and wealth to promoting alternatives to public education, which I believe is the bedrock of our democracy. I think one of the most significant reasons this country grew and expanded was that going back to our earliest days, we, more than any other Nation in the world, pioneered free public education, accessible to all, and that engine drove this country forward. To ignore that, to abandon public education, would be a tremendous setback to not only our economy but to the fabric of our society.

Her focus on vouchers and for-profit education calls into question—very dramatically—her commitment to public schools. It does not seem to be her major priority, and I would argue that has to be a major priority of the Secretary of Education, along with the Federal role of ensuring that the rights of all students are protected, regardless of where they live. This can't be a Department of Education that is focused on certain ZIP Codes and ignores other ZIP Codes.

Furthermore, nothing in her background and in her testimony before the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee inspires confidence that she has the experience or vision necessary to oversee public education policy, including higher education and adult education.

For these reasons, I cannot support her nomination, and I would urge my colleagues to join me in voting no.

As I indicated in my opening remarks, having served under both Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents, this is the first time I have ever felt that I could not support a nominee for the Department of Education.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I wish to thank my many colleagues who have been here this morning to talk about this critical appointment, the Secretary of Education, who oversees all of our K–12 and higher education in this country. It is a principle so many of us care about. I have heard passionately from so many of my colleagues here today about what public education means to them, what it means to our country, what it means to our

democracy, and what it means for kids of all different backgrounds to come together in a public education system that is guaranteed by this country. The dangerous views of this nominee, Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education—who has said repeatedly she will not protect the investments we have made, but rather has the philosophy that we should take money away from our public education students and put it to vouchers for private schools—will undermine our whole entire democracy. It is why we have heard across this country from so many parents and teachers and students and grandparents and business leaders who are urging Senators from every State to vote no on this nominee.

Certainly we can do better. Certainly the last election was not about sending our K–12 and higher education system into chaos, certainly not at a time when one of the most important things people care about is the stability of our economy, the ability to get a job. Fundamental to that is being able to know you can go to a school, no matter where you are or where you live or how much money you have, and get a good education. We need to keep that, and no one wants to send that system into chaos at this time. That is why people are speaking out.

As I mentioned earlier today, I have heard from thousands of people in my home State who have contacted me with concerns about this nomination of Betsy DeVos to be the Secretary of Education. An overwhelming number of them are people who have spent time in our classrooms with our kids; that is, our teachers. Many of them have spent decades in public schools dedicating their own lives to helping our children learn in school districts of all different sizes, and those teachers deserve a voice today.

So I thought I would take a few minutes to tell my colleagues a little bit about what I am hearing and why they believe we should oppose Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education.

I heard from a teacher from my hometown of Bothell, WA, who wrote me and said that public education is the basis of equality for all students in this country. Our Founding Fathers recognized the importance of having educated citizens and the need to provide it for all of our children. Education for profit doesn't work. And we need to do what we can to make sure we fight privatization of our education system.

I heard from another woman in central Washington who works with low-income students. As she noted, taking title I funding and putting it toward private schools will be devastating to small communities. She is echoing what I am hearing from rural communities across my State and what I am hearing from many other Senators who have talked to me about what they are hearing from rural communities in their States.

From Seattle, I heard from an educator who told me that she wanted to see fellow educators—or at least people with some experience in our public schools—running this Department. That is why she opposes Betsy DeVos—no experience.

A retired teacher from Mercer Island asked me to oppose this nomination. She has spent 37 years teaching children in our public schools.

On the other side of my State, in Spokane, a 28-year teaching veteran says strengthening public education is the best thing we can do for schools like hers that are located in a high-poverty district.

In Prosser, a public school teacher and a former lawyer told me that he is committed to both the public education system and the Constitution. He called the nomination of Betsy DeVos an affront to both, given what he called her track record of undermining public schools and the need for separation of church and State. He said that only through access to high-quality learning opportunities can we remain free.

I heard from a teacher—also a parent—from Issaquah who said: ''This nomination is very disappointing.'' In order to ''make America great again'' she said we need fully funded schools for teachers who have the time and the resources to prepare students to be lifelong learners.

In Monroe, WA, a teacher for 35 years says she is afraid of what DeVos could mean to public education.

From Camano Island, a retired teacher of 31 years said all children deserve the same access to high-quality public education.

A teacher from Vancouver School District tells me that our public schools deserve better than someone who has called them a dead end, adding that the Secretary of Education should be an advocate for the principle of free, quality, and equal education. She worries that if we don't defend public education from the views of Mrs. DeVos, then we have failed the future of this democracy.

I received a succinct message from Dave in Seattle, in all caps, where he writes: ''ABSOLUTELY NO.''

Those are just a few of the many, many people I am hearing from. There are literally thousands and thousands more. I know that is true from all of our colleagues here. Why? Because people are making their voices heard loud and clear. They want a Secretary of Education with real experience in public schools who is truly dedicated to strengthening our public education system across the country.

I am proud to stand with my constituents and the public school educators from Washington State to urge our colleagues to vote no on Betsy DeVos.

We have had a good number of Senators here today to talk about this. I know we are going to be spending Monday, Monday afternoon, into the night Monday, Tuesday morning hearing from many other Senators and having a very robust debate.

I hope that all of those who are listening, and everyone in this country, stands up at this time and thinks about what public education means to this freedom and this democracy, and I know they will, as they have been continuing to let their voices be heard by their elected representatives.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL CRAIG FALLER

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and congratulate RADM Craig Faller on his outstanding service to our Nation as the Navy's chief of legislative affairs from June 2014 through January 2017. During that time, he was the Navy's lead advocate on Capitol Hill and had the challenging job of communicating with all 535 Members of Congress, handling their constituent inquiries, and properly representing the Navy while taking into account military, political, and budgetary priorities.

Admiral Faller selflessly devoted the last 2 and a half years of his life to ensuring our Nation's sailors were represented in Congress, and he excelled in that role. He established warm and lasting relationships with my colleagues, garnering respect and admiration in both Chambers of Congress and on both sides of the aisle. He worked with us to establish the first-ever Senate Navy Caucus and broadened the Navy's outreach beyond members of defense committees. His efforts, along with those of the Chief of Naval Operations, introduced the Navy to Senators who would not otherwise have had exposure to the great work our sailors are doing around the globe.

On behalf of my colleagues and the U.S. Congress, I thank Admiral Faller for his dedicated service to the Navy and our Nation. I also thank his wife, Martha, for her support and sacrifice. I wish them fair winds and following seas as he moves on to his next assignment as the senior military assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:57 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 36. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation''.

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

At 11:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled joint resolutions:

H.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule.

H.J. Res. 41. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers''.

The enrolled joint resolutions were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

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–663. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2016 Annual Nuclear Weapons Stockpile Assessments from the Secretaries of Defense and Energy, the three national security laboratory directors, and the Commander, United States Strategic Command (OSS–2017–0053); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–664. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–665. A communication from the Acting Secretary of the Army, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Dakota Access Pipeline; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–666. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Technical Collection for the New START Treaty (OSS–2017–0108); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–667. 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 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–10. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing the United States Congress to extend Louisiana's seaward boundary in the Gulf of Mexico to three marine leagues; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4

Whereas, in *United States of America v. States of Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida*, 33 U.S. 1 (1960), the seaward boundary of the state of Louisiana in the Gulf of Mexico was judicially determined by the United States Supreme Court to be three geographical miles, despite evidence showing that Louisiana's seaward boundary historically consisted instead of three marine leagues, a distance equal to nine geographic miles or 10.357 statute miles; and

Whereas, the seaward boundaries in the Gulf of Mexico for the states of Texas and Florida were determined to be three marine leagues; and

Whereas, the unequal seaward boundary imposed upon Louisiana has resulted in (1) economic disparity and hardship for Louisiana citizens and entities; (2) economic loss to the state of Louisiana and its political subdivisions; and (3) the inability of the state of Louisiana and its political subdivisions to fully exercise their powers and duties under the federal and state constitutions and state laws and ordinances, including but not limited to protection and restoration of coastal lands, waters, and natural resources, and regulation of activities affecting them; and

Whereas, in recognition of all of the above the Legislature of Louisiana in the 2011 Regular Session enacted Act No. 336, which amended Louisiana statutes to provide that the seaward boundary of the state of Louisiana extends a distance into the Gulf of Mexico of three marine leagues from the coastline, and further defines ''three marine leagues'' as equal to nine geographic miles or 10.357 statute miles; and

Whereas, Act No. 336 further provides that the jurisdiction of the state of Louisiana or any political subdivision thereof shall not extend to the boundaries recognized in such Act until the United States Congress acknowledges the boundary described therein by an Act of Congress or any litigation resulting from the passage of Act No. 336 with respect to the legal boundary of the state is resolved and a final nonappealable judgment is rendered; and

Whereas, through the federal Submerged Lands Act of 1953, Congress has the power to fix the unequal disparity of the lesser seaward boundary forced upon Louisiana by recognizing and approving that Louisiana's seaward boundary extends three marine leagues into the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, as shown by the national impact of natural and manmade disasters such as hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and the Deepwater Horizon BP Oil Spill in 2010, the seaward boundary of Louisiana is vital to the economy and well-being of the entire United States, since among other benefits the Louisiana coastal area: (1) serves as both host and corridor for significant energy and commercial development and transportation; (2) serves as a storm and marine forces buffer protecting ports and the vast infrastructure of nationally significant oil and gas facilities located in such area; (3) provides critical environmental, ecological, ecosystem, and fish, waterfowl, and wildlife habitat functions; (4) provides protection from storms for more than 400 million tons of water-borne commerce; and (5) offers recreational and ecotourism opportunities and industries that are known and appreciated throughout the world; and

Whereas, the Louisiana coastal area accounts for 80% of the nation's coastal land loss, with its valuable wetlands disappearing at a dramatically high rate of between 25–35 square miles per year; and

Whereas, hurricanes Katrina and Rita turned approximately 100 square miles of southeast Louisiana coastal wetlands into open water, and destroyed more wetlands east of the Mississippi River in one month than experts estimated to be lost in over 45 years; and

Whereas, the economic, environmental, and ecological damage of the Deepwater Horizon BP Oil Spill is already calculated in terms of billions of dollars, and potential longer-lasting impacts are still being determined; and

Whereas, adopted in 2006, the federal Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) would provide ongoing revenues to Louisiana from federal oil revenue derived from gulf leasing and drilling, with the first payment in 2017 estimated to be approximately $176 million, and with such monies dedicated to coastal restoration, hurricane protection and coastal infrastructure; and

Whereas, despite strenuous objection, efforts are now underway to repeal or amend GOMESA that would result in depriving Louisiana and other gulf coast states of such monies; and

Whereas, the extension of Louisiana's seaward boundary into the Gulf of Mexico for three marine leagues will provide a much-needed stream of revenue for use in the state's ongoing efforts to clean up, rebuild, protect and restore the Louisiana coastal area from losses suffered due to both natural and manmade disasters, and will benefit both the state and the entire nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to extend Louisiana's seaward boundary in the Gulf of Mexico to three marine leagues; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ENZI, from the Committee on the Budget, without amendment:

S. Res. 46. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Budget.

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. TESTER (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARPER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WICKER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 298. A bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. PAUL):

S. 299. A bill to require the appropriation of funds to use a fee, fine, penalty, or proceeds from a settlement received by a Federal agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. UDALL, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 300. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that return information from tax-exempt organizations be made available in a searchable format and to provide the disclosure of the identity of contributors to certain tax-exempt organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SASSE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 301. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 302. A bill to enhance tribal road safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 303. A bill to discontinue a Federal program that authorizes State and local law enforcement officers to investigate, apprehend, and detain aliens in accordance with a written agreement with the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and to clarify that immigration enforcement is solely a function of the Federal Government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 304. A bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to allow the Indian Health Service to cover the cost of a copayment of an Indian or Alaska Native veteran receiving medical care or services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 305. A bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day; considered and passed.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S.J. Res. 20. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to clarify the authority of Congress and the States to regulate corporations, limited liability companies, and other corporate entities established by the laws of any State, the United States, or any foreign state; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S.J. Res. 21. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Update for the 2008 Ozone NAAQS; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. KING, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. Res. 44. A resolution designating February 6 through 10, 2017, as ''National School Counseling Week''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. Res. 45. A resolution designating February 2017 as ''American Heart Month'' and February 3, 2017, as ''National Wear Red Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ENZI:

S. Res. 46. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Budget; from the Committee on the Budget; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 47. A resolution supporting the contributions of Catholic schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 132

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 132, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide for congressional and State approval of national monuments and restrictions on the use of national monuments.

S. 166

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 166, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Muhammad Ali.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 170, a bill to provide for nonpreemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 229

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 229, a bill to provide for the confidentiality of information submitted in requests for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, and for other purposes.

S. 240

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 240, a bill to nullify the effect of the recent executive order that temporarily restricted individuals from certain countries from entering the United States.

S. 260

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. 260, a bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

S.J. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 9, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8, of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to the disclosure of payments by resource extraction issuers.

S.J. RES. 11

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 11, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation''.

S.J. RES. 17

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 17, a joint resolution approving the discontinuation of the process for consideration and automatic implementation of the annual proposal of the Independent Medicare Advisory Board under section 1899A of the Social Security Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 302. A bill to enhance tribal road safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a bill I just introduced, the John P. Smith Act.

Just a few short weeks ago, I came to the floor to recognize John Smith, a Wyoming resident who was a life-long advocate for transportation safety. For nearly three decades, ''Big John'' Smith led the Department of Transportation for the Eastern Shoshone and

Northern Arapaho Tribes of the Wind River Reservation. Wyoming lost one of its great representatives and leaders on December 31, 2016, but John's legacy lives on through the changes he effected on the Wind River Reservation.

John's unwavering commitment to improving transportation infrastructure earned him awards and respect the country over. More importantly, Big John inspired others to invest in transportation and road safety on the Wind River Reservation. It is only fitting that a bill, which seeks give additional tools to tribal governments across the country, would be named after such a committed man.

The John P. Smith Act will streamline requirements for tribal transportation projects to help make intersections, railroad crossings, and other tribal transportation features safer for the people who depend on this infrastructure. Relatively minor changes can dramatically improve public safety around roads. The John P. Smith Act makes sure that simple things, like installation of rumble strips, improvement of roads for pedestrian or cyclist safety, and even basic signage would not be subject to months or years-long delays due to bureaucratic backlog.

When he testified before the Committee of Indian Affairs when I was Chairman, Mr. Smith told the stories outlining the many tragic deaths on dangerous roads in Indian country. He shared that at the time of his testimony, the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming had the highest rate of pedestrian deaths in the United States. The John P. Smith Act would ensure that basic safety measures could be put in place in a timely manner. Big John shared, ''When you have narrow roads, with sharp curves, no medians and no shoulders, you are asking for trouble.'' The projects included in this bill will help to save lives in tribal communities.

John Smith has been described as a ''Champion of Change'' by the White House, a skillful diplomat by his peers, and I was proud to call him my friend. It is with great honor and respect that I am pleased today to introduce the John P. Smith Act to build on John's lifetime of transportation safety achievements.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 44—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 6 THROUGH 10, 2017, AS ''NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK''

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. KING, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 44

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has designated February 6 through 10, 2017, as ''National School Counseling Week'';

Whereas school counselors have long advocated for equal opportunities for all students;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic, personal, social, and career development;

Whereas personal and social growth results in increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for college and careers;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;

Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and the United States;

Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, mental health issues, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and school violence;

Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and social and emotional development;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;

Whereas the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 491 to 1, almost twice the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 6 through 10, 2017, as ''National School Counseling Week''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

SENATE RESOLUTION 45—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 2017 AS ''AMERICAN HEART MONTH'' AND FEBRUARY 3, 2017, AS ''NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY''

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 45

Whereas heart disease affects men, women, and children of every age and race in the United States;

Whereas, between 2003 and 2013, the death rate from heart disease fell nearly 30 percent, but heart disease continues to be the leading cause of death in the United States, taking the lives of approximately 800,000 individuals in the United States and accounting for 1 in 3 deaths across the United States;

Whereas congenital heart defects are the most common birth defect in the United States, as well as the leading killer of infants with birth defects;

Whereas, each year, an estimated 790,000 individuals in the United States have a heart attack, of whom an estimated 115,000 die;

Whereas cardiovascular disease and stroke account for $555,000,000,000 in health care expenditures and lost productivity annually;

Whereas, by 2030, cardiovascular disease and stroke will account for $1,093,900,000,000 in health care expenditures and lost productivity annually;

Whereas individuals in the United States have made great progress in reducing the death rate for coronary heart disease, but this progress has been more modest with respect to the death rate for coronary heart disease for women and minorities;

Whereas many people do not recognize that heart disease is the number 1 killer of women in the United States, taking the lives of 298,840 women in 2015;

Whereas nearly ⅔ of women who unexpectedly die of heart disease have no previous symptoms of disease;

Whereas nearly ½ of all African-American adults have some form of cardiovascular disease, including 48 percent of African-American women and 44 percent of African-American men;

Whereas Alaska Natives die from heart disease at younger ages than individuals from other ethnic groups;

Whereas it is estimated that 36 percent of Alaska Natives and American Indians who die of cardiovascular disease die before reaching 65 years of age;

Whereas many minority women, including African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, and Native-American women and women from indigenous populations, have a greater prevalence of risk factors or are at a higher risk of death from heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases, but such women are less likely to know of the risk;

Whereas, between 1965 and 2017, treatment of cardiovascular disease for women has largely been based on medical research on men;

Whereas, due to the differences in heart disease between men and women, more research and data on the effects of heart disease treatments for women is vital;

Whereas extensive clinical and statistical studies have identified major and contributing factors that increase the risk of heart disease, including high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking tobacco products, exposure to tobacco smoke, physical inactivity, obesity, and diabetes mellitus;

Whereas an individual can greatly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease through lifestyle modification coupled with medical treatment when necessary;

Whereas greater awareness and early detection of risk factors of heart disease can improve and save the lives of thousands of individuals in the United States each year;

Whereas, under section 101(1) of title 36, United States Code, the President is requested to issue an annual proclamation designating February as American Heart Month;

Whereas the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health, the American Heart Association, and many other organizations celebrate National Wear Red Day during February by ''going

red'' to increase awareness about heart disease as the leading killer of women; and

Whereas, every year since 1964, the President has issued a proclamation designating the month of February as American Heart Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 2017 as ''American Heart Month'' and February 3, 2017, as ''National Wear Red Day'';

(2) supports the goals and ideals of American Heart Month and National Wear Red Day;

(3) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment in the United States to fighting heart disease and stroke by—

(A) promoting awareness about the causes, risks, and prevention of heart disease and stroke;

(B) supporting research on heart disease and stroke; and

(C) expanding access to medical treatment;

(4) commends the efforts of States, territories and possessions of the United States, localities, nonprofit organizations, businesses and other entities, and the people of the United States who support American Heart Month and National Wear Red Day; and

(5) encourages every individual in the United States to learn about the risk of the individual for heart disease.

SENATE RESOLUTION 46—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Mr. ENZI submitted the following resolution; which was referred from the Committee on the Budget; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 46

Resolved,

SECTION 1. GENERAL AUTHORITY.

In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Budget (in this resolution referred to as the ''committee'') is authorized from March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2019, in its discretion, to—

(1) make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, use on a reimbursable or nonreimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2. EXPENSES.

(a) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017 under this resolution shall not exceed $3,534,372, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $35,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $21,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(b) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 under this resolution shall not exceed $6,058,924, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $60,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $36,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019 under this resolution shall not exceed $2,524,552, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $15,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. REPORTING LEGISLATION.

The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2019.

SEC. 4. EXPENSES AND AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) EXPENSES OF THE COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the committee.

(2) VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED.—Vouchers shall not be required for—

(A) the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(B) the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(C) the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery;

(D) payments to the Postmaster of the Senate;

(E) the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(F) the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(G) the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations'' of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee—

(1) for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017;

(2) for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019.

SENATE RESOLUTION 47—SUPPORTING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Mr. DONNELLY (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 47

Whereas Catholic schools in the United States are internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence and provide students with more than an exceptional scholastic education;

Whereas Catholic schools instill a broad, values-added education emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in young people in the United States;

Whereas Catholic schools provide a high level of service to the United States by providing a diverse student population from all regions of the country and all socio-economic backgrounds, with 36.4 percent of students from ethnic and racial backgrounds and 17.4 percent of whom are non-Catholic, with a strong academic and moral foundation;

Whereas Catholic schools are an affordable option for parents, particularly in underserved urban areas;

Whereas Catholic schools produce students strongly dedicated to their faith, values, families, and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual, character, and moral development;

Whereas Catholic schools are committed to community service, producing graduates who hold ''helping others'' as one of their core values;

Whereas the total Catholic school student enrollment for the 2015–2016 academic year was almost 2,000,000 and the student-teacher ratio was 13.1 to 1;

Whereas Catholic schools educate a diverse population: 20.3 percent racial minorities; 16.1 percent Hispanic/Latino; 17.4 percent non-Catholic;

Whereas the Catholic high school graduation rate is 99 percent, with 87 percent of graduates attending 4-year colleges;

Whereas, in the 1972 pastoral message concerning Catholic education, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops stated, ''Education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and building of community. Community is central to education ministry, both as a necessary condition and an ardently desired goal. The educational efforts of the Church, therefore, must be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only to his solitary destiny, but also the destinies of the many communities in which he lives.'';

Whereas the week of January 29, 2017, to February 4, 2017, has been designated as National Catholic Schools Week by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and February 1, 2017, as National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools;

Whereas National Catholic Schools Week was first established in 1974 and has been celebrated annually for the past 43 years;

Whereas, while some Catholic schools are challenged by declining enrollments and school closures, the good news is that there is a strong demand and enthusiasm for Catholic schools;

Whereas 32 percent of Catholic schools have waiting lists for admission and new schools are opening across the country; and

Whereas the theme for National Catholic Schools Week 2017 is Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of National Catholic Schools Week, an event cosponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and established to recognize the vital contributions of the thousands of Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the United States;

(2) applauds the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on their selection of a theme that all can celebrate; and

(3) supports the continued dedication of Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers across the United States toward academic excellence, and supports the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the United States.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Dr. Anne Ordway, a fellow in my Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the first session of the 115th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VIETNAM WAR VETERANS RECOGNITION ACT OF 2017

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 305, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 305) to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mrs. ERNST. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 305) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 305

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 ''Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. DISPLAY OF FLAG ON NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY.

Section 6(d) of title 4, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''National Vietnam War Veterans Day, March 29;'' after ''third Monday in February;''.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon, Monday, February 6; 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 the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for leader remarks, with no motions in order, for up to 15 minutes; and following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the DeVos nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the DeVos nomination and that it stand adjourned under the previous order at 1:30 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 12 noon on Monday, February 6.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:30 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 6, 2017, at 12 noon.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DAVID MAO, DEPUTY LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the Deputy Librarian of Congress, David Mao, who is leaving the Library of Congress after 11 years of distinguished service to accept a position with the Georgetown University Law Center.

Mr. Mao, who holds a law degree from Georgetown University and a library degree from Catholic University, began his tenure at the Library in 2005, serving for five years in the Congressional Research Service, before working in and later leading the Law Library. In 2015 Librarian of Congress Dr. James Billington appointed Mr. Mao to become Deputy Librarian of Congress. Later that year he succeeded Dr. Billington, serving as Acting Librarian of Congress for nearly a year until Dr. Carla Hayden was nominated, confirmed, and sworn-in as the current Librarian of Congress last year. As Deputy Librarian under Dr. Hayden, Mr. Mao oversaw the U.S. Copyright Office, CRS, Library Services, and the Law Library within the Library of Congress.

During Mr. Mao's tenure as acting Librarian of Congress and Deputy Librarian, he has distinguished himself by his steady leadership during a time of transition for the Library of Congress. Among many achievements he led efforts to improve the Library's information technology operations, including hiring a new permanent Chief Information Officer, strengthened the institution's overall operations, and created a new department focusing on national and international outreach.

In my positions as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress in previous terms, I have always been impressed by David's self-effacing and gracious manner, and his exceptional leadership of the world's premier library. He is a wonderful example of a public servant. I thank him for his service to the Library of Congress, to the U.S. Congress, and, more broadly, to the American people. He will be missed on Capitol Hill. I wish him well.

HONORING CHIEF LARRY EUGENE PRATT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of Chief Larry Eugene Pratt. Chief Pratt is one of the most respected fire district chiefs and is retiring from the Kearney Fire and Rescue Protection District after 53 years of service. I join with the families, fellow firefighters, and citizens of the Kearney community in congratulating Chief Pratt on his many years of success, contributions to the community and now his retirement.

Chief Pratt began his firefighting career as a junior firefighter in 1963 while he was still in high school. Due to lack of manpower in the mid-1960s, Chief Pratt was one of approximately a half dozen students who were dismissed from Kearney High School to respond to calls during his high school career. While Chief Pratt was still a volunteer firefighter, he began a career working for Hallmark Cards for 34 years. In 1973, Chief Pratt became the Assistant Fire Chief and a year later after completing his EMT certification he was elected Fire Chief serving from 1975 through 1990. When the Kearney Fire and Rescue Protection District was created in 1990 Chief Pratt was appointed Fire Chief. In March 2001 he was hired as a career Chief.

During Chief Pratt's tenure, the call volume increased from 209 to a projected 1700 and the career positions increased from 3 to 28. With additional personnel and equipment, the ISO classification improved from a Class 8 to a Class 4 for the entire District.

Chief Pratt truly believes in public service and commitment to keeping his community safe. Chief Pratt is a past president of the Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs 1976 through 1978, past president of the Fire Fighters Association of Missouri 1989 through 1992, and past president of the Missouri Association of Fire Protection Districts 2011 through 2013. Chief Pratt has been a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs and Missouri Valley Division of Fire Chiefs since 1978 and received his Chief Fire Officer Designation in August 2002. Chief Pratt is a charter member of St. Michael's Knights of Columbus Council and the Kearney Rotary Club, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Kearney Area Development Council and KCB Bank.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and the rest of the Kearney community, family and firefighters in applauding Chief Larry Eugene Pratt's outstanding achievements and contributions to the community, and the State of Missouri. I wish Chief Pratt and his family the very best in years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE TEXAS PRAYER CAUCUS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Texas Prayer Caucus and the first "Call to Prayer Day" that will be held Monday, February 6, 2017 on the steps of the Texas Capitol in Austin.

State Director Debbie Terry, Chairman Scott Sanford and Vice Chairman Matt Krause have organized the event to bring the Texas Legislative Prayer Caucus into a network of 30 other states in an officially registered, members-only, bipartisan, bicameral caucus for lawmakers committed to action in prayer and the protection of religious liberties.

Recognizing the role of our Creator in government and society, the Prayer Caucus "Call to Prayer Day" is an admirable demonstration of the rights outlined by our country's founding fathers in the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights ensuring the "free exercise" of religion and speech as well as "the right of the people to peaceably assemble."

I commend the Texas Prayer Caucus and their commitment to lift up our country, state and government leaders in prayer.

PRESIDENT TRUMP MUST INVESTIGATE VOTER SUPPRESSION INSTEAD OF VOTER FRAUD

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in response to the recent and unfounded claims of voter fraud made by President Trump. Throughout our nation's history, it has been tradition for a newly inaugurated president to try and establish common ground across party lines and heal divisions to ensure that our society transitions between administrations with a positive outlook. However, many of the President's actions have been contrary to this tradition, and his obsession with voter fraud is just a senseless distraction from the real issue of voter suppression in this nation.

The reality is that there is quantifiable evidence that voter fraud is so rare it never influences the outcome of any major U.S. election. Instead of investigating these baseless claims of voter fraud, our taxpayer dollars would be better spent looking into how millions of Americans were denied their constitutionally protected right to vote because of modern-day voter suppression tactics, like voter ID laws, across the country.

In my home state of Alabama, nearly 250,000 Alabamians who don't have a valid voter ID, could not vote in the 2016 election. This is unconscionable and should not be allowed to continue. The solution to the voting issue is a simple one. We can strengthen our democracy by making it easier, not harder, to vote. We should work in a bi-partisan way, as has been our history, to restore the full protections of Voting Rights Act of 1965. The narrative of voter fraud is a myth. However, voter suppression is a real and overly prevalent national issue that must finally be addressed once and for all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on roll call vote 77, I was not present because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "NAY."

RECOGNIZING MS. NAOMI BASHKANSKY FOR HER PERFORMANCE AT THE 2016 WORLD SCHOOL CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Naomi Bashkansky of Bellevue, Washington for her victory at the 2016 World School Chess Championship. Like many other students of Olde Middle School, Naomi works every day to balance extracurricular activities, family commitments, and school life. With the help of coaches, teachers, and family, she strives to mold her own unique identity as a student, a friend, a daughter, and a citizen. Although many aspects of Naomi's life may be familiar to us all, there was nothing ordinary about her performance at the chess championship.

Naomi's accomplishment and strength of character are deserving of the highest level of praise. Naomi not only out-performed 400 young chess players representing 3o different countries, but she graciously represented the people of the 9th Congressional District and the United States of America.

During the competition, Naomi's path to victory was not always clear; she suffered some early losses and could have easily admitted defeat, but she did no such thing. As she competed in the championship round, she bore not only the weight of her own expectations, but also the burden of representing the nation. At such a young age, Naomi's courage and determination is certainly extraordinary. I know I will continue to hear about her achievements for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Ms. Naomi Bashkansky on a hard-earned victory and wish her the best of luck in the future.

COMMEMORATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this February we recognize and celebrate the 40th commemoration of Black History Month.

This month we celebrate the contributions of African Americans to the history of our great nation, and pay tribute to trailblazers, pioneers, heroes, and leaders like the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama; Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall; U.S. Senator Blanche Kelso Bruce; U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan; U.S. Congressman Mickey Leland; Astronauts Dr. Guion Stewart Bluford, Jr. and Mae C. Jemison; activists, intellectuals, authors, and artists like Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, James Baldwin, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Gwendolyn Brooks just to name a few of the countless number of well-known and unsung heroes whose contributions have helped our nation become a more perfect union.

The history of the United States has been marked by the great contributions of African American activists, leaders, writers, and artists.

As a member of Congress, I know that I stand on the shoulders of giants whose struggles and triumphs made it possible for me to stand here today and continue the fight for equality, justice, and progress for all, regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

The greatest of these giants to me are Mrs. Ivalita "Ivy" Jackson, a vocational nurse, and Mr. Ezra A. Jackson, one of the first African Americans to succeed in the comic book publishing business.

They were my beloved parents and they taught me the value of education, hard work, discipline, perseverance, and caring for others.

And I am continually inspired by Dr. Elwyn Lee, my husband and the first tenured African American law professor at the University of Houston.

Mr. Speaker, I particularly wish to acknowledge the contributions of African American veterans in defending from foreign aggressors and who by their courageous examples helped transform our nation from a segregated society to a nation committed to the never ending challenge of perfecting our union.

A few years ago about this time, I was honored to join my colleagues, Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congressman CHARLES RANGEL, a Korean War veteran, in paying tribute to surviving members of the Tuskegee Airmen and the 555th Parachute Infantry, the famed "Triple Nickels" at a moving ceremony sponsored by the U.S. Army commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The success of the Tuskegee Airmen in escorting bombers during World War II—achieving one of the lowest loss records of all the escort fighter groups, and being in constant demand for their services by the allied bomber units—is a record unmatched by any other fighter group.

So impressive and astounding were the feats of the Tuskegee Airmen that in 1948, it helped persuade President Harry Truman to issue his famous Executive Order No. 9981, which directed equality of treatment and opportunity in all of the United States Armed Forces and led to the end of racial segregation in the U.S. military forces.

It is a source of enormous and enduring pride that my father-in-law, Phillip Ferguson Lee, was one of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Clearly, what began as an experiment to determine whether "colored" soldiers were capable of operating expensive and complex combat aircraft ended as an unqualified success based on the experience of the Tuskegee Airmen, whose record included 261 aircraft destroyed, 148 aircraft damaged, 15,553 combat sorties and 1,578 missions over Italy and North Africa.

They also destroyed or damaged over 950 units of ground transportation and escorted more than 200 bombing missions. They proved that "the antidote to racism is excellence in performance," as retired Lt. Col. Herbert Carter once remarked.

Mr. Speaker, Black History Month is also a time to remember many pioneering women like U.S. Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm; activists Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks; astronaut Mae C. Jemison; mathematicians like Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson; authors Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Gwendolyn Brooks; all of whom have each in their own way, whether through courageous activism, cultural or intellectual contributions, or artistic creativity, forged social and political change, and forever changed our great Nation for the better.

It is also fitting, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to those national leaders whose contributions have made our nation better, we honor also those who have and are making a difference in their local communities.

In my home city of Houston, there are numerous great men and women. They are great because they have heeded the counsel of Dr. King who said:

"Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

By that measure, I wish to pay tribute to some of the great men and women of Houston:

1. Rev. F.N. Williams, Sr.
2. Rev. Dr. S.J. Gilbert, Sr.
3. Rev. Crawford W. Kimble
4. Rev. Eldridge Stanley Branch
5. Rev. William A. Lawson
6. Rev. Johnnie Jeffery "J.J." Robeson
7. Mr. John Brand
8. Ms. Ruby Moseley
9. Ms. Dorothy Hubbard
10. Ms. Doris Hubbard
11. Ms. Willie Bell Boone
12. Ms. Holly HogoBrooks
13. Mr. Deloyd Parker
14. Ms. Lenora "Doll" Carter

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us pay tribute to those who have come before us, and pay forward to future generations by addressing what is the number one issue for African American families, and all American families today: preserving the American promise of economic opportunity for all.

Our immediate focus must be job creation, and enacting legislation that will foster and lay the foundation for today's and tomorrow's generation of groundbreaking activists, leaders, scientists, writers and artists to continue contributing to the greatness of America.

We must continue to preserve the American Dream for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here in celebration of the heroic and historic acts of African Americans and their indispensable contributions to this great Nation.

It is through our work in creating possibilities for today and future generations that we best honor the accomplishments and legacy of our predecessors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I missed roll call no. 77 on February 2, 2017 due to an unscheduled constituent meeting off the House Floor that unexpectedly ran long. Had I been present for the roll call, I would have voted "NO".

INTRODUCTION OF THE RETURN TO PRUDENT BANKING ACT

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the nine-year anniversary of the greatest financial crisis in a generation. This economic disaster nearly caused the destruction of our country's entire financial infrastructure and led to what we call now the Great Recession.

However, during the last nine years Wall Street Banks have succeeded and in the process have caused the financial failure of millions of Americans. JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Citigroup, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley have all reported record profits during the recession. Wall Street in the last nine years has regained ALL of its pre-crisis wealth with interest, while Main Street has yet to see a real recovery.

During the 1990's, Wall Street's biggest banks and speculation houses concocted a fraudulent and greedy scheme to create false money. Then, in 2008, their crime exploded, nearly destroying capitalism. Their recklessness was so extreme it wiped out the net worth of 44 percent of Hispanic American households, 33 percent of African American households, and 11 percent of Caucasian households, respectively.

This was a taking of historic dimension never reimbursed to this day. It sucked out the wealth from millions of American families. It's time for Congress to ensure that these failures in our banking system are never repeated.

That is why I have reintroduced the Return to Prudent Banking Act. To build on the momentum and the movement to reinstate Glass-Steagall.

Since last summer, fifteen state legislatures introduced resolutions calling for Congress to reinstate Glass Steagall. Democrats and Republicans have memorialized support for Glass-Steagall in their respective political platforms. Even President Trump has declared his support for a new Glass-Steagall law and we are obligated to work with him to do just that.

I was proud to join with 57 members of the House who several years ago voted against the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, the bill that overturned Glass Steagall. As the anti-regulation movement won the day, that law was a clear signal that Wall Street was in charge. Banks grew larger and riskier, and American taxpayers were given the bill when the deregulated financial sector fell apart.

This is a reality that has sunk its teeth deep into the flesh of our Republic, influencing more and more who is elevated to office.

Mr. Speaker, these banks have to be defanged. Restoring Glass Steagall is a first step among other items, like a campaign finance reform, better trade deals, and better deals for American workers.

TRIBUTE TO JUDY HOOPES

HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Judith H. Hoopes, of Greenville, Delaware, a lifelong Delawarean and an invaluable member of our community.

A 1960 graduate of Duke University, her college major in history led to her long-time involvement with the Delaware Historical Society. She was involved in many state arts organizations, including her appointment as Chair of the Delaware State Arts Council by then-Governor Pete duPont. Dedicated to her community, Judy was a valuable asset to the numerous non-profits in Delaware she lent her support. She was a founding board member and past Chair of the Delaware Community Foundation, was the first woman to Chair the YMCA board, a founder of the Fund for Women, and a longtime Woodlawn Trustee. For these and many other contributions Judy received the Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Judy and her late husband Robert were married for 53 years. Their family was the focus of their lives, and their wonderful children and grandchildren are a testament to their good work. I am honored to call their daughter, Stephanie, and son, Robert Jr., friends. Their commitment to community and love of Delaware will surely carry on their mother's spirit. My sympathy goes out to Stephanie, Robert and his wife Hilary, Judy's five grandchildren James, Elizabeth, Penelope, Riter, and Charlotte, as well as their extended family and Judy's many friends.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of Judy, and I want to express my deep gratitude for her dedication and service to her community, and the state of Delaware.

HONORING MICHAEL MINASIAN

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and the passing of a special person from Montebello, California. Mr. Michael Minasian was an irreplaceable member of the Armenian-American community, who was born to survivors of the Armenian genocide in 1931. Mr. Minasian's success wasn't handed to him; for five years he and his family lived in a camp for displaced persons after World War II. When Mr. Minasian and his family immigrated to the United States, he attended night school to learn English while helping his parents support the family.

From 1953 to 1955, Mr. Minasian served in the U.S. Armed Forces in West Germany, and became a citizen in 1954. He returned to the Los Angeles area where he produced the bilingual "Armenian Radio Hour" and put his entrepreneurial spirit to work, first through owning the International Music Center in East Los Angeles, and later by building a successful insurance agency. More recently, Mr. Minasian reinvented himself as a land developer, building tracts of single family homes. Through his businesses, Mr. Minasian helped develop the City of Montebello and much of Eastern Los Angeles County bears his mark.

Mr. Minasian's contributions to the economy of our community were rivaled only by his civic leadership. A champion of the Armenian-American community, he spearheaded efforts to build the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument, which towers over Montebello's Bicknell Park. As founder of the Armenian Assembly, he paid his success forward to young Armenians by creating a Washington, DC internship placement program. Mr. Minasian has even made a difference right here in the United States Congress, where he successfully led the fight for passage of Armenian-genocide resolutions in 1975, 1984, and 1985.

Countless organizations in Montebello have benefitted from Mr. Minasian's leadership. He served as President of the Montebello Junior Chamber of Commerce and Chairman of the Montebello Citizens Advisory Committee on Park Planning and Design. He has also served on the boards of directors of the Montebello Chamber of Commerce and the Armenian Educational Foundation. His contributions to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Montebello American Legion, and as Human Services Commissioner for the City of Montebello will not be forgotten.

Mr. Minasian's life embodies the spirit of our hardworking immigrant community. His legacy will serve as a shining example, not only to the Armenian-American community but for all future generations, of the difference that one man or woman can make in his or her community. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending my condolences to his widow, Lydia, and their four children and six grandchildren.

IN RECOGNITION OF RON RUBIN

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ron Rubin on being an honoree at the National Museum of American Jewish History's Only in America Gala. This honor seeks to recognize those individuals who have greatly helped in the development of the Museum and for service to the business, cultural, and philanthropic communities. His contributions to our community have been recognized by many, and I am grateful for his work for the people of Philadelphia.

Ron's career began in the 1950s when he joined his father's small real estate firm. Throughout his career, Ron has worked to guide growth for major development in office buildings, retail centers, and malls up and down the East Coast. Ron's work helped make the Rubin Organization one of the largest real estate companies in the United States. After the Rubin Organization was acquired by the Pennsylvania Real Estate Investment Trust (PREIT), Ron served as CEO

of PREIT and was recently appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

In the 1990s, Ron helped to revitalize the Center City Business District by helping develop the Center City District business-improvement group. He has worked closely with many Philadelphia organizations including PECO Energy, the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the Kimmel Center, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. As the co-chair of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of American Jewish History, Ron helped oversee the expansion of the Museum to its current location on Independence Mall.

Ron's hard work and dedication to improving Philadelphia embodies the Museum's motto of "Dream, Dare, Do." In recognition of his years of service to Philadelphia, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues rise to congratulate him on this honor.

INTRODUCTION OF PUTTING OUR VETERANS BACK TO WORK ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act, a bill I introduced earlier today to help veterans gain skills for good paying jobs by reauthorizing the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). The VRAP program, signed into law in 2011 and expired in March 2014, provided training for education that led to high demand occupations, including management, business and financial operations, protective service, construction and transportation among other careers. In the two years of the implementation of VRAP, the Department of Veterans Affairs approved over 126,000 applications, of which, 76,000 veterans enrolled in a training program.

The Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act extends the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide rehabilitation and vocational benefits to members of the Armed Services with severe injuries or illnesses, extends rehabilitation programs for persons who have exhausted their rights to unemployment benefits under state law and reauthorizes collaborative veterans' training, mentoring and placement programs.

This legislation builds on our vow to hire our nation's heroes by directing the Secretary of the VA to establish a Federal web-based employment portal containing information on Federal programs and activities concerning employment, unemployment and training programs that are geared towards veterans. This legislation also directs the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General to award grants to hire veterans as firefighters and law enforcement officers. Finally, the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act directs the heads of executive agencies to consider favorably as an evaluation factor for civilian and defense contracts at or above $25 million, a prospective contractor with a workforce of at least 5 percent veterans.

The men and women who signed up to defend America and our values, whether they served during Vietnam or more recently in Iraq or Afghanistan, are owed our gratitude and our promise to support them as they transition to civilian life. I urge my colleagues to pass the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act to ensure that our heroes are afforded meaningful employment opportunities. This is a promise that we must keep.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DREAMERS, IMMIGRANTS, AND REFUGEES (DIRE) LEGAL AID ACT

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the DREAMers, Immigrants, and Refugees (DIRe) Act. This legislation will provide funds for legal services to protect DREAMers, immigrants, and refugees from President Trump's Executive Order.

Last week, I held an immigration town hall. Scores of my constituents attended because they were afraid for their families and communities. This was before the Executive Order was released. When I was at the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) on Saturday, I saw this fear escalate. Immigrants and refugees were unjustifiably detained and denied access to counsel at airports across our country. President Trump's Executive Order directly challenges the right to due process, which is guaranteed under our Constitution. My legislation will guarantee that DREAMers, immigrants, and refugees have access to legal aid.

I am deeply concerned about the actions taken by the Trump Administration. The refugees that have been granted status by the U.S. Government undergo an intensive security screening process that takes an average of 18 to 24 months. The security screening is performed by multiple federal agencies, including the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI Terrorist Screening Center, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the Department of Defense. The security screening that refugees undergo is the most intensive of any individual entering the United States.

It is sad that the Trump Administration would detain individuals, who fear for their lives in their home countries and seek refuge in the United States, with the intent to deport them back into harm's way. These actions are a misrepresentation of our American values. Our country has always stood up for the oppressed and welcomed the persecuted. It is un-American to turn our backs on those that need our help the most.

If we wish to remain a beacon of freedom to the world, we must stand up for the immigrants and refugees looking towards the United States for hope. We cannot just claim we are the greatest nation in the world. We actually have to act like it too.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WOMEN IN DATA SCIENCE CONFERENCE AND THE PARTICIPANTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Women in Data Science Conference (WiDS) and the Michigan In Data Science professors and scholars who are participating in this forum. WiDS plays an important role in bringing together world-class researchers to share cutting edge findings and best practices.

The Women in Data Science conference is a Stanford University-affiliated technical conference that brings together the latest data science techniques and findings across a variety of disciplines. The conference features exclusively women speakers and includes seven distinguished scholars from the University of Michigan from its College of Engineering and School of Information. Their research covers a variety of fields including healthcare, artificial intelligence and machine learning. Additionally, it includes a poster session to showcase current student and faculty research as well as a livestream featuring industry and academic leaders at Stanford University.

Data science is a new field that has the potential to revolutionize our understanding of a variety of disciplines, and forums like WiDS play a critical role driving advances by facilitating knowledge transfer between top scholars and industry researchers. It is inspiring to see women from the University of Michigan leading the way in publishing groundbreaking discoveries that further our understanding of critical areas like healthcare, communications and statistical analysis. The real-world impact of this research underscores the importance of the work being showcased, and it is my hope that the University of Michigan continues to be a leader in this field.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the University of Michigan researchers and other participants in the Women in Data Science Conference. The innovative research and support for women help inspire and educate individuals about the important work being done on data science across the country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FARM REGULATORY CERTAINTY ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my legislation, the Farm Regulatory Certainty Act. In 2015, a federal judge ruled in a citizen suit that dissolved manure nitrates constitute a "solid waste" under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Four dairies in Washington State that were proactively working with the EPA to address nutrient management issues at their dairies were held culpable of "open dumping" by a federal judge. A farmer myself, I firmly believe farmers have and must continue to

lead the charge on good stewardship and conservation, which this ruling undermined. While there are a number of statutes that do govern agricultural nutrient management practices, Congress never intended for RCRA to be one of those statutes. In fact, the EPA's own regulations promulgated back in the 1970s agree that agricultural wastes, such as manures and fertilizer, were not intended to be governed under this law. This misguided ruling has placed farmers across the country in a legal uncertainty. It is incomprehensible that Congress and EPA intended that agricultural nutrients be exempt from this law, and then have a court find farmers at fault for non-compliance with the very law they are exempt from. Farmers need to know with certainty to what rules apply to them.

The legislation I introduce today would clarify and reaffirm that RCRA was not intended to govern agricultural nutrient management activities. Moreover, if a farmer is already engaged in legal action and is diligently working with the state or federal regulators to address nutrient management issues, then they would be preempted from citizen suits under this bill.

We want to continue to encourage farmers to be good, proactive stewards, and create an climate where farmers can feel comfortable working with regulators to address stewardship issues—not have farmers fear that documents they provide to regulators will be acquired by third-parties and used against them in "double-jeopardy"-like lawsuits. This commonsense legislation will clarify Congress' intent on this statute, and work to restore a relationship of trust and confidence between farmers and regulators.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES J. SPINELLO

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to include in the RECORD some inadequate yet heartfelt words to celebrate the life and mourn the loss of James J. Spinello. Jim was my dear friend, respected colleague, and trusted confidant. We met in 1988 when he was a Young Turk in the Nevada Assembly. Along with his friends, Matt Callister, Gene Porter, and Wendell Williams, he was a legislator with a mission. As members of the Marvin Sedway/Gary Gray posse of talented young idealists, they set out to change the world—and indeed they have made Nevada a better place, each in his own way.

As an Assemblyman, Jim served as Chair of the Education Committee where he led the fight for class size reduction and as Vice Chair of the powerful Ways and Means Committee where he championed more funding for mental health. He was the serious, scholarly one of the bunch who had the compassion, knowledge, and work ethic to get things done.

After two terms he went on to manage Nevada's state workers compensation system. He joined the administrative team at Clark County in 1997 for several years before becoming an integral player at R&R. Partners where he served as director of local government affairs. He loved his R&R family, especially Billy Vassiliadis, who was there for him in the most generous ways until the very end.

Meanwhile, he taught classes part time at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the College of Southern Nevada, which he thoroughly enjoyed. He was a natural teacher and role model who entertained, educated, and inspired. He brought his practical experience as well as his academic training and a vast wealth of information to the classroom.

Throughout all this time, Jim remained a wonderful friend, a man I trusted totally, which is a rare thing in politics today. We shared a Mediterranean temperament—mine Greek and his Sicilian. Boy, was he Sicilian. He had black curly hair and a beautiful singing voice (we called him Spinatra). He loved red wine and pasta, and loyalty was very important to him.

Jim enjoyed traveling, especially with his beloved daughters, Lilly and Chessa. He traveled to Sicily with his girls to visit his mother's village and found some slightly suspect cousins along the way. Everything he did, he did with their futures in mind. He was very proud of them and spoke of them often. At the Sicilian wake following his service, there was consensus among those who had known Jim for a long time that he was, simply put, a really good guy—in the very best sense of the words. Billy V. noted that his legacy is in his girls and the many young people he taught in class and in the work place. Dick Cooper commented on how ethical he was: He just couldn't not tell the truth. Another legislative colleague, Ernie Alder, said Jim was polite enough to laugh at his jokes. And Tom Warden and Marc Hechter, who had been with Jim every day those last weeks, recalled when Jim had selflessly been there for them in trying times. Matt called him a true friend and Chris Giunchigliani remarked on his amazing strength of character and spirit.

Tears were shed. Stories were told. Memories were bittersweet. He was a wonderful person to work with, to have a martini with, to stay out of or be in trouble with. He was loyal to me and I will always try to be loyal, in words and deeds, to his memory. The Spinner set a high bar. His passing is Nevada's loss.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as our nation celebrates National Catholic Schools Week, I rise to recognize the lasting contributions of Catholic education in my South Florida community.

Marian Center School and Services, Archbishop Edward McCarthy High School, Cardinal Gibbons High School, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll High School, Archbishop Curley-Notre Dame High School, Immaculata-LaSalle High School, Monsignor Edward Pace High School, Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, St. Brendan High School, Archdiocese of Miami Virtual Catholic School, St. John Vianney Seminary, Belen Jesuit Preparatory, Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart, Chaminade-Madonna College Preparatory, Christopher Columbus High School, and Archbishop Curley Notre Dame are just a few of the Catholic institutions serving my district.

These schools do more than provide their students with an excellent education.

Each one of them is also dedicated to instilling a religious grounding, academic excellence, and moral values in their students so that they can dedicate their lives to serve God, their families, and their community.

Congratulations to the teachers, administrators, and staff at our fantastic Catholic schools.

Thank you for your dedication to building a brighter future for South Florida.

HONORING S. JEROME FELDMAN

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Pennsylvanian, Mr. S. Jerome Feldman. A well-respected and greatly admired member of our community, Mr. Feldman is celebrating his 85th birthday today, February 3rd.

I have known Jerome and his wife Helene for many years and have always found them to be extraordinarily kind-hearted and wholly selfless people. His lifetime of charitable work and his dedication to peace and our national security is without peer. Jerome served our country with honor as a member of the United States Navy during the Korean War. Well-liked among his peers in the Navy, his bravery and commitment earned him the respect of everyone who served with him as well as the undying gratitude of our nation.

Mr. Feldman continues his advocacy for peace and security through his support of our closest ally, the State of Israel. He is also an active member of Philadelphia's Jewish community, one of our nation's oldest and most vibrant Jewish communities.

More than anything, Jerome is a family man, a neighbor and a friend to many, including me. He is the sort of man that Pennsylvania is proud to call a native son, and I am equally proud to call Jerome a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring S. Jerome Feldman on the occasion of his 85th birthday on February 3rd of this year.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S663–S683

Measures Introduced: Eight bills and six resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 298–305, S.J. Res. 20–21, and S. Res. 44–47. **Pages S679–80**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 46, authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Budget. **Page S679**

Measures Passed:

SEC Resource Extraction Resolution of Disapproval: By 52 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. 51), Senate passed H.J. Res. 41, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to "Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers". **Pages S663–64**

National Vietnam War Veterans Day: Senate passed S. 305, to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day. **Page S683**

DeVos Nomination—Cloture: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education. **Pages S664–78**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 52 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. 52), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S664**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 12:15 p.m., on Monday, February 6, 2017, Senate resume consideration of the nomination. **Page S683**

Messages from the House: **Pages S678–79**

Executive Communications: **Page S679**

Petitions and Memorials: **Page S679**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S680**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S680–83**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S683**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—52) **Pages S663–64**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 6:30 a.m. and adjourned at 1:30 p.m., until 12 noon on Monday, February 6, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S683.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 28 public bills, H.R. 843–870; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 62–63; and H. Res. 86–90 were introduced. **Pages H975–77**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H978**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H949, H958**

Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation": The House passed H.J. Res. 36, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United

States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation", by a yea-and-nay vote of 221 yeas to 191 nays, Roll No. 78. **Pages H951–58**

H. Res. 74, the rule providing for consideration of the joint resolutions (H.J. Res. 36) and (H.J. Res. 37) was agreed to yesterday, February 2nd.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12 noon on Monday, February 6th. **Page H962**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H949.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on page H958. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Finance: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, subcommittee assignments, designation of members to serve on the Joint Committee on Taxation, designation of members to serve as Congressional Trade Advisors on Trade Policy and Negotiations, to open Executive Session transcripts from 1985–2007, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

House

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Priorities of the House Officers and Legislative Branch Entities for FY 2018 and Beyond", 5 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.J. Res. 44, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976; H.J. Res. 57, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to accountability and State plans under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and H.J. Res. 58, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues, 5 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of February 6 through February 10, 2017

Senate Chamber

On *Monday*, at approximately 12:15 p.m., Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

Also, cloture has been filed on the nominations of Jeff Sessions, of Alabama, to be Attorney General, Thomas Price, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Steven T. Mnuchin, of California, to be Secretary of the Treasury.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Armed Services: February 7, to receive a closed briefing on cyber threats, 9:30 a.m., SVC–217.

February 8, Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, to hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

February 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: February 8, to hold hearings to examine Inspector General recommendations for improving Federal agencies, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: February 8, to hold an oversight hearing to examine modernizing our nation's infrastructure, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: February 6, organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, subcommittee assignments, designation of members to serve on the Joint Committee on Taxation, designation of members to serve as Congressional Trade Advisors on Trade Policy and Negotiations, to open Executive Session transcripts from 1985–2007, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Committee on Foreign Relations: February 7, to hold hearings to examine the plan to defeat ISIS, focusing on key decisions and considerations, 10 a.m., SD–419.

February 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the United States, the Russian Federation, and the challenges ahead, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: February 9, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine empowering managers, focusing on ideas for a more effective Federal workforce, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: February 8, to hold an oversight hearing to examine emergency management in Indian Country, focusing on improving the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Federal-tribal relationship with Indian tribes, 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: February 9, organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and S. 178, to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: February 7, business meeting to consider the nomination of David J. Shulkin, of Pennsylvania, to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Select Committee on Intelligence: February 7, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

February 9, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House Committees

Committee on Armed Services, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The State of the Military'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

February 7, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing entitled ''Emerging National Security Challenges, Threats, and Opportunities: Key Issues for the 115th Congress and the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, February 7, Full Committee, business meeting to consider the committee's authorization and oversight plan for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Countering the North Korean Threat: New Steps in U.S. Policy'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Ending the Crisis: America's Borders and the Path to Security'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on House Administration, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Priorities of the House Officers and Legislative Branch Entities for FY 2018 and Beyond'' (continued), 11 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

February 7, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 634, the ''Election Assistance Commission Termination Act''; H.R. 133, to reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of Presidential election campaigns; and a committee resolution regarding views and estimates for FY2018, 12 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, February 7, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 732, the ''Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2017'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, February 7, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 11 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Accomplishing Postal Reform in the 115th Congress—H.R. 756, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2017'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, February 7, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 428, the ''Red River Gradient Boundary Survey Act''; H.J. Res. 42, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to drug testing of unemployment compensation applicants, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, February 7, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Making EPA Great Again'', 11 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, February 7, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Assessing the VA IT Landscape: Progress and Challenges'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, February 7, Subcommittee on Social Security, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

February 7, Subcommittee on Social Security; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint hearing entitled ''Examining the Social Security Administration's Representative Payee Program: Determining Who Needs Help'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

12 noon, Monday, February 6

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 15 minutes), Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 noon, Monday, February 6

House Chamber

Program for Monday: To be announced.

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Congressional Record

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