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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 27, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PAUL MITCHELL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

REMEMBERING YOM HASHOAH—HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this week we commemorated Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. People around the world gathered together in their communities to remember and to reflect, to mourn the dead, to pay tribute to the survivors, and to honor the sacrifices of the rescuers and liberators.

As a Member of Congress who represents south Florida, Yom HaShoah is particularly meaningful for me and for my constituents as so many Holocaust survivors call our south Florida community home.

I have had both the honor and the privilege to come to know many survivors over the years and be able to call them my friends. You know, you can only learn so much about the Holocaust from history books because the human toll, that is told by survivors.

What is truly eye opening and what really brings things into perspective is sitting down with survivors or family members of survivors and hearing their stories. It is as heartbreaking as it is unimaginable to think that humanity could inflict this kind of hatred, this kind of evil upon fellow human beings, and it is as shameful as it is unconscionable that the indifference of mankind could allow such atrocities to occur.

This is why it is incumbent upon us, all of us, Mr. Speaker, to mark Yom HaShoah each and every year and to rededicate ourselves to learning from the lessons of the past so we can ensure a better future free of such hatred, free of such intolerance.

On Tuesday, we marked the Days of Remembrance with a beautiful and moving candle-lighting ceremony here in the Capitol rotunda where survivors lit six candles representing the 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis. It was the first such commemoration since the passing of Elie Wiesel.

Elie Wiesel made it his life mission to share the memories of what had occurred so that the world would know the truth. Elie Wiesel would not let anyone forget the horrors of the past because, as he said in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech: ''If we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices.''

Elie was only 15 years old when he and his family were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp facing near certain death. It was at Auschwitz where nearly 1 million Jews were murdered. Almost one out of every six Jews who were killed during the Holocaust were killed at Auschwitz.

Today, Auschwitz serves as a stark reminder of the sins of the past, of the evil, of the indifference of mankind, but it also serves as an educational opportunity, an opportunity to bear witness.

As Elie Wiesel said at the dedication ceremony of our United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993: ''For the dead and the living, we must bear witness.''

For not only are we responsible for the memories of the dead, Mr. Speaker, we are also responsible for what we are doing with those memories. That is why, since 1988, the International March of the Living has brought over 250,000 participants together from over 50 countries to march a 3-kilometer path leading from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

The march is a silent tribute to all victims of the Holocaust, and as the International March of the Living states: It is intended to inspire individuals, to fight indifference, to fight racism, to fight injustice by witnessing the atrocities of the Holocaust.

This past Monday, April 24, the International March of the Living held its annual march in Poland. And though the march is a silent tribute, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to pay a vocal tribute to the participants of the March of the Living, as well as to the International March of the Living members, for their part in keeping alive the legacy, in keeping alive the memory of those who perished.

I pay tribute to its efforts to educate, to bring together individuals with survivors so that they can get a better understanding of what blind hatred can do if left unchecked.

And I pay tribute to the International March of the Living for its pledge to ''Never Again'' and to working to build a world in which we can all

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fulfill our promise of a better future free from hatred, free from bigotry, free from indifference to the suffering of others.

INTRODUCING DRAIN THE SWAMP ACT

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, so 100 days. Candidate Trump made much about, you know, the pernicious influence of peddlers in Washington, D.C., the revolving door between high-level government political appointees and lobby firms. He called D.C. a swamp again and again and again, and he promised to drain it. So how is he doing?

He was going to have a 5-year ban, if you worked for him in an eye-level position, 5-year ban from becoming a lobbyist. Of course, there was already an existing provision, ethics provision that forbids lobbyists from joining agencies that lobbied in the prior 2 years. So let's check in.

Number 1, Chad Wolf, lower right. He has been named chief of staff for the Transportation Security Administration. For the last 2 years, he has lobbied the TSA to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a new carry-on luggage screening device. Now, as chief of staff, he is in the position to decide whether or not that agency will purchase the device as it is being tested and evaluated for use.

Now, how could that be? Well, President Trump eliminated that ethics provision that you couldn't lobby, join an agency which you have been lobbying for 2 years; so hence, number 1, Chad Wolf.

Number 2, Michael Catanzaro. He is the top White House energy adviser. He worked last year as a lobbyist for energy companies, oil, gas, and coal, and was lobbying to stop or overturn the Obama attempts to deal with climate change, including the Clean Power Plan and various other things, but he is now the top White House adviser.

Okay. Well, we are not doing so good so far. Well, how about the 5-year prohibition? That is pretty stiff. None of these guys are going to leave their lucrative lobby jobs and come and work as a public servant at those low salaries if they can't go back to lobbying, right, so that has got to be cleaning up the swamp. Whoops. Oh, no, not so much.

Marcus Peacock, senior White House budget adviser, he is leaving the Trump administration to join the Business Roundtable, 77 days after he started working for President Trump. He is going to lead the policy group on key issues relating to the Trump agenda, including taxes, infrastructure, regulatory reform, and he signed the pledge saying that for 5 years he would not lobby this administration, but he got a waiver, just a little waiver. So much for the 5-year restriction.

Anybody who wants to leave the Trump administration just goes and gets a waiver, and they go right back to lobbying for him. So the revolving door is spinning faster and faster.

But how about the President saying no one should benefit from this kind of public service. Well, ELIJAH CUMMINGS and I have raised concerns about the lease of the Trump Hotel here, which says specifically that no government official shall benefit. No elected official of the United States of America shall benefit from this lease. But President Trump says that that is not a problem, and the new temporary appointee of head of the GSA says it is not a problem. He is not benefiting. The money is going into trust, and the trust can only use the money to improve the properties or pay down the debt. So, therefore, he doesn't benefit. Huh?

But then we had a really kind of strange incident this week where the State Department posted ads for Mar-a-Lago on an official government website, ostensibly because they just wanted to show people the winter White House. Of course, they, you know, were showing the rooms and all that. I don't think they had the rates posted. You still had to call. They took it down after people complained about it.

So we are not doing so good on the drain the swamp stuff. But I want to help the President here. I introduced a bill at the beginning of this Congress, the DRAIN the SWAMP Act. Maybe he doesn't know these things are going on. Maybe he doesn't know this guy Peacock got a waiver. Maybe he doesn't know that these people were lobbying these agencies, and he really does want to drain the swamp.

So I am hoping he will endorse a bill I have introduced, the DRAIN the SWAMP Act, which—instead of having a signed agreement, which can be waived by some random bureaucrat at the White House in secret—would actually put into statute a 5-year ban on returning to lobbying after you have been a high-level political appointee in this or any future administration.

Now, that would really drain the swamp. So the question is: Is the President just going to pretend the swamp doesn't exist anymore, or would he like to put some teeth in a law that would actually help us drain the swamp and stop this pernicious revolving door and influence peddling that he was so offended by as a candidate but seems to be turning a blind eye to as President of the United States?

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN RAY KOGOVSEK

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

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor former Congressman Ray Kogovsek, a dear friend who represented the Third Congressional District of Colorado before me. I ask that you keep him in your thoughts and prayers as he now faces a challenge far greater than any political race.

Ray is a native of Pueblo, Colorado, and but for his college years and his tenure here from 1979 to 1985, he never left his hometown and never wanted to. His commitment to his community spread to encompass the entire Third District, which he came to serve after 10 years in the Colorado Legislature where I first met him.

Ray won election to Congress in 1978 by 364 votes. In 1980, he faced the same challenger in a Reagan landslide year. He won by 22,000 votes. And in 1982, after redistricting changed half of his district, he handily won again. Ray won because of who Ray is. He is a man of gentle wisdom, wisdom about people, a man with a gut instinct to know what is right, a genuine man, a man who knows no anger.

His achievements in his short time here in Congress were many. From a vast wilderness bill painstakingly built through his outreach and development of a coalition of broad support, to funding to widen a beautiful highway through Glenwood Canyon to make it safer for road travel, to resolving a decades-old boundary dispute for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and his work on behalf of the Third District continued after he chose to leave Congress.

He is known for his work on Western water issues and was awarded the prestigious Wayne Aspinall Award by the Colorado Water Congress, an award named after another Colorado congressman who served as chairman of the House Interior Committee.

But I have a sense that what Ray values most about his career in public service, about his advocacy for his district and for the West, are his friendships, the friendships that he found and nurtured here in these halls and beyond.

I want to thank Ray Kogovsek on behalf of the House of Representatives and the Third District and wish him and his family comfort and strength during this difficult time.

□ 1015

END HUNGER NOW—SNAP WORKS

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the House Agriculture Committee has held 21 hearings during the past 2 years on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP. The committee has heard over 30 hours of testimony from over 60 experts, both liberal and conservative, from all across the country. We have heard from academics, advocacy groups, Federal and State government officials, charitable organizations, and even a few people who have relied on SNAP for food assistance.

All of our witnesses have confirmed what we know to be true: SNAP works. It is a powerful program that helps to alleviate poverty and food insecurity, and it is worthy of our support.

Today I would like to share with my colleagues a few of the most important takeaways from the 21 hearings I participated in as ranking member of the Nutrition Subcommittee.

First, SNAP benefits should not be cut. Forty-two million Americans, including working families, veterans, seniors, children, and the disabled, struggle to put food on the table. In the richest country in the history of the world, I find that unconscionable. SNAP is a vital tool that helps struggling Americans get back on their feet, and participation has steadily declined as economic conditions have improved.

Second, the current SNAP benefit is inadequate. On average, SNAP households receive about $225 a month. The average benefit per person is about $126 per month, which works out to be a meager $1.40 per person per meal. You can't buy a Starbucks coffee for that.

Pamela Hess with the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, said it best during her testimony before the Agriculture Committee: '' . . . people can't parent well and raise happy, healthy children who are ready to learn, and you can't work well if you are hungry, if you are wondering where your next meal is coming from. . . . ''

Cutting this meager benefit would be a rotten and heartless thing to do, especially as so many in our country continue to face incredible hardships.

Third, SNAP does not discourage work. The majority of people on SNAP who can work, do work. Almost 70 percent of SNAP recipients aren't expected to work because they are kids, they are elderly, disabled, or caring for a young child or disabled family member. More than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, nondisabled adult do work while receiving SNAP, and more than 80 percent work in the year before or after receiving benefits.

Under current law, able-bodied adults without dependents, known as ABAWDs, are limited to 3 months on SNAP out of every 3 years if they aren't working. I don't agree with that provision, but I have come to learn that some of my Republican colleagues want to shorten that time that these very vulnerable adults can remain in the program. Make no mistake, such a move wouldn't help people find jobs; it would only make them hungry and more vulnerable.

As Sherrie Tussler of the Milwaukee Food Bank noted in her testimony before the Agriculture Committee: ''Somehow, we have determined that punishing people with hunger will motivate them towards work. Hunger doesn't motivate. It dulls and it makes people sick.''

Fourth, case management requires a well-funded, multiyear commitment. Case management that helps connect those in need with tailored services to move out of poverty can be successful, but those investments cost money. We need to adequately fund these efforts.

Lastly, block grants threaten programs that provide an economic ladder. Past Republican budgets have proposed block-granting SNAP, but we know from decades of experience that funding for block-granted programs erodes over time and does not provide the same responsiveness to economic conditions that SNAP does.

SNAP expands during times of economic hardship and contracts as the economy recovers. It successfully reaches those in need and is only limited by the modest benefit calculation and hurdles to access like the ABAWD time limit. There is no reason whatsoever, based on all of our hearings, to undermine SNAP through structural changes, block grants, further restrictions, more onerous requirements, or cuts.

At a minimum, the next farm bill must do nothing to make hunger worse in this country—period. Instead, we should focus on strengthening our antihunger safety net to make sure anyone who needs modest food assistance benefits has access to them. We need to support and expand innovative programs that help to increase the purchasing power of SNAP, and we need to increase SNAP benefits to provide families who benefit from the program access to more nutritious foods that last them through the month.

Mr. Speaker, today, chefs and advocates from across the country are on the Hill with Food Policy Action and Environmental Working Group to discuss issues related to the farm bill, including our antihunger safety net. I urge my colleagues to listen to these chefs—they are food experts—and pay attention to them, especially when they ask you to support policies that will be aimed at ending hunger now.

THANKING SHERIFF JOHN SANNER FOR HIS SERVICE

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank recently retired Stearns County Sheriff John Sanner for his service to the people of Minnesota. For the past 33 years, Sheriff Sanner has watched over our community, ensuring our safety and the safety of our loved ones. In 1984, he started out as a patrol deputy and was elected sheriff 20 years later.

After the horrific abduction of Jacob Wetterling in 1989, Sheriff Sanner was one of the main officers on the case. He worked for more than 26 years searching tirelessly for Jacob, hoping to finally give Jacob's family an answer. Years went by and, soon, decades, but Sheriff Sanner never gave up on Jacob or the Wetterling family. He stood by them until the case was finally solved just this past year, proving his dedication to his job and to the people he served.

Sheriff Sanner, I speak on behalf of all Minnesotans when I say thank you. We wish you a long, peaceful retirement spent with your family.

TRUMP ERA OF IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, ''This is a new era. This is the Trump era.'' Mr. Speaker, those were the words of the Attorney General, the former Senator from Alabama.

The Attorney General has launched a campaign to paint immigrants as criminals, rapists, gang members, and ''cartel henchmen.'' In his prepared remarks at the border a couple of weeks ago, the Attorney General planned to say the following: ''It is here, on this sliver of land, where we first take our stand against this filth.''

When he gave the speech he edited out the words ''this filth'' because, I guess, calling immigrants from Latin America ''filth'' was even too extreme for this Attorney General. But it remains on the DOJ website. In fact, as far as the Attorney General is concerned, any immigrant who is here illegally is a criminal.

He has ordered the government to prosecute immigration violations, even minor ones, to the full extent of the law and to make prosecution of immigrants a top priority—on par with murder, drugs, counterfeiting, and kidnapping.

He has ordered every one of the 94 U.S. Attorney Offices to appoint a special prosecuting attorney so that immigrants are considered public enemy number one, nationwide—not drug dealers, immigrants. According to the latest Federal data, 46 percent of all new Federal criminal prosecution is immigration related—not narcotics. The second highest crime prosecuted accounts only for 14 percent of new Federal cases. In the new Trump era, a felony prosecution against an immigrant who has been living and working here peacefully for decades is three times important than a felony prosecution of a drug dealer.

And that imbalance is not enough for the Attorney General. He wants to prosecute immigrants beyond the full extent of the law by turning misdemeanors into felonies, and turning felonies into aggravated felonies. They think it will not look so ugly when the U.S. is deporting moms and dads who have raised successful families—or deporting children who grew up in the U.S. from the time they were toddlers—if the Attorney General and his team can look and tell the American people they were just thugs, gangbangers, and rapists.

Jeff Sessions and Donald Trump want more immigrants criminalized, felonized, and deported. Yes, we are truly in the Trump era.

But let's be frank. This is not a surprise when Donald Trump descended the gold escalator and announced his candidacy for President. Almost the first words out of his mouth were Mexicans are rapists, murderers, drug dealers, and immigration is turning America into a war zone.

When he was a Senator from Alabama, the Attorney General made a career of associating immigrants with crime and doing his best to defeat reforms that would strengthen legal immigration and reduce illegal immigration. Deportation, criminalization, and restricting legal immigration were the bedrock of this Attorney General's approach when he was a U.S. Senator.

Our legal immigration system already works fine according to both Senator and Attorney General Sessions, no matter that some people who are receiving their visas today applied for them when Bill Clinton was President and that those applying for visas today will probably get them when Chelsea Clinton is President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, when your constituents say, ''Hey, why don't those immigrants come here legally?'' or, ''Why don't they just go back and come back legally?'' the answer is clear: as a Senator, our Attorney General made sure that that was impossible.

Next week, millions of Americans will take to the streets to demonstrate against mass deportation, the border wall, prison beds, and drive-by deportations. But it is not because we are soft on crime or love immigrants more than the people who were born here. No. We have a different vision of what the United States is and should always be.

We are not an incarceration nation, a nation hostile to other countries and their people. We are a great nation, a nation that, in her greatness, is a beacon of hope to refugees, a land of opportunity for entrepreneurs, and a democracy with separate branches of government that act as effective checks and balances on unlimited power.

The American people are sensible, fair, and pragmatic, and are correct when they reject the idea that a wall makes sense in the 21st century as the centerpiece of our immigration policy. We are not persuaded by the poetry of the Attorney General when he stands at the border and says: ''It is here, on this sliver of land, where we first take our stand against this filth.'' No, we think of another, better poem, the one at the Statue of Liberty, the lady with her torch in the harbor, who shares our deeply held values as Americans and says every day to the entire world at that harbor: ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.''

CONGRESS SHOULD VOTE ON CONTINUING POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last week was another reminder of the chaos in Afghanistan. Tragically, 200 Afghan soldiers were killed by the Taliban; but, unfortunately, that is no surprise.

After 16 years in Afghanistan, absolutely nothing has changed. If anything, it has gotten worse. The American taxpayer, United States military, and the marines in my district are frustrated with the 16 years of continued chaos. That is why Mr. GARAMENDI and I have introduced H.R. 1666 and have been joined by seven of our colleagues. Our bill asks that Congress be able to debate and vote on whether we should or should not continue our current policy in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I bring this poster on the floor as a reminder. Let me say to you today and my fellow colleagues that we have spent over 800 billion taxpayer dollars, over 2,200 American servicemembers have died, and over 20,000 of our troops have been severely wounded. The waste, fraud, and abuse is just as bad, if not worse, today than at the very beginning of 2002.

Now, some 300 additional marines, mainly from Camp Lejeune in my district, have been deployed to Afghanistan this spring, and we have had no discussion of that on the floor of the House. Mr. Speaker, I am calling on PAUL RYAN as Speaker of the House to permit a new debate on our future involvement in Afghanistan and whether or not our young men and women should be sent to war, as there are more than 300 Members of the House of Representatives that were not here in 2001 that have never had a debate or a vote on Afghanistan and the policy of Afghanistan.

It is time that the Congress interject itself. It is our constitutional responsibility to send our young men and women to die for this country, and yet we do not ever have a debate. That is why the bill that Mr. GARAMENDI and I have put in, H.R. 1666, will simply say that the House will have a debate on whether we should or should not be in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know why that is asking too much because it is our constitutional duty. Nothing that we vote on in this House of Representatives is as sacred as sending a young man or woman to die for this country.

□ 1030

I have sent a letter to PAUL RYAN as recently as yesterday asking him to please give us the ability that we have taken the oath to debate war. And the Speaker of the House can order the committees of jurisdiction to send an authorization of military force to the floor of the House for debate.

Mr. Speaker, for all of our men and women in uniform, all of the families of our men and women in uniform who have died for this country, please, Congress, let's join together, Republican and Democrat, and let's debate the future of Afghanistan.

CONGRATULATING RABBI ELYSE FRISHMAN ON HER RETIREMENT

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

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my friend and spiritual mentor, Rabbi Elyse Frishman, for her 22 years of exceptional service to Barnert Temple in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey.

After decades of service to the Jewish community, Rabbi Frishman will be retiring this June. Personally, I am very lucky to call Rabbi Frishman my rabbi.

In addition to leading our congregation, she is the editor of the reform prayer book ''Mishkan Tefilah,'' and a national leader in worship and congregational engagement.

Rabbi Frishman has stood as a model citizen and faith leader, going the extra mile to bring together the community in times of anxiety and fear.

She was recently featured by The Bergen Record for her work to unite the interfaith communities in a common mission, forming dialogues, understanding, and building friendships where they didn't exist before.

In doing so, she has long set an example for the families of our congregation. As a parent, I am glad my children are growing up knowing and being led and educated by her in our faith community.

Rabbi Frishman deserves to be held up as a model for public service. And though our congregation and I will miss her deeply, I congratulate her on her retirement, and I hope everyone enjoys the evening celebrating her years of service to us. America and our community has been very lucky to have Rabbi Elyse Frishman.

Thank you, Rabbi Frishman.

HONORING CAPTAIN JOSHUA TODD BYERS

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

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Captain Joshua Byers, a fallen soldier, son, husband, brother, and friend.

In Sparks, Nevada, Captain Byers lives on as a legacy. His kind heart, patriotic soul, and strong ideals of servant leadership have left a strong and lasting impact on everyone who knew him.

Captain Byers attended Edward C. Reed High School in Sparks, the home of the Raiders. Although not originally from Sparks, Captain Byers moved with his mother, father, and two younger brothers to chase a dream and God's calling in Nevada.

While at Reed High School, he joined the Naval Junior ROTC program and various other clubs, all while maintaining excellent grades.

When he reached his senior year, he was student body president, the battalion commander of the Junior ROTC

unit, and in line to be valedictorian on graduation.

One of his biggest dreams was to attend one of the Nation's service academies. After he completed his 4 years at Reed High School, he accepted an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, Hudson High.

Upon graduating from West Point, he earned an Army Ranger tab and was deployed to Iraq in 2003, where he was killed in action due to an IED explosion.

His legacy lives on at Reed High School, especially in the NJROTC program. Through an award given there by one of the past instructors as well, there is now being more done in order to memorialize a hero who left such a profound impact on those who knew him and were around him.

The NJROTC hallway at Reed High is going to be completely dedicated to Captain Byers, being named the Captain Joshua T. Byers Leadership Memorial Hallway.

In this hall you can find Captain Byers' uniform, awards, military decorations, and various pictures and stories to help capture the essence of this hero in our hearts and minds.

Mr. Speaker, I ask today that we keep the Byers family and Joshua in our prayers and thoughts.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S PROMISE TO DRAIN THE SWAMP AND 100 DAYS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, we are quickly approaching President Trump's first 100 days in office, and the swamp he pledged to drain now has been stocked with Wall Street's finest.

President Trump made a big jobs promise to working people across this country in his campaign. But hundreds of steel workers in places like Lorain, Ohio, are being terminated due to continuing Korean and Chinese imports being dumped into this marketplace.

The President seems to have a raft of bankers from Goldman Sachs advising him on the global economy, but where is his trade team that is supposed to protect workers like I represent in the State of Ohio?

This is the backdrop to the 2018 budget the President has chosen to send up to Congress. His 2018 budget rewards Wall Street—anybody surprised—and hurts Main Streets in places like Lorain and Ohio and Pennsylvania and Michigan and Indiana and Wisconsin, the States that carried him into the Presidency.

Vice President Joe Biden once said: ''Show me your budget, and I will tell you what you value.''

Well, President Trump's budget apparently doesn't value the people of the Great Lakes States because it zeros out the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and other programs under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency that are trying to help us clean up water, the source of all life.

Look what he is doing to job training programs, to Meals on Wheels, to after-school care, programs that the middle class cares about and are vital to life: slash, slash, slash. More bankers in there from Goldman Sachs and Wall Street.

To make matters worse, the Trump administration has a total disregard for ethics, as they clearly violate the Emoluments Clause of our Constitution.

President Trump and his children have still failed to fully divest their assets and put them in true blind trusts to prevent real and dangerous conflicts of interest.

How about the number of patents that China has just granted to the Trump family, including Ivanka Trump? How about that? When the President has changed his position on China from what he said in the campaign and now it is a little bit different and the patents just got approved after sitting on the shelf for a decade, does that strike anyone as unusual?

The Trump administration is not draining the swamp. This President is filling it with broken promises to the American people who are depending on him and his administration to make a difference for people who need attention across this country.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the need to support those who have been victimized by this terrible crime.

According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, nearly 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will experience sexual violence, and 7 out of 10 sexual assault cases are committed by someone who the survivor knows.

Nearly 50 percent of female survivors will experience PTS, or post trauma stress, and per the Rape and Incest National Network, only 2 percent of those offenders will spend jail time or be convicted of a felony.

Sex trafficking is a prevalent problem, and according to the U.S. State Department, 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders. Of those numbers, 80 percent are female and half are children.

Sex trafficking occurs when someone uses fraud, force, or coercion to cause a commercial sexual act with an adult or cause a minor to commit a commercial sexual act.

Thus, victims of sex trafficking are also victims of assault. They are threatened, taken from families and loved ones, and forced to commit acts they would not do on their own free will.

These statistics demand action. I personally know victims of sexual assault, and I have tackled it head-on while as a commander. I started this journey when I was a commander at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

When I arrived there as a new base commander in 2008, the allegations of sexual assault were too high. I implemented a two-step solution to address the problem.

First, all rape accusers, if willing to testify, would have their day in court, have their day to say what happened to a jury.

Second, those convicted of rape would have their names and prison sentences distributed widely around the base. Our rates immediately improved. This program was later ranked by the Air Force as the number one sexual assault response program—the number one in the Air Force. So I take this issue seriously.

I recently met with Courtney, a constituent in my district in Omaha, who was sexually assaulted while serving as a marine. She shared her story with me, including how she was treated after reporting the rape. And what she told me greatly disheartened me. I could not believe that someone who proudly served in uniform was basically ostracized by the very people she served with.

She felt persecuted and ignored for daring to report an assault that should not have occurred, from simple acts of being ignored to having her belongings thrown out of the barracks in black trash bags by her fellow servicemen.

Courtney was not only a victim of assault, but a victim of repeated backlash from superiors and colleagues. Courtney developed PTS because of not only the assault, but how she was treated for reporting the assault.

In my district office is Makayla, an intern who at the young age of 15 was molested by her father. Makayla's parents were divorced, and one weekend when she was alone with her biological father, the horrendous crime took place.

She would live in fear for the next 2 years until, finally, by the grace of God, she told her mom what happened. The days following were a whirlwind, from giving testimony to telling her grandparents what their son had done to her.

The lives of both women will never be the same. However, they both know and both knew that God would turn their trauma into triumph.

Makayla is now a college student at the University of Nebraska Omaha and shares her story at colleges, schools, nonprofits, and other organizations all over Nebraska. After graduating, she wants to work in politics to change the policies surrounding sexual assault cases.

Courtney is also speaking out and has started a blog on social media sites detailing her journey to recovery and sharing her story so others know that they are not alone.

She also will be staying in touch with me about potential legislation and ideas to help those who are victims of sexual assault in the military.

There are many in Omaha who deserve recognition for the work they do every day to combat sexual assault and human trafficking to help victims. The Women's Center for Advancement helps victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. They have a hotline that victims can call and make that their first step in getting the help they need.

Project Harmony offers victims of child sexual assault the opportunity to take forensic interviews instead of having to appear in court, which can retraumatize the victims.

The Coalition on Human Trafficking is training staff at hotels and motels to be able to identify possible victims of sex trafficking. The goal is to provide the awareness training to all hotels within a 50-mile radius of Omaha, and to date they have trained over 85 locations.

Finally, we can't forget the members of law enforcement who work tirelessly to catch those responsible for sexual assault and human trafficking. Without them, there would be so many more victims who would still be abused, assaulted, and traumatized.

And while there are law enforcement and others dedicated to stopping these assaults and human trafficking, there is more that could be done.

Earlier this month I joined my colleagues as an original cosponsor on H.R. 2052, also known as the PRIVATE Act, which would amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to provide harsher penalties to anyone who engages in what is known as revenge porn.

The Violence Against Women's Act of 1994 also helps provide some justice. This act used Federal funds to help investigate and prosecute sex offenders and establish the Office on Violence Against Women in the Department of Justice, a program we must continue to support.

Finally, I have agreed to cosponsor H.R. 1035, the Extending Justice for Sex Crimes Act of 2017, which amends the statute of limitations for a victim of human trafficking or a Federal sexual offense to seek and recover damages.

This bill sets a 10-year statute of limitations from the date the victim discovers the offense or injury and not when it occurred to file a civil action. It also extends the statute of limitations for a minor victim to file a civil action for 10 years from the date that the victim turns 18. Currently it stands at 3 years.

Sexual assault and exploitation is a social problem and a crime. We need to step up and assist with prevention of these acts, prosecute the perpetrators, and provide the provisions for resources for victims.

□ 1045

NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, April is National Minority Health Month, and I have pledged to use every opportunity that I can to promote awareness, greater understanding, and direction toward solutions to some of our health needs and problems.

I have with me today a statement from one of the staff members in my district office who describes what it is like to live with sarcoidosis.

She begins her statement by saying:

Hello. My name is Shonna Latrice Smith, and I have sarcoidosis. Living with sarcoidosis has been a tough battle for me, not knowing what other parts of my organs could be affected by this terrible disease.

I began having symptoms of experiencing hoarseness for months at a time, swollen lymph nodes, loss of weight, loss of breath, severe joint pain with deformity in my fingers. My face and arms showed noticeable skin lesions with severe swelling. I experience most mornings chronic dry coughs that feel like my chest would burst open.

After a series of blood tests, X-rays, pulmonary testing, and skin biopsies, test results indicated sarcoidosis, I began to have anxiety attacks. Because I had no clue where, when, and how I contacted this disease, I didn't know if it would affect the longevity of my life. I began with small doses of prednisone orally to treat inflammation and swelling, including steroid injections to my face, arms, and fingers to reduce swelling.

My battle with sarcoidosis has affected my getting up, walking with struggling not to lose my balance due to my joints being stiff and sore. Doctors begin treating me for rheumatoid arthritis with a medication called methotrexate, a chemotherapy agent and immune system suppressant to treat autoimmune diseases and rheumatoid arthritis.

After taking methotrexate for about a year, doctors saw no change in the swelling of my hands and face, so I began taking a new medication called Plaquenil also used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, skin diseases, and autoimmune diseases. I am currently taking prednisone to continue to treat severe swelling for my face and hands.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. Smith for sharing this information and this experience with us. Therefore, I urge that we continue to support research so that we may find more effective treatment and a cure for sarcoidosis and other disease entities.

It is my position that health is wealth. We can have all of the other attributes of life, but if we have chronic disease that has not been cured or for which we are not sure of a cure for, then that takes away from the quality of life for the individuals with those experiences. Therefore, I reiterate that research could be the answer.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Pastor Melissa Hatch, Prosper United Methodist Church, Prosper, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Almighty and gracious God, today we are grateful for Your guidance and Your presence in our lives. We humbly follow Your lead and direction.

When our own decisions seem too difficult to navigate, help us to turn to the One who never slumbers or sleeps. When we are impatient for decisions, help us to wait upon You for the right way to go.

Strengthen us for the work that You have called us to do. Help us to work together for the common good and reach across lines to be Your hands and feet in a world that desperately needs You.

When times and situations seem uncertain, help us cling to the hope that we find in You. And in the words of Micah 6:8, help us to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

We pray all of this in Your mighty name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. BUDD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

HONORING COACH DON DAVIDSON

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Don Davidson for 50 years of teaching and coaching at Yorkville High School, Aurora Christian, and Parkview Christian Academy.

Coach Davidson's ability to inspire and energize his students of all ages has led them to hundreds of victories on the basketball court, earning him a place in the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Not only does Don hold the second longest home winning streak in Illinois history, with 80 wins from February 1988 until February 1997, but his exceptional coaching has secured 677 career varsity wins, 10 IHSA regional titles, 5 IHSA sectional titles, and 3 ACSI Great Lakes championships.

More importantly, Don is a generous, compassionate mentor who cares deeply about the lives of his students off the court.

Don, thank you for your 50 years of service to our community and, most importantly, for embodying the life of Christ to your students and to their parents, like me.

VOICING SUPPORT FOR SCIENTISTS AND FEDERAL WORKERS

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

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice support for the dedicated public servants who make this country great.

President Trump campaigned on a promise to drain the swamp, and instead he nominated unqualified Wall Street executives and career politicians for Cabinet and senior-level positions, leaving the next level of appointments almost entirely unfilled, all while threatening to cut the experienced Federal workforce who make our government work well every day.

As the only Ph.D. physicist in Congress, I know that many of these Federal workers and their support staff are scientists who work every day to advance innovation and improve our standard of living. The Department of Energy, for example, relies on scientists with technical expertise to run our national labs. The success of their work depends on long-term sustained funding and a continuity of competent leadership to make their new ideas a reality.

But our President's skinny budget would destroy scientific funding and force us to give up our place as a leader in innovation, and many of his appointments are insulting jokes. So last weekend I joined the March for Science because it is clear that this administration does not value science and scientific enterprise.

I call on my colleagues here today to support scientists and Federal workers. And if a swamp needs to be drained, the place to start is Mar-a-Lago.

TAX FREEDOM DAY

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Sunday marked Tax Freedom Day, determined by the Tax Foundation, led by President Scott Hodge. This is the day when our citizens have earned enough money to pay their tax bill for the year.

It is alarming that American taxpayers must work 113 days to foot the bill for their annual tax obligation. Collectively, American families spent more on their taxes this year than on food, clothing, and housing combined. This is an abuse of the American people, limiting their ability to spend their own hard-earned wages.

As Tax Freedom Day is pushed later each year, we must commit to commonsense reforms to the Tax Code. The Federal Government takes too much from American workers with an obsessive push to increase taxes, destroying jobs.

I am encouraged by the tax plan President Donald Trump outlined yesterday and look forward to working with him to provide tax reform that will create jobs, simplify the Tax Code, and grow the economy. I am confident that, by working together, we can deliver comprehensive, balanced tax reforms for American families which will promote jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

PUERTO RICO MEDICAID FUNDS EVAPORATING

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, while my Republican colleagues take their sweet time passing a bill to fund the government, Puerto Rico is watching its Medicaid funds evaporate.

In this package, we must provide sufficient resources to address this shortfall from the funding authorized under the ACA that is already owed to the people of Puerto Rico.

I remind Congress the funding under discussion would close a Medicaid shortage that was created by the unequal treatment of American citizens in Puerto Rico, fueling a healthcare crisis of historic proportions.

Last year, Speaker PAUL RYAN committed to helping the people of Puerto Rico. As he, himself, recognized, these are our fellow citizens.

Yes, Mr. President, they are American citizens. They have fought, shed blood, and given their lives in nearly every major war, yet they have been treated unfairly for decades.

Donald Trump's own HHS Secretary recently acknowledged Puerto Rico needs $900 million to fund Medicaid. For once, I agree with the Secretary.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION ACT

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

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, a labor union's purpose is simple: to represent its members and to bargain on their behalf. But for millions of Americans who are currently paying union dues, their money is sometimes being used for political advocacy that they may not support.

The First Amendment in our Constitution grants workers around the country the freedom to donate or not to donate to any political cause. As it currently stands, however, union members have to opt out of having their dues spent on certain political activity. This process can be burdensome, and it can be complicated and time consuming.

Instead of asking workers to go through a lengthy process just to avoid funding political causes they don't support, they should have the choice from the start whether to opt in to that spending or not.

Earlier this week, I introduced the National Paycheck Protection Act that would require an employee's consent before their labor organization dues are used for any purpose not directly related to collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, union members are Americans before they are Republicans or Democrats, and this simple change would be the first step in the fight for more worker freedom.

DRAIN THE SWAMP

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Saturday marks 100 days since President Trump took office. He is far from ''draining the swamp'' as promised. He stacked his administration with billionaires, family members, and people with dangerous ties to Russian interests.

His national security policies have been a far cry from the steady-handed

decisionmaking he promised. From Mar-a-Lago missile strikes to aggressive and impulsive national security rhetoric, the President has made our foreign policy as murky as swamp water—a dangerous practice in today's world.

One hundred days in, the President is heavy on alternative facts and light on action. Where is his job bill? Where is his infrastructure and cybersecurity plan? Where is all of the ''winning'' we were supposed to be sick of by now?

It has been 100 days, Mr. President. It is time to do something the American people can get behind. You can start by draining the swamp you created at the White House.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the life and legacy of Donna Lynn Johnson who, for 40 years, brought quality eye care to the South Side of Chicago. She will be greatly missed by her patients, family, and especially her niece, Donna Miller.

Lastly, I am proud to have Baily Lynn Compton from Texas as my shadow today.

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST FISH FRY, PARIS TENNESSEE

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

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the World's Biggest Fish Fry, which happens to be this week in Paris, Tennessee. Each year at the end of April, people from all across the country travel to west Tennessee to take part in a week-long celebration that includes parades, a carnival, rodeos, dances, catfish races, and much more.

The Fish Fry, as folks call it in west Tennessee, originated in 1938 as one of the many ''Mule Days,'' when farmers gathered to trade their products, do their shopping, and enjoy the fellowship of their community.

By the 1950s, the tractor replaced the mule, so the good citizens of Paris and Henry County started a new event that is now known in west Tennessee and around the country to be ''The World's Biggest Fish Fry.''

The festival ends with the main event this Friday, April 28, when more than 5 tons of catfish will be cooked, leading up to a grand 2-hour finale of parades.

I thank the Paris-Henry County Chamber of Commerce for their leadership in preserving this great west Tennessee tradition.

□ 1215

REPUBLICAN HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, the new Republican healthcare scam, again, slams good hardworking Americans with higher costs and less healthcare coverage. Fewer people will have healthcare coverage, and insurance companies will increase their already record profits.

And what would a Republican healthcare bill plan be without a massive tax cut for high-paid insurance executives?

UnitedHealthcare is one of America's largest insurers and is under investigation by the Department of Justice for defrauding Medicare and the American people out of billions of dollars over the past decade.

On page 67, in seven words, this Republican bill gives their chief executive officer, who made $66 million in 2014, a massive tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, this is disgusting and morally reprehensible.

TAKE YOUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY

(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 there are a lot of children in the Capitol for Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.

While my three sons are all grown and scattered across the country, I do have the privilege of having Seth Lewis Parish with me today.

Seth lives in Maryland, and thanks to the nonprofit Tuesday's Children, he gets to spend the day with me—or better yet, I get to spend the day with him.

Seth is 7 years old and actively involved in his Cub Scout pack. I was really glad to hear that, as I am an Eagle Scout who has been involved in Scouting all my life. Seth is in the first grade. He is a Tiger Scout, plays ice hockey, and also participates in tae kwon do.

In 2009, Seth's dad was serving in the Army and lost his life about a month before Seth was born. Tuesday's Children uses its experience and expertise to help our military families work through their own losses.

Seth's mom, Debbie, dropped him off at my office this morning. He is the best-dressed guy today on the floor and, very frankly, on Capitol Hill, right over there.

Seth, I hope you are having a good day shadowing an old Scout like me.

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

(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, yesterday Representative FITZPATRICK and I introduced a bipartisan resolution calling on the House to commit to the removal of political gerrymandering from congressional redistricting and to improve the public confidence in our electoral process.

Every citizen in every State deserves to have the same ability as citizens in States like California, Arizona, Hawaii, and Ohio, who now have to draw their Congressional district boundaries without the influence and gamesmanship of politics.

The political gerrymandering of our congressional districts, which attacks at the very bedrock the right of every American to fair representation, has seriously undermined the public's trust in our democratic system.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to get the back room out of the ballot box and let the people decide.

HONORING U.S. CHESS TEAM FOR ITS GOLD MEDAL VICTORY AT 42ND WORLD CHESS OLYMPIAD

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

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the U.S. Chess Team for its historic victory in the 42nd Chess Olympiad held in Baku, Azerbaijan, this past September.

The last time the United States won this competition was 40 years ago at the 1976 Chess Olympiad in Haifa, Israel. At that time, the gold medal was determined by the outcome of a single game that lasted 14 hours and contained 111 moves, and eventually ended in our favor.

The final round in Baku was even more strategic, with the gold medal determined by a brilliant final move. The game was close, but the United States Chess Team took home the gold once again.

Today I would like to honor the six members of the winning chess team as well as their coach. This was a great accomplishment for the United States. I am honored to have the opportunity in Congress to recognize them.

For the next 2 years, the Olympiad trophy will rest and be on display at the World Chess Hall of Fame in St. Louis, Missouri. I look forward to recognizing the team's accomplishments in my home State.

THE FCC AND NET NEUTRALITY RULES

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the new Trump-appointed FCC Chairman announced his mission to undermine the net neutrality rules that we fought so hard to put in place.

In 2015, over 4 million people submitted comments calling on the FCC to keep the internet open and fair. However, the FCC's new Chairman, who used to work as counsel for Verizon, wants to turn the internet into a system of pay-to-play fast lanes for Big Money and people who can afford it, leaving everyone else behind in the slow lane.

This hands the levers of access over to big ISPs at the expense of students,

small businesses, entrepreneurs, independent content creators, and millions more.

In today's digital age, maintaining open and equal internet access is essential to breaking down barriers in education, media, expanding access to jobs and employment, driving innovation in health care, and so much more.

We must stand strong in opposition to the FCC's attack on fairness, equality, and net neutrality.

CELEBRATING GULFSTREAM'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of Gulfstream Aerospace, the largest private sector employer in Georgia's First Congressional District.

Gulfstream's origins as an aerospace company are steeped in American history. During World War II, Roy Grumman built war planes for the United States during the war. After the war ended, he sought a new use for his resources and, in 1958, founded Gulfstream to build business airliners instead.

Mr. Grumman's first project, the Gulfstream I, made its first flight on August 14, 1958. This purpose-built business aircraft was the first of its kind and revolutionized general aviation. Gulfstream produced more than 200 of the original aircraft, many of which are still operating today. The first project spawned more aircraft models and helped exciting innovations take off.

On September 29, 1967, Gulfstream landed in Savannah, Georgia, where it remains headquartered to this day. Savannah offers optimal land availability, labor supply, transportation facilities, and weather conditions, making it the perfect location to operate.

We have gladly welcomed Gulfstream in our district for the last 50 years, and this impressive company has greatly contributed to the community by employing nearly 10,000 people.

Congratulations to Gulfstream Aerospace on reaching its 50th anniversary, a milestone I am confident it will continue to build on.

TRUMPCARE

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the latest version of TrumpCare. Once again, House Republicans have confirmed their approach to fixing health care requires gutting key provisions for people with preexisting conditions, increasing costs, and offering fewer protections. Letting the States cherry-pick the essential health benefits—the 10 basic medical care categories covered, like emergency care, mental health, addiction treatment, or lab tests—is just crazy.

The obvious problem with eliminating the Affordable Care Act's essential health benefits is that it will leave people without access to reasonable quality health insurance. The consumer should know what their health insurance covers.

Without some minimum requirements, insurance companies can offer plans that are insurance in name only. Anyone who is actually sick and needs care will be left out in the cold.

The essential health benefits make the marketplace viable because they help pool the risk among the whole population instead of just attracting sick people who need these services.

If Republicans thought TrumpCare was so great, why would they exempt Members of Congress and our staff?

I urge my colleagues to scrap this political game and work with us to strengthen health care for all Americans.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, the President said he would drain the swamp in Washington. He has flooded it. He said he would break the cycle of corruption. He has accelerated it. Nearly 100 days into his administration, the President has reneged on the fundamental promise that he would clean up Washington.

Today, the Democracy Reform Task Force is releasing a report detailing 100 ways the Trump administration has flooded the swamp in the first 100 days. As the report chronicles, President Trump has made a mockery of ethics law and regulation, promoted a culture of secrecy in the executive branch, stacked his Cabinet with Big Money campaign donors, installed a special interest revolving door into the Trump White House, put big money ahead of the public interest, turned the Presidency into a profit-making enterprise, pursued public policy for his personal benefit, and raided the Treasury to pay for vacations and private business promotion.

These are not the actions of a President intent on draining the swamp or restoring a voice to the voiceless or restoring power to the powerless. Americans of all political stripes are starting to wonder: ''Maybe the President isn't looking out for me and my family. Maybe he is just looking out for himself, his business, and his brand.''

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

SUSTAIN THE RESISTANCE

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, this is undoubtedly the greatest 100 days of any President in human history. Give President Trump a grade of A-plus for the greatest broken campaign promises in history; the greatest meaningless executive orders, offering showy ceremonies when a mere phone call would have done the job; certainly, the very greatest number of insulting tweets—no President in history has ever come close; the greatest conflicts of interest; the greatest embrace of authoritarian leaders; the greatest gap between reality and fantasy, unquestionably. He talks as a populist and he governs as a plutocrat.

The greatest thing about Trump's 100 days is that America still exists without a major war or an economic free fall. Every day we survive without a Trump-inspired catastrophe is a great day for our country.

Sustain the resistance and remain hopeful for a Trump-free America.

TRUMPCARE DROPS MILLIONS FROM COVERAGE

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

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I thought the Republican plan for repealing the Affordable Care Act and dropping 24 million Americans from healthcare coverage could not get any worse, but I was wrong. The latest iteration of TrumpCare still drops millions from their coverage, but will now make coverage worse and more expensive for those who can get it.

I believe all Americans deserve protections for the coverage of essential health services and preexisting conditions, not just Members of Congress. Swiss cheese insurance plans that don't cover ER visits or prescriptions and charge you more if you have ever been sick aren't worth the paper they are printed on.

This bill undermines our healthcare system in so many damaging ways. And for what?

Let's not forget that the bill includes nearly $600 billion in tax breaks for drug companies, insurers, and the wealthy. Millionaires would get an average annual tax cut of more than $50,000 while hardworking families and older Americans would struggle to afford meaningful coverage.

I won't stand for a bill that endangers the well-being of my constituents to benefit the very wealthiest Americans. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

NORTH KOREA

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

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise out of a concern of this administration's policies to North Korea. I urge the administration to look at recent history.

From 1994 to 2002, North Korea was not developing plutonium and there was no threat of medium- or long-range ballistic missiles. That was under President Clinton's leadership because President Clinton had come up with a deal to buy the medium- and long-range missiles from North Korea.

Then what happened?

President Bush came and disregarded both deals and put North Korea under the axis of evil, even though they had no relationship to 9/11. It was a mistake of foreign policy.

We know the solution to North Korea. We know they have an army of 200,000. They have 15,000 places of nuclear weapons. There is not a militaristic solution. The solution is to go back to the direct diplomacy that President Clinton had and to have South Korea engage in that diplomatic solution.

There is an answer to North Korea. We cannot play games with this issue when President Clinton showed the framework.

□ 1230

FIRST 100 DAYS OF BROKEN PROMISES

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on the campaign trail, the President talked a good game on trade that appealed to working families. But now that he is President, his promises ring hollow.

He promised to stop outsourcing and shipping jobs overseas, but he issued 15 contracts since becoming President with companies that have outsourced jobs. He promised to hold China accountable and label them a currency manipulator. He reversed that pledge.

He promised to drain the swamp, but he has done just the opposite. He stacked the Cabinet with wealthy insiders; and his White House is filled with friends, family, and a stunning display of nepotism and conflicts of interest.

He said he would release his tax returns. That is a laugher. Breaking with 40 years of precedent, he has not released his taxes and claimed the American people don't care.

Seventy-four percent of Americans want to see his tax returns. And we will never know the full extent of his conflicts of interest and how he stands to enrich himself in office until we see his tax returns.

Congressional tax-writing committees can request them because they have the authority under IRC 6103, and I urge my colleagues to support this effort.

BIGGER AND BIGGER SWAMP

(Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump promised American voters he would drain the swamp of special interests in Washington. Instead, he is swimming in it.

He has filled his administration with billionaires, Wall Street operatives, special interest lobbyists, lawyers, and consultants who are drafting policies for the very industries they came from, and he refuses to release the White House visitor log so we have no idea what special interest lobbyists he is meeting with.

Trump has refused to release his tax returns or divest his business interests.

Can you believe the State Department posted a blog advertising his exclusive Mar-a-Lago resort? Since becoming President, he increased the fees for that resort from $100,000 to $200,000.

He has both close allies, Cabinet appointees, and other appointees with questionable ties to Putin and Russia.

His swamp is getting bigger and bigger.

HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY EARL F. HILLIARD

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with friends and family of our former colleague and my personal friend, Earl F. Hilliard, who this weekend will be celebrating his 75th birthday.

While a Member of this body, Earl and I worked very closely together preserving the integrity of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and supporting the preservation and restoration of historic sites and buildings.

This weekend, a gathering will establish a scholarship in his honor in order for more rural Alabama young men and women to have opportunities to further their education.

I want to congratulate my friend for reaching this milestone in his life—a place I got to last year this time—and wish him a happy birthday and further success in establishing benefits for young men and women throughout Alabama.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1694, FANNIE AND FREDDIE OPEN RECORDS ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES; AND WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(A) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 280 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 280

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1694) to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and amendments specified in this section and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-14 modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. It shall be in order at any time through the legislative day of April 29, 2017, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

SEC. 3. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of April 29, 2017.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I have a confession to make to you. In fact, I have two confessions to make.

The first is I have got a big group up in the Rules Committee right now. It is my Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce. It is an amazing county, tremendous diversity, tremendous record of success in solving problems. They have been up there visiting with leaders all day long.

I first met with them this morning while Mr. MCGOVERN was down here on the floor during 5 minutes. I said: Well, this is a 5-minute time. You can step right through the doors there, if you would like to see it.

They said: Who is on the floor?

I said: Well, it is this fellow right here. His name tag is there in the Rules Committee. He is down there, #endhunger.

I said: The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) and I can disagree on all sorts of issues, all sorts of public policy, but there is nobody in this institution who has a heart for service on the issue of hunger more than JIM MCGOVERN does.

I said: Here he is. He is representing Massachusetts, of all places, and he has chosen to serve on the Agriculture Committee. If you are a Georgian, you serve on the Agriculture Committee because you grow cotton and peanuts and row crop after row crop after row crop. When you are from Massachusetts and you sit on the Agriculture Committee, you want to end childhood hunger, you want to feed people.

I tell you that as a confession, Mr. Speaker, because I am not going to confess to sharing my admiration for JIM MCGOVERN all that often on the House floor, but I was with folks up there today who really do commit themselves to making a difference in our county. It was nice to have a colleague on the floor—again, with whom I disagree about much—who was putting everything he had, as he does every day, into an issue that he cares a lot about.

That is all my constituents back home want, Mr. Speaker, is to believe that we have sincere, earnest folks working on sincere and difficult issues. So I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for that.

My second confession, Mr. Speaker, is that ordinarily I really enjoy listening to the Reading Clerk read the rule. It gets me all wound up about how the process is. Of course, today she was talking about all the amendments we are going to make in order. We are making every single amendment offered by both sides of the aisle in order on this underlying bill.

I found myself thinking back to the days when I was a young man and I came up here with my class. I was sitting up here in the gallery, and I walked into the floor at a time when the Reading Clerk was just standing up there reading. There was no cheat sheet that they give you in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. You don't have any idea whether they are going to read for 20 seconds or 20 minutes. For all you know, they are going to read for the rest of the afternoon, and it was hard to follow.

I get a cheat sheet here that my staff gives me before each rule. I didn't enjoy it as much today as I ordinarily do, Mr. Speaker, because there is a lot of procedural work in this rule.

We are coming up on a bunch of big deadlines. So there is the ability to bring up suspensions. These are commonsense bills that two-thirds of the House agree on. You can bring those up at any time. That provision is made in this rule.

There is the ability to bring things up the same day. If the Rules Committee goes up and passes a new rule, we can bring that bill to the floor immediately. Ordinarily that would lay over for 24 hours. But because there are so many things we are trying to get done, we waived that.

All of those procedural issues, Mr. Speaker, get in the way of my favorite part of the rule, which is that every single Member of this body had a chance to come up to the Rules Committee, offer their ideas for how we can make this bill better, and the Rules Committee made every single one of them in order. Let me tell you more about that.

This House Resolution 280, Mr. Speaker, is the structured rule for the consideration of H.R. 1694. If you happen to tune into our Rules Committee web feed, Mr. Speaker, you can see it at rules.house.gov if you are not able to get up there with us as we meet sometimes late at night.

This House Resolution 280 is for the consideration of H.R. 1694, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017. Now, folks know a lot about open records, Mr. Speaker. It is that procedure—it is called FOIA, the Freedom of Information Act—where any member of the United States community board of directors—that would be any United States citizen—can write and say: this is my government, and I want some information about what is going on. That has been a very fundamental part of who we are as a people for as long as you and I have been alive.

What is unusual, though, is the way the Federal Government has gotten involved in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to the tune of about $187 billion—billion with a B, Mr. Speaker. The American taxpayer bailed out these two private institutions making the American taxpayer, making the U.S. Government the largest shareholder in both of these institutions.

So we found ourselves in a unique situation of having the American taxpayers in charge of an institution with no ability, through the Freedom of Information Act, to request information from that entity. It just hadn't come up that often. Thank goodness we haven't had to bail out folks that way in the past.

Mr. Speaker, these entities that Fannie and Freddie are a part—we called them government-sponsored enterprises—they just haven't historically been the subject of that kind of taxpayer scrutiny, but times are changing.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, went through the regular order process. Hearings were held. Markups were held. It came out of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. If you have not looked into government reform, Mr. Speaker, it is not often that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is moving unanimous legislation.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is a tough committee to serve on. I served there in my first term here, Mr. Speaker. It is the hardest things about our government, how we hold each other accountable. Of course, where you stand sometimes depends on where you sit here. If you sit on the left or you sit on the right, you might feel differently about government reform and accountability.

This bill passed out of this committee on a voice vote, Mr. Speaker. The most collaborative of efforts moved this bill to the floor.

Then when we got it in the Rules Committee, we had several Members say: I think we can make this bill better. I think we can make this bill even better.

These were Members who may not have had a chance to fix those issues on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Again, as I said, we made all amendments in order from both sides of the aisle. I believe that totals three today, Mr. Speaker. But the take-home message for me is, if you had an idea about how to fix this bill, the folks in the Rules Committee made that opportunity available to you.

Mr. Speaker, we can't do the big things every single day of the week. Every piece of legislation we pass, unless we stuff everything into it, can't do everything for everyone. Candidly, I am opposed to stuffing everything into a piece of legislation. I am glad when we have an opportunity to move one issue, one subject, one topic at a time and deliver on behalf of the American people.

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, this structured rule, House Resolution 280, is a good bill. It

is a good resolution that, if passed, will provide for the consideration of the underlying legislation, H.R. 1694, which, if passed, will provide the American taxpayer, for the first time, the accountability that they deserve for the $187 billion in taxpayer support that Fannie and Freddie have received. I am proud to be associated with that.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), my friend, for the customary 30 minutes.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I first want to begin by thanking the gentleman for his kind words to his constituents about me on the floor. It means a lot to me, and I appreciate it.

I should tell him, however, that, even though sometimes people don't realize this, Massachusetts has a robust agricultural base, and, in fact, in my district, I have 1,832 farms on over 142,899 acres, compared to the gentleman who has 209 farms on 13,328 acres. So, in addition to fighting hunger, I am on the Agriculture Committee to represent my farms.

I do genuinely appreciate the gentleman's kind words, but then I look at the rule that we are debating today and it kind of spoils the mood.

Having said that, I just want to say to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that here we are again, just 1 day from our government running out of funding and confronting yet another manufactured, totally avoidable crisis, and instead of working on a bill to fully fund America's biggest priorities, we are back on the floor with—the only way I can characterize this—more filler legislation. It seems my Republican friends care more about looking busy than actually doing their jobs.

This rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 1694, as my colleague mentioned, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017. It is a fine bill designed to strengthen transparency at Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. I support the legislation. My Democratic colleagues support the legislation. The Republican majority supports the legislation. In fact, I haven't found one person yet who doesn't support the bill.

Freedom of information is a good thing, Mr. Speaker, and I support FOIA, but what about the freedom from the threat of a government shutdown?

What about freedom from the threat of a default on our national debt?

What about freedom to know what our President's conflicts of interest are and to see his tax returns?

What about the freedom from having our healthcare protections ripped away, protections like essential health benefits and protections for people with preexisting conditions?

And what about the freedom to know what Congressional Republicans and the White House are doing to our healthcare system behind closed doors?

None of this seems to matter.

But the most troubling part of this rule is that it declares blanket martial law, through Saturday, that allows Republicans to bring anything—and I mean anything—to the floor between now and then.

Now, I understand the importance of rushing something to the floor when the government is about to run out of money; although, I would point out that we are 7 months into the fiscal year and my Republican friends set this deadline themselves back in December, so there is absolutely no excuse for Congress to come within hours of yet another shutdown. But this is just the latest example of Republican obstruction, obfuscation, and incompetence that has, once again, brought us to the edge of the cliff. And, Mr. Speaker, this is no way to govern.

This rule would allow Republican leadership to rush anything to the floor within hours of it being released. Not just appropriations, it gives them blanket authority to jam us with whatever new disaster they cook up with the White House in the backroom of Capitol Hill, and that includes this latest healthcare deal that I have heard so much about this week.

Of course, with it being a backroom deal, we were relying on news reports all week to clue us in to these terrible new provisions; and it was only last night, around midnight, when the Republicans finally posted their newest healthcare proposal that we were able to confirm just how bad it really is.

Incredibly, this new amendment will make the bill even worse than before. Honest to God, Mr. Speaker, I didn't know that was possible.

In addition to killing the requirement to provide basic, crucial, essential benefits like maternity care and prescription drugs and emergency services, this new amendment will also completely gut protections for people with preexisting conditions. In fact, this amendment directly violates the commitment made by President Trump and House Republicans to protect those with preexisting conditions.

This newest proposal will allow insurers to charge an unlimited ''age tax'' to older Americans, and, to make matters even worse, Republicans have set up a system that would allow women to once again be charged more than men for health coverage. It will bring us back to those bad old days when insurance companies could charge women more because they said being a woman was a preexisting condition.

Give me a break.

All of this, on top of a disaster of a healthcare bill that will cause 24 million Americans to lose their healthcare coverage. And in addition, their bill would cut Medicaid by close to $1 trillion, and take that $1 trillion and give it, in the form of tax breaks, to the wealthiest individuals in the country.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the way we should be running this House. All of this is being done to appease the most conservative fringes within the Republican Conference in an attempt to deliver, I guess, a political ''win'' to Donald Trump so he can celebrate 100 days in office. It doesn't matter what the details are, he just wants to be able to tout a victory of some sort.

Well, this is not a victory for the American people. This would be a disaster for the American people.

It is no wonder that my Republican colleagues have been overwhelmed by angry calls from their constituents at home demanding that they oppose this reckless and heartless bill. As one Republican remarked: ''I spent the whole work period hearing from people pissed about preexisting conditions. This isn't helpful.'' That is one of my Republican colleagues.

Now, under this rule, these dangerous backroom deals could be rushed to the floor without any proper deliberations, but they will have a very real, very serious, and very dangerous consequence for millions of Americans. Real lives are at stake here.

Now, I can't help but also note that this newest amendment exempts Congress from the terrible impacts of this proposal. Can you believe that? Knowing just how damaging these new provisions are, Republicans wanted to keep healthcare protections for themselves but set up another system for their constituents.

Now, it was only after the press caught Republicans with their hands in the cookie jar that they introduced yet another bill to unexempt themselves. But the new bill to unexempt Congress would require a 60-vote supermajority in the Senate. What are the odds that is going to happen, Mr. Speaker?

Are we seriously supposed to trust that they won't exempt themselves from this terrible plan, to trust that the Senate can muster 60 votes to pass this provision or anything else?

Let me be clear: this maneuver is a procedural sleight of hand. This is legislative smoke and mirrors designed to give Republicans, who tried to pull a fast one and got caught, a talking point.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans wrote this bill, so change the damn bill. Don't just say: ''Trust us. We will pass another bill to fix the fix, and we will get the Senate not to make any changes. Oh, while we are at it, we will get a supermajority in the Senate to support it.'' Who do you think you are fooling, Mr. Speaker?

I urge all my colleagues to defeat this martial law rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would tell my friend that I think this is exactly the right way to be moving legislation, and I am proud that we are doing it. Big bills are hard and big

bills are sloppy. Can we do better on big bills? Of course we can. Of course we can.

But you and I have been on the Rules Committee together, Mr. Speaker. The Rules Committee process, you have seen it happen. If I am down here talking about a small bill that everybody agrees on, folks want to know why it is we are not doing something bigger. And when I bring a big bill down here tomorrow, folks are going to want to know why I have rushed it to the floor and we are not doing something that has more bipartisan agreement on it instead.

These issues are hard, and that is why they have sent serious men and women here to try to solve them. I want to do everything that my friend from Massachusetts has talked about, Mr. Speaker. I want to see a healthcare bill go across the floor. I want to see a full-year funding bill go across the floor. Shoot, I don't stop there. I want to see the budget go across the floor. I want to see a transportation and infrastructure bill go across the floor. I have got a tax bill I want to see go across the floor. The list is long.

And while my friend from Massachusetts and I are down here working on this, I have got 433 other colleagues out there working on that, and my great hope is that we are going to deliver on those things in the very near future, too.

But today, Mr. Speaker, today isn't a day for recriminations. Today is a day for celebrations, in that what we have here is a bill that we have worked through the regular order process.

You are not going to hear one person, Mr. Speaker, not one, come down to the floor and say this bill wasn't moved through the process in the right way. You are not going to hear one person come down to the floor and say their voice was silenced on this bill. You are not going to hear one person come down to the floor and say their input was turned away on this bill.

We do so much that we wish we could do better, Mr. Speaker. When we have these opportunities to celebrate those things we are doing right, I sometimes wish we would take a little more time to focus on our successes. There will always be time to turn our attention back to our failures.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would just say to my colleague, I don't have any problem with the underlying bill, but I would argue with him that I think most of our colleagues probably don't know what the hell we are doing here because, in the scheme of things, this is not terribly consequential. I think our problem is the fact that we are at the edge of another crisis where, if we don't fund the government by tomorrow, we shut this place down, we shut the government down, and that has an impact on the American people.

I think what our objection is is that the rule that you bring to us here today to consider the underlying bill also allows my Republican friends to bring up anything they want between now and Saturday, including, you know, an awful healthcare repeal bill.

And by the way, when we talk about regular order, it would be nice, especially when it comes to the big things like health care, that we actually do things like hearings and listen to what experts have to say and our constituents and patients and doctors, I mean, a whole bunch of people who have a stake in our healthcare system.

The bill that my friends brought to the floor, that they had to pull, never had a single hearing and, in all likelihood, whatever monstrosity they bring to the floor in the future will probably not be the result of regular order. It will be the result of a backroom deal where very few people have any input.

So I can't celebrate today. I am very concerned for my constituents. I am very concerned for the millions of people who might lose their health care. I am concerned for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump's first 100 days have been embroiled in controversy and shrouded in secrecy. The American people deserve a heck of a lot better. They deserve transparency from their government. They deserve to know which special interests are getting face time with the President and his top aides and whether the White House is being used to personally enrich President Trump and his family.

It is our duty, as the people's Representatives, to hold this administration accountable, an administration that has so many conflicts of interest, financial conflicts of interest, that it is on a collision course with corruption. So, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative KATHERINE CLARK's resolution, H. Res. 286, which would force the White House to release information to us regarding the President's many potential conflicts of interest, including his tax returns, involvement in his business empire, and White House and Mar-a-Lago visitor logs.

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 12 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. KATHERINE CLARK) to discuss our proposal.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Massachusetts. I am glad to share in this bipartisan moment of admiration for his work with my colleague from Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that we can bring a resolution to the floor. This resolution will ensure that the House meets its constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight of the executive branch by investigating potential conflicts of interest of President Donald J. Trump.

□ 1300

It reads: ''Whereas, on October 18, 2016, then-candidate Donald J. Trump communicated via Twitter: 'I will Make Our Government Honest Again—believe me. But first, I'm going to have to #drainthe swamp in DC';

''Whereas, President Trump subsequently nominated a team of wealthy and connected insiders to lead his Cabinet, many of whom have been forced to withdraw from consideration because of irrevocable conflicts of interest;

''Whereas, as President-elect, President Trump announced that he would be 'leaving his great business' to his adult children, a move he felt would be 'visually important';

''Whereas, President Trump has taken no steps to untangle his financial interest in his business holdings, to limit his ability to advise the nominal managers of The Trump Organization, or to prevent other interests from currying favor with the White House by doing business with companies that might benefit the President's bottom line;

''Whereas, President Trump has reversed White House policy and now refuses to release visitor logs to the public;

''Whereas, on May 30, 2014, President Trump stated: 'If I decide to run for office, I will produce my tax returns, absolutely';

''Whereas, on January 24, 2016, President Trump stated that he would release his 'very big returns . . . in the next period of time';

''Whereas, on February 25, 2016, President Trump changed his position and stated that, although he could not release his tax returns while under audit, he would do so 'as soon as the audit is done';

''Whereas, on May 11, 2016, President Trump communicated via Twitter: 'In interview I told @AP that my taxes are under routine audit and I would release my tax returns when the audit is complete, not after election!';

''Whereas, on January 22, 2017, White House senior adviser Kellyanne Conway stated that 'the White House response is that he's not going to release his returns';

''Whereas, President Trump has directed the Congress to act on comprehensive reform of the Internal Revenue Code;

''Whereas, without the President's tax returns, the public cannot know

how the full extent to which any proposed reforms will personally benefit the President;

''Whereas, on January 11, 2017, President Trump insisted that he has 'no dealings with Russia';

''Whereas, it has been widely reported that President Trump sought and received funding from Russian investors, especially when American banks stopped lending to him after his multiple bankruptcies;

''Whereas, Donald Trump, Jr., who runs day-to-day business operations for his father's companies, has stated: 'Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets. We see a lot of money pouring in from Russia';

''Whereas, on March 20, 2017, James B. Comey, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, confirmed the existence of a Federal investigation into multiple connections between the Trump campaign and the regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin;

''Whereas, it has been reported that President Trump has personally guaranteed over $300 million in loans to German financial institution Deutsche Bank AG;

''Whereas, the Trump administration is now responsible for overseeing multiple investigations into the trading and lending practices of Deutsche Bank AG and for negotiating a potentially multibillion-dollar settlement with the bank related to its trading of mortgage-backed securities;

''Whereas, these matters represent only a few of the many instances in which President Trump has broken his promise to 'drain the swamp';

''Whereas, under the Constitution of the United States, the United States Congress has a responsibility to conduct oversight of the executive branch of government;

''Whereas, the majority of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives rejected an amendment to have the committee's oversight plan that would have tasked the committee with investigating the President's conflicts of interest;

''Whereas, members of the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Homeland Security, and Ways and Means of the House of Representatives have each advanced resolutions of inquiry designed to obtain information about the President's ongoing conflicts of interest;

''Whereas, the majority has blocked each of those resolutions from consideration on the House floor;

''Whereas, the continuing refusal of the majority to conduct even basic oversight of the Trump administration diminishes the status of the Congress as a coequal branch of government;

''Whereas, this continued neglect undermines the credibility of the House of Representatives and raises a question of the privileges of the House;

''Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives directs the following persons to take the following actions:

''(1) President Trump is directed to transmit to the House of Representatives copies of any document, record, memorandum, correspondence, or other communication in possession of the Executive Office of the President, or any portion of such communication, that refers or relates to President Trump's proposal to maintain an interest in his business holdings, while turning over day-to-day operation of those interests to his sons Donald J. Trump, Jr. and Eric Trump.

''(2) In support of transparency in government and the longstanding tradition of the disclosure of tax returns of Presidents and Presidential candidates, the Secretary of the Treasury is directed to provide the Committee on Ways and Means with the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2007 through 2016 for review in closed executive session by the committee as provided under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and directs the committee to hold a vote on reporting such information to the full House of Representatives.

''(3) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics is directed to publish any waiver or exception granted to any officer or employee of the government to the January 28, 2017, executive order entitled 'Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Appointees'.

''(4) The Administrator of General Services is directed to provide the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives with any legal analysis supporting its March 23, 2017, conclusion that Trump International Hotel in Washington may maintain its lease with the Federal Government, despite an express prohibition on elected officials taking part in the lease.

''(5) President Trump is directed to provide visitor logs for both the White House and Mar-a-Lago to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives on a rolling and ongoing basis, and directs the committee to hold ongoing votes on reporting the contents of such visitor logs to the full House of Representatives.''

Mr. Speaker, I filed this resolution because it appears to me and the American public that Mr. Trump has drained the swamp and funneled it into the Oval Office.

Trump's billionaire, special interest friends are now in charge of policies that impact every American, every family, and every child. Everything from education to health care to taxes are in the hands of people who have never sent their kids to public schools, who have never had to take out a loan to pay for college, and who have never had a medical bill they couldn't afford—and all of this is in the hands of a President who refuses to release his tax returns.

While Trump fights to keep Americans in the dark about which of his other friends he owes special favors to—whether it is Big Oil, foreign banks, lobbyists at Mar-a-Lago, or the Russians—Republicans seem to be happy to look the other way.

Transparency and accountability are not partisan ideas. Families at home deserve a Congress that works together to be the necessary check that our Constitution provides over this unaccountable administration. I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would say to my friends on the other side of the aisle that they had me at hello. When they said this was a great bill underlying this resolution and they didn't see any controversy, they thought we ought to pass this and they thought this was a good step forward for the American people, yet you had me. I would like to do that.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, a friend of mine, his name was Jay Pierson. He served in this institution for over four decades. His job was not to be particularly partisan one way or the other. His job was to make sure this place functioned. I wonder what goes on over the 40 years of changes in the way that we treat each other on the House floor and the way that we work with each other on the House floor.

My friends have a perfectly legitimate concern. In fact, they brought it up as a privileged resolution already this year. It has been tabled. I recognize that my friends and I have disagreements—vast disagreements—in numerous areas of public policy, but today we have a chance to talk about one of the agreements that we have. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what folks back home watching think. Do they think, just like the media loves to report, that, golly, those guys can't even agree on what time to start in the morning?

For Pete's sake, we have worked a bill through the process, just like we learned about in civics class. Don't make me sing ''I'm just a bill, and I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill,'' Mr. Speaker, because that is exactly the process that we all want bills to go through, and we have done that here today.

We can't even take a moment to talk about how successfully we have worked together, not even a moment to talk about how the process worked, not even a moment to talk about how we delivered for folks. We have to shift gears to something that is not even the topic of the bill today. We will have time to talk about every controversy we want. If folks want to go fisticuffs with one another, I am certain we will make time for that, but right now we have a chance to talk about those things that unite us.

In the spirit of dispelling those myths, Mr. Speaker, dispelling those

myths that things don't get done around here, dispelling those myths that we don't respect each other, and dispelling those myths that we can't work together, I want to dispel the myth that what this underlying rule does is it provides Republicans with a pathway for doing whatever it is they want to do whenever it is they want to do it, because that doesn't really sound like fair play. I wouldn't want to support such a bill either.

What this rule does do is, contrary to the rules, allow us to bring up suspension bills at any time. Now, what a suspension bill is, Mr. Speaker, as you know, it is a bill that can pass not with a simple majority, but with a two-thirds majority. So this rule says, forbid the thought, should bipartisanship break out in the next 72 hours, you all should be able to bring those bills to the floor and deliver it for the American people.

Well, dag gum it, I support that. I don't look at that as a way of Republicans to manipulate the system. I look at it as a way for the United States Congress to deliver on behalf of the system, and I am glad we are doing it.

Number two, the bill says, if the Rules Committee, in its wisdom, passes a rule to bring a bill to the floor rather than have that bill lay over for a night, you can bring that bill to the floor directly. So my friend is absolutely right when he says that passing this rule would allow us to rush legislation to the floor. It would rush that commonsense, bipartisan legislation that two-thirds of us would agree on, we can rush those results across the finish line for the American people; and, if the Rules Committee acts and we pass that rule on the floor of the House, it will allow us to consider the legislation that that rule would bring to the floor on the same day instead of waiting 24 hours.

Now, what my friend says about having an opportunity to read the bills is critically important—critically important. I want to point out because, again, folks have so many concerns about what goes on in this institution, I got lots of things I can gripe about, but when we are getting it right, I want to make sure that we are telling folks that we are getting it right.

This tradition of self-flagellation in this institution drives me crazy because, when we tear ourselves down, Mr. Speaker, it is not us who bears the cost of that. It is our constituents. It is the board of directors of the United States of America. It is the folks who come beyond us.

We have a responsibility to lead this institution, and when we are doing it right, we ought to tell the American people that we are doing it right. For example, there might be a healthcare vote that comes to the floor of this House in the next 24, 48 hours. I don't want to get my expectations high for that, Mr. Speaker, but I sure would be enthusiastic if that happened. If that were to happen, my friend is exactly right: we will go to the Rules Committee; we will pass a rule; we will bring it to the floor; and we will bring it up the same day. But the language was posted yesterday, and the vote wouldn't happen until tomorrow. So when folks say let's leave the language out there for folks to have a chance to read it, let's not rush something through, we have got 3 days built into the system.

□ 1315

That is not a rule of the House. I want to make that clear. There is no rule in this institution that says you have got to present a bill before you can pass a bill to read it and find out what is in it. This is not a rule of this House. It is a policy of ours. It is a policy of who we are and of let's do this; let's make this our commitment to make this happen. Mr. Speaker, it does not always happen, but most of the time it does. I celebrate that success.

Again, thinking about those things that unite us instead of divide us, I just listened to my friend, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, make an incredibly eloquent plea for her bill. She said, if we defeat the previous question—that vote is coming up very soon—we will take up her piece of legislation, which was just handed to me about 3½ minutes ago.

Mr. Speaker, I get it that sometimes people think that they have such urgent ideas that those ideas need to come to the floor in a hurry. I will settle for either outcome: that it is okay that we bring ideas to the floor in a hurry and that it is okay if you hand somebody a bill 3½ minutes ago and tell them you want to bring it to the floor 30 minutes from now. If that is okay, then let that be okay. If what we need is for bills to lay overnight, then let that be okay.

We have a process here that is built on mutual respect, that is built on years of tradition that men and women paid a tremendous price for, that they provided tremendous leadership for. In the name of short-term political gains, I want to make sure that we don't tear down those long-term policy successes.

This institution should be a source of pride for the American people. I don't believe that it is today. The responsibility of making it that source of pride falls on you and me. We are the only ones who can get that job done. We have an opportunity today to do just a little bit of that, and I hope we take advantage of that.

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

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

Let me say to the gentleman from Georgia: he had me at hello, too. If all he said was ''hello'' and introduced the underlying bill, we would be done. There would be no controversy. The underlying bill is being brought to the floor under a rule that is atrocious and that, quite frankly, every Member of this House should be ashamed about. Under this martial law rule, you can bring anything up at any time you want, at a moment's notice, without people having an opportunity to actually understand what they are going to vote on.

The gentleman talked about they might bring up the healthcare bill between now and Saturday. He said: Yesterday, we posted the text of our new amendment. He used the word ''yesterday'' loosely. They posted it at midnight last night. I was asleep at midnight; I don't know about the gentleman.

The bottom line is, there is nothing that says that they can't change the text again and again and again and again, offer more amendments, because that is what they have been doing since they first began their effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

On something as important as health care, on something that could affect millions and millions of people in this country, that could throw 24 million people off of health care, that will cut Medicaid by a trillion dollars, that will compromise Medicare, that will take away essential benefits, people ought to know what the heck they are voting on.

We ought to have regular order on these major pieces of legislation. Why is that so controversial? How about a hearing on health care? The idea that we would like the opportunity to know what we are voting on, to do this in a thoughtful way, is so offensive to my Republican colleagues. I am flabbergasted by this—to basically defend this process.

We have to use a procedural motion to be able to try to force a debate or bring to the floor the bill of my colleague, KATHERINE CLARK, which basically calls on the President to release his tax returns and calls for some transparency with regard to visitor logs at the White House and Mar-a-Lago. We have to resort to a procedural motion because the Republican majority basically blocks us from bringing anything to the floor under a normal process.

The Rules Committee has become a place where democracy goes to die. Yet the bill that we have before us, the underlying bill that we are going to consider later today, could probably pass on a suspension.

By the way, we have no problem with giving you same-day authority on suspension bills. Those aren't controversial. We don't even have a problem, although you should have prepared for this, with you being able to bring a bill to the floor quickly to keep the government running.

It is the broad authority that you have given yourselves to bring anything at a moment's notice, without anybody having a chance to review it. That is what we have a problem with. Quite frankly, my Republican colleagues ought to have a problem with that, too.

Mr. Speaker, shortly after taking the gavel, Speaker RYAN said: ''I want to

have a process that is more open, more inclusive, more deliberative, more participatory, and that is what we are trying to do.'' That was the Speaker of the House.

Unfortunately, Republicans do not appear to be trying very hard. The current Congress is on track to become the most closed in history, with an incredible 26 closed rules in this year's first quarter out of 42 total rules. The Republican majority shut out all amendments from both Democrats and Republicans on fully 62 percent of the legislation considered by the House under a rule.

Do Members realize that? On most bills, even they are not allowed to offer amendments. No amendments at all. Under a closed rule, you can't even offer an amendment to fix a typo.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask my colleagues to take a look at this chart. This shows closed rules in the past decade and for the first quarter of the year.

Do you see this really long red line on the top? I am happy to bring it over to my colleagues here. If you see that line, you will see that the bottom line is that this shows that this Congress has an abysmal record with regard to an open, fair process.

When we were in charge from 2007–2010, we averaged only 8 closed rules in the same timeframe. This Congress is more than three times as closed. We have 26 closed rules in the first quarter alone; that is not to mention zero open rules. You are even crushing your record for 2015, the year that you beat the all-time closed rule record. This is not something to be proud of.

What has this historically closed process brought to the House? Complete chaos. Virtually no legislative accomplishments. A lousy process usually leads to lousy legislation. We learned that from your awful, disastrous attempt to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

By the way, I should point out that while we were meeting here today—I guess some of the advocacy organizations had a chance to read the language you posted last night at midnight—so far, the American Hospital Association, AARP, the American Medical Association, March of Dimes, and America's Essential Hospitals have all come out against this terrible, new Republican health proposal. In fact, the American Hospital Association said: ''The amendment proposed this week would dramatically worsen the bill.''

I would just say to my colleagues: We don't have a problem with suspensions. We don't have a problem with a rule that will allow us to keep the government running. We have a problem with your closed, authoritarian approach to the legislation. We have a problem with the prospect that you might bring a healthcare bill to the floor that will impact millions and millions of Americans, and nobody will have read it, nobody will even have any guarantee that what you posted last night at midnight will even be what we are voting on.

This is a big deal. It affects my constituents and it affects your constituents. We ought to be doing a better job around here, and this process, quite frankly, stinks.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 3½ minutes remaining.

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

Simply, again, I reiterate that everybody in this House, Democrats and Republicans alike, should be ashamed at the way this House is being run. The American people who are watching should be appalled by the way this House is being run.

I don't care whether you are a liberal or conservative or fall somewhere in the middle. You ought to have some confidence that what the people's House is doing is actually thoughtful and is actually in the best interest of the people of this country. That is not what is happening here.

Yes, the underlying bill that we are going to talk about later today, we have no problem with it. It could have passed overwhelmingly under a suspension vote. I am happy to support it. No problem.

I have no problem, by the way, with bringing up suspensions to fill up time as we try to get a resolution to the continuing resolution. We have no problem, quite frankly, with bringing up a continuing resolution in a quick fashion.

This rule continues a lousy process that has been embraced by the current Republican leadership in this House. There is no excuse for this. When it comes to big bills, big legislation, like health care, which is a very personal thing to people in this country, the American people deserve much better than this.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''no'' on this lousy rule and stand up to your leadership and demand that they open this House up not only to Democratic amendments but to Republican amendments as well. This is a deliberative body. We ought to be able to deliberate.

On big issues like health care, it ought not be some backroom deal that a few people put together. We saw the result of those backroom deals with a lousy, terrible, awful bill that would hurt millions of Americans. We ought to do it out in the open.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I heard a group of constituents ask one of our freshman Members what they found to be the most surprising part of this institution, having served here for about 100 days, and it was with no small amount of joy that they gave exactly the same answer that I would have given after my first 100 days. They said to their constituents: What really surprised me is how earnest, hardworking, conscientious, dedicated, and how committed each and every Member of this institution is.

There are a couple of bad apples that don't follow under that perspective, but, by and large, the surprise when you get elected to Congress is about the high quality of the people who you get to work with, the commitment of the people you get to work with, the conviction of the people who you get to work with.

What you have heard from my friend from Massachusetts, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you, is 100 percent authentic. There is no one down here playing for the cameras today. I could make a powerful case that while cameras provide a great deal of sunlight, they create a great deal of unnecessary heat, as well. Folks sometimes are performing for cameras in this institution, but not my friend from Massachusetts.

What you heard from my friend from Massachusetts was absolutely sincere concern about public policy. I agree with him. I believe we should have an open and deliberative process in this institution.

You and I and my friend from Massachusetts don't work for the leadership. The leadership works for us. There is not one Member of the leadership team who votes for me. I vote for them.

We have an opportunity to direct the way this institution is led. Candidly, I couldn't be more proud than I am of the way that PAUL RYAN leads this institution. He is not the Republican Speaker. We have a Republican leader. The Democrats have a Democratic leader. PAUL RYAN is the Speaker of the House. I am incredibly proud of the way he leads this institution.

The way to make it even better, Mr. Speaker, is not to cite every single thing that we do as a failure. It is just not so. Let's find those things that we do that we can do better, and let's identify them and work together, but let's celebrate those successes.

For example, my friend pointed to the number of closed rules that have come to the floor. For folks who don't follow the process closely, a closed rule means there were no amendments allowed.

Well, many of those bills, Mr. Speaker, were bills that the Rules Committee sent out an email to all of Capitol Hill and said: We are bringing this piece of legislation to the floor. Here it is for you to read it and digest it. And if you have any ideas about how to make this bill better, you send them to us, and we will take a look.

When we did that, Mr. Speaker, not one single idea came back from the Republican or the Democratic side of the aisle for improving the bill.

□ 1330

So, yes, the bill came to the floor. The rule was closed not because we are trying to silence the minority, not because we are trying to silence elements of the majority, but because we had a completely open process, and it turned out that regular order got it right the first time. We don't need to identify that as a failure. That is an unmitigated success.

Some of those closed rules, Mr. Speaker, came because we were bringing legislation under the Congressional Review Act. Now, for folks who don't know the Congressional Review Act, that is that act that was passed so that Congress could go back and review regulations that had been passed by the administration to make sure those regulations followed congressional intent.

By definition, those bills have to be narrow and targeted. We can't have an amendment about healthcare legislation added to our waters of the U.S. Congressional Review Act bill. We can't have folks go and add a pay raise for our military men and women to that Congressional Review Act bill. We want a pay raise for our men and women in uniform. We passed it out of the House. It is sitting in the United States Senate, but it can't be on a CRA piece of legislation. So, yes, every single one of those bills came to the floor under a closed rule not because someone was trying to silence the minority, not because someone wanted to silence elements of the majority, but because that is the process that we have to work through together, and, by golly, we are doing it right.

My friend from Massachusetts talked about what has gone on in this body. I will tell you, this body has moved more legislation to the President's desk for his signature in these first 100 days than any President since Truman. We have had Republicans running the show, we have had Democrats running the show, but it is only when we collaboratively have been running the show that we have moved more bills to the President's desk than any other Congress in modern American history. I am proud of that. Some of those votes went my way, some of those votes didn't go my way, but we worked each one of those through the process, and we did each one of those things together.

Mr. Speaker, I would love to tell you what is going to happen over the next 18 months. I have no idea. But I know that to the extent that this body is full of accusations, to the extent that this body is full of mistrust, to the extent that this body is full of frustration and condemnation, we are going to go down one path.

To the extent that this body isn't afraid to tell folks back home when we are working hard together, to the extent that this body isn't ashamed that we rolled up our sleeves together and got some things done that folks thought we wouldn't be able to get done, to the extent that this body isn't afraid to confront the fact that we are always going to have disagreements, but from time to time bipartisanship breaks out and bills move a little more quickly than they do at other times. If folks are willing to accept our successes with the same zeal that they celebrate our failures, Mr. Speaker, I tell you, we are going to create a different institution over these next 18 months. Again, not under Democratic leadership, not under Republican leadership, but under PAUL RYAN's leadership as Speaker of this entire House of Representatives.

We have one such opportunity today. I encourage folks to go to the web page of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. I believe it is oversight.house.gov. Those folks are working on some of the toughest issues in this town, and often they are bitterly divided along partisan lines. They are working on those issues that tend to separate Americans rather than unite them. They have sent us a bill today that was so widely supported, it passed by a voice vote unanimously out of that committee. It then went to the Committee on Rules, where every single Member of Congress was invited to improve it. Three Members of Congress took us up on the invitation, and every single one of their amendments was made in order by this rule.

Mr. Speaker, we have lots of things that are going to bring my friend from Massachusetts and I back down to this floor, and we are going to disagree heartily about those. Today we have an example of something that brings us together. I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on this rule that brings our OGR unanimously passed bill to the floor, and vote "yes" on that underlying bill, just as our Republican and Democratic colleagues on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform did.

Mr. Speaker, there are lots of challenges ahead of us. This is one we can put in the books as a success for our constituents back home. I ask for a "yes" vote.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 280 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

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

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 286) directing certain officials of the executive branch to provide information to the House of Representatives that will enable the House to meet its constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight of the executive branch by investigating potential conflicts of interests of President Donald J. Trump. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 286.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools

for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting the resolution, if ordered, and suspending the rules and passing S. 496.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 230, nays 193, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 229]

YEAS—230

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
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
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)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—193

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
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
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
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
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—7

Bucshon
Chaffetz
Marino
Newhouse
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Walorski

□ 1359

Messrs. VARGAS, KILMER, NOLAN, DEMINGS, HUFFMAN, and Mrs. TORRES changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 226, noes 192, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 230]

AYES—226

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
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
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
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
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marshall
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stivers
Suozzi
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams

Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—192

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
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
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
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
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
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—12

Bucshon
Chaffetz
Cheney
Hurd
Marino
Newhouse
Royce (CA)
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Stewart
Valadao
Walorski

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1407

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 230.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 230.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 230.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 1180, WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Rules Committee issued an announcement outlining the amendment process for H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017, which will likely be before the Rules Committee next week.

An amendment deadline has been set for Monday, May 1, at 10 a.m.

The text of the bill is available on the Rules Committee website.

Feel free to contact me or my staff if you have any questions.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATION AND PLANNING AREA REFORM REPEAL ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 496) to repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled ''Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform'', on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 3, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 231]

YEAS—417

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney

Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—3

Blumenauer
DeSaulnier
Lofgren

NOT VOTING—10

Bucshon
Chaffetz
Ferguson
Graves (LA)
Marino
Newhouse
Peters
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Walorski

□ 1417

Ms. JACKSON LEE changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2015

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Representative JOE WILSON be removed as the cosponsor of H.R. 2015. He was incorrectly listed when it should have been Representative FREDERICA WILSON.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

FANNIE AND FREDDIE OPEN RECORDS ACT OF 2017

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1694.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 280 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1694.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1419

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1694) to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes, with Mr. COLLINS of Georgia in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 1694, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017.

Mr. Chairman, transparency is critical. It is critical to oversight and accountability of the Federal Government and how it spends taxpayer dollars. The American public has a right to know how their tax dollars are spent.

The Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, is a key tool for citizens to access information about their government. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are not subject to the requirements of FOIA, despite taxpayers' substantial investment into both entities and the government's implicit guaranteed backing of these entities.

Taxpayers have spent $187 billion to bail out Fannie and Freddie, the most sweeping government intervention into private financial markets in decades. Taxpayers are on the hook for $400 billion in lost investments and $5 trillion in mortgage liabilities.

At the same time, the American public is unable to seek accountability from these entities under FOIA. It is far past time we apply FOIA to Fannie and Freddie. There is precedent for applying FOIA to non-traditional quasi-governmental entities. Congress subjected Amtrak to FOIA in recognition of sizeable taxpayer funding.

To stabilize the housing market in the aftershock of the 2008 financial crisis, the Federal Housing Finance Agency placed Fannie and Freddie into conservatorship to return them to financial viability and stockholder control. FHFA is a government entity subject to FOIA. Under the terms of its conservatorship over Fannie and Freddie, FHFA exercises the titles to their books and records, as well as the powers and privileges of Fannie and Freddie.

Despite this government intervention and explicit guarantee, taxpayers, however, are unable to obtain any information from Fannie and Freddie.

H.R. 1694, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017, sponsored by Oversight and Government Reform Chairman JASON CHAFFETZ, will allow the American public to submit FOIA requests to Fannie and Freddie as long as the entities remain under FHFA's conservatorship. H.R. 1694 reflects FOIA's presumptions of openness, granting taxpayers information unless an exemption applies.

This bill is a commonsense measure to allow the American public access to basic information regarding entities that they fund with their tax dollars.

The American public should not be in the dark when it comes to what Fannie and Freddie are doing.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support for the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this bill, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017.

I want to start by thanking the sponsor of this bill, Chairman CHAFFETZ, for working with the Democratic members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to address concerns that we raised as well as concerns raised by the Federal Housing Finance Agency. The bipartisan cooperation that was demonstrated on this bill should be a model for this body.

This bill would apply the Freedom of Information Act to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac while they are in conservatorship or receivership. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are stockholder-owned, government-sponsored enterprises chartered by Congress to purchase mortgages and pool them into mortgage-backed securities to create liquidity in the mortgage market.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were brought into Federal conservatorship under the control of FHFA in September 2008. According to the CBO, during the financial crisis, Treasury purchased $187 billion of senior preferred stock from the two entities to ensure that they could continue to operate. Neither entity has drawn on Treasury support since 2012, both have returned to profitability, and the dividends they generate are paid to the Treasury.

There are some practical concerns with the underlying bill because it would apply FOIA to these private companies for the first time. The amendment Chairman CHAFFETZ will offer addresses some of those concerns, which I will discuss when we consider this amendment.

I would like to discuss some concerns with language that was added in this bill at the Rules Committee to address the estimated cost of the bill.

CBO estimates that this bill would increase the administrative costs of Fannie and Freddie by $310 million, with $10 million of that resulting in direct spending. This bill would address those costs by requiring commercial requesters to pay for processing FOIA requests made to Fannie and Freddie. This would be a significant change from the way FOIA typically works.

It is unclear how Fannie and Freddie could reasonably estimate how many FOIA requests they would receive or to know how to distribute administrative costs equitably among commercial requesters.

The bill would allow Fannie and Freddie to determine how much they

would charge commercial requesters. Whatever cost estimation methodologies Fannie and Freddie choose to use, the methodologies will almost certainly be challenged, potentially leading to litigation, which would be handled by the Department of Justice.

It is highly likely that banks would file FOIA requests to obtain information about the business practices and holdings of Fannie and Freddie. The costs charged to them for their requests would then be passed on to consumers.

I believe this language was intended to be helpful, but it is one result of applying to private companies a statute designed to apply to government agencies. We should carefully analyze this provision and its likely consequences as this bill moves forward in the legislative process. There may be a better way to address this issue.

I also hope that the chairman will continue to seek ways of expanding transparency in government, and that the committee's next step will be to require the disclosure of White House visitor logs.

The White House recently reversed what had been the Obama administration's policy of disclosing the records of who comes and goes from the White House. The president of Judicial Watch, Tom Fitton, said:

''This new secrecy policy undermines the rule of law and suggests this White House doesn't want to be accountable to the American people.''

I look forward to working with the chairman to address this very troubling reversal of a critical government transparency policy.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Chair, I thank my friend from Florida for the opportunity to speak on this bill. And as a member of the House Financial Services Committee, I am grateful for the bipartisan leadership in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in bringing H.R. 1694 to the floor, for it is high time that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac be subject to the regimen of the Freedom of Information Act. This critical oversight tool is sorely past due for these government-sponsored agencies.

Over the past four decades, we have seen the waste and largess exhibited by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac embedded in their everyday operations. And while they got their start during the height of the Depression and performed an able task of setting high standards for the liquidity for mortgage credit, they have long outlived their original charter.

Oakley Hunter, the president and chairman of Fannie Mae back in the 1970s, described Fannie Mae as the world's largest floating crap game. Nothing has changed.

□ 1430

In the early 1980s, we found Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac dominating, as they do today, 9 out of 10 mortgages in the United States, and yet they were highly unprofitable and highly suspect in their management. During that time, Senator William Proxmire led the charge in the United States Senate seeking answers about the enterprises' executive compensation.

Flash-forward to the 1990s, we saw executive compensation at Fannie Mae run amok.

During the 2000s, their imprudence and desire for growth paved the way for the U.S. housing crisis and global economic collapse.

More recently, we have discovered that Fannie Mae is spending $171 million in taxpayer funds on a new Taj Mahal office in Washington, D.C., to replace their already extraordinarily luxurious campus on Wisconsin Avenue, which one Washingtonian, Mr. Chairman, described as what Versailles would look like if Louis XIV had any money. According to the inspector general's report from last June, this 15-year cost of relocating Fannie Mae's headquarters and the construction of the new building now topped $770 million.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Chairman, as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac languish in Federal conservatorship following their collapse from the 2008 housing crisis, it is high time to apply FOIA to these GSEs and bring accountability and transparency for the American taxpayers.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, as you can see, this is a bill that I think has broad bipartisan support. It is something that we need to do for the taxpayers who have invested so much into Fannie and Freddie over the years. Let's make them subject to FOIA.

I urge support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–14 modified by the amendment printed in part A of House Report 115–96. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 1694

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

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. APPLICABILITY OF FOIA.

(a) APPLICABILITY TO GOVERNMENT SPONSORED ENTITIES IN CONSERVATORSHIP.—Section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(n) The Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation shall comply with agency requirements under this section during any period such enterprise is under conservatorship or receivership pursuant to section 1367 of the Federal Housing Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 4617).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall be effective on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to any request filed under section 552(a)(3) of title 5, United States Code, on or after such effective date, relating to any record created before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. COMMERCIAL REQUESTERS.

For purposes of subsection (n) of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 2(a), each enterprise described in such subsection shall establish a fee schedule such that in the first year the fees collected from requests for records intended for a commercial use cover the costs of administering such subsection (n), which shall be estimated as $40,000,000 in the first year. In each subsequent year, each such enterprise shall evaluate whether the fees collected under the prior year's fee schedule were sufficient to recover all actual costs of administering subsection (n) and revise the fee schedule to recover the costs of administering subsection (n) in the following year and any outstanding costs of administering subsection (n) from the prior year not collected through fees in the prior year. Each such enterprise shall make the revised fee schedule and a detailed explanation of the prior year's costs and projections of future costs that were used to justify the fee schedule publicly available online for 10 days prior to the fee schedule going into effect.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 115–96. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. ROSS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115–96.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, as the designee of the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, strike line 10 and all that follows through line 16 and insert the following:

''(n)(1) This section shall apply to the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation during any period either such enterprise is under conservatorship or receivership pursuant to section 1367 of the Federal Housing

Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 4617).

''(2) For purposes of this subsection, the exemption described in subsection (b)(4), relating to trade secrets and commercial or financial information, shall apply without regard to whether such information was obtained from a person outside the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as the case may be.''.

Page 1, line 18, after ''on the date'' insert the following: ''that is six months after the date''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 280, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, the manager's amendment that I am offering on behalf of Chairman CHAFFETZ makes technical and conforming changes to the bill.

Applying FOIA to Fannie and Freddie while the entities remain in conservatorship will better ensure that the American people know what their government does with their taxpayer dollars. But, if and when Fannie and Freddie come out of conservatorship, the entities need to be able to operate as commercially competitive businesses.

This amendment clarifies that Fannie and Freddie may use exemption 4, which protects sensitive commercial information from disclosure, regardless of whether information was obtained from a person outside of Fannie or Freddie, to protect their financially sensitive materials from public disclosure.

Mr. Chairman, recognizing the administrative labors involved in setting up FOIA shops, the amendment also addresses the implementation date. Fannie and Freddie will likely need to hire staff, update their websites, and identify records to be made publicly available as a matter of course.

The manager's amendment, therefore, provides Fannie and Freddie 6 months after the bill's enactment to establish their respective staffs and protocols to administer FOIA.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, but I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment, which would make improvements that address concerns raised by FHFA.

The manager's amendment would make several important improvements to the underlying bill. This amendment would provide Fannie and Freddie 6 months to implement the bill. This time is important to ensure they have staff and procedures in place to process FOIA requests.

This amendment would also clarify that Fannie and Freddie could use exemption 4 of FOIA in the same way that FHFA can currently use it to protect trade secrets and commercial or financial information generated by Fannie and Freddie.

Exemption 4 protects ''trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential.'' Exemption 4 requires that that information can only be protected if it comes from an outside source rather than being generated by an agency itself.

Without the language added by this amendment, there would have been uncertainty as to whether confidential business information that would have been protected if Fannie or Freddie sent it to FHFA would have been protected when those entities were, themselves, responding to FOIA requests.

I appreciate Chairman CHAFFETZ' willingness to work with us in addressing these concerns, and I urge all Members to support this manager's amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 115–96.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, after line 16 insert the following new subsection (and redesignate the subsequent subsection accordingly):

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act may be construed as precluding the application of any of the exemptions described in section 552 of title 5, United States Code, to subsection (n) of such section, as added by subsection (a).

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 280, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I would like to first commend Chairman CHAFFETZ for introducing H.R. 1694, the Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017. I would also like to thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and members of the committee for all of their hard work on this legislation.

H.R. 1694 would amend the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, to make its provisions apply to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac when the two entities are in Federal conservatorship or receivership. My amendment makes commonsense improvements to the underlying bill to ensure that all nine FOIA exemptions apply to government-sponsored entities in conservatorship.

By passing this amendment, we will ensure that personal privacy and sensitive information is appropriately protected, while ensuring the highest level of transparency for the American taxpayers.

I am pleased to have the support of Chairman CHAFFETZ on this amendment, and I urge all of the Members to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, though I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, FOIA does not require that all records be released to requesters. The FOIA statute allows agencies to withhold information under nine exemptions, which were designed to protect truly sensitive information that would be harmful to important interests if released.

Just last year, Congress clarified that the expectation—and now the legal requirement—is that agencies only withhold information when it is necessary to prevent harm to the interest that the exemption was intended to protect. The Johnson amendment clarifies that Fannie and Freddie would be allowed to withhold requested information under those nine exemptions, just as any other agency would be permitted to withhold information, if the enterprises reasonably foresee that disclosure would harm a protected interest.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CLAY

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 115–96.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT), I offer amendment No. 3.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act, or the amendment made by this Act, may be construed as precluding or restricting the disclosure of information regarding any proposed new product or significant new product term prior to loan

purchasing, or substantive negotiation with an interested party regarding purchase of loans with such new product or significant new product term.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 280, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT). This amendment simply makes clear that the application of FOIA to Fannie and Freddie will not limit disclosures regarding the loans to which Fannie and Freddie offer any type of guarantee or support.

I agree that Americans have the right to know what loans and other agreements Fannie and Freddie are backing. Earlier this year, Fannie Mae created a ''pilot program'' under which Fannie has backed a large investor's purchase of foreclosed homes that the investor will then lease. The public certainly has a right to information about such programs.

As Ms. PLASKETT's amendment makes clear, such disclosures should occur before any loans are purchased or backed so that Congress can assess the potential effects on all stockholders, including taxpayers, home buyers, and renters. I appreciate the gentlewoman's thoughtful amendment, and I urge all Members to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, though I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, it is imperative that Fannie's and Freddie's conservator—the Federal Housing Finance Agency, or FHFA—scrutinize new purchasing strategies to ensure that the enterprises' dealings are in line with their charters to stimulate homeownership. If FHFA fails to guarantee the soundness of their business dealings, FOIA could empower the taxpayer to step in and hold accountable Fannie or Freddie.

For instance, thanks to taxpayers' explicit backing of Fannie earlier this year, Invitation Homes, the single-family rental business owned by the lucrative private equity firm Blackstone, secured a $1.8 billion initial public offering, or IPO, the largest since October of 2015.

In its IPO filing, Invitation Homes disclosed that Fannie, which received over $116 billion from the taxpayers in the aftershock of the financial crisis, is guaranteeing up to $1 billion in debt from Invitation. While Blackstone gets the money, the taxpayers take on the risk; and Fannie pivots unimpeded into the rental markets, leaving those hopeful of homeownership with less support.

Applying FOIA to Fannie and Freddie under this bill strengthens the guarantee that government-sponsored entities are fulfilling their mandate to stimulate homeownership rather than being in the business of supporting profitable, private equity investors on the backs of taxpayers.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment further clarifies the legislation's assurance of applicable disclosures as a mechanism to keep Fannie and Freddie consistent with their Federal charters to stimulate homeownership.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1694) to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

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

FANNIE AND FREDDIE OPEN RECORDS ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 280 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1694.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1501

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1694) to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes, with Mr. COLLINS of Georgia in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 115–96 offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 115–96 offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 410, noes 5, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 232]

AYES—410

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings

Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—5

Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Gaetz
Posey
Webster (FL)

NOT VOTING—15

Beyer
Cárdenas
Chaffetz
Duncan (SC)
Grijalva
Hudson
Huffman
Lowenthal
Marino
Napolitano
Newhouse
Rosen
Slaughter
Torres
Wasserman Schultz

□ 1525

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. McCOLLUM, Messrs. CRAWFORD, EMMER, Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Messrs. McHENRY, and BURGESS changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on a rollcall vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 232.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 232.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1694) to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 280, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on passage of the bill 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 425, nays 0, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 233]

YEAS—425

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Noem

Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—5

Chaffetz
Marino
Newhouse
Slaughter
Wasserman Schultz

□ 1535

So the bill 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.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 249, noes 163, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 234]

AYES—249

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Beatty
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Buchanan
Budd
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Carson (IN)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cohen
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Dent
DesJarlais
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Ferguson
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego
Garrett
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Griffith
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hollingsworth
Huffman
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Levin
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Marchant
Marshall
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Payne
Perlmutter
Perry
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Reichert
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Rosen
Ross
Rothfus
Royce (CA)
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Suozzi
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thornberry
Tiberi
Titus
Trott
Tsongas
Velázquez
Wagner
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—163

Aguilar
Amash
Babin
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Blum
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carter (GA)
Castor (FL)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Connolly
Costa
Costello (PA)
Crowley
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Denham
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Doyle, Michael F.
Espaillat
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Fitzpatrick
Flores
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gibbs
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hartzler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hoyer
Hudson
Huizenga
Hurd
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger
Knight
LaHood
Lance
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lynch
MacArthur
Mast
Matsui
McEachin
McGovern
McKinley
Meehan
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Moore
Neal
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Peters
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rogers (AL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Rouzer
Ruiz
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schrader
Sewell (AL)
Sires
Smith (MO)
Soto
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walberg
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Grijalva
Tonko

NOT VOTING—16

Chaffetz
Garamendi
Gohmert
Grothman
Larsen (WA)
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Newhouse
Peterson
Quigley
Rokita
Roybal-Allard
Slaughter
Smucker
Torres
Wasserman Schultz

□ 1543

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to attend votes on April 27, 2017 due to a family medical issue. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

"Yea" for rollcall vote 229.
"Yea" for rollcall vote 230.
"Yea" for rollcall vote 231.
"Yea" for rollcall vote 232.
"Yea" for rollcall vote 233.
"Yea" for rollcall vote 234.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.J. RES. 50

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as cosponsor of H.J. Res. 50.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GALLAGHER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

UNCLE SAM IS GOING HUNTING FOR RUSSIAN BEAR

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, Uncle Sam is going hunting for Russian bear. World War II started with Nazi Germany invading Poland. Russia quickly

invaded for the West to take their chunk of Poland's freedom.

Years later, we won the Cold War, and Poland joined NATO. But Poland has never been truly free because Mr. Putin—mother Russia—has controlled Poland's energy. Mr. Putin has punished Poland in their desire to be free by slowing natural gas exports in a cold, Polish winter that became much colder.

Uncle Sam is about to put the Russian bear on permanent hibernation by exporting American liquid freedom. Our liquified natural gas will leave Sabine Pass in June heading to Poland.

The Russian bear is on the run. Let American liquid freedom reign.

DISTRICT SCHOOL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the talent and hard work of the youth in New Jersey's 12th District.

This past weekend, a group of East Brunswick High School students were recognized as the best team from the Northeast in the We the People competition. Competing against more than 1,200 students, this team demonstrated knowledge of constitutional principles in both historical and contemporary contexts.

This weekend, students from John Witherspoon Middle School of Princeton and West Windsor-Plainsboro South High School will come to Washington to compete in the final round of the 2017 National Science Bowl.

To all of these students: The guidance of your teachers, Alan Brodman, Bill Merritt, and Sunila Sharma, and your hard work is evident, and New Jersey's 12th District is very proud of you.

It is an honor to represent a district that continues to emphasize the importance of STEM and civic education, and encourage our Nation's youth to thrive.

FIRST 100 DAYS OF PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the first 100 days of President Donald Trump's administration.

In his first 100 days, President Trump has enacted more pieces of legislation than any other President since Truman, facilitated the earliest Supreme Court confirmation since 1881, eliminated many onerous regulations to restore economic optimism and opportunity, protected the sanctity of life, and driven illegal border crossings to a 17-year low. His accomplishments are truly remarkable.

I have appreciated President Trump's willingness to listen and work with Congress on major pieces of legislation. His effort to work with Congress is a breath of fresh air.

President Trump made several promises to the American people, and I am encouraged by his efforts to fulfill them. Mr. Speaker, the American people are watching—they are watching both the President and those of us in Congress. They will not accept broken promises or half-hearted measures. They want results. I look forward to working alongside President Trump to keep our promises.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S PROMISE TO DRAIN THE SWAMP

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

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, the President made big promises on the campaign trail to drain the swamp. He promised that his Washington would look different. Well, it does look different, but not in the way he promised.

Instead of ethics reform, his administration rolled back ethics provisions that prevented officials from serving in Federal agencies that they lobbied in the last 2 years.

He promised to tackle campaign finance, saying that he wouldn't accept campaign donations from special interest groups. Instead, he has invited the special interests into his Cabinet, appointing them into the highest position.

He promised he would ask Congress to pass campaign finance reform that prevents registered foreign lobbyists from raising money in American politics. Instead, it turns out that some of his closest confidants and former campaign advisers have made millions lobbying foreign governments.

He promised he would release his own tax returns, but has not. The American people have no way of knowing how he or his family businesses stand to benefit from these tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, this is not draining the swamp. Everyone is accountable, especially those in the highest levels of our government.

CONGRATULATING DARLENE JOHNSON

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

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Darlene Johnson of Woodland, Washington, on being nominated for two Women in Transport Awards of 2017 by Transport News International. She was given these well-deserved awards for Best Woman-Owned Land Logistics Company in the Pacific Northwest, and Most Inspirational Woman in Land Transport in the Northwestern U.S.

Throughout her distinguished career, Darlene has done everything in her power to serve her community. She currently sits on the Woodland Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors where she advocates for stronger environment for businesses in southwest Washington. Darlene's tenacity and dedication motivate and inspire those around her, me included.

Not only does she advocate for local businesses, but she is a local businessowner herself. Darlene, along with her husband, Jim, operate Woodland Truck Line, Inc. It is fitting that she is receiving this award for successfully running a business in an industry that is commonly thought to be male dominated. Those who know Darlene, like I do, know that if Darlene were to start a business in any other industry, she would go over, under, or right through any obstacles in her way.

Darlene's service to our community does not go unnoticed. There is not an issue affecting the Woodland community with which she is not actively involved. She currently is deserving of this prestigious award on behalf of southwest Washington. I congratulate her and wish her the best in her future endeavors and continued success in transportation.

LET'S START FOCUSING ON MAIN STREET AND AMERICAN WORKERS

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

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, President Trump campaigned throughout this country, including my home State of Pennsylvania, as a great populist, as a champion of the working class.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank President Trump and his administration for revealing their true intentions yesterday when they revealed their Wall Street written and designed tax plan—a giveaway for millionaires and billionaires. And not one thing—not one—for 99.9 percent of the working American people.

Mr. Speaker, we do need tax reform, and you would see broad bipartisan support for that. But it has to be real. It has to be paid for. And it must include relief for those three-quarters of the American people who pay more in payroll taxes than they ever do in individual income taxes.

Enough of focusing on Wall Street and the corporate income tax rate, and let's start focusing on Main Street and American workers.

HEALTHCARE DEBATE IN OUR NATION

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, as President Trump and Republicans in Congress work toward finally delivering the American people relief from ObamaCare, it is important to remember how we got here and why we find ourselves in this position today.

We are approaching the fork in the road for health care in our country. We have a choice of two paths, and they lead to very different outcomes.

ObamaCare's regulatory behemoth is collapsing the individual market and is paving the way toward a disastrous result, namely, socialized medicine—and the crowded waiting rooms, scarce access to physicians, and low-quality health care that comes with it, not to mention an unprecedented accumulation of power in Washington, D.C.

This is not conjecture. Barack Obama, Harry Reid, and a whole host of ObamaCare supporters have been completely candid about their ultimate goal of a single-payer healthcare system, which could then seamlessly devolve into socialized medicine.

The time to right our course is now. Republicans are offering the American people a better way, one that fosters choice, lowers healthcare costs, and improves Americans' health outcomes. We have two clear and very distinct options. Let's make the right choice and pull back from the brink of socialized medicine.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the last four elections have defined one of the most dramatic political realignments in our country's history.

In these elections, we have seen a net shift of 64 U.S. House seats, 12 U.S. Senate seats, 10 Governors, 919 State legislative seats, and the Presidency shift from Democrat to Republican.

This happened in large part on three overarching mandates from the American people: revive the economy, secure our borders, and restore our healthcare system. If President Trump can accomplish these three objectives, his administration and this Congress will be remembered as one of the most successful and beneficial in our Nation's history.

In working toward these goals, President Trump has faced the most bitter, virulent, and partisan opposition that any President has endured since the election of 1860.

We have seen the radical left in full display across our Nation with its appalling incivility, its intolerance of other points of view, and its disrespect of our democratic process and constitutional institutions. Sadly, this opposition now permeates much of our press and academia.

Yet, despite these obstacles, as we mark the first 100 days of this Presidency, there is ample reason to celebrate the new direction that President Trump and this Congress have taken and the progress that we have made.

Our overarching mandate is to revive our economy and restore prosperity to millions of struggling American families who have suffered the most disappointing decade in more than 80 years, buried under an avalanche of Obama-era regulations and taxes.

American workers finally have an advocate in the Oval Office. This President has signed more legislation in his first 100 days than any President since Harry Truman. And many of these bills, as well as his executive orders, have begun repealing the heavy regulations that have been sinking our economy.

One study estimates these actions have already relieved our economy of $68 billion of destructive regulations. That comes to about $500 for every family in America.

The Keystone pipeline alone will produce thousands of construction jobs, billions of dollars of private investment, and, when completed, 830,000 barrels of Canadian crude oil entering American markets every day.

And what has happened?

Well, consumer confidence is up 3 points since the election. The S&P is up 11 percent, the NASDAQ is up more than 15 percent, and the Dow is up 13 percent. 317,000 more Americans are working today than on the day the President took the oath of office, unemployment has dropped three-tenths of a point, and the labor participation rate has started to inch upward once again.

It is not yet ''morning again in America,'' but the first faint shades of light are appearing on our economic horizon.

The second great mandate was to secure the borders after many years, when millions of illegal immigrants made a mockery of our Nation's sovereignty and our rule of law. Wages for working Americans stagnated, jobs dried up, and social services have strained as a result.

Well, finally, we have a President who takes the Nation's security and the sovereignty of our borders seriously. Renewed enforcement has, by all accounts, boosted morale of our immigration agencies dramatically, and criminal aliens are finally being deported—already showing a 32 percent increase in deportations compared to the last administration. Because of this new resoluteness, illegal border crossings have plunged by some 60 percent.

□ 1600

Now, healthcare reform is the third of the mandates. That requires congressional action, and here is where Congress has let him down. But as we approach the 100th day of the administration, it appears legislation will soon begin moving to the Senate, and, before long, the collapsing, one-size-fits-all bureaucracy of ObamaCare will give way to a healthy and vibrant healthcare market where Americans will have the widest possible range of choices to meet their own needs with the supported tax system to ensure that these plans are within the financial reach of every American.

Ultimately, though, the success of this administration will not be measured by 100 days or by talking points from politicians. It will be measured by a simple question that every American will answer for himself or herself: Am I better off today? As we approach this first checkpoint in the course of this administration, there is strong reason to believe the answer to that question will be a decisive yes.

This is a period of great change, and great change brings great controversy. But I believe that this President and our Nation can take increasing confidence from these first 100 days and can take great strength in knowing that a day is fast approaching when we will awaken and realize it is, indeed, morning again in America.

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

FIRST 100 DAYS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate you yielding and being willing to stick around with me this afternoon. I have a great pleasure this afternoon, and that is to talk about successes that we have had together.

I was down on the floor earlier when we were debating the rule, and I was talking to my Democratic colleagues on the Rules Committee about the good work that was going on in the Rules Committee; the good work that was going on on the House floor. In fact, we brought the bill—it was a raucous debate, Mr. Speaker. You will remember it. We argued for an hour about all sorts of extraneous things, then we brought the bill down, and it passed, I believe unanimously, here on the floor of the House just a few minutes ago.

I don't understand that. I just don't understand what those drivers are in politics, Mr. Speaker, that encourages us to tear folks down instead of build folks up. And that is why I want to talk about some successes today. You can't see my slides, Mr. Speaker, but I have got some numbers written down to the left in red, and those are the numbers that are worth paying attention to.

Twenty-eight. Twenty-eight is the number of bills President Trump has signed into law in his first 100 days; 28. That is more bills signed into law than any other American President since Harry Truman.

More bills. Now, I read the same newspapers you read, Mr. Speaker. I listen to the same news broadcasts you listen to. I hear folks talk about inaction. I hear folks talk about confusion. I hear folks talk about division. I don't

hear folks talking about success, and success is what marks these first 100 days.

Again, there has been more legislative activity than any other President and Congress—collaboratively Congress, House, Senate, Republicans, Democrats—more legislative success than we have had in any Congress and White House combination since Harry Truman.

Mr. Speaker, we had the first Supreme Court confirmation in the first 100 days since 1881—since 1881. Now, it is with no joy that I share with you that the Supreme Court is such a powerful institution, Mr. Speaker. I think too often we fail to get the job done legislatively, and the Court steps in and legislates from right across the street. That wasn't the job the Constitution envisioned. That wasn't the job assigned in Article III, but it is the job that has been taken on by default. So it has become increasingly important that we make sure the Court is staffed.

I supported the Senate having hearings on the Garland nomination last cycle. I supported the Senate having hearings on the Gorsuch nomination this cycle. Decision after decision in the last session went 4–4, which meant we could sustain the underlying Court's decision, but we couldn't decide these important questions that were still a source of confusion across this country. We now have a fully staffed Supreme Court again—the first time since 1881. We have seen a Supreme Court confirmation in the first 100 days of a new administration.

Seventeen, Mr. Speaker. It has been 17 years since illegal border crossings reached this low level. I am going to come back to that. But what I am saying is that words matter. And what the President has said is: we are going to grow the most robust economy the world has ever seen, but we are going to do it with a legal visa program that makes sure folks are coming and going in accordance with U.S. law. And simply that change in attitude, Mr. Speaker, simply that change in attitude from ''we are going to ignore the law'' to ''the law matters'' has brought illegal crossings down to a 17-year low.

Mr. Speaker, 728; that is the number of millions of dollars saved with the President's first foray into cutting Federal budgets. His first foray into cutting Federal budgets, he started taking a look at Federal contracts. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, what it is like to be a new President of the United States, particularly one that doesn't come out of a legislative or government tradition? Everything is new as it comes to the content, but what is not new is so much of the process.

The President has been looking at contracts his entire life, Mr. Speaker. The President has been negotiating contracts his entire life. He took a look at the beginnings of the Pentagon contracts and said, by golly, we can do better for the American people; $728 million on project number one saved for the American taxpayer.

That brings us to number 16, Mr. Speaker, and that is 16 years since consumer confidence in this country has been as high as it is today. I enjoy traveling across the district, Mr. Speaker, and I am talking to folks. We are a divided community, like every community is in the country. Some folks believe one thing; some folks believe another. Generally, we are united on issues, but sometimes we are divided on issues. And voter after voter after voter says: ROB, I am not sure what is going to happen, but I feel like we are going to have opportunity. It has been 16 years since consumer confidence has reached this high of a level.

Now, with that increase in confidence, Mr. Speaker, comes an incredible obligation on the 435 of us to deliver. This isn't confidence that is based on nothing happening. This is confidence based on something happening. We have real obligations to fulfill those promises, those commitments that we all made during the last election cycle. I think we have the men and women in this Chamber who can do it, but it has been 16 years since the American people believed that we could.

I want to put those border crossings in perspective, Mr. Speaker. There has been a 61 percent decline in border crossings in President Trump's first 100 days.

Now, I come from Georgia. We have got a robust agricultural economy in Georgia. And I tell my constituents day in and day out, if you are not going to raise your son or daughter to pick carrots in south Georgia; if you don't aspire for your son or daughter to be the very best cabbage picker that we have in the State of Georgia; if you are not aspiring to be part of that agricultural economy and help us get crops out of the field, we are going to need somebody who is aspiring to do that hard work. And it is hard work, Mr. Speaker.

Well, if we can agree that these aren't jobs that American citizens are losing, these are jobs that are adding to the American economy, then we need a legal visa program to let folks come in and to let folks go out. I went on a bipartisan codel, Mr. Speaker—a bipartisan codel, Republicans and Democrats, traveling together to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras talking with families.

You remember the women and children crisis there: unaccompanied minors coming across the border? I talked to family after family, and they said: ROB, listen, I don't want to be an American citizen. I don't want to go to America. I don't want to be in America. I am happy here at home. But dad, or my husband, he generally travels to America during the growing season, during the construction season, and turns around and comes back home when that season is over.

Well, you all are getting so tough on your border security, you are not handing out legal visas to do this work, that now my husband or my dad can't come back home when the growing season is over. So now we are all picking up, and we are trying to get into America, too, so the family can stay together.

Well, it makes perfectly good sense to me if you were that family. It makes no sense if you are the American taxpayer. You recognize that you have jobs that need to be filled. You recognize you have skills that you are not training your children to fulfill, and you don't want to change the visa program to make that happen.

The President has committed to growing the economy. We know that is going to mean legal access in and out of the country. There was a 61 percent drop in illegal border crossings in the first 100 days.

I will tell you what else that means, Mr. Speaker. That means, instead of our border patrol men and women working that border under very difficult conditions, instead of our law enforcement, instead of all of the instruments of homeland security that we have in this country being focused on families crossing the border, with a 61 percent decline in this human traffic crossing the border, law enforcement can now focus on the real security issues to this country: to the drugs crossing the border, to the weapons crossing the border; forbid the thought to weapons of mass destruction crossing the border.

There have been tremendously important accomplishments here in the first 100 days; so much more that we will be able to do together.

Mr. Speaker, there were 25 Iranian entities sanctioned by the Trump administration in the first 100 days. That is what we did together in this Chamber. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, we passed the Iranian sanctions language in a bipartisan way to send the word to the leaders of Iran that while we have great respect for your citizenry, we cannot tolerate a nuclear Iran. We do not trust you to be a member of the league of nations with nuclear capabilities, and the answer is no as you pursue those very dangerous dreams.

Well, you will remember, President Obama negotiated a deal with the international community and with the Iranians. I wish he hadn't, but he did. We had sanctions. Those sanctions are now gone. Iran is pursuing very much the same path that I would have expected them to pursue, given the deal that was negotiated. And the world continues to be a dangerous place.

Well, we have rules on the books today, laws on the books today that allow the government, in consultation with Congress, in cooperation with Congress, based on statutes passed by Congress, to get involved unilaterally as the United States of America in trying to prevent a nuclear Iran.

There were 25 different entities identified by this administration as helping the Iranian Government to pursue those dangerous and illegal nuclear goals sanctioned and reined in. It is going to make a difference. It is going to make a difference to national security. It is going to make a difference to international security.

Mr. Speaker, $18 billion—you can't see this slide, but already in 4 months on the job, 4 months in cooperation with this Congress, we have seen $18 billion saved through the elimination of red tape. I don't mean $18 billion that is a one-time deal, Mr. Speaker. I mean $18 billion annually in wasteful compliance costs erased by this administration, again, often in cooperation and consultation with Congress.

When I go back and tell you that this President has signed more bills into law than any President since Harry Truman in cooperation with this Congress, I am talking about many of the bills that did exactly this: cutting red tape, saving the American taxpayer money. Those bills, very often, were brought through the Congressional Review Act process. That is a process, as you know, Mr. Speaker, that allows the Congress to take a look at the regulations that the administration promulgates.

We pass the laws; the administration writes the regs; we get to go back and look at the regs to make sure they represent the true intent of the legislation.

Well, in many instances so far this year, Mr. Speaker—in fact, in more instances than any other time in American history, we have decided that those regulations do not reflect the intent of Congress. In fact, often they are running directly contrary to the intent of Congress. We have eliminated those $18 billion annually in savings to the American taxpayer.

Remember the Keystone pipeline, Mr. Speaker. This administration approved the Dakota Access pipeline. Think back, Mr. Speaker. We are going to disagree on things. I am perfectly comfortable with the disagreements that this body has. But when the application for the Keystone pipeline was delivered to the administration, it took longer for the past two administrations to approve the Keystone pipeline—and by approve it, I mean ultimately they rejected it. It took longer for them to consider and reject the Keystone pipeline than it took for Americans to build the Hoover Dam from start to finish.

I want you to think about that. When we are talking about jobs; when we are talking about the economy; when we are talking about America being that beacon of hope, and freedom, and opportunity across the country; when we are talking about the tremendous need for public works projects in this country, and the amazing things the American people can do when they put their shoulder into it, it took longer in the 21st century to get an answer to whether or not you are allowed to build a pipeline than it took to build the Hoover Dam from start to finish. That is bad for all of us.

□ 1615

That is bad for every Republican, every Democrat, every Independent. Every single American citizen needs economic opportunity. Every single American citizen needs a job. Every single American citizen needs the certainty of knowing if the pipeline is bad, let's cancel it and let's move on. But let's not sit and wait and delay. Let's not debate and debate. Let's get to an answer.

In the first 100 days on the job, President Trump got to an answer. President Bush and President Obama, combined, again, over 8 years of delay. President Trump, first 100 days, approved this.

What does this mean? Well, it means that the oil coming out of Canada is going to come to America to be refined. Remember, the Keystone Pipeline debate, Mr. Speaker, was never about the environment and whether or not the Canadians were going to harvest this oil. It was never about that. The Canadians were loud and clear: We are going to get this oil out of the ground. We are either going to get it out of the ground and send it to America to be processed, or we are going to get it out of the ground and send it to China to be processed. You pick.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is an easy choice. If I get to be king of Canada, I can make different decisions about their environment. But while Canada has sovereignty and gets to make its own decisions about its natural resources, we get to decide: Are American citizens going to profit from the processing of this oil or is China going to profit from the processing of this oil?

When this oil gets processed, who do you think is doing it in the most environmentally sensitive manner, Mr. Speaker? You tell me. If there's a single colleague in this body that believes the Chinese are better stewards of the environment than the Americans are, then you needed to vote ''no'' on the Keystone pipeline. But if you believe that we care more about Mother Earth than the Chinese do, if you believe that American rules and regulations protect the environment more than Chinese rules and regulations do, then you needed to be a supporter of the Keystone pipeline.

In his first 100 days, President Trump took this source of indecision and confusion and provided certainty. That is not academic, Mr. Speaker. That certainty is directly connected to jobs.

You can't see it from where you sit, Mr. Speaker, but I am talking about over 500,000 new jobs not connected to the pipeline, individually. There are going to be a lot of jobs on the pipeline. Not this number. I am talking about this approach to governing that says people deserve a ''yes'' or a ''no'' answer. People deserve certainty. People deserve fast responses. People don't need to hang in the lurch.

Every single Member of this body, Mr. Speaker, has seen it in their constituency back home where a small-business owner said: You know what? I wanted to hire a few more people, but I wasn't really sure what was about to happen and so I have been putting it off. I wanted to open a new franchise, but I wasn't entirely sure of what the economic situation was going to be so I have been putting it off.

When we talk about the economic growth over the past 100 days, when we talk about the stock markets moving, when we talk about consumer confidence rising, when we talk about new jobs being created, we are talking about a change in attitude. And I have seen it on both sides of this body.

It is a shame, Mr. Speaker, there is that underlying current that maybe voters reward fighting with each other more than they reward working together. I don't believe it, but I certainly see people posit that theory. I believe folks reward cooperation and getting things done. I don't think people pay us to agree with each other. I think people pay us to make progress together—500,000 new jobs.

I will read from The Wall Street Journal. It says: ''The Trump order is a promise in the bank for the voters who elected the President because he promised to focus on jobs and revving up the economy.''

I believe it is 12 congressional districts, Mr. Speaker, that have Democrats representing them in Congress, but those districts voted for President Trump in the Presidential election. These are not conservative men and women out across the district pursuing some sort of ideological agenda. These are hardworking American families who identify more with the Democratic Party and Democratic values but who began to lose hope in what was going on with regulation across the country and job creation across the country, and they cast their vote for President Trump.

Over 500,000 new jobs, Mr. Speaker.

What are we talking about? We are talking about the Keystone pipeline. We are talking about the Clean Power Plan, which, alone, threatened to put about 286,000 jobs out to pasture. We are talking about new investments in infrastructure.

I am not just talking about roads and bridges, Mr. Speaker. I am talking about the FAA and air transportation. I am talking about ports like the Port of Savannah in Georgia, the fastest growing container port in the Nation, and sea transportation. I am talking about railroads. I am talking about water infrastructure to make sure every family has access to clean and healthy drinking water.

These are job-creating proposals, and they are job-creating proposals that have been kept off the books for so long because of regulatory uncertainty.

Today we have an opportunity to do that for the very first time.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to take you back to where I began, and that is that we have a choice in this country. We can focus on the things that divide us all day every day. We can do it. I still believe there is more that unites us as a nation than divides us as a nation, but if you choose to spend your time talking about those things that divide us, you can fill up a day.

If you choose to spend your time talking about those things that are broken yet proffering no solutions to fix them, you can fill up a day. If you choose to spend your day talking about why everybody else is a lazy son of a gun and only you have access to the truth, you can fill up a day, and then a week, and then a month, and then a year, and then a Presidential cycle, and then a decade, and then a generation.

But, Mr. Speaker, if you will recognize that working together we have already passed more laws in 2017 than any other Congress and President working together since Harry Truman, if you will recognize that we have taken the uncertainty out of the Supreme Court—we fully staffed the Supreme Court so that uncertainty in the legal arena will exist no longer—if you recognize that a thorny issue like illegal immigration that has been made so difficult to solve because we haven't been able to figure out how to deal with the border security aspect so that we can go on and deal with the other thorny issues, those border crossings are down, which means our opportunity has increased for dealing with these problems that have plagued our Nation for so long.

I can give you one example of that, Mr. Speaker. I am going to digress.

I have got a family in my district trying to bring a relative into the country from Haiti. They have been working on it for 11 years—11 years. All the talk that goes on in this body about immigration, nobody is taking about helping my constituents from Haiti. Nobody is talking about passing a law to make it easier to get your family member in from Haiti. Nobody is talking about those families that have been separated while trying to follow the law of the land. Nobody is talking about those families that have paid out of pocket to go through the legal process—all the time, all the money, all the delay to do it the right way. Nobody is talking about fixing it for those families.

Let's fix it for those families because we all agree there is a better way. If you want to get your adult child in from Mexico, Mr. Speaker, you needed to file your paperwork in 1993 for their number to be coming up today—1993, to do it the right way and have their number to come up today.

Who believes a 25-year process to bring a family member into this country is the right answer? Of course folks are going to do it the wrong way.

If you want to bring your adult brother or sister in from the Philippines, you had to file in 1994 for their number to be coming up legally today. Who believes that is the right system?

The system is broken. We don't have enough trust together to repair the system. By eliminating the illegal border crossing's immediate challenge, the President has created the headroom for us to work together on issues that we can absolutely solve.

728, Mr. Speaker, the number of millions of dollars saved in contract negotiations thus far—in fact, not even thus far, but contract negotiations on one single Pentagon project that the President has inserted himself in.

For all the things you may think the President knows, doesn't know, you agree with, you disagree with, you have to know that he knows how to drive a hard bargain. You have to know that he knows how to negotiate big contracts.

The American taxpayer is not satisfied with the way we have been doing it, with the way former White Houses have been doing it. We have an opportunity to come together and do it better, and the President is leading us in that way.

And that all culminates, Mr. Speaker, in 16. That is the number of years since consumer confidence in this country was at its current levels. You can do that math if you would like, Mr. Speaker. It will take you back through an entire 8 years of Democratic control of the White House, and it will take you back through an entire 8 years of Republican control of the White House.

The American consumer does not care whether you are a Republican or a Democrat. The American consumer cares whether or not they think their job is secure.

The American consumer does not care if you are a Republican or a Democrat. The American consumer cares whether prices are higher tomorrow or lower tomorrow.

The American consumer does not care about our petty, silly, inside-the-beltway Washington arguments. They care about whether America is going to be stronger for their children and grandchildren a generation from now. And it has been 16 years since American consumers have the optimism that they have today.

I will say it again, Mr. Speaker. We can consume every second of every day in this body fussing, griping, complaining—there are lots of things that are wrong and lots of folks to blame for it—or we can recognize the big hopes and dreams that the American people have placed on this President and this Congress and this time in our history. We can recognize that there is still more that unites us in this country than divides us in this country. We can still recognize that folks care very little about us and our families and care so very much about their community and their families.

With that as our touchstone, Mr. Speaker, call me an irrational optimist, but I think there is absolutely nothing that we can't do together, and I look forward to playing a role in that.

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

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S TAX PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, this Special Order is for the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and I am so proud to be a vice chair of that caucus and to lead the Special Order hour with my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

We do this once a week, and we try to take up topics that we think are of great interest across the country to our constituency. So I am very proud to have the Congressional Progressive Caucus leading the way on so many issues that are important, from education to transportation, infrastructure to, of course, today's topic, which is the tax plan that was released yesterday by President Trump.

The tax plan that was released yesterday—and I have to start by saying I am not sure this is actually the plan. I am not sure that a one-page document constitutes a plan. This is not even a two-sided document. It is a one-sided document. This is what we are reacting to. And it is similar to the tax plan that candidate Trump spoke about during the campaign.

So we will do our best with what has been put forward as a plan, but this plan, in our estimation, when you look at what it contains, really amounts to nothing more than a one-page document full of handouts to the rich.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Steve Mnuchin, yesterday said, during a press conference, that one thing that this President has done very well—this is a quote: ''One thing this President has done very well is listen.''

Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with that. Two weekends ago, there were 190,000 Americans in red States and blue States across the country who were on the streets asking for the President to release his tax returns in the same way that every other President of the United States has done in modern history. Unfortunately, this President has not listened. As a candidate, he said he would release his tax returns. As a President, he has refused to do so.

He didn't listen when women and their allies took to the streets in the biggest march in American history to demand that he respect women, protect Planned Parenthood, and support equal rights for women.

And this President certainly didn't listen to the millions of Americans who were outspoken in their opposition to the Republican healthcare plan that essentially took $1 trillion off of the backs of working people and folks who need health care across this country and transferred it to the wealthiest in our country.

The reality is this President, unfortunately, has not been listening to the American people. If you look at that healthcare plan, just as an example, only 17 percent of the American public actually supported TrumpCare. This President has not been listening, to now put forward another plan on health care that again suggests that we should actually take away essential health benefits from people, take away the opportunity for people to have preexisting conditions covered, and, once again, leaving an additional 24 million Americans stripped of their health care.

□ 1630

So in this tax press conference yesterday, it became very clear that the administration doesn't have really an idea of exactly what the plan is going to look like, except for the fact that it will be good for business.

Secretary Mnuchin said:

''Under the Trump plan, we will have a massive tax cut for businesses. . . .''

Despite all of President Trump's broken promises, we have to believe that this may actually be true. Let's not forget that the Secretary of the Treasury was a C-level executive at Goldman Sachs and his loyalties have been with Big Business.

The tax plan, as we have been given it on this one-page document, is a gift-wrapped tax cut to the highest earners and corporations. The claim is that it was written to create jobs and spur economic growth and help low- and middle-income families, but what it really does is drastically reduce tax rates for Big Business to just 15 percent. That tax break isn't just for cooperations; it is also for pass-through firms.

Let's be clear about what pass-through firms are. Pass-through firms are entities that wealthy people and companies use in order to funnel money and have lower tax rates. Among these companies is The Trump Organization.

This is why, in asking for the President's tax returns, this is not just an ask that doesn't have any meaning. It is not a partisan ask. We have 190,000 Americans in the streets in red States and blue States asking. When we know what is in the President's tax returns, then we have the ability to make sure that we understand, as the American people, whether any plan he proposes is in the interest of the American people or whether it is in his own financial interest.

According to the Center for American Progress, 70 percent of partnership and S corporation income goes to the top 1 percent of U.S. households by income. So when you propose a tax cut for these pass-through entities, we are talking about a tax cut for the people in the top 1 percent of this country. We are not talking about a tax cut that benefits middle class, working families.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities provided a specific example where a lawyer making $1 million a year could funnel their income through that pass-through and could actually save $180,000 a year. There is no doubt that this President would himself benefit from this tax plan, although we can't say exactly how much, because we haven't seen the tax returns and we don't know exactly which financial interests he has and how much he would benefit.

However, his own lawyers reported that nearly all of his 500 or so businesses are—don't be surprised—pass-throughs. If we accept this assertion from his lawyers that his assets are worth more than $10 billion, then this tax plan or tax ploy, depending on how you want to see it, would actually save the President of the United States millions of dollars, but it would not benefit millions of working families across this country who actually need to see our tax system reform so that it is more fair.

When asked how these tax cuts were paid for, Secretary Mnuchin said they would be so effective at bolstering the economy that it would pay for itself. Now, we have seen trickle-down economics before in this country, and it is a nonsensical idea that this tax plan would bolster the economy. We have seen the disastrous effects of trickle-down economics specifically on low-income and middle-income families.

The Tax Foundation estimates that reducing the business rate for companies and pass-throughs to 15 percent would actually reduce revenue in this country by $3.5 trillion over 10 years. They also found that, at the very best, the plan would only spur enough growth to pay for less than half the cost of the tax cuts. Low-and middle-income Americans would ultimately pay the price, not Big Business.

Now, this is similar to what we saw in the healthcare plan. In the healthcare plan, if you remember, what we saw was a proposal to cut $880 billion from Medicaid and take that money and essentially give a trillion dollars in tax cuts to the wealthiest. So if you were in the top 4 percent of income earners in this country, you would have gotten a tax cut of about $200,000 a year. But if you were in that age that we like to call seniors, between 50 and 64, you would have an age tax and you would have to pay up to $15,000 more on your premiums. So that is why some of my colleagues across the aisle actually called that healthcare plan a downpayment on a tax plan. It was supposed to be the beginning of a tax reform plan that, again, moved more money to the wealthiest in our country.

We are seeing a State-level microcosm of this playing out right now in the State of Kansas where the State passed massive tax cuts, including exempting pass-throughs from State taxes.

The result?

More than 333,000 residents changed their income to funnel through pass-throughs in the first year alone.

What happened in Kansas when this was pushed through?

State revenue went down by an additional almost 2 percent, costing $206 million in 2013 and $472 million the following year.

Today, the State faces a $1.1 billion shortfall, and residents are paying the price in lost programming and services. But the promise that was made at the time that this plan was pushed through in Kansas—the same kind of plan that is being proposed today at the Federal level—the promise that was made was that it would kick-start the economy. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, that hasn't happened either. Economic growth in Kansas is happening at just half the national average.

Because here is the thing: tax cuts don't just pay for themselves, and there are plenty of experts on both sides of the aisle that will attest to that. A sheet of paper is not a plan, and everyone knows it.

When reporters pressed Secretary Mnuchin and the National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn for details, they failed to provide anything of substance. A reporter asked Cohn three times what the tax cut would look like for a family of four making $60,000 per year.

I have a lot of those families, Mr. Speaker, in my district. I believe we have those families in red States and blue States, working people across this country who believe that America should be and must be a land of opportunity for people who work hard. Maybe they are not the richest people in the world. Maybe they are not the richest top 1 percent in this country. But they work hard, they earn a good living, and they deserve to have fairness in our tax plan.

Now, when Mr. Cohn was asked three times by this reporter what the tax cut would look like for a family of four making $60,000 a year, he replied it is ''gonna mean a tax cut'' three times in a row. Instead of getting answers, though, and when he was pressed, reporters were told over and over again that they would get more information later and that the administration is in ''robust talks.''

Well, I am a Member of the House, and supposedly those robust talks are happening with the House and the Senate. We all represent the people of the United States. We want to all be a part

of the conversation, and we demand to know specifically, as we look at this plan, how this President, his family, and his Cabinet will benefit from the tax plan. That is only fair, Mr. Speaker, that we understand exactly how this tax plan would benefit the person who is proposing the tax plan.

Is this tax plan for the American people to see relief, or is it for the President and his best friends to see relief?

The reality is that this is about an issue of trust. The American people deserve to know whether they can trust this President and this administration to act on their behalf. So far, unfortunately, this administration has continued to throw the middle class under the bus, whether it is threatening to cut funding for Meals on Wheels, which is part of the budget proposal in cutting the CDBG programs, or whether it is in proposing a healthcare plan that cuts vital health care from millions of Americans. So we are intent to stay extremely vigilant.

I see that we have a couple of colleagues from the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a colleague on the Judiciary Committee, a strong champion for working people in Texas and across our country.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) for yielding and for her leadership on this Special Order.

I will take just a moment of the gentlewoman's time because I think she has captured the essence of the frustration, not that Members of Congress have, but that the American people have. So I wanted to make sure that I shared some of the contrasts that we have between what has happened yesterday and the announcement of the administration of Mr. Trump's tax proposal, which, in essence, is really a bowl of horror. It is a continuation of an ineffective 100 days, and the fear that I have is that it was rushed and put together to meet this really unnecessary standard or unnecessary test of 100 days, one that was so pronounced during Mr. Trump's campaign in contrast to Mr. Clinton, Mr. Bush, and Mr. Obama, the last three Presidents that we have as examples.

What is in the first 100 days?

The first 100 days should be working. You should be working every day and you should have to account or you should be able to account for the successes that you have done in the normal course of work. Methodically, you can check off the good that you have done for the American people; that it comes naturally, that you have been methodical, that you have worked with Congress, that you worked with your executives, that you have looked to see what can be improved.

All that we can see is what has been destroyed or dismantled or taxed or ridiculed. There is nothing that advantages the American people.

Certainly, the healthcare bill was ridiculing the American people. It was ridiculous. $880 billion was taken from Medicaid; $600 billion was to be used for tax cuts, which they do not have at this point. We fear that they will be rushing through such a bill in the next couple of days.

More importantly, where was the commitment to all of the promises?

So let me just speak to two particular points.

The economic security of women, what has happened under this administration?

Blocking expanded overtime pay, which disproportionately benefits women workers. Failing to advance equal pay, paid family leave, and affordable childcare legislation, talking about it but doing nothing.

Endangering retirement security by blocking a rule requiring retirement advisers to put clients first.

Can you imagine?

Senior citizens have helped build this country, and you would deny them adequate counsel on their retirement. That has happened.

All of these have happened under the Trump administration: proposing severe cuts to the Department of Labor, which would hinder enforcement of family and medical leave. Of course, cutting Meals on Wheels, as has been indicated. Cutting the National Institutes of Health. Major lifesaving research down the drain. Scientists looking for other countries to go to because they have no room at the inn.

And then making student debt harder to pay off by rescinding a rule that limits the fees that loan companies can charge its borrowers. Remember, those borrowers are 18, 19, 20, 21 years old. They are the next generation or the current generation of the builders of this economy and this society.

Then to add insult to injury, if I might say, yesterday a big pronouncement announced over the weekend the biggest, fattest tax cut you could ever have or tax reform that you would ever have. Of course, everyone knows in America this is not tax reform. This is a simple bunch of tax cuts that will have a competition between debt and deficit. This will be a spiraling downward trend digging America into the deepest hole of debt and deficit in the history of the United States.

Trillions of dollars spent on individuals and corporations that do not need it.

How do I know?

I have spoken to them, and there is a whole litany of corporate issues that are not being answered.

For example, the idea of being able to deduct interest payments is nowhere to be found. That might help middle class working families, as well as corporations and small businesses.

What you have is trickle-down economics. President Trump's tax plan is built on the same trickle-down economics that withered inequality and undermined working families.

There are massive tax breaks for Trump himself. In the course of his days that he may have paid taxes—and let me be very clear that we don't know what impact this tax bill would have on him because we do not have his tax returns. But we do know, in the last time we have records, he had to pay $39 million in taxes because of the alternative minimum tax put in place in 1986 by President Reagan.

Can you imagine?

If there was not the AMT—alternative minimum tax—he would be paying $5 million.

□ 1645

Well, ladies and gentlemen, my dear colleagues, they have eliminated in this tax bill the AMT. That sounds suspicious, and it shouldn't sound suspicious. It is suspicious, and the reality of it is it is self-promoting and self-happening.

Then, of course, these tax cuts are moving the corporate rate from 35 to 15. Let me make a breaking news announcement. Most corporations pay about 14, but with the 35 moved to 15, maybe they will pay zero.

Who is going to be part of the overall supporting and investment in this Nation, to build our infrastructure, to create jobs, to build the new level of energy, new technology, to ensure that health care is provided for those who need it, to make sure that the Affordable Care Act continues to cover the millions of people that need it instead of cutting 24 million people?

Well, with the tax cuts in place, there is a rush to judgment. That judgment is a pronouncement of a complete deficit hole for the American people. That is what this tax cut does. There are no benefits for working class Americans or middle class Americans. There is no incentive to create jobs. In fact, I have no idea what the thinking or planning was that went into the President's tax plan.

All I know is that the American people who get up every day and go to work, or those who get up every day and get three or four buses to go to work—and part of the time that they are going to work, they have to drop off their children at a school that may not be in their neighborhood because there is a need for more investment in education. All I know is that those people whom I am so proud to be able to represent, as well as large businesses and small businesses that, I believe, as I have listened to corporate leaders just a few hours ago saying, ''We are with you all. We want what is best for America. This is not what we desire, not to give all to us or the top 1 percent. We want to help America grow because, as America grows, our companies thrive, our shareholders thrive,'' that is not the message of this administration.

So I am delighted to join the Congressional Progressive Caucus to ask the question of the Trump administration: Are you so worried about the 100

days that you cannot worry about the American people? Is 100 days more important than the mother who is traveling to work 3 and 4 hours? Is 100 days more important than the traveling salesmen who need the kind of infrastructure and roads that work? or those in southern America that need the kind of rural electric system that helps them? or those that need clean energy? or those that need research for the next cure for sickle cell anemia?

Is your 100 days so important that you cannot provide resources for law enforcement and firefighters and first responders, that you cannot provide help for the national parks, the National Endowment for the Arts, and you cannot provide direction to the Department of Justice, which has turned itself into the injustice, unjust department, exploring ideas of taking away civil rights, denying individuals their rights as citizens in the United States in terms of discrimination and equality, opportunity or, in actuality, creating the one thing that you can be proud of, and that is the deportation task force that is demonizing hardworking individuals who simply want an opportunity for their families?

So I would only say that I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me, and I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), as well, for his presence here and others that will come and ask the question: Are all these people that we have listed less important than your 100 days? I am saddened if the answer is yes.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague Congresswoman PRAMILA JAYAPAL and who is leading tonight "Congressional Progressive Caucus Special Order the impact of President Trump's Tax Cut Plan."

As a member of the House Budget Committee, I would participate in any Committee's markup of a tax reform bill.

President Trump's much anticipated tax plan is another disappointment; a poor work product; something he should have been ashamed to put his name on; and it reveals yet again what many warned about before the election.

This President is unprepared for his office, and he shows either no capacity or interest in on the job training.

This tax plan in any school of business would get a failing grade.

A one page federal tax cut plan—really is an insult to the American People.

This plan shows no command of the facts regarding our nation's very complex tax system.

President Trump's tax plan, just as his healthcare reform proposal, and immigration reform proposal would hurt working families and disproportionately favor the wealthy and large corporations at the expense of the nation's middle class.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin set out a test for tax reform that, "there will be no absolute tax cut for the upper class."

But the president's tax plan has failed this test miserably by providing a huge tax cut for the wealthy while middle income families would receive very little benefit.

In fact, Trump's tax plan provides a huge tax benefit for him personally. Using his 2005 tax return numbers, President Trump would save about $28.6 million in taxes under his plan.

About $27 million of those savings is due to the reduction of the pass through income rate to 15%.

President Trump's tax proposal blows a hole in the nation's deficit.

It's become painfully obvious that the deficit only matters when a Democrat is President.

The plan is not revenue neutral. In fact, early press reports indicate that the Trump proposal is likely to add several trillions of dollars to our deficit.

Busting the deficit the way the Trump tax plan would do puts immediate pressure on our other obligations—including guaranteed Medicare benefits.

The President can't pretend to protect Medicare, then leave beneficiaries completely exposed by draining our coffers.

For some context, these tax cuts could fund Medicare for the next 75 years or more.

You have to question the priorities of the President—is he working to keep his promises to hardworking Americans, or is he abandoning those promises in favor of enriching the wealthy.

President Trump's tax proposal is a return to Reagan's failed supply side economics.

The evidence is clear: large tax cuts like this don't pay for themselves, despite the rhetoric we hear from this Administration. Just ask the conservative leaning Tax Foundation.

This broad outline—which lacks any kind of real detail—seems to simply be a repeat of the mistakes we made with President George W. Bush's tax cuts in 2001 and 2003, which cost us trillions of dollars, did nothing to help working families, and, in part, contributed to the Great Recession.

Democrats know that the Middle Class deserves the tax cut, not Donald Trump and his Cabinet.

We would focus on growing our economy from the middle out, instead of trickle-down economics from the top down.

The middle class does not need to lose their healthcare coverage provided by the Affordable Care Act.

The middle class does not need to deal with the consequence of a massive tax cut for the wealthy.

Any tax cut must be paid for by getting funding from somewhere else in the federal budget.

The source of funding to pay for the tax cuts under the failed repeal of the Affordable Care Act would have come from Medicare and Medicaid—hurting millions of people who would have lost access to health insurance coverage.

I am joining my colleagues this evening in strong opposition to this Administration's attempt to diminish the quality of life of working families by creating unfair burdens like funding ill-conceived tax cut plans.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for eloquently articulating so many of the issues that are in front of us right now, including, once again: What exactly is this administration doing for people across this country, both those who voted for him and those who didn't, but middle class Americans who are trying to make sure that this country stays a land of opportunity?

Mr. Speaker, so the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), my distinguished vice chair and co-chair of this Special Order hour, may control the remainder of this hour, I yield back the balance of my time.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S TAX PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for leading us in this Special Order to discuss President Trump's tax proposal, which we received this morning—or last night. The public discussion on taxes has been going on for several weeks now in anticipation of the release of the President's proposal.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans took to the streets, from the East to the West, the North to the South, all over America. Hundreds of thousands of people marched with a very simple demand to President Trump, which is that he follow the precedent and the policy that was pursued by the last nine Presidents, going back to Richard Nixon, for a half century of releasing his tax returns, something that President Trump promised to do as a President, saying he would do it after his audit was completed, and then he got into office and then just changed his mind and said this would be, I guess, another one of the broken promises that he would deliver to the American people.

So why is this a big deal? Why is it important that we get to see the President's taxes?

Well, America was conceived in popular democratic revolution against royalty, against monarchy, against aristocracy. We, as a people, overthrew a king who imposed tea taxes on small businesses, on the little people, but exempted his tycoon buddies in the East India Corporation, a king who constantly sweated the commoners with high taxes to pay for his lavish expenses and traveling jaunts and vacations around the world with the royal family and the royal court, a king who never paid any taxes and never disclosed his own entanglements with foreign governments. We rebelled against that kind of government.

We demand accountability. We demand transparency here.

Mr. President, please read the Constitution. We have no kings here. We have no slaves here. We have no czars here. We have no serfs here. We have equal citizens, free citizens with equal rights.

We allow no titles of nobility here, which is a point you might mention to your Secretary of State, who still carries that disgraceful title conferred upon him by Vladimir Putin, the Russian Order of Friendship.

In America, no one is above the law and all of us are subject to it. As Tom

Paine put it, in the monarchies, the king is law; but in the democracies, the law is king.

The President of the United States owes an undivided loyalty to the people, the laws, and the Constitution of the United States, not the oligarchs of Russia, not the businessmen of Azerbaijan, not the hotel owners of the world, not the Bank of China, not the dictators and kleptocrats and tyrants of the Earth. The President owes undivided loyalty to the people of the United States.

So we ask the question: Where are your taxes?

How can we determine whether the President has conflicts of interest or is collecting illegal emoluments from foreign governments if he won't show us the names of the people and the corporations that he is in active partnership with all over the world? We simply can't do it.

How can we dream of undertaking to completely reform and revise the tax policy of America unless we see the President's tax returns in order to determine whether or not he is going to benefit from the policies that he is now advancing? We can't do it.

Forgive me, but is there anyone left in America who thinks that this President would propose a tax reform that would hurt his own individual, personal, or business interests? If you believe that, you are too innocent to be let out of the house by yourself at this point in the Trump administration.

So then we arrive at work and we receive this. This single piece of paper is the Donald Trump tax plan. It is not a bill. It is not a study. It is not a plan. There are not even complete sentences in it. There are sentence fragments in it. It is not even a press release.

But it has got a few key ideas, apparently, that he is asking the Republicans in Congress to lead us to pass by tomorrow in order to make the 100-day deadline which the President has disdained and castigated. But he wants to make the 100-day deadline because he understands now that there is some kind of milestone that he wants to suddenly be able to achieve.

Well, what is in here?

Well, first, the Treasury Secretary, Mr. Mnuchin, set out a test for tax reform in which he said there will be no absolute tax cut for the upper class. Well, this plan totally defies that promise. It betrays that promise. It provides a huge tax cut for the wealthy, while middle class families receive very little benefit, at the same time that social programs are being sliced and diced all over the Federal Government.

We also know that the tax plan will provide a huge benefit to Donald Trump himself. Now, we know this only because one of his tax returns leaked out, suspiciously, and some think, from the White House, the 2005 plan, which appeared on TV—nothing before that, nothing after.

But even taking this 1 year which, presumably, is most in the President's favor, President Trump would save over $28 million in taxes under the 1-page plan that got passed around Congress today. Most of that money comes through the reduction of the pass-through business income tax rate, reducing it from the 30 percent range to 15 percent.

But then it also proposes abolishing, and I know it because it says right here, bullet No. 3 under bullet No. 5, repeal the alternative minimum tax. He wants to repeal the alternative minimum tax.

Now, what is this AMT? AMT does not stand for ''all money to Trump.'' AMT stands for the alternative minimum tax. And what it means is, if you are superwealthy and you have got an army of lawyers on your side and you can structure your corporate bankruptcies and your personal business losses—of which President Trump has many—in such a way as to make it possible for you not to pay any taxes for a long time, the alternative minimum tax says, well, there is something that everybody has got to pay. There is an alternative minimum tax. We are not going to let anybody's clever lawyering bring them below a certain rate.

On that rule, we know that Mr. Trump, in that 1 year we know about, 2005—you probably saw it on Rachel Maddow. In that 1 year, he paid millions of dollars only because of the existence of the alternative minimum tax. In other words, all of his deductions and corporate bankruptcies and clever lawyers' tricks that got him down to zero, presumably, in all these other years that he won't show us, none of them could stop him from having to pay something, because the alternative minimum tax says let's not press a good joke too far. We understand you are very wealthy. We understand that there are loopholes that have been injected to the law, but we are not going to let anybody fall below a certain minimum threshold.

You could think of it kind of like equivalent to the minimum wage for working people. The alternative minimum tax is kind of the minimum wage that the wealthiest people in the country pay us, as opposed to escaping all of their taxes.

Well, Donald Trump now wants to abolish the alternative minimum tax. He just wants to get rid of it. That doesn't sound like a very good idea. It is going to dig a superbig hole for us and dig the deficit much further.

Let's talk about the deficit. Well, I thought—look, I love the fact that we have got two parties. We should have more parties. It is great that we have got a left and a right. A bird can only fly if it has got a left wing and a right wing, all right?

□ 1700

But I thought that the heart of Republican Party orthodoxy is you don't blow up the deficit with outrageous tax proposals or spending proposals. They call us tax-and-spend liberals. They are cut-the-taxes-and-spend conservatives. I don't even know what makes them conservative anymore. I call myself a liberal because the heart of the word ''liberal'' is liberty. I call myself a progressive because the heart of the word ''progressive'' is progress. And if we are not making progress, then what are we doing in government?

But after seeing this plan, I realize those of us on our side of the aisle can call ourselves conservatives, too, because we want to conserve the land, the air, the water, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, political democracy, our alliances with foreign governments and foreign democracies, Social Security, health care for the people, and we want to preserve as much of a balanced budget as we can get to. On the other side of the aisle, they are calling themselves conservatives, and I don't know why because if they back this proposal, then they are blowing a multitrillion-dollar hole in the deficit.

This plan is not remotely revenue neutral. The earliest estimates are that it will blow a 6 or $7 trillion hole in the deficit. That, of course, is a way to put unsustainable pressure on the other commitments we have made as a Congress, as a people, Social Security commitments to the people, and Medicare commitments to the people for health care. We cannot afford this irresponsible and reckless tax plan that has been sent to Congress by the President. It is a return to discredited, failed, supply-side economics. All they can say is they will blow a $7 trillion hole in the deficit, but they are going to make so much money back through all the economic activity that we will be able to make money on that. If you believe that, then you will believe Mr. Trump's promise that he is going to release his tax returns next year or the year after that.

Look, we do need tax reform in America because this system is regressive, and this system is opaquely complex. We need some real reform. But this is not remotely the answer, this one-page mimeographed sheet of some really bad ideas.

Let me just say one other thing that seems to have snuck in there: repeal the estate tax. They want to repeal the estate tax. This might be the greatest betrayal of all—not because President Trump has ever supported it, but because the Founders of America were determined to have an estate tax. I am talking about Thomas Jefferson, Tom Paine, and Ben Franklin. The original Americans wanted this to be a country of economic opportunity and freedom for people. But they thought the idea of inherited wealth passed down from generation to generation was a major threat to the idea of political equality and democracy for all. They saw that it would be unsustainable if you had huge fortunes—nowhere near as huge as they are today—but huge fortunes being

passed down from generation to generation. That would lead us to an aristocracy; that would lead us to a monarchy; and that would lead us to Presidents of the United States who would think that they don't have to show you their income taxes, Presidents of the United States who think it is okay to spend public money on fancy vacations for their family and Secret Service all over the country and the world and having a winter or a summer escape at Mar-a-Lago, Florida, and so on. Go back, please, I beseech the citizens of America, read Thomas Jefferson about inherited wealth.

Now, our laws today don't even have the estate tax or the inheritance tax starting until millions of dollars. The vast majority of Americans are not even affected by it. It applies right now only to the smallest sliver of the wealthiest Americans. I think—and forgive me for not having the facts in front of me—again, we are just getting this all right now, but I think we are now somewhere around $4.5 million. So if you die with $4.5 million, your estate is not going to be taxed. That is enough to send the kids and the grandkids to college. It is enough for people to inherit a house or two houses. That is not bad. But the fact that we would tax beyond that means that we are not going to get a society that is based on inherited wealth and deep, profound political and economic inequality which were totally anathema to the Founders of the country, and also, by the way, totally antithetical to the vision of Adam Smith who is the big hero to my conservative friends on the other side of the aisle.

Adam Smith was someone who said: You don't want to have inherited wealth in a society like that. That is dangerous. It will promote idleness and irresponsibility among the people who inherit hundreds of millions or billions of dollars. It will increase political inequalities and class tension in the society, and it will lead to irresponsible behavior by the people who have that kind of wealth.

People will get the idea that they can buy a public office. In America, public office is something that you earn. It is not something that you buy; but, right now, there is a model for elective politics around the country which is you don't have to be involved in politics, you don't have to be involved in social movements, you don't have to be involved in public service, and you don't have to do anything for anybody. As long as you have got enough money, you can go in, you can buy the consultants and the pollsters, and you can go right to the head of the class, and then you can get into office.

What is so dangerous about that? Well, look around the world. What is happening? There is a whole new model of government that is popping up from Putin's Russia to Duterte's Philippines to Orban's Hungary to Le Pen's France. And the model is this: that people get into office, and government becomes a moneymaking operation for them and their friends, for a tiny elite. That totally contradicts the promise of America. Our Founders were concerned with making sure that there would be public virtue, that we would put people in office who were committed to the common good, to the public interest of everybody, not to the goal of enriching themselves or their hotel partners or people they are in business with in Russia or in Saudi Arabia or all over the world. That is not the model. In America, the government has got to be devoted to the people.

So, America, read the fine print here. This tax plan contradicts everything that we were founded on as a country. It upsets the very idea of democracy—abolishing the estate tax, abolishing the alternative minimum tax, driving all the wealth up the income and wealth ladder. That is not America. We have got to stand up for what American values really are. We are not Russia. We are not a kleptocracy. We are not Azerbaijan. We are not Saudi Arabia. This is the United States of America. We need a government that is committed to the economic success of every family and of every person.

So I am urging the public to do exactly what you did with that terrible health proposal they came forward with that would have thrown 24 million Americans off health insurance in order to create hundreds of billions of dollars of tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. Reject it. Don't accept it.

America needs to know that all of the protests and the popular participation is working. The Women's March set the whole context for discussion about what is going to happen here because we know that President Trump campaigned like William Jennings Bryan, like he was a big populist. He was going to be on the side of the working people. But he got in, and the very people he denounced, like Goldman Sachs, have come to run his government. It is a Wall Street Cabinet. It is the wealthiest Cabinet in the history of the United States. That is who this government represents today. That is what this tax plan represents today.

So they are going to try to jam it down Congress over the next 24 hours. We are going to do everything to stop it. We need the help of the American people to stand up and say: No; what is the rush? Let's take time, and let's analyze what is in there. Let's see if it is consistent with our values. Let's see if it is going to blow a multitrillion-dollar hole in the U.S. deficit. Let's see if it is sustainable, and let's see if this is the best way to do this.

This is not a way to run Congress of the greatest democracy on Earth—springing things at us in the last minute, just like they did with the healthcare plan. The Affordable Care Act that they are so eager to slice and dice at this point came about after 70 hearings in this body, after a year and a half of debate, and after town meetings all over America. Their plan to destroy it they brought in on Monday night, and they voted it in on Wednesday with no hearings, with no witnesses, with no deliberation and discussion. Now they want to try the same magic trick with their tax plan.

They have got a royal straight flush. Let's be clear, they control the House, the Senate, the White House, and now, with the confirmation of Mr. Gorsuch, the Supreme Court. All that we have on our side are those three beautiful words that kick off our Constitution: we the people. We the people have to stand up and say that this is not what anybody voted for. It clearly was not what the majority of the country voted for because a majority of the people did not vote for Donald Trump. But it is not even what the States and the electoral college who were on his side wanted. Nobody was talking about a tax plan that would bring havoc and ruin to our economy and drive working class and middle class people even further into a position of submission to the wealthiest people who now appear to want to govern us in all things.

We don't begrudge anybody their wealth. It is great. This is a country where people can get rich. That is great. But your wealth does not give you the right to control everybody else. Your wealth does not give you the right to govern the rest of America. That is the principle at stake here.

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

DILIGENT CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it has been interesting hearing about a situation in the country—and it is amazing how some of us can look at the same thing and see very different situations. I know there are some that think we should stay in session all the time, but as is normally said back in Texas about the Texas legislature—and it applies even more so to the U.S. Congress—and that is, when legislature is in session, neither man nor property is safe.

We are voting on bills every day we are in session. As I understand it, there was a time when Congress could be in session, have hearings during the day, maybe vote in committee but not actually have votes on the floor during the day. But I think over the years, the concern has been if we are not voting on the floor where it is recorded, then people might not show up. There is certainly a body of evidence to support the country being better off when Congress doesn't come into session.

I had read that one of our Founders, Thomas Jefferson, for all his wisdom and his incredible draft—his was the first draft of the Declaration of Independence—Jefferson was not actually there in Philadelphia to help draft the

Constitution in 1787. But I had read that he sent a letter and remarked that if he had one thing that he could get into the Constitution—realizing, of course, it was too late at that point—but it would be a requirement that no bill could be voted on in Congress until it had been on file for a year.

Some might immediately respond: well, gee, there are so many bills that we pass as emergency bills; and I would respond that yes, and usually those things that are drafted so quickly are more problematic than other legislation that goes through a lengthy and more diligent look at what is in the bill before it is passed.

In fact, if we had such—and I am not advocating that we have this constitutional amendment—but I am noting, Mr. Speaker, the merits of having bills on file for a lengthy period of time so people have a chance to think about it, talk about it, weigh the merits, and go back to our districts and talk about the merits there.

Of course, I am not talking about going back and having these fake news townhalls where people who supported opponents demand townhalls, and they have their playbook for how you go about trying to intimidate your Member of Congress and keep intimidating until your Member of Congress becomes a coward and he is afraid not to have, or she is afraid not to have, a townhall. And then once you have cowarded them into having a townhall, then they have the playbook for how you totally disrupt the townhall.

□ 1715

That is not what I am talking about. I am talking about going all over your district talking to people eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart, and finding out where people are. It is incredible how people have come to be hurting over the last 8 years.

For all the talk that President Obama had about Fat Cats on Wall Street, it was as if there was a wink and a nod: Okay, I am going to refer to you guys on Wall Street as Fat Cats, but I am going to make you richer than you have ever been. I am going to stack the deck in your favor. All you have to do is endure me calling you Fat Cats, making references to you being so greedy. I may even refer to you being Republican, even though probably more of you donate to me than did my opponents. But that will be our little game. Then, of course, when I am out of office, you can pay me $400,000 for giving you an hour of my time. That is another wink and nod. It is just a friendly reward for how good I did for you while I was President.

Let's face it, the Democrats got through the Dodd-Frank bill that was supposed to punish the banks that brought us to the brink of ruin, but instead of punishing or reining in the investment banks on Wall Street that brought us to the brink of ruin, Dodd-Frank has overseen the demise of hundreds, even thousands of community banks that did not bring us anywhere close to the brink of economic disaster. In fact, they were the backbone.

As President George W. Bush was going out of office, he got $700 billion handed over to the Treasury Department so they could reward people like those at Goldman Sachs who helped bring us to the brink of desperation. In fact, I only saw one of the contracts that were drafted by the Treasury Department some years back. Lo and behold, it was one of the firms that was listed as being appropriate for the Treasury to contract with. Goldman Sachs was right in there.

Of course, with the disdain that Secretary Paulsen had for Goldman Sachs, he wasn't about to let their competitor, Lehman Brothers, survive. He was able to keep them from surviving, not helping them. God bless Ford Motor Company. They were able to turn down any government assistance that GM and Chrysler took.

There was a remedy, if we hadn't panicked and followed the advice of former FDIC Chairman Isaac. I found out from my Democratic friend BRAD SHERMAN that he actually was the one that first brought former Chairman Isaac to the Hill. He had a good solution that would not have caused us to take what was referred to by socialists the day after it passed as the biggest step toward socialism in the last 50 years, and that was the Federal Government crawling in bed and calling the shots with the investment banks on Wall Street, much to the ruin of so many community banks.

We gave advantages to the big banks. We hurt the community banks who were not able to compete as well. God bless all of those that have hung in there. I hope that we can rectify things better than that.

The bottom line, I think, testifying about what the Obama years were about—and was even acknowledged by President Obama—a few years ago, he actually acknowledged that his Presidency oversaw a record that had never happened before in U.S. history. Ninety-five percent of the income in the United States—that was under Obama's policies—95 percent of all American income went to the top 1 percent in America.

If you were looking for one fact to really characterize the abuses of the preceding 8 years, I think that would be in contention. Ninety-five percent of the income went to the top 1 percent, not under George W. Bush, not under George H.W. Bush, not under Ronald Reagan, not under Richard Nixon, not under Dwight Eisenhower, not even under Harry Truman, but under Barack Hussein Obama's policies.

During his Presidency, the way the deck was tilted against the middle class and shrunk as the poor in America grew under Obama's policies, we actually hit a milestone in American history. Ninety-five percent of the income went to the top 1 percent income earners. That is pretty amazing.

I do personally, Mr. Speaker, think that has something to do with the Republicans gaining the majority in the House, in the Senate, and getting the Presidency. Americans, by a huge margin of electoral votes, and if you look at the map, who voted for Donald Trump and who voted for Hillary Clinton, it pretty well establishes the Democratic Party as the fringe party of America. They won the fringes, other than some major cities here and there. They are the fringe party.

All across America—the bulk of America, when you look at the map, voted to change course. Let's try something different so that 95 percent of America's income doesn't end up in the pockets of the top 1 percent—those same 1 percent that will be paying former President Obama $400,000 for 1 hour of his time.

Where have we heard that recently?

Well, I don't believe that was George W. Bush speaking to the disabled veterans getting that kind of money. Oh, yes, I recall now. It was Hillary Clinton. It was Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton earned massive amounts for speeches while his wife was the Secretary of State. And, wow, all of those tens, hundreds, millions of dollars coming to the Clinton Foundation amazingly at the time that this company that ends up being controlled by the Russians are allowed by Hillary Clinton to buy 25 percent or so of our uranium production.

Let's recap briefly what the Clinton family has done for us. Well, we know that in the nineties, when it comes to foreign affairs, North Korea was a threat to the world, to freedom, because they had a crazy leader, Kim Jong-il, and the world was concerned that North Korea might get nuclear weapons.

So what happened through the Clinton administration?

Well, they sent Wendy Sherman and some other folks and they negotiated with the North Koreans and said: If you will just sign and say you are agreeing not to develop nuclear weapons, we will make sure you have everything you need to make nuclear weapons, but you will have to sign saying that when we give you everything, make sure you have everything to make nuclear weapons, you just won't make them into nuclear weapons.

I mentioned before, it reminds me of that routine Jeff Foxworthy talks about when he was not doing very well financially and a guy comes to take his car because he hasn't been able to make his payments, and he said: Look, man, please don't take my car. If you take my car, I can't do any more gigs and I can't make any money, and then I have no chance of paying you.

The guy said: Buddy, I am sorry, but my instructions were to either take the car or cash or a check.

Foxworthy said: Check? You mean I can just sign something and you will take that and leave me alone? Oh, I can give you a check. I didn't know that was going to be good enough.

I thought about Kim Jong-il thinking: You mean you will give me everything I need to create a bunch of nuclear weapons and you will accept my signature and that is good enough for Wendy Sherman and all those other people—our Under Secretary of State under Bill Clinton?

It is amazing that she has had the nerve to come out critical of any other Secretary of State after the disaster she presided over.

Yes, he was glad to sign whatever the Clintons wanted him to sign. He said: Sure, if Ms. Sherman wants me to sign something, I will sign whatever you want.

And in no time, what does he have?

Nuclear weapons.

President Obama comes into office and the whole world is concerned about Iran getting nuclear weapons.

What do they do?

They said: Let's send Wendy Sherman and some of these smart people like John Kerry, who doesn't now how to pronounce Genghis Khan. Let's send them over there to negotiate with Iran so that maybe we can keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons the same way some of these same people kept North Korea from developing nuclear weapons.

So what happens?

They go over and they give the largest supporter of terrorism in the world massive amounts of cash. By massive, I mean pallets of cash and checks; however you may want it. There is no telling. They may have sent some gold or platinum. Who knows? Plutonium.

It will be interesting in the years ahead to just see how terrible the agreement was and how we are finding out—it seems like almost every night in the news we find out some other disaster that the Obama administration provided the crazy supporters of terrorism in Iran. I don't mean the rank-and-file people.

We get the impression possibly a majority of Iranians like Americans. They wish they did not have radical Islamists in control, but they are. The Obama administration provided them murdering thugs who have killed, been responsible for the death of so many in the past, and no doubt will be again in the future, and they are on their way to having nuclear weapons, just like the Clinton administration oversaw with North Korea.

□ 1730

In the meantime, though at the end of the Bush administration, the President Bush administration actually was making progress in making our borders more secure. It never came out during those days, but the Republicans in the Texas delegation in Congress were having meetings once every couple of weeks with people in the Bush administration—Karl Rove, Chertoff—a lot of good that did. But we were getting reports every couple weeks. We wanted to know what advancements, what progress had been made in the preceding two weeks in securing our border. They were taking steps to do that.

President Obama takes over, and what happens? It is like the floodgates were opened. As the Border Patrol have said to the drug cartels who were responsible from the Mexico side for every inch of the border, if you cross over in one drug cartel's sector, you must make sure you have their permission. Normally that means you must pay or agree to work for them when you get to the U.S. city where you are going.

That is why they called the Department of Homeland Security their logistics, that all the drug cartels had to do is get these people across the border. They would pay thousands to the drug cartels to get them across. They were used as a distraction. They sent them across. The Border Patrol would have to in-process them in accordance with the Obama policies. While they were doing that, they would tell you privately, yes, we know there are drugs coming across at other points in the river down there south of McAllen and southwest of McAllen, but they knew. We are doing our job. We know they are bound to be bringing drugs over while they keep us tied up. What a business model.

Then the Department of Homeland Security would ship many of those people to the places that they would have addresses for, and, as I witnessed myself, there were times when our Border Patrol would say: well, you certainly didn't come up with all the thousands. And ultimately they finally admit: no, they are going to let me work some of that off when I get to the city where I am going.

In other words, they would be their drug mules, they would be their drug salespeople. Some, God forgive us, would get into sex trafficking. The Obama administration allowed this massive network to take off.

At the same time, we heard from FBI Director Comey, we ended up with ISIS cells in every State, we had the drug cells locating all over the country in the last 8 years, we had ISIS creating cells that would be activated at some point and begin to kill Americans, and so it shouldn't have been that big of a surprise to those who were really paying attention that Americans were ready for a change. Not on the fringes, but Americans across the heartland were ready for a change, and they voted for Donald Trump.

This week, I don't know if we are going to vote tomorrow on the American Health Care Act. I indicated now, with the changes that have been made, I think probably 90 percent or so of the Freedom Caucus has now agreed. Because, I mean, we have gotten the best we can get. If we don't do something, people in my district who are just overwhelmed with the prices of their health insurance premiums, the cost of health care, the high deductibles, meaning they are paying for insurance they are probably never going to get anything out of—they have got to have help.

That is one of the reasons, one of the biggest reasons I was a holdout because even though I think CBO was talking about premiums continuing to increase up to 2026, and then 10 years from now start down a little bit, people in east Texas could not afford for premiums to continue to go up for 10 years. I think it was probably more accurate they would be going up for 3 years.

But with what we have done, and the agreement we got—I am telling you, President Trump is a great man to negotiate with. He does want to get a deal done. He was extremely cooperative. He actually can be quite enjoyable to negotiate with. He is an amazing man. But we were having trouble with leaders in the House and the Senate. President Trump would agree to things, and we would have trouble getting it past our own leadership.

Some of us felt all along, if you let the conservative group sit down with the Tuesday Group, we could probably get things worked out, and, really, bottom line is, that is what happened. TOM MACARTHUR is a very dear friend. I know he wants what is best for the people in his district. He is doing all he can to serve them. I know that is what the Tuesday Group wants to do. They want to serve their constituents. We all do.

So now where we are—and hopefully we will have votes and we can get this done. But we have gone from a bill that had 17 percent support of the American people, and now we have gotten an agreement to include provisions that eliminate the taxes immediately that would have been kept in place for the future. Under our agreement, the language is there, those taxes are out immediately. There has also been added a work requirement for people who are Medicaid recipients. If they are able to work, then they should work. If they don't have a job, they still will need to do some work under the work requirements, much like the welfare requirements that were passed in the 1990s by the Republican House and Senate. For the first time in 30 years, a single-mom income, when adjusted for inflation, started going up after the work requirement was added.

We have also agreed to language that will make sure that people who have preexisting conditions can't be shunned by the insurance companies. If you are 26 and you are living with your parents, you can still be on their insurance. I don't know why we have even an age limit at all. Those things will still be there, despite all the fear mongering that some on the other side of the aisle have done back in Texas that I know of.

Let's make no mistake, this is not a full repeal. There is still a lot of work to be done. But the MacArthur amendment will allow the repeal of some of the mandates—not the preexisting condition or the 26 being on parents' insurance but some of the other mandates that have spiked the insurance costs so high. While this revised version still

does not fully repeal ObamaCare, it will bring down the costs of health insurance. The people I represent just had to have help. At least 75 percent were saying: We have got to have help. So we look forward to working with the Senate and trying to make it even better as it goes through the Senate.

I think I have got just a minute. I just wanted to note, the observance anniversary of the Holocaust this past Tuesday, April 25, was a very somber occasion held in the rotunda. I know the minority leader, Senator SCHUMER, wanted it there. I just continue to hope and pray, as I hope most Americans do, that we will never, ever have another Holocaust. I think one of the things that can help prevent that is if we have effective national days of prayer, as have been going on for so many decades, going back to Washington proclaiming days of thanksgiving and prayer and fasting.

I deeply regret, though, that we thought we were going to be able to fulfill the vision of Anne Graham Lotz, the new chairman of the National Day of Prayer. She took over for Shirley Dobson, who did a magnificent job for the last 25 years as the national chair. She had a vision for doing it in the rotunda, and all that would require, like for the Holocaust observance, would be a unanimous consent agreement in the House and Senate, and then it would have been in the rotunda. It would have needed to have been after 5. Even though the Holocaust occurred during the day, it was clear, and she had agreed, the National Day of Prayer folks had agreed, but any Senator can put a hold on such a thing, and one Senator did. Senator SCHUMER put a hold on the National Day of Prayer being able to use the rotunda.

I hope and pray some day Senator SCHUMER will realize that the best way to avoid a Holocaust in the future is to have effective national days of prayer from the rotunda and everywhere else that we possibly can, as the church services have been held in the Capitol, participated in by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and so many others. They were nondenominational; so they thought that didn't violate their Constitution.

But it looks like this will be in the area that Senator SCHUMER cannot stop from being used. It is totally under the control of the House. I want to thank Speaker RYAN for allowing the use. We will be in statuary hall where nondenominational Christian churches were held on Sunday. It was the largest Christian church in Washington for much of the 1800s. So that is where it will be this year. Hopefully we won't have a Senator who will put a hold on it next year, and Billy Graham's daughter, Anne Graham Lotz' vision will finally be fulfilled.

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

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2303

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at 11 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 99, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–97) on the resolution (H. Res. 289) providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 99) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 28, 2017, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1167. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Title I--Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged (Subpart C--Migrant Education Program) [Docket ID: ED-2013-OESE-0119] (RIN: 1810-AA99) received April 24, 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.

1168. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and accessories abroad controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List, Transmittal No. DDTC 16-126, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1169. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and accessories abroad controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List, Transmittal No. DDTC 16-105, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1170. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services, Transmittal No. DDTC 16-100, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1171. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and accessories abroad controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List, Transmittal No. DDTC 17-008, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1172. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services, Transmittal No. DDTC 17-017, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1173. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services, Transmittal No. DDTC 17-005, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1174. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles that are firearms controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List, Transmittal No. DDTC 16-137, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1175. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles that are firearms controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List, Transmittal No. DDTC 16-074, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1176. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report certifying that the export of the listed items to the People's Republic of China is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 note; Public Law 105-261, Sec. 1512 (as amended by Public Law 105-277, Sec. 146); (112 Stat. 2174); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1177. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1178. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31126; Amdt. No.: 3740] received April 21, 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.

1179. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31125; Amdt. No.: 3739] received April 21, 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.

1180. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class C Airspace; Little Rock, AR [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0233; Airspace Docket No.: 17-AWA-1] received April 21, 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.

1181. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Monongahela, PA [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9102; Airspace Docket No.: 16-AEA-6] received April 21, 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.

1182. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Savannah, GA [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9101; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ASO-14] received April 21, 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.

1183. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Louisville, GA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0581; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ASO-4] received April 21, 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.

1184. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — 2017 Revisions to the Civil Penalty Inflation Adjustment Tables [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7004; Amdt. Nos.: 13-39, 406-11] (RIN: 2120-AK90) received April 21, 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.

1185. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2017 [Notice 2017-21] received April 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1186. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Examination of returns and claims for refund, credit, or abatement; determination of correct tax liability (Rev. Proc. 2017-26) received April 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1187. A letter from the Secretary, Department of State, transmitting a letter certifying that the conditions of Section 135(d)(6) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, including as amended by the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-17), have been met as of April 18, 2017 (H. Doc. No. 115—32); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Financial Services, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means and ordered to be printed.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 289. Resolution providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 99) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–97). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. KIND, and Mr. CRIST):

H.R. 2183. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reduced excise tax rate for portable, electronically-aerated bait containers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 2184. A bill to support meeting our Nation's growing cybersecurity workforce needs by expanding the cybersecurity education pipeline; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. PITTENGER (for himself and Mr. ZELDIN):

H.R. 2185. A bill to require the President to transmit to Congress determinations and certifications of whether foreign financial institutions listed in Attachment 3 or Attachment 4 to Annex II of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action have facilitated transactions or provided services for foreign terrorist organizations, sanctioned foreign persons, or Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps or any of its officials, agents, or affiliates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. GARRETT):

H.R. 2186. A bill to reserve any amounts forfeited to the United States Government as a result of the criminal prosecution of Joaquin Archivaldo Guzman Loera (commonly known as ''El Chapo''), or of other felony convictions involving the transportation of controlled substances into the United States, for security measures along the Southern border, including the completion of a border wall; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee):

H.R. 2187. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of certain retirement plan contributions picked up by governmental employers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. HURD, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KATKO, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. OLSON, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 2188. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the major metropolitan area counterterrorism training and exercise grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 2189. A bill to amend section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 with respect to requirements for domestic industries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD:

H.R. 2190. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's real property portfolio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. DUNN (for himself, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. NEAL):

H.R. 2191. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to revise certain regulations relating to aircraft boarding, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. FLORES, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. OLSON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. WALKER, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. UPTON, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BRAT, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. YOHO, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. STEWART, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. HARPER, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. LATTA, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. FASO, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. GOWDY):

H.R. 2192. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to eliminate the non-application of certain State waiver provisions to Members of Congress and congressional staff; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Mrs. NOEM (for herself, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 2193. A bill to grant States authority to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws on remote transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 2194. A bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate e-liquids and personal electronic vaporizers, to reduce the morbidity and mortality resulting from cigarette smoking through the responsible regulation of e-liquids and personal electronic vaporizers as a tobacco harm reduction strategy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. CUMMINGS, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. COFFMAN, and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 2195. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for access of the Special Counsel to certain information; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RUSSELL (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. LYNCH):

H.R. 2196. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. KEATING, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RASKIN, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TONKO, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 2197. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an energy efficiency materials pilot program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 2198. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that calls to medical facilities of the Department can be quickly redirected to the Veterans Crisis Line; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRAMER (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 2199. A bill to improve Federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection, and use of Federal real property, by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to develop a multipurpose cadastre of Federal real property and identifying inaccurate, duplicate, and out-of-date Federal land inventories, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. ROYCE of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 2200. A bill to reauthorize the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, Ways and Means, Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, Armed Services, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. EMMER:

H.R. 2201. A bill to amend the Securities Act of 1933 to exempt certain micro-offerings from the registration requirements of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 2202. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize appointment of Doctors of Chiropractic to regular and reserve corps of the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. HANABUSA (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 2203. A bill to authorize Federal agencies to establish prize competitions for innovation or adaptation management development relating to coral reef ecosystems and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HULTGREN (for himself and Mr. BARR):

H.R. 2204. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study regarding the privacy of information collected under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 2205. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income interest received on certain loans secured by agricultural real property; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. KAPTUR (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MOORE, Ms. LEE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. EVANS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 2206. A bill to authorize the President to reestablish the Civilian Conservation Corps as a means of providing gainful employment to unemployed and underemployed citizens of the United States through the performance of useful public work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. WALZ, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 2207. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to support community college and industry partnerships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 2208. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide funding, on a competitive basis, for summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth ages 14 through 24; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 2209. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the work opportunity credit for certain youth employees, and to extend empowerment zones; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. DENT):

H.R. 2210. A bill to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the ''Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. LOBIONDO):

H.R. 2211. A bill to provide for the award of medals or other commendations to handlers of military working dogs and military working dogs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MARINO (for himself and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 2212. A bill to promote competition in the market for drugs and biological products by facilitating the timely entry of lower-cost generic and biosimilar versions of those drugs and biological products; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. HURD, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. VELA):

H.R. 2213. A bill to amend the Anti-Border Corruption Act of 2010 to authorize certain polygraph waiver authority, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. O'HALLERAN:

H.R. 2214. A bill to prohibit the payment of salary to Members of Congress in the event of a Government shutdown, to direct the Congressional Budget Office to submit daily reports during the period in which a Government shutdown is in effect on the effects of the shutdown on the economy and the costs of the shutdown to taxpayers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HECK, Mr. HUNTER, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KIHUEN, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 2215. A bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related legitimate businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 2216. A bill to provide that certain project works on the St. Croix River, Maine,

are not required to be licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 2217. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase for 2 years the residential energy credit and the investment tax credit with respect to solar property with a nameplate capacity of less than 20 kilowatts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 2218. A bill to expand the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness and Sampson Mountain Wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROYCE of California (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mrs. LOVE):

H.R. 2219. A bill to increase the role of the financial industry in combating human trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 2220. A bill to appropriate such funds as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Armed Forces, including reserve components thereof, and supporting civilian and contractor personnel continue to receive pay and allowances for active service performed when a Government shutdown occurs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. SMUCKER:

H.R. 2221. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself and Mrs. BEATTY):

H.R. 2222. A bill to amend section 428 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to provide incentives to grantees under the Continuum of Care program to re-house all former members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. EVANS, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. WALZ):

H.J. Res. 100. A joint resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against al Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and the Afghan Taliban; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on 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 Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H. Res. 286. A resolution directing certain officials of the executive branch to provide information to the House of Representatives that will enable the House to meet its constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight of the executive branch by investigating potential conflicts of interests of President Donald J. Trump; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. YOUNG of Iowa:

H. Res. 287. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should pass no law that would exempt from its obligations or provide any other special consideration to elected or appointed Federal officials or any other Federal employee; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and the Judiciary, 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. CHABOT (for himself, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BLUM, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BACON, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BRAT, Mr. COMER, Ms. ADAMS, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida):

H. Res. 288. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of April 30, 2017, through May 6, 2017, as ''National Small Business Week'' to celebrate the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, and Mrs. BEATTY):

H. Res. 290. A resolution expressing support for celebrating the fourth week in April as Every Kid Healthy Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. BEYER, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. MOORE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER):

H. Res. 291. A resolution promoting and supporting the goals and ideals of the Fair Housing Act and recognizing April 2017 as Fair Housing Month, which includes bringing attention to the discrimination faced by every-day Americans in the United States in housing and housing-related transactions on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, familial status, disability, and religion; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H. Res. 292. A resolution designating April 30, 2017, as El Día de Los Niños-Celebrating Young Americans; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 2183.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 2184.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PITTENGER:

H.R. 2185.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. BROOKS of Alabama:

H.R. 2186.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power and authority to enact this legislation according to Article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 2187.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I: 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;

Amendment XVI: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 2188.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in and Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 2189.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 and 8 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD:

H.R. 2190.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DUNN:

H.R. 2191.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 2192.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Departmenr

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 2193.

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.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 2194.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BLUM:

H.R. 2195.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 2196.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 2197.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 2198.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

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 this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. CRAMER:

H.R. 2199.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 2200.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18.

Article 4, Section 3.

By Mr. EMMER:

H.R. 2201.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 2202.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. HANABUSA:

H.R. 2203.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.R. 2204.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 2205.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

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.

By Ms. KAPTUR:

H.R. 2206.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 with specific power to provide for the general welfare of the United States and to regulate commerce among the several states, and with the Indian tribes of the Constitution.

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By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 2207.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 2208.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 2209.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 2210.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 2211.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 14: ''Congress has the power to . . . make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.''

By Mr. MARINO:

H.R. 2212.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section I, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution, in that the legilation concems the exercise of legislative powers generally granted to Congress, including the exercise of those powers when delegated by Congress to the Executive.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution in that the legislation exercises legislative powers granted to Congress by that clause ''to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.'' and

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution in that the legislation exercises legislative powers granted to Congress by that clause ''to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.''

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 2213.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, 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.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. O'HALLERAN:

H.R. 2214.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 2215.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

10th Amendment

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 2216.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes:'' as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 2217.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 2218.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needfull rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.

By Mr. ROYCE of California:

H.R. 2219.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause I (relating to the general welfare of the United States); and Article I, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to regulate interstate commerce).

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 2220.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 2221.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 2222.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article 1, Sec 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.J. Res. 100.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Consolidated Authorization for Use of Military Force Resolution of 2017 is constitutionally authorized under Article I, Section 8, Clause 11.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 38: Mr. ARRINGTON.

H.R. 90: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 93: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 102: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 103: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. MAST.
H.R. 113: Ms. TITUS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. ROSEN, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 169: Mr. KHANNA and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 173: Mr. LONG, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 247: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 256: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 305: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 350: Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota and Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee.
H.R. 355: Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 390: Mr. ISSA and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 392: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 463: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 488: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 510: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 535: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 606: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 608: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 613: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 619: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. COMER, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 632: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 638: Mr. VARGAS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 671: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 719: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 721: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 731: Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 747: Mr. SERRANO, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 749: Mr. BACON.
H.R. 750: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 754: Mr. SHERMAN and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 758: Mr. FLORES, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. GAETZ.
H.R. 772: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H.R. 801: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 809: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 816: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 828: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 830: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 846: Mr. RUTHERFORD, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. GAETZ, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 849: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 904: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 927: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 930: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. TONKO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BERA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. LATTA, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 931: Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LATTA, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. DENT, and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 952: Mr. O'HALLERAN and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 967: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 972: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 980: Mr. VARGAS, Ms. DELAURO, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 1002: Ms, SHEA-PORTER, Mr. FASO, and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 1017: Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 1038: Mr. REED, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 1039: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 1054: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 1057: Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 1058: Mrs. LOVE.
H.R. 1065: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 1073: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
H.R. 1090: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 1097: Ms. KAPTUR,
H.R. 1136: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 1156: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 1164: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 1180: Mr. ROKITA and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1186: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 1200: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. YODER, Mr. BARR, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. HARPER, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1205: Ms. BASS, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. COURTNEY, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 1206: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 1232: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1245: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 1341: Mr. BACON.
H.R. 1358: Mr. O'HALLERAN, Miss RICE of New York, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1361: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BOST, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1377: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 1384: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. MOORE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1413: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 1419: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 1421; Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 1438: Mr. MCNERNEY and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1539: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1558: Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 1565: Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 1569: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1575: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 1584: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1618: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Ms. SHEA PORTER.
H.R. 1625: Mr. ISSA, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 1626: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 1627: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 1629: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 1644: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H.R. 1651: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 1652: Mr. PETERSON and Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1661: Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 1663: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1671: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
H.R. 1676: Mr. COMER and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 1677: Mr. KHANNA, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1698: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. THORNBERRY, Ms. FOXX, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BYRNE, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 1711: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1727: Ms. LEE.
H.R. 1736: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 1748: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 1760: Mr. SCALISE and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 1777: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
H.R. 1779: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 1784: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 1789: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 1809: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 1821: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. WILLIAMS, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 1838: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 1841: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1844: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1874: Mr. YODER and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 1875: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1881: Mr. OLSON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 1885: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1892: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 1896: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1897: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1904: Mr. LONG, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 1905: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1911: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1919: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota.
H.R. 1924: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1928: Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1939: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 1953: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 1955: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 1974: Ms. LEE and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 1991: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2023: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana.
H.R. 2044: Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SIRES, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. LEE, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BEYER, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Ms. MATSUI, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 2052: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. BYRNE, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 2053: Mr. BARR and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2068: Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. MOORE, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2124: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 2151: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2161: Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico.
H.R. 2166: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2168: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
H.R. 2170: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 2175: Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 2176: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2180: Mr. RUSH and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2182: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. FASO, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.J. Res. 51: Mr. BIGGS.
H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. BANKS of Indiana.

H. Con. Res. 27: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Ms. DELBENE.

H. Con. Res. 41: Mr. MAST.

H. Res. 31: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 129: Mr. HECK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. KING of New York. Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H. Res. 161: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. BEATTY, and Ms. ESHOO.

H. Res. 165: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Ms. JAYAPAL.

H. Res. 172: Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. MENG, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. TITUS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. BASS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SUOZZI, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 220: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H. Res. 222: Mrs. NOEM.

H. Res. 239: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H. Res. 243: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H. Res. 252: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H. Res. 260: Mr. FLEISCHMANN and Mr. MOULTON.

H. Res. 269: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Res. 272: Mr. LAMALFA.

H. Res. 281: Mr. LARSEN of Washington and Mr. TAYLOR.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 2015: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.J. Res, 50: Mr. BUDD.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2017 No. 72

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Martyn Sloan, lead pastor of Harvest Time in Fort Smith, AR.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Almighty and Eternal God, who has created us, to whom we belong and whom we serve, it is in You that we find our purpose, our peace, and our prosperity. May Your Kingdom come.

Use this day our lawmakers to complete and carry out Your will on this Earth as in Heaven. Create in each of them a clean and a courageous and a selfless heart that will not give in to fear, adversity, or temptation. Grant them wisdom and the discernment of the truth so that they may rightly judge these, Your children. Strengthen them as they grow weary so that they may give strength to the weary and burdened in this life.

We pray this and all things in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I would like to thank Pastor Marty Sloan for delivering the opening prayer in the Senate today.

Pastor Sloan is the lead pastor of Harvest Time, one of the most active and well-attended houses of worship in Arkansas's second largest city of Fort Smith, which is the city in which I grew up.

Pastor Sloan is also a proud husband and father and plays an important role in the life of the Fort Smith community. As the lead pastor of Harvest Time, he has a passion for caring for his congregation and those in the larger community through preaching, teaching, and counseling in order to encourage and build up their faith and develop meaningful relationships with Christ and one another.

For 22 years, Pastor Sloan has been in ministry and has focused on both national and international missions. He has also been involved with the Live Nativity on Capitol Hill and the National Day of Prayer and has conducted pastoral conferences in America, Peru, and Armenia. Pastor Sloan says that one of his greatest joys is to ''pastor from the center of the room'' because his desire is to lead his congregation by walking through life together with them.

Serving as the guest Chaplain is an incredible honor. I am thankful for Pastor Sloan's ministry, and I am so pleased he could be here to offer an invocation of asking God to guide and bless the efforts of Congress and America's leaders.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX PLAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the administration introduced a plan to serve as the guideline for modernizing and simplifying America's Tax Code. This process is long overdue, and it is a priority that is shared by the Republican House, Senate, and the administration. By bringing down tax rates for individuals, we can help ease the burden on middle-class families, and by lowering taxes for American businesses, both small and large, we can foster job creation here at home, while making our country more competitive in an increasingly competitive international economy. I commend the President and his team for taking this critical first step, and I look forward to working with the administration and our House colleagues to finally overhaul our tax system.

NOMINATION OF ALEXANDER ACOSTA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, despite much unnecessary obstruction, the Senate has continued to move forward with the confirmation process for administration nominees.

Just this week, we have confirmed two more impressive individuals—Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. Today, we will have the opportunity to confirm a third. That nominee, Alexander Acosta, understands the difficult task ahead of him as the next Secretary of Labor. Fortunately, he has an impressive background that will serve him well as he takes on these tough issues. It explains why Acosta has earned high acclaim from numerous pro-job groups, like the National Association of Manufacturers, which called him an ''exceptional choice to lead the Department,'' and the chamber of commerce, which noted his ''extraordinary history of government service and refined skills.''

He has also earned support from across the political spectrum, including from people like Lafe Solomon, a National Labor Relations Board Acting General Counsel in the Obama administration, who said Acosta is ''very open-minded and fair'' and ''deserves to be Secretary of Labor.''

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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We have also heard from unions that have backed him as well. In their words, Acosta is an ''advocate for the middle class,'' a nominee with ''strong credentials and an impeccable reputation,'' and someone they can work with ''to protect and make better the lives of working men and women across America.''

Acosta's leadership at the Labor Department will serve as a much needed change from what we saw under the previous administration, when, too often, onerous regulations that stifled instead of encouraged growth were given high priority, which came at a disadvantage to the very workers the previous administration claimed to be helping.

Of course, much work remains when it comes to providing relief to middle-class workers, but today's vote to confirm Acosta represents another positive step in that direction.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final issue, as we know, talks on government funding legislation have continued throughout the week on a bipartisan, bicameral basis. The House has introduced a short-term funding bill that we expect to pass before Friday night's deadline so that a final agreement can be drafted and shared with Members for their review prior to its consideration next week. This extension will also protect thousands of retired coal miners and their families from losing the healthcare benefits I have fought for throughout this entire process, as I continue to lead the fight to secure them on a permanent basis.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Acosta nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of R. Alexander Acosta, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I think I have 15 minutes to speak. When I get to about 13 minutes, would you raise your thumb or something and tell me, please.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair certainly will.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Thank you.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

Mr. President, I come to the floor today to spotlight a potential failure of leadership at the Defense Department's Office of Inspector General in that a large number of hotline cases have been set aside, neglected, and possibly forgotten.

The hotline plays a very critical role in the inspector general's core mission of rooting out fraud, waste, and abuse. The hotline is the command and control link between whistleblowers on the one hand and investigators on the other hand. To succeed, hotline tips need quick and decisive action, but speed is not one of the chief assets of this unit. Without a quick response, the full value of whistleblower information is lessened.

Last year, at my request, I was given a 12-page spreadsheet dated November 8, 2016. It listed 406 hotline cases that had been open for more than 2 years or over 730 days. Frankly, I was stunned by what I saw on this spreadsheet. I counted 240 cases—over half of the total—that had been open for more than 1,000 days. Many had been open for more than 1,300 days. Some were right at a 4-year marker; that is 1,460 days. The oldest is now pushing close to 1,600 days. Even—if you can believe it—5-year-old cases are not unheard of. So we can see why working quickly on these investigations—taking tips from whistleblowers and pursuing them on waste, fraud, and abuse—is very important, and we shouldn't have this time wasted.

When cases remain open for years, they become stale. Inattention breeds neglect. Work grinds to a halt. Cases slowly fade from memory. This is unacceptable, and my colleagues ought to consider it unacceptable, and the Secretary of Defense ought to consider it unacceptable. The hotline, then, with this waiting period, loses its full value.

The deputy inspector general for administrative investigations, Mrs. Marguerite C. Garrison, is in charge of the hotline, so she is accountable for the backlog. The backlog shows a lack of commitment to the hotline creed and the plight of whistleblowers. Here is why: Hotline posters are displayed throughout the Department of Defense. They are a bugle call for whistleblowers. They encourage whistleblowers to step forward, and they do that at considerable risk. In return, then, these patriotic people ought to deserve a quick and honest response.

Allowing their reports to slide into a deep, dark hole, in limbo for 2, 3, or 4 years—and even more, as I have pointed out—leaves whistleblowers exposed, leaves them vulnerable to retaliation, and of course distrusting of the system that is designed to protect the whistleblowers. So, in the end, this kind of treatment will discourage others from stepping forward in the future.

Hotline officials, including Mrs. Garrison, were questioned about the backlog on December 15, 2016. They attempted to deflect responsibility elsewhere and showed little interest in the problem. After numerous followup inquiries, a second meeting was requested.

So at a March 30 meeting this year, Hotline officials were singing a whole different song. They tried to dispel the notion that a surge in cases closures were triggered by my inquiry. To the contrary, they said, it was part of routine, ongoing ''cleanup of the hotline mess'' that began way back in March of 2013. They reported that 107,000 cases were swept up, including the so-called bad dog cases from 2002.

This explanation may be fiction.

Mrs. Garrison should know that the 406 cases date back to 2012 and 2013. After sitting on the hotline docket for up to 4-plus years, these cases are anything but routine. They are tough nuts to crack, of course, and very difficult to resolve—sort of like the bad dogs way back in 2002.

What they needed was clear direction from the top. They needed to be handed off to a tiger team, but that didn't happen. Priorities became an afterthought, and the hotline mess got more nourishment.

Then, finally, the ''routine, ongoing'' cleanup reached the 406 most egregious cases—the worst of the worst. The ones that bring me to the floor today.

Since January, I received five updated spreadsheets trumpeting the closure of 200 of these so-called bad dogs—done with due diligence, I hope. Though late and incomplete, the surge shows what is possible when management starts doing what we expect management to do; in other words, managing. The backlog can be controlled and eliminated.

Why did it take top managers so long to see the light and get on the stick doing their job? Maybe they just didn't care—at least not until the Senator from Iowa started asking questions. Then and only then did they indicate what had been characterized as ''aggressive management oversight.''

Well, praise the Lord. Those words—''aggressive management oversight''—warm my heart, but the deputy IGs need to exercise aggressive oversight at all times, not just when a Senator steps in and not just when embarrassing revelations get some daylight. Good managers don't need a Senator looking over their shoulders to know what needs to be done. That is no way to run a railroad, as we say. The managers responsible for the hotline mess need more supervision.

One of Mrs. Garrison's other directorates—the whistleblower reprisal investigations, or what we call the WRI unit—is always crying out for help. It is facing its own hotline-style tsunami. It has a staff of 56 personnel, but only 28 of those 56—or about 50 percent—are actually assigned to investigative teams. They complete 50 to 60 reports per year. With some 120 cases under investigation at any one time, a large number inevitably get rolled forward from year to year. The backlog could easily double or triple over the next few years.

In November, 38 cases were beyond acceptable limits. As of March 28, the oldest one was 1,394 days old. While many of these cases were recently closed, new ones keep popping up on the list. Despite very substantial increases in money and personnel since 2013, the deputy IG still seems overwhelmed by the volume of work.

While beefing up the whistleblower reprisal investigations may be necessary, Mr. Fine and his deputies need to do more with what they have. With an annual budget of $320 million and a 1,500-person workforce, efficiencies can be found.

Some units are said to be top-heavy and ripe for belt-tightening. The investigative processes are notoriously cumbersome and could be streamlined.

The audit office, with 520 workers, turns out mostly second-rate reports. It needs strong leadership and it needs redirection. The Obama administration never seemed to take these problems very seriously. I hope this new administration coming in to drain the swamp will do better.

Weak leadership gave us the hotline backlog. Weak leadership is giving us the continuing mismatch between the workforce and the workload. Both are messy extensions of a much more harmful leadership problem—a festering sore that is eating away at integrity and independence.

This is what I am hearing:

Top managers have allegedly been tampering with investigative reports and then retaliating against supervisory investigators who call them to account. This is sparking allegations that a culture of corruption is thriving in the Office of the Inspector General. I gave my colleagues a glimpse of this problem in a speech on April 6 of last year. I used the fifth and final report of Admiral Losey's investigation to illuminate this problem.

That report was allegedly doctored by senior managers. Investigators were allegedly ordered to change facts and remove evidence of suspected retaliation.

Can my colleagues believe this?

Mrs. Garrison even sent a letter that cleared the admiral long before investigators had even completed the review of the evidence. This was a very serious error in judgment, giving the appearance of impropriety.

Was this then a coverup to facilitate the admiral's pending promotion?

Thankfully, Acting Inspector General Fine intervened. He showed real courage. After taking a firsthand look, he backed up the investigators, overturning some—but not all—unsupported charges. He helped to bring evidence and findings back into sync. I thank Inspector General Fine from the bottom of my heart.

But Mr. Fine still has more work to do.

The alleged doctoring of the Losey report, I am told, is not an isolated case. There are at least five others just like it—and probably more—that all need oversight.

As I understand it, the Office of Special Counsel is contemplating a review of these matters and could rule in favor of whistleblower reprisal investigations. They blew the whistle on all of the alleged tampering going on—and do my colleagues know what these patriotic people got for it? They got hammered for it. They got hammered for protecting Federal workers.

If top managers are tampering with reports and retaliating against their own people who report it, then how can they be trusted to run the agency's premier whistleblower oversight unit?

All of the pertinent issues need to be resolved, and they demand high-level attention. So I call on the new Secretary of Defense and the acting inspector general to work together to address these problems.

No. 1, the hotline needs to be brought up to acceptable standards under stronger management; No. 2, all potential solutions to the workload-workforce mismatch need to be explored, including internal realignments; No. 3, an independent review of all cases where alleged tampering occurred should be conducted, to include an examination of the Garrison letter clearing an admiral in the midst of an investigation. If tampering and retaliation did in fact occur, then the culprits should be fired.

I look forward to receiving a full report.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

U.S. MILITARY READINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, our military and our intelligence community grapple with intersecting issues that aren't wholly unique to this day and age. Our national security has always been imperiled by foreign threats, from the Revolutionary War to two World Wars, and we previously faced a seemingly unsurmountable debt burden following World War II.

The challenge seems to be, as it always is in a democracy, that people of different views differ on the sense of urgency on priorities and the means to address both those threats and our financial house in order to be able to pay for what it takes to keep America safe. What is unique is the range and complexity of the problems we face and their scale.

I am reminded of a sobering quote from the former Director of National Intelligence during a hearing just last year, former Director James Clapper, who served 50 years in the U.S. intelligence community. He said: ''In my time in the intelligence business, I don't recall a time when we have been confronted with a more diverse array of threats.'' I agree with him.

On top of that diverse array of threats, never before has our country been at war for such an extended period of time since 9/11, and never before have we done so much with an all-volunteer military force stressed by repeated deployments, while at the same time defense spending has been cut by nearly 15 percent over the last 8 years.

So the United States is at a crossroads when it comes to meeting the diverse threats we face today, while simultaneously preparing for the ever-evolving future threats headed our way tomorrow.

I wish to first provide a little bit of context about our lack of readiness to meet those threats by framing the challenges our military and our Nation faces, and then I wish to offer some thoughts about how we can rise to meet these challenges and maintain our military preeminence and leadership in the world.

First, there are the challenges abroad. We face a range of adversaries unlike any other in our history. In the Middle East, even as ISIS forces are pushed back in Iraq, their ideology spreads like a contagion through their so-called cyber caliphate, and it continues to permeate the West and attract the vulnerable and the disillusioned. FBI Director Comey has said that his agency has open investigations into home-grown jihadists in all 50 States.

Iran, under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, is a breakout nuclear threat and remains the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism in the world. At the same time, it is rapidly growing its ballistic missile arsenal and has regained much of its financial strength following sanctions relief under the JCPOA.

Then there is Syria. Since the Syrian civil war began, 400,000 have died in a bloody civil war, while Bashar al-Assad, a brutal dictator known to repeatedly use chemical weapons on his own people despite redlines drawn, enjoys Russian and Iranian support and protection.

In addition to its meddling in the Middle East, Russia has invaded eastern Ukraine and annexed Crimea. It routinely threatens NATO member states and has ramped up its use of ''active measures''—a program of both overt and covert action that leverages propaganda, cyber espionage, social media, and a sometimes gullible mainstream media both here and abroad—to influence and undermine public confidence in the very foundation of our democracies, which are our free and fair elections.

In the Pacific, China seeks to advance its regional dominance by making claims to former sandbars and reefs

that it has now built into strategic military bases—complete with a 10,000 foot runway—in the South China Sea.

Finally, as we learned more about yesterday at the White House in the briefing from the President's national security advisers, North Korea continues to develop and test its nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities with the threat of soon being able to combine the two to threaten the continental United States and wreak death and destruction.

Many before me have observed that American strength on the world stage is a deterrent and a stabilizing influence, while weakness is an invitation to our adversaries and inherently destabilizing. I think that proposition has never been more evident than it is today.

But to address these threats—to maintain the peace and fight, if we must—we need a capable, ready, and modern military force. But the truth is we are not ready. While I believe America will always rise to the challenges once roused from our national complacency, it makes a dangerous world even more dangerous.

U.S. military readiness and modernization—already under great stress and stretched thin around the world—has suffered 15 years of continued operations and simultaneous budgetary restrictions and deferred maintenance and investment. That has led to some very real consequences for our military. Let me just illustrate a few of those consequences.

According to General Walters, the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, more than half of all Marine Corps fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft were unable to fly at the end of 2016. Let me say that again. That is a shocking statistic. More than half of the Marine Corps' fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft were unable to fly by the end of 2016. These aircraft are in constant operation overseas and are absolutely necessary to continue the fight against ISIS and terrorism, yet half of them are unable to take off.

The Navy fleet currently stands at 275 of the 350 ship requirement. Law mandates an inventory of 11 aircraft carriers and has a stated force level goal of 12. But today, the Navy requires a waiver in order to operate just 10, currently. As we all know, these carrier strike groups deploy worldwide, and, as the Navy likes to say, they act as ''100,000 tons of diplomacy that doesn't need a permission slip.''

Of our 58 Army brigade and combat teams, only three are considered fully ready for combat. These are the main building blocks of the Army that support the majority of Army operations, and only three are fully ready. Keep in mind, too, that our Army is smaller than at any time since before World War II, as a result of draconian cuts in defense spending.

Finally, when it comes to our Air Force, General Wilson, the Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, recently testified: ''Sustained global commitments and funding reductions have eroded our Air Force to the point where we have become one of the smallest, oldest equipped, and least ready forces across the full-spectrum of operations in our service history.'' The Air Force currently has 5,500 aircraft in its inventory. That is down from 8,600 since 1991. The average aircraft in the U.S. Air Force is 27 years old. For example, I was at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, TX, just last week, viewing some of their B–1 bombers, which is a plane first flown in 1974.

Then, of course, there is the grandpa of our aircraft fleet, the B–52—that is still in operation—first introduced in the 1950s.

The Air Force is also experiencing a pilot shortage crisis due to the pressure on the force, including quality of life issues and, of course, increased demand and competition from the airline industry.

So our military faces these internal issues as well. No one would argue that in order to keep the peace and to protect our national vital interests, we must have a credible and modern force. But the hard truth is that we don't currently meet that standard, and we can't afford to ignore the problems.

So why, I ask, do we continue to do so? More importantly, the question is this: Where do we go from here? How can we assure that our military can maintain its competitive edge and ensure it is ready to meet these and future challenges? I have a few suggestions.

First, we must fund our military to meet the threat environment, not do what we can to meet the threat environment with what we funded for the military. In other words, the threat should determine the resources necessary to meet that threat. So I would suggest we should start by eliminating sequestration of Department of Defense funding under the 2011 Budget Control Act. The truth is that the Budget Control Act was never meant to cut military spending. It was meant to spur action. Remember the supercommittee and the hoped-for grand bargain? Instead, the BCA took a meat ax to our defense budget. Allowing the Budget Control Act to keep making automatic cuts to our military until 2021 does not serve the national security interests of the United States. It does the opposite. These cuts add risk not just to our national security but also to our servicemembers and their families—who, as I said, have been fighting the longest war in our Nation's history—and it does so by undermining their training, readiness, and modernization.

At a time when our growing national security threats require greater investment in technology, we are tying the hands of our military and simply hoping for the best. So if we want to return to a strong American military after years of stress and inadequate funding, we need to start with ending the Department of Defense sequestration.

Of course, the next logical question becomes this: If we do away with the defense portions of the Budget Control Act, how do we control overspending, deficits, and unsustainable national debt, which is a serious problem?

That brings me to my second point. A bipartisan Congress and the Trump administration must address our budget priorities by looking at and addressing all government spending, not just the 30 percent or so represented by discretionary spending. Right now, about 70 percent of Federal spending isn't even appropriated by the Congress. It simply runs on autopilot, and it grew last year at the rate of 5.5 percent, while discretionary spending has remained relatively flat. Until we have the political courage on a bipartisan basis to tackle our structural financial problems, we will never adequately fund the military or our other national priorities.

We also need a bipartisan commitment to ending continuing resolutions and the self-destructive drama and narrative of potential government shutdowns.

Most importantly, perhaps, the Defense Department needs to be able to plan, not just for the duration of the next continuing resolution, but it needs to be able to plan long term and to spend the money that is appropriated to it in an efficient way.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Goldfein, captured the point well 2 months ago, when he said: ''There is no enemy on the planet that can do more to damage the United States Air Force than us not getting a budget.'' This sentiment is shared by all the service chiefs, and I wholeheartedly agree.

In a Department as big, as large, and as unwieldy as the Department of Defense, there is no doubt that there is room to streamline, improve efficiencies, and reduce duplication. We can all agree on that. But the truth is we need to take a hard, strategic look at our budgetary and fiscal needs across the Federal Government. Endless continuing resolutions aren't the answer. Continuing resolutions actually limit an agency's ability to be efficient and flexible, and they prevent the establishment of new programs and the retiring of the old and obsolete programs.

At the end of the day, the only way we can rein in spending, get a handle on our debt, and ensure our military stays ready for the threats facing it every day is to clearly articulate our country's needs and how we plan to meet them. That way, we can restore constitutional oversight responsibilities to Congress.

Finally, Congress has a tremendous opportunity, working with the Trump administration, to propose a strategy to modernize our military and prepare for the next generation of warfighting. Both readiness and modernization have been encumbered by the lack of a coherent national security and foreign

policy strategy in recent years, in addition to the blanket restrictions placed on defense spending.

Too frequently, modernization has simply been pushed aside by myopic views of how to deal with our financial challenges, which place greater risk on the warfighter and our collective security. You had better believe that, not hamstrung by redtape and regulations or continuing resolutions or deep cuts in defense spending or national security spending, our enemies take full advantage of our reluctance to deal with our challenges on a bipartisan basis. All the while, the United States operates on platforms engineered decades ago to fight the last generation's wars.

I can't think of a better example than our nuclear weapons program. This is the preeminent deterrent to war. Our country is the leading pioneer in science and technology, but instead of modernizing our nuclear weapons to provide a safe, reliable, and dependable deterrent, we, in effect, merely extend the service life of outdated and ancient weapons.

Clearly, we need a coherent national security strategy from President Trump and his Cabinet to do that. I know Congress is committed to working with them to make that happen.

By doing away with the Budget Control Act, putting the Pentagon on a dependable and predictable budget and developing a coherent national security strategy, we can maintain our status as the top military in the world. Along the way, we can deter our enemies and reassure our allies. We don't need to rewrite the playbook. We need to go back to the basics of government, providing for our national defense and keeping our fiscal house in order, all in light of the challenges and threats these times present.

My hope is that we will get out of the rut we have been in the Senate and in the Congress for the last few years and we will actually capitalize on this moment—and rally around a bipartisan commitment that a strong, modern, and ready military is really a nonnegotiable item—to lay the foundation for a modern military that will continue to keep our Nation safe for generations. I am committed to working with the administration and all of my colleagues in order to accomplish these goals.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enjoyed hearing my friend and gym colleague talking about defense. I agree with him; we need a strong defense. I agree with him that deficits are an enemy of getting the defense spending that we need. I hope when we consider tax cuts, we will hear that same view that we can't go deeply into deficit. I appreciate my colleague's great comments.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING BILL

Mr. President, I wish to talk first about some good news: the appropriations process—our negotiations to keep the government open. The President has backed off his threat to hold government funding hostage over the wall and over cutting healthcare funding for millions of Americans. This healthcare funding is essential to ensuring that millions of Americans will not see their premiums skyrocket and that they will not be kicked off their plans. Make no mistake, we will watch the administration like a hawk to make sure they follow through on their promise to continue this funding.

We are very happy that they have seen the light that Democrats have tried to show them for weeks. Threatening to hurt Americans for political gain is a loser.

Much like the administration's withdrawal of their demand for wall funding, which Democrats laid out a month ago as a condition for successful bipartisan negotiations on the appropriations bill, this decision brings us closer to a bipartisan agreement to fund the government and is good news for the American people.

The tendency of this administration has been to go at it alone. What these negotiations show is that when the Trump administration takes into account the Democratic position and is willing to move in our direction, they can make progress on issues as we have on the appropriations bills.

On those appropriations bills, of course, there are a few remaining issues to be settled. The most vexing are poison pill riders. We will not accept them, but I believe we are close to final agreement. Our side will continue to work in good faith to see that an agreement is reached to keep the government open by tomorrow's deadline.

I hope that this is something of a metaphor for the future, that the administration will not put together its plan and say that bipartisanship means you support our plan without any Democratic consultation, input, and, more importantly, taking into account our values, which we believe are close to where American values are—much closer than some on the other side.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX PLAN

Mr. President, yesterday the President released—and this is not as good news, unfortunately—a one-page outline of his plan to change the U.S. Tax Code. Even from the very limited details that were released, the President's priorities are clear: Give massive tax breaks to folks like himself—the very, very wealthy in America.

The top rate would come down; taxes that disproportionately affect the very wealthy would go away, while middle-class and working families would be denied some of the most useful deductions. This isn't simply the Trump plan to lower taxes. It is the plan to lower the taxes of Trump and those with enormous wealth, similar to his.

The prime beneficiaries of the Trump plan would be his Cabinet. Secretary Mnuchin, one of the architects of the plan, could not guarantee this morning that the middle class will not pay more under the Trump tax plan. If, on one sheet of paper, you can guarantee that corporations pay less and you can guarantee that the wealthiest Americans pay less but you can't guarantee that hard-working, middle-class Americans pay less, you don't have a good recipe for changing our Tax Code. And, for the good of America, you are to go back to the drawing board.

This proposal falls short, far short of the mark in several ways: First and foremost, it mostly benefits the very wealthy. In the Trump tax plan, corporations and the very wealthy get a huge tax break through lower rates and the elimination of things like the estate tax. In fact, the proposal the President put out yesterday is actually even more of a giveaway on the estate tax than his proposal in his campaign. In the campaign, President Trump promised to repeal the estate tax for estates up to $10 million, retaining it for the wealthiest of estates. This proposal would eliminate the tax completely, particularly on those multimillion- and even billion-dollar estates. The result would be that the 5,200 wealthiest families in America would each receive, on average, a $3 million windfall, and many would receive much, much more than that.

Also, because the Trump plan lowers the tax rate on the so-called passthrough entities to 15 percent, wealthy businessmen, like President Trump, will be able to use passthrough entities to pay 15 percent in taxes while everyone else pays in the twenties and thirties. This has implications for something we don't need—the carried interest loophole. President Trump promised to get rid of this in his campaign. Instead of using the carried interest loophole under the President's bill, Wall Street funds could file their taxes at a new passthrough rate of 15 percent, which is even lower than the present tax on carried interest.

Ironically, the President's tax plan would indeed get rid of the carried interest loophole only by making it lower than the present rate and making it permanent—a total, total reversal of what he pledged in his campaign.

It all goes to show that those who stand to benefit most from this proposal are folks like the President and those at his level of wealth, while tens of millions of American middle-class, working families are hurt and could very well pay more.

This brings me to my second point, which is that the Trump plan hurts middle-class and working Americans by eliminating their most popular and useful deductions. Take the elimination of the State and local tax deduction, for instance, which is used by so many middle-class families in my home State of New York. As it was cited in the Syracuse Post Standard: ''The loss of the deduction will cost New Yorkers an average of $4,500 per year for those who file itemized returns, totaling about $68 billion per

year that State residents will no longer be allowed to deduct from Federal returns.''

I saw in Newsday this morning that a number of our Long Island Republican colleagues said they couldn't be for this. We hope they will stand up to anything that gets rid of State and local deductibility because, let me repeat, that is $4,500 a year that New Yorkers would no longer be able to deduct on average—massive tax cuts for the very wealthy, crumbs at best for everyone else.

Third, the Republican plan is steeped in hypocrisy. Even without filling in the details, Trump's plan is already impossible to pay for. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates that Trump's tax cuts will cost about $5.5 trillion over 10 years, as much as $7 trillion. That is a huge amount of money in our economy.

CRFB projects that ''no plausible amount of economic growth would be able to pay for the tax plan.'' The Republican plan would explode the deficit.

For the last 8 years, all we heard from our Republican colleagues was that Obama was raising the deficit and we needed to cut programs that benefit the poor and the middle class; cut the entitlements, Social Security, Medicare because of the deficit. All of a sudden, now with a Republican President and a proposed tax cut for the wealthy, we are hearing from the other side of the aisle that deficits don't matter.

Our Republican colleagues certainly believe the admonition that ''consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.''

Fourth, the Trump tax plan would explode the deficit and, thus, endanger Social Security and Medicare, which may well be the nefarious, ultimate goal of the hard right.

Sadly, I know it can happen. I have seen it before with the Bush tax cuts. President Bush pushed a big tax break for the wealthy. It blew a hole in the deficit and racked up debt, and then he and his Republican colleagues tried to pursue deep cuts to the social safety net to balance the ledger.

If Trump's tax plan were to pass, you can be sure, America, that a few years down the line—maybe even not that long—the deficit will be so large that our Republican colleagues will throw up their hands and say: We have no choice but to come after Social Security and Medicare and other important programs for the middle class as a way to address the deficit they created by showering tax breaks on the very rich.

They will resume the cry they had in the Obama years: Cut the deficit—which seems to apply to the programs that help the middle class but never to the ones that benefit the wealthy.

Just from the bare-bones skeleton the administration outlined yesterday, we can already surmise that this plan is not much more than a thinly veiled ruse to give away trillions to the wealthiest among us, starve the government of resources, balloon the deficit, and then cut Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare to make up the difference.

This plan will roundly be rejected by taxpayers of all stripes. The American people are once again learning that what President Trump promised to working America in his campaign and what he is doing are totally at odds.

TRUMPCARE

Mr. President, on TrumpCare, very briefly—on the new version of TrumpCare that may soon be headed for a vote in the House, let's not forget the reason that Americans were against the first version of TrumpCare. They are still in the second version. This version is worse, and there has been a lot of focus on a few of the changes.

The fundamental nastiness of the TrumpCare proposal—raising the rates on people 50 to 65, 24 million people uncovered, difficulty in covering preexisting conditions—is still in this bill. In fact, it is even worse. The new TrumpCare will allow States to decide whether insurers have to cover Americans with preexisting conditions. It is hard to come up with a crueler bill than one that would have resulted in 24 million fewer Americans with healthcare coverage, but this new TrumpCare manages to do it. It would hurt even more Americans and bring us back to the days when an insurance company could deny you coverage exactly when you needed it most.

I say to the more moderate Republicans in the House: If you didn't like the first version, you surely shouldn't like this version. Frankly, you will pay a huge consequence in the 2018 elections if you vote for it. We hope you don't vote for it because we know how many people it would hurt. Even if it passed the House, the chances for survival in the Senate are small. We don't even know if the new version would survive under the rules of reconciliation, the amendment to allow States to drop preexisting conditions. The fulcrum of the new changes very possibly violates the Byrd rule and would be kicked down here and need 60 votes, which they won't get for such a nasty provision.

A warning to all those voting for it in the House: It may well be a chimera, all to save face for the President in his first hundred days.

THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST ONE HUNDRED DAYS

Finally, Mr. President, we are only a few days from President Trump's 100th day in office, and by all accounts, this has been a vastly different Presidency than was promised during his campaign. So far this week, we Democrats have highlighted how this President has broken or not fulfilled promise after promise to the working men and women of America.

Today, I would like to focus on a particularly stunning reversal this President made in the first 100 days on one of the central pillars of his campaign: his promise to drain the swamp. President Trump repeated this phrase at every campaign rally. In many ways, it summed up his ''outsider'' campaign. Make no mistake about it—the President ran as a populist outsider, not as a traditional, hard-right, conservative Republican. He challenged the establishments of both parties and pitched himself as a change agent, someone who could shake up the status quo. ''Drain the swamp'' was his tag line.

We Democrats disagree with this President on many things, but we agree with him that the very wealthy, powerful special interests have far too much power in Washington. Large corporations that have the resources to make unlimited, undisclosed campaign contributions, that have resources to hire lobbyists on issue after issue, hold far too much power in this Nation's Capital, and that structure has created a system where the wealthy and powerful are advantaged in DC, while average, hard-working Americans have a much smaller voice.

Draining the swamp would be a good thing, but unfortunately, despite the many times he pledged radically to change the power structure in Washington in the first 100 days, the President has abandoned the mission. He filled his government with billionaires and bankers laden with conflicts of interests. He has broken with the practice of the Obama administration by ending the publishing of visitor logs to the White House, so the press and the American people don't know who has the ear of the President and his top people. He has even granted waivers to lobbyists to come work at the White House on the very same issues they were just lobbying on, and he has kept those waivers secret.

A President who truly wanted to drain the swamp wouldn't have taken a single one of those actions. What are the American people going to think? He campaigned on this and totally reversed himself within the first 100 days. What are they going to think of him? It is no wonder his popularity ratings are low and sinking.

President Trump ran as a populist, but at the 100-day mark, he hasn't even tried to change the power structure in Washington and has in many ways rigged the government even more to benefit corporate special interests. This is one of the biggest broken promises he made to the working men and women of America. That is how we Democrats sum up the first 100 days—broken and unfulfilled promises to the working people of America. And when it comes to draining the swamp, he has not done it.

One final point. The events yesterday have further proven our point. The President promised one thing in his campaign and is now doing another. On his new healthcare proposal, he has shown his hand: Promise something for the working people but deliver legislation that only helps the very wealthy. On his new tax plan, which still benefits the rich: Promise the working people; deliver for the wealthy. The President has made our point better than we

could this week. After these two bills, his promises to working people are in tatters.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I thank the leader for his remarks, especially with respect to the new addition of the healthcare bill. It is a disaster for Americans. It is immoral. It doesn't work. It doesn't address any of the problems that remain in the underlying healthcare system. Hopefully the Senate can rise above it and work together to do something better for the American people.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. President, I rise today because tomorrow President Trump is going to become the first President in about 30 years to address the National Rifle Association. He will address the NRA tomorrow, and I thought it would be appropriate to come down to the floor to talk a little bit about the epidemic of gun violence in the context of this speech.

A lot of us were thrown off by the tone of the President's inaugural address. It was very different from a lot of inaugurals we have heard—not uplifting, really. There was much more of a dark, dystopian picture of America, one that was frankly unfamiliar to a lot of us. Maybe the most memorable line from the President's inaugural address was that after describing this dystopia that he believed most persons lived in, he said: ''This American carnage stops right here and it stops right now.''

I wanted to come down to the floor today to talk about that idea of American carnage, what it really is. I mean, this is American carnage. It is 31,000 Americans, mostly young men and women, who die every year from gunshot wounds—2,600 a month, 86 a day. That is an enormous number. There is no other country in the first world, in the industrialized world, that has numbers like this. They happen for a variety of reasons. Two-thirds of those are suicides. That is an epidemic in and of itself. A lot of them are homicides. A number are accidental shootings. But America has this problem uniquely. There is no other industrialized competitor where this happens. That is the face of American carnage.

President Trump is going to address the National Rifle Association tomorrow—an organization that is, frankly, dedicated to continuing this real carnage that is happening in America. You can't explain these numbers through mental illness. There is just as much mental illness in all of our economic competitors around the world. You can't explain this through exposure to violent content on TV or movies or video games. There are plenty other countries that have rates that are much lower than this and the kids see that same content. You can't explain this away by law enforcement. We spend an awful lot of money putting cops on the streets. What we have in this country that is different from any other nation is loose and lax gun laws that allow for criminals and people with serious mental illness to get their hands on weapons that are more powerful than those that are available in other nations. That was the case in Sandy Hook, too—enormous destruction in a short amount of time.

I want to talk a little bit today about two things—first, about the real scope of this carnage, and second, about the real story of gun owners.

The President is going to go talk to the NRA—a group that is increasingly wildly out of step with gun owners not just in my State but across the country.

First, I want to talk about this idea of carnage in America—the central focus of the President's inaugural address. I commend to my colleagues an article that appeared earlier this week—maybe late last week—called ''What Bullets Do to Bodies.''

We don't like to talk about that a lot because today the popular image of a gun is almost divorced from its actual function. People collect them. People buy them in order to convey a certain image or lifestyle. People certainly have weapons to protect themselves, but very few Americans actually understand what these guns are designed to do. They are designed to kill people. They are designed to gravely hurt people. In particular, the AR–15 and AR–15 variants are dedicated to killing people as fast and as gruesomely as possible.

This article, ''What Bullets Do to Bodies,'' follows a trauma surgeon in Philadelphia. I want to read a few paragraphs from this article. It says:

> The main thing that people get wrong when they imagine being shot is that they think the bullet itself is the problem. The lump of metal lodged in the body. The action-movie hero is shot in the stomach; he limps to a safe house; he takes off his shirt, removes the bullet with a tweezer, and now he is better. This is not trauma surgery. Trauma surgery is about fixing the damage the bullet causes as it rips through muscle and vessel and organ and bone.
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> The bullet can stay in the body just fine. But the bleeding has to be contained, even if the patient is awake and screaming because a tube has just been pushed into his chest cavity through a deep incision without the aid of general anesthesia (no time; the patient gets an injection of lidocaine). And if the heart has stopped, it must be restarted before the brain dies from a lack of oxygen.
>
> It is not a gentle process. Some of the surgeon's tools look like things you'd buy at Home Depot. In especially serious cases, 70 times just at Temple last year, the surgeons will crack a chest right there in the trauma area. The technical name is a thoracotomy. A patient comes in unconscious, maybe in cardiac arrest, and Goldberg has to get into the cavity to see what is going on. With a scalpel, she makes an incision below the nipple and cuts 6 to 10 inches down the torso, through the skin, through the layer of fatty tissue, through the muscles. Into the opening she inserts a rib-spreader, a large metal instrument with a hand crank. It pulls open the ribs and locks them into place so the surgeons can reach the inner organs. Every so often, she may have to break the patient's sternum—a bilateral thoracotomy. This is done with a tool called a Lebsche knife. It's a metal rod with a sharp blade on the end that hooks under the breastbone.

The surgeon in this case is Dr. Goldberg.

> Goldberg takes out a silver hammer. It looks like—a hammer. She hits the top of a Lebsche knife with the hammer until it cuts through the sternum. ''You never forget that sound,'' one of the Temple nurses told me. ''It's like a tink, tink, tink. And it sounds like metal, but you know it's bone. You know like when you see on television, when people are working on the railroad, hammering the ties?''

''It's just the worst,'' one nurse told the writer of this story. ''They're breaking bone. And everybody—every body—has its own kind of quality. And sometimes there's a big guy you'll hear, and it's the echo—the sound that comes out of the room. There's some times when it doesn't affect me, and there are some times when it makes my knees shake, when I know what's going on in there.''

The article goes on to talk about what happens to those who survive.

> The price of survival is often lasting disability. Some patients, often young guys, wind up carrying around colostomy bags the rest of their lives.

They go to the bathroom through a stoma, a hole in their abdomen.

> ''They're so angry,'' Goldberg said. ''They should be angry.'' Some are paralyzed by bullets that sever the spinal column. Some lose limbs entirely.

AR–15s are designed by the military in order to kill people even more quickly so that you don't ever have the chance of going to an emergency room. That is what happened at Sandy Hook. What is remarkable is that not a single one of those kids ever made it to a trauma surgeon. All of those kids died on the spot—20 of them.

You sort of have to think about bullets like running fingers through the water: When you run your fingers through the water, it causes ripples, it causes disruptions in the water around them. Well, a bullet coming out of an AR–15 rifle moves three times faster than a bullet coming out of a handgun. So just look what happens when you run your hand through water. You run it through at this speed versus running it through at that speed. The ripples and the disruptions get bigger, right? And they spread further. That is what happens when the bullet from an AR–15 enters the body of anyone, but it certainly does something different when it enters the body of a 6-year-old. One trauma surgeon said that when it hits bone, it likely will just turn it to dust. If a bullet from an AR–15 hits the liver, well, this surgeon says that ''the liver looks like a Jell-o mold has been dropped on the floor.''

I know some people think AR–15s are fun. They are fun to show off to your friends. They are neat to fire. But that is carnage. A little kid's bones turning to dust in the middle of a first grade classroom is not sport; that is American carnage. Do you know what? A lot

of gun owners get this. A lot of gun owners understand that this has gotten out of hand.

There was a poll that was conducted just about 2 weeks ago of gun owners across the country. Eighty percent of them support requiring a background check before you buy a gun. That is pretty similar to the number you would find when you ask gun owners and nongun owners, but the gun owners in my State were frankly just as shocked and horrified at what happened in that classroom at Sandy Hook as my nongun owners were.

Gun owners in this country increasingly are not represented by the National Rifle Association, the group Donald Trump is going to go talk to this week, because the National Rifle Association, which claims to be speaking for gun owners, opposes background checks. They don't want a single additional gun sale to go through a background check. They are just fine with the fact that almost half of all guns sales in this country occur without a background check, meaning criminals and people with serious mental illness can get a gun so easily in this country that they don't even have to make much of an effort.

Eighty-six percent of gun owners in this poll support prohibiting anyone who is convicted of stalking or domestic abuse from buying a gun. The NRA opposes that. Eighty-five percent of gun owners support prohibiting those who are on the Federal terror watch list or no fly list from buying a gun. The NRA opposes that.

Eighty-eight percent of gun owners believe you should have a permit to carry a concealed handgun in a public place. The NRA opposes that. So it is no secret that 67 percent of gun owners feel the NRA used to be an organization dedicated to gun safety, but it has been overtaken by lobbyists. Fifty percent of gun owners feel the NRA does not represent their interests.

When President Trump goes to talk to the NRA tomorrow, I hope he understands they are not advocating for the views of gun owners in my State, they are not advocating for the gun owners in most all of your States. They are a radical political organization. They have to start answering for why they don't square with the views of gun owners.

Finally, here is a story of American carnage. Keon Huff, Jr., was 15 years old when he was shot on March 17 of this year in Hartford, CT. Here is what Keon said to one of his mentors in the North End of Hartford. He said: ''I'm either going to go on to college and play basketball or I'm going to die on the streets.''

Can you imagine there are kids who think that in this country? Can you imagine there are kids in this country who think their choices are to go play basketball in college or die on the streets of Connecticut? Most Americans cannot imagine a little kid saying that, but Keon thought that. He was right—because he was a great basketball player. He lived at the North End YMCA. He devoted all of his energy to basketball. He wanted to be the next Michael Jordan. If you told him otherwise, he just did not want to hear it. He was committed to playing basketball in college, but it was the other one that got him. He died in the hallway of his apartment complex when he was shot in the head on Friday, March 17. He died on the streets of Hartford. He did not end up going to college to play basketball. He is just one of 2,600 a month who die from guns, 31,000 a year, 86 a day.

A lot of gun owners in this country get that. They understand the flow of illegal weapons into our streets. They understand there are some weapons out there that are way too powerful that do those terrible things to bodies when the bullet enters.

When Donald Trump talks to the NRA, I hope he takes them on and asks why they refuse to stand up for policies that will end this American carnage that the President talked about in his speech and why they will not start actually representing the views of American gun owners.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Wyoming.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, people around the country know the world continues to be a very dangerous place. It became more dangerous over the past 8 years. I believe that is particularly related to what I saw as unwise and unsound policies by the Obama administration, certainly when it comes to foreign policy.

Every President's foreign policy should secure America's national interests and demonstrate America's leadership around the world. That was not the case under President Obama. The last President and his team followed a policy, what has been called strategic patience—strategic patience—when dealing with hostile countries all around the world: Iran, North Korea.

Any time there was a belligerent, aggressive, cunning dictator on the move, President Obama's position was strategic patience. It was a terrible approach—a terrible approach for us in dealing with reckless regimes.

I always thought President Obama was completely focused on signing a nuclear deal with Iran, not because it actually was a great deal but maybe because it might reflect well on his legacy. I thought he wanted a deal so badly that he ended up getting a deal that was a bad deal. Well, as part of the deal, the former President accepted Iranian demands—and he accepted all of them—to lift an arms embargo that the United Nations had put into place.

This was an embargo that said that Iran was not supposed to be selling weapons to other countries. The embargo was going to disappear in 5 years, whether Iran complied with it or not. We already know Iran has no intention of playing by the rules. They haven't played by the rules all the way through. Last week, the Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, said Iran has already been violating the embargo. That is why I believe they have no intention of playing by the rules.

The Secretary of Defense tells us they are not playing by the rules now. He said we have seen Iranian-supplied missiles—our Secretary of Defense said: We have seen Iranian-supplied missiles being fired into Saudi Arabia by the rebels in Yemen. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was even more clear. He said last week that Iran is ''the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism.''

He said that Iran is ''responsible for intensifying multiple conflicts''—''intensifying the conflicts and undermining U.S. interests in countries such as Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and Lebanon.'' Now, this is a direct result of President Obama spending 8 years being strategically patient. It is the result of sending the signal that Iran would be rewarded for its bad behavior.

So let's look at what happened last year when the Obama administration was bragging about the nuclear deal—and they were high-fiving, bragging about the deal.

Just when the deal went into effect, President Obama arranged to send to Iran $1.7 billion in cash—$1.7 billion is an astonishingly large amount of money. It is a million and a million and a million—it is 1,700 piles of $1 million. Remember—try to visualize this. You may remember the news reports about pallets of cash stacked up going to Iran. President Obama sent $400 million as a downpayment.

Within 24 hours, the Iranians agreed to release a group of Americans whom they had been holding hostage. The Obama White House said it was not a ransom payment to free the hostages. The Obama administration actually thought the American people were naive enough to believe it was just a coincidence in timing. Well, you can bet the Iranians did not believe it was a coincidence because they actually said it was not a coincidence.

The Iranians described the money as for the release of the hostages. We know from experience that the Iranians see hostage-taking as a valid way of conducting their own foreign policy. Right now, North Korea also has taken hostages—three American hostages written about today in the papers.

We know from experience the Iranians see hostage-taking as a valid way to conduct foreign policy, and they have also gotten the message, at least from the previous administration, that it can be a very profitable policy as well. President Obama played right into their hands. There is something else President Obama did that we just learned about, and that is why I wanted to speak about this today.

Politico had a major expose on Monday of this week. The headline was: ''Obama's hidden Iran deal giveaway''—

the ''hidden deal giveaway.'' Around the same time President Obama was sending cash to Iran, he also released seven Iranians who had been arrested by the United States. The President downplayed the crimes these individuals had committed. He said it was a ''one-time gesture'' to help grease the skids for his Iran deal.

Now, according to the documents obtained by Politico, the Obama administration also dropped charges and international arrest warrants against 14 other individuals. Some of them were wanted for serious threats to our own American national security. One man was charged with trying to buy thousands of assault weapons—thousands of assault weapons—and send them to Iran.

Another was charged with conspiring to get from Iran thousands of pieces of equipment with nuclear applications. The scheme included hundreds of U.S.-made sensors for uranium enrichment centrifuges in Iran. Centrifuges were a big reason we were concerned about Iran's nuclear program in the first place. Yet, according to President Obama, this doesn't seem to be a problem.

According to the article that came out Monday, ''As far back as the fall of 2014, Obama administration officials began slow-walking some significant investigations and prosecutions of Iranian procurement networks operating right here within the United States.''

As one expert told Politico, ''This is a scandal.'' She said: ''It's stunning and hard to understand why we would do this.'' Republicans in Congress warned about this kind of thing from the very beginning. President Obama was so interested in getting a deal that he got one that in my opinion, has been very bad for the United States—not just for the United States, bad for the world because Iran with a nuclear weapon makes the world less safe, less secure, and less stable.

President Obama has this as part of his legacy, but I will tell you strategic patience has failed. Secretary of State Tillerson said so last week, and I agree with him completely. I am glad to hear our top diplomat recognized this, and I am glad to see the Trump administration doing a comprehensive review of the Iran nuclear agreement.

The last President put international opinion first when it came to foreign policy. We see this all around the world. This President, President Trump, is showing that we will put America's interests first. It is not just Iran where we have the problem. I was recently in Asia over the break, along with a group of Senators. We went to Tokyo, we went to Beijing to meet with the leaders in China. We went around that region. We met with the Premier of China, who is the No. 2 person in China, and we met with the No. 3 and the No. 4 to talk specifically about the problems of North Korea and the region.

For a long time, North Korea has been called the land of lousy options, but there is new urgency as we see the increasing capacity of North Korea now with their rockets not just propelled with liquid fuel but now with solid fuel that allows for quicker launches. The launch vehicles are no longer on wheels limited to the roads in North Korea, they are now on tracks and they can go anywhere.

North Korea has increased their nuclear capacity as well as their missile deliverability, and they are working on intercontinental ballistic missiles that can hit the United States. That is why we were at the White House yesterday for this secure briefing. That is why it is so critical that we focus on North Korea and we have a President who is focused on a peaceful resolution but is not afraid to use force, as we have seen in Syria and in Afghanistan, because if you want to use deterrence, you have to have a capacity—which we have had in the United States, which is incredible—through the Presidents over the years. You have to have a commitment to use that capacity, and we have seen from President Trump a commitment to use that capacity in Syria, in Afghanistan. You have to communicate a willingness to use that capacity, as President Trump is doing today.

Last week, Vice President PENCE traveled to the demilitarized zone between South Korea and North Korea. He said very clearly that when it comes to North Korea's nuclear weapons program, ''the era of strategic patience is over.''

North Korea has been allowed to get away with too much for too long. It continues to test nuclear weapons. It continues to test missiles. It continues to use hostages as a way of getting what it wants from other countries.

Over the weekend, we learned that North Korea arrested an American professor who was in that country. North Korea, like Iran, has a history of taking hostages and using them as leverage to get what it wants. We now know three Americans are being held in North Korea.

The leadership of countries like Iran and North Korea need to understand that this kind of action will not succeed.

No one wants a fight with Iran. No one wants a fight with North Korea. The way to avoid the fight is to show that there is a limit to the patience of civilized countries of the world, which is why the age of strategic patience is now in the past.

There is new leadership with negotiation, deterrence, and, as a final option, the use of force, if necessary, which has not been the case in the last 8 years, where the use of force, the message sent by that administration was: We have no commitment to use the capacity which the United States has.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, there is probably nobody in the Senate I admire more than the Senator from Wyoming, except maybe his colleague, MIKE ENZI, who is also from Wyoming.

I come to the floor not to talk about these issues but to talk about others. I feel compelled to respond to some of what he said.

There's no need for Senator BARRASSO to remain. So don't feel as though you have to, but thank you just the same.

Mr. President, a little background: As the Presiding Officer knows, having spent some time in the military—'06, the Marine Corps; the Navy salutes the Marine Corps. I am a retired Navy captain, three tours in Southeast Asia in the Vietnam war. I served as a P–3 aircraft mission commander right at the end of the Cold War. The month I stepped down as a Navy captain, I led a congressional delegation back into Vietnam. Six of us—Democrats, Republicans—went at the behest of former President George Herbert Walker Bush's administration to find out what happened to thousands of MIAs to see if we could get information about them and to provide that information to their families for closure. That was the beginning of an effort in the House, mirrored by the one over here led by JOHN MCCAIN and John Kerry, to move us toward normalized relations to see if the Vietnamese would cooperate with us in providing information that we wanted and the families wanted and deserve.

In fact, a year ago, I learned, along with President Obama, that we are there to kind of close the circle on our relationship with Vietnam, which has changed a lot over the last 30 years. Interestingly enough, we are Vietnam's best trading partner, and they are a very good trading partner to us.

When we were there, they announced they were going to buy something like $10, $12, $14 billion worth of our aircraft—not fighter aircraft, not military aircraft, but civilian aircraft from, I believe, Boeing.

I learned about some polling data. They had taken two polls, two surveys of the Vietnamese people early last year, and the question asked of Vietnamese people was: How do you feel about other countries, the people from other countries? How do you feel about the Chinese, the Russians, Filipinos, Malaysians, Indians, Pakistanis, Americans, and others? How do you feel about them? In one survey, 85 percent of the Vietnamese people said they had favorable opinions toward America and Americans—85 percent, the highest of any other nation surveyed. Another survey said: No, no, 95 percent of Vietnamese have favorable opinions of the United States, which is higher than their opinions of any other nation.

The reason I mention Vietnam—they were a bitter enemy of this country. The names of 55,000 men and women with whom I served in Southeast Asia are on a wall just down 2 miles from here, down by the Lincoln Memorial. While we were bitter enemies, we resolved those differences in the 1990s.

We are now close trading partners. We don't agree with them on every single thing, but they like us a lot. We have much more of a relationship than we have ever had in the past, and it is a much better economic relationship than we have ever had in the past.

The reason I mention Vietnam is that there are some corollaries here with Iran. In 1978, that was when some will recall—the pages are too young to remember this. But in 1978, Iranians, led by their religious leader, captured, took control of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. They held our folks for a year or two as part of their cultural revolution or religious revolution.

When they did that, do you know what we did? We seized a lot of their assets in this country, in other countries as best we could. And that was not just a couple of dollars, not just a couple million dollars; it was hundreds of millions of dollars, and, man, maybe even more. Maybe it was even billions of dollars.

We held those assets, and we kept the Iranians from reclaiming those assets for, gosh, over 30 years—maybe close to 40 years. They have litigated in court. They say that they feel they should have access to what is theirs, what was theirs.

We are told by lawyers—I am not a lawyer—but we are told by some pretty smart lawyers on our side and others that they had a very good chance of getting all that and more in court if we didn't settle.

What we did, at the end of the day, when the Iranians agreed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement, which was reached with not just the United States but with the Germans, the French, the Brits, the Chinese, and the Russians—the idea was to make sure that Iran didn't have a quick path, a fast track to continuing their development of nuclear weapons. They were clearly wanting to do it, and we wanted them not to do that.

So we ended up negotiating this agreement. Part of the agreement was to settle these claims from almost 40 years ago, financial claims, valuable assets that we basically seized and refused to return.

It turns out, we have to mention how highly the Vietnamese people think of us today. As it turns out, Vietnam is a very young country, very young. So is Iran.

Iran has about 80 million people. In Iran, the majority of the people are under the age of 25. They like this country a lot, but they have people over there who are more in line with the old regime, who don't like us. The Revolutionary Guard, some of the military leadership—they don't like us.

They have newly elected leadership from 4 years ago, President Rouhani, Foreign Minister Zarif, and others who, frankly, want to be able to work with us, if they can. They are willing to agree to what I think is a very harsh agreement to ensure that they don't move forward on developing weapons and developing nuclear weapons. If they do, then we are going to impose these really stringent sanctions on them, shut down their economy—double-digit rates of inflation, economy in the tank. Finally, they said: OK, uncle. We will agree to this agreement.

Since then, the Iranians have done what the Vietnamese did a year ago; they have a more abundant civilian air fleet. Their civilian aircraft are old, decrepit, and they need new ones. They are doing what the Vietnamese have already done: buying a lot of American-made aircraft, passenger aircraft by Boeing. We are not talking about just a couple billion dollars' worth but certainly more than $10 billion worth.

I think they have already taken orders on one and have made one of the very first ones, and there is more to come. I think they are also going to buy a bunch of airbuses. I think more than half of the airbuses have components made in America, and that is another boost to our economy.

I don't remember who said it, but a Chinese military leader once said: The greatest victory of all is the one that we win without firing a shot. That is what he said: The greatest victory of all is the one we win without firing a shot.

Well, for a Navy guy who has seen some time in a combat area and the Presiding Officer, who knows a little bit about this stuff as well—I think he probably agrees with me that if you can win one without shooting anybody or getting anybody killed, I think that is worth doing.

The other thing I would say is, that doesn't mean we just trust Iran that they are going to do what they said they are going to do in the deal. There is an agency—I think it is called the International Atomic Energy Agency. They are all over them in terms of monitoring the deal and making sure that what the Iranians agreed to do, they actually do. What is it, trust but verify? That is really what the Iranian deal is all about: trust but verify. We will see how it all works out.

Color me hopeful. A lot of times when we vote on stuff, we vote our hopes as opposed to our fears. Sometimes we vote our fears, as opposed to our hopes. On the Iran deal, I voted my hopes. We will see how it goes, and I am hopeful.

BORDER WALL

Mr. President, that is not why I came to the floor. There is a lot of talk about a wall. I heard a song by Pink Floyd the other day: ''All in all it was just a brick in the wall.''

The President wants us to build a wall on our southern border with Mexico. It is about 2,000 miles between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf Coast. I have been down there any number of times as the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee and still as the senior Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee. The ranking member is CLAIRE MCCASKILL of Missouri.

I have not been on every square mile of the border with Mexico, but I can tell you that there are some places on the border where a wall makes some sense, and there are frankly a lot of places where it doesn't, including where you have hundreds of miles of river where it doesn't make any sense.

Also, I have heard from folks from Yuma down there, where the Border Patrol told me—where they had an area where they had some wall. I think the wall was maybe 15 feet high, and they kept finding like 18-, 19-foot ladders on the other side of the wall, where people would come up with a ladder to the wall and go over and above the wall. So you can go over a wall. You can even go over a high wall with a ladder that is high enough. A lot of that has been done.

You can go under a wall, tunnel under. A lot of people tried to get out of Mexico into the United States by tunneling under the wall.

As it turns out, walls in some places make sense. Fences in some places make sense. Boats in some places, like on the river that happens to be our border, the Rio Grande border with Mexico—boats make sense. Sometimes fast boats, really fast boats make sense. Sometimes it makes sense to build a ramp so you can get boats into the water in different places. Sometimes it makes sense to build a road on our side of the border to give us mobility. Sometimes it makes sense to put surveillance equipment in drones. Sometimes it makes sense to put surveillance equipment in helicopters. Sometimes it makes sense to put surveillance equipment in fixed-wing aircraft and also not just binoculars to try to find people.

There is something called VADER. It is an acronym for Vehicle and Dismount Exploitation Radar, to find people. It is very highly sophisticated surveillance equipment to go on our drones, go on our helicopters, and go on our fixed-wing aircraft.

What is so special about this? It can see at night. It allows us to see dozens of miles into Mexico at night—through fog, through rain. We have a system and if we need to, rather than just send out aircraft or drones or whatever without that kind of surveillance equipment, let's put the surveillance equipment on it. That makes far more sense than building a 2,000-mile wall.

Other things that make sense are surveillance towers. We have to go 100 feet up in the air, 200, 300 feet. Some of them are mobile. Some of them are stationary. We have motion detectors. In some places, that makes a lot of sense.

There is no shortage of ideas that make sense. What I like to do to try to figure out what to do is I ask people like the Border Patrol: What do you think makes sense? And what they pretty much say is an ''all of the above'' approach.

We have an ''all of the above'' approach in energy. If we are smart about securing our border with Mexico, I think we have gotten smarter as we

have gone on. We certainly have a lot more people down there than we had before that. We have 20,000 people, our men and women in the Border Patrol. They work hard and do a good job.

It is an ''all of the above'' approach. So I wanted to get that off my chest.

Does it make sense to spend $25 billion to build a wall that we may need less than 100 miles? Probably not. Absolutely not.

The people who are coming across our border with Mexico are not Mexicans. They used to be. There are more Mexicans going back into Mexico from the United States than are coming into the United States from Mexico. The places where a lot of illegal immigration is coming from are three countries: Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

Here is why they come. It is because they live lives of desperation. They live lives without economic hope, economic opportunity, murder, mayhem, some of the highest murder rates in the world. I think El Salvador—I don't know if we have the numbers here. They have a number of different routes they take from the three countries of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, mostly coming into the United States right here. They don't so much go over to El Paso. They certainly don't head over here on land to get in on the western side of our border. Some try to come by air, but mostly they come by—it used to be by train, now mostly it is by land, and they are dangerous missions. The reason they come is because there is not much hope there.

Frankly, the reason there is not much hope there, in part, is because of us. There used to be a comic strip called ''Pogo.'' The Presiding Officer remembers ''Pogo.'' One of the lines from ''Pogo'' is, ''I found the enemy, and it is me.''

We are the enemy. The chairman of the Homeland Security Committee said many times, the root cause of what is going on down there is our addiction to drugs in this country. The drugs are trafficked through here, they come into the United States, are sold, and the money from the drugs goes back there along with guns. When we deport the bad guys, what do we do? We take the bad guys who were selling the drugs, and we put them right back down here. It is a toxic mix of guns, weapons, and bad guys. They make life down here miserable for people.

As it turns out, Colombia, a few years ago, was a miserable place to live too. One time, about 20 years ago, a bunch of gunmen in Colombia rounded up the supreme court justices of the Colombian supreme court, took them into a room and shot them to death—shot them to death.

There was a time when the FARC, the rebel groups, the leftist groups, and the drug gangs were trying to take down the Government of Colombia, and it looked like they could. And some great people in Colombia stood up and said: Not on my watch. This is not going to happen on my watch. They came up with Plan Colombia in order to make sure this didn't happen. President Clinton and a guy named Joe Biden, who was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, led an effort to—not for us to fully fund Plan Colombia, but they basically said: This is on you. You can do it like at Home Depot. You can do it. We can help. They did the heavy lifting. They did most of the raising of revenues, and we played our role. We continued to play our role for 20 years and Colombia is a different place today.

The same thing can happen to these three countries down here. Joe Biden was playing a significant role as Vice President. I was helpful, as was Jeh Johnson, former Secretary of Homeland Security, and others as well. These folks, along with these three countries, came up with something they called the Alliance for Prosperity. It is really like Plan Colombia—find out what works, do more of that. Plan Colombia worked, and they are trying an approach like this down here. The idea is to restore the rule of law, to focus on infrastructure, to focus on making good government work and be effective, to really tamp down on the corruption they have there, the obstruction that goes on with small businesses. The idea is to create a safer, better place. Most people don't want to leave here. I talked to plenty of them. They want to stay there. Some of them want to come up here and work but then go home. This is their country, and they love their country, like we love ours.

Finally, as we have been joined on the floor by one of my colleagues, I ask him to allow me just maybe another minute or two.

NAFTA

Mr. President, there has been talk about NAFTA. There has been talk—and I don't know if these are alternative facts coming out of the White House or what—that the President is going to pull out of NAFTA.

I would just state this. I met with Robert Lighthizer, who is going to be our Trade Rep—and I understand that he will be a good one. He will succeed Michael Froman, who was an excellent Trade Rep for a number of years. When I met with Mr. Lighthizer in my office a couple of months ago, he talked about renegotiating NAFTA. When we negotiated the Trans-Pacific Partnership with 11 other countries around the world—40 percent of the world's markets—we did that over the last couple of years, we were renegotiating NAFTA. We fixed a lot of things in NAFTA that needed to be fixed, not just in the Mexico part of NAFTA but also Canada.

One of the things that needed to be fixed was in our top market—we raise a lot of chickens in Georgia, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and other places. Our top market for poultry is Mexico. Canada doesn't buy our chickens. They keep us out. The Trans-Pacific Partnership renegotiated NAFTA, not just for poultry but for a variety of other commodities we want to sell.

So my friendly advice to the President is, before he goes ahead and pulls out of NAFTA, why doesn't he and the administration take a closer look at what we renegotiated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership when we renegotiated NAFTA. I think we will find a lot of what we need to do, want to do, and what we can agree to do.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, I want to talk about healthcare reform. The Republicans came up with a really good idea in 1993. It was introduced by John Chafee, the Senator from Rhode Island, and cosponsored by 23 Senators. It was an alternative plan to HillaryCare in 1993. The Republicans got the ideas from the Heritage Foundation, and they turned out to be good ideas.

One provision they included was that every State would have an exchange. If people couldn't get healthcare, they could buy their healthcare coverage as a part of a large purchasing pool called an exchange. The Republican idea from Chafee and others not only had exchanges but had sliding-scale tax credits for buying down the healthcare for lower income folks to buy down the cost of coverage for lower income people. When their income reached a certain level, the tax credit went away. That was in 1993, the alternative plan to HillaryCare, with the individual mandate. Basically, many folks had to be covered, and there would be a fine if they didn't get coverage. We can't make people get coverage, but the idea was to get people to get coverage.

The employer mandate was the fourth concept. The fourth concept said employers of a certain size—I think it was employers with 50 to 100 employees—were to provide healthcare to their employees.

The last piece was that insurance companies could not deny coverage to people because of preexisting conditions. That was the 1993 proposal, courtesy of the Heritage Foundation.

When Mitt Romney was Governor of Massachusetts, he took that game plan, lock, stock, and barrel, and established RomneyCare and it worked out pretty well. When we did the Affordable Care Act, we took RomneyCare and built on that.

I will close with this. The piece that needs to be fixed and repaired, not repealed but fixed, out of the original Republican idea is the idea that the insurance companies need a stable insurance pool of healthy people, not just old people and sick people but healthy people and younger people as well. There are some ways we can fix that. It is one of the fixes we need to make. It isn't all that hard. It isn't all that hard, and I will talk about that some other day.

I appreciate my friend from one of those Dakotas—South Dakota—for being patient and waiting. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. President.

My colleague and friend, the Senator from Delaware, is also a former Governor, and it is always enjoyable to listen to the experiences and clearly the understanding about a number of the issues we have in common in terms of things that concern us.

I remember back in 1993, as well when we were looking at healthcare reform in South Dakota, we actually, in our process, adopted the vast majority of what was considered to be the recommendations from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners—guaranteed renewability of policies, guaranteed to be able to move from one group insurance product to another group insurance product, a minimum amount of premium versus maximum amount of premium by any carrier in any single group of policies in one plan. Those provisions actually worked for us for a period up until 2009, when ObamaCare became the law of the land, and at that point we suffered through the same problems most of the rest of America is suffering through right now.

But there are some things that really do bind us together, and one of them is trying to make and produce the best healthcare products for the citizens within our different States that we possibly can. I think in the U.S. Senate there are enough of us who truly believe we can fix, repeal, replace ObamaCare. I think Democrats would like to say we are going to fix it. I think Republicans recognize that we are probably going to do more of a startover because the basic concept of ObamaCare, which was moving more and more into a single-payer system, will not work.

For those of us who believe in the free market, what we want to do is take away the regulations at the Federal level, give them back to the States, and allow the States to actually experiment and make a more competitive healthcare product. That allows for businesses to be able to insure more individuals to help pay for their costs. It also means, then, you can actually get more individuals to receive the benefits of private healthcare rather than being responsible for or at least expecting that the Federal Government is going to subsidize with Federal taxpayer money their healthcare costs. I think that is part of what we need to be concerned with here today.

REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. President, we all want a strong economy. We want more jobs being made available. One of the reasons I am here on the floor today is to talk about not just the healthcare regulations that impact the ability of employers to hire employees, but we should also be talking about the regulatory environment in the United States.

That is what I really want to talk about today, is this tremendous success we are beginning to have in just the first 3 months that President Trump has taken office. We have been successful in undoing a number of the regulatory hurdles that have been hindering job growth and prosperity in the United States.

It has been 3 months now since the President took office, with a Republican-led Congress in place ready to help him advance policies that grow our economy and allow hard-working Americans to keep more of their paycheck each month.

We are going to be talking a lot about tax reform, but we shouldn't forget about regulatory reform as well.

One of the items with tax reform, some folks actually suggested a tax on items being brought into the United States—a border adjustment tax. One of the reasons for that was they thought we would be buying more American goods if we made those goods from other countries more expensive by putting a tax on them, which would be passed on to the consumers. I think that is the wrong approach.

What we should be doing is allowing our consumers the availability of a less expensive American product, and the way you do that is we allow manufacturers in the United States to become more competitive. We do that by reducing their input costs, including a regulatory impact that is huge.

We believe we should be creating an atmosphere in the United States for products to be produced at a cost that is less in the first place. We shouldn't have to increase the cost of other people's products coming into the United States. We should be making it less expensive for our producers to compete with them. The way we accomplish this, first and foremost, is by reducing the regulatory environment in America, which is way too intrusive, duplicative, and overreaching.

If anyone is wondering how bad the regulatory environment is in the United States today, well, regulations cost the American people $1.9 trillion annually, the bulk of which is handed down to consumers. Businesses don't absorb it, they pass it on.

How are the consumers paying for it? Through higher prices on products and goods produced in the United States. If you are wondering why it is such a big deal, it is because we want our manufacturers, our producers, and our businesses in the United States to be able to compete with our competitors overseas, the ones that don't have the crippling regulatory environment we have here at home. Right now, our businesses and job creators are crippled by Federal regulations that limit their ability to expand and grow, to create more job opportunities, and pay higher wages.

If the $1.9 trillion we spend annually on regulations were a country, it would be the 10th largest economy in the world, about the size of India or Russia's economy. Get this. We pay more as consumers for the cost of regulations at $1.9 trillion than we as taxpayers pay in personal income taxes on April 15. On April 15, we pay about $1.4 trillion in personal income taxes, and yet we pay $1.9 trillion—one-half trillion more in the costs of regulations.

No other country in the world even comes close to this sort of unhealthy, costly regulatory environment. It is putting us at a competitive disadvantage in the international arena. While there has been a lot of focus this week on reforming our tax policy to get us back to the level of global competitiveness that we need, we must not lose sight of the need to reform our regulatory environment to one that invites growth and innovation. Both are needed. We have to reform our tax policy, and we absolutely have to reform our regulatory policies.

Already in the first 3 months that President Trump has been in office, we have made progress in stopping harmful regulations from taking effect. Under the Congressional Review Act, the Senate has passed 13 resolutions so far this year to undo Obama-era regulations. The Congressional Review Act allows us to disapprove certain regulations that basically were approved by the administration or created by the administration over the last 6 months. The reason we are able to do it is because we can do it with just a majority vote. It is a privileged motion in the U.S. Senate. It is a majority vote in the House and takes a majority vote in the Senate. It doesn't require 60 votes, so we are actually able to, with a majority vote, undo these regulations that were going to be imposed on the American public over the last 6 months. I think that is a step in the right direction. This is a program which in the past has been used only one time since it was created in the 1990s. We have done it 13 times in just these first 3 months. The Congressional Review Act, or CRA, is truly an important oversight tool that allows Congress to undo Federal regulations issued by unelected bureaucrats at Federal agencies by this simple majority vote.

For example, we have been able to reverse the Obama administration's education mandate which would have imposed Federal education standards to assess schools at the State and level local. We think that should be done at the State and local level.

We also stopped an Obama regulation that would have imposed burdensome new restrictions on internet service providers that would do nothing to increase privacy protections for consumers. If you follow some of the misinformation that has been put out there, some people have suggested that we were taking away privacy that had been put in place by the last administration. Not true. Actually, what happened was that the courts had already stopped these provisions before they were ever put into effect.

So, for the people who like the policy protections that are in place today,

they are still there. This was a new regulation that they were going to impose that took an entirely different approach to managing privacy. We were able to stop it. We have told the agencies to go back, to start over again, and to start following a similar course of action to what was already in place and that people already liked.

The savings that come from undoing these and other regulations that we have stopped under the Congressional Review Act, combined with the President's Executive actions and rule delays, will save Americans, approximately, 52 million hours of paperwork annually and, if you accumulate what the costs are over an extended period of time, over $65 billion in regulatory compliance costs. To the President's credit, he has also been busy using the tools he has available in order to undo burdensome regulations that are crippling growth.

The new administration put a halt to the overreaching waters of the United States—or WOTUS—rule, requiring the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers to review the WOTUS rule in order to make certain it promotes economic growth and minimizes regulatory uncertainty. I would suspect that this time around, rather than the last time around, they will actually be required to use sound science in making those determinations.

It also stopped the Obama administration's costly Clean Power Plan, which would have required States to completely rework their electric grids and would have led to dramatically higher electricity bills for every single American in the country.

Now, I am not suggesting that all rules are bad. Some rules are necessary for a government to operate in an orderly fashion and keep Americans safe, but too much regulation is costly and clearly stifles innovation. For the past 8 years, Americans have seen an unprecedented number of new rules and regulations that have been issued by unelected, unaccountable Washington bureaucrats.

We are committed to changing that ''Washington knows best'' mentality because, at the end of the day, overregulation hurts families the most because they are the ones who are forced to pay more for goods and services when businesses are forced to spend exorbitant amounts of money just to put their products on the market.

It is time for America to retake its position as a world leader in innovation. It is time for America to get busy on production again—creating new job opportunities, selling more of our products at a competitive advantage overseas, affording young people new job opportunities and the ability to stay here in the United States, inviting more capital to come in because there is a better return on capital, which, once again, gets reinvested in the United States and, thus, grows our economy and allows us to be able to enjoy the services that economy supports.

It is time to take a second look at regulations. It is time for the United States to be a leader again and for the American people to have the ability to have influence on the laws that are being created. Those laws should be voted on by their elected representatives, not imposed on them by unelected Washington bureaucrats.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to follow up on the remarks that have just been made by our friend from South Dakota.

During his first 100 days in office, President Trump has wasted no time in fulfilling one of his key promises and one of those promises that is hard to appreciate because, if bad things do not happen to you, it is hard to realize they did not happen. Yet there were many bad things in store for the American people and frankly a lot of bad things that have happened through the very kinds of regulations, over the last years, that Senator ROUNDS was talking about.

Over the last 8 years, any time I had been traveling in Missouri, one of the top-of-mind issues with group after group had always been a different and more troublesome and more burdensome recent regulation by the Federal Government. I had heard about healthcare, but often I had heard about healthcare with regard to the irrational regulations that were being put out as part of the bill, and I had heard about taxes. Yet I would say that the No. 1 issue I had heard about for the whole 8 years was that of out-of-control regulators who were clearly also not responsive to anybody and did not need to be. Frankly, in the second 4 years of that Presidency, the regulators were even less responsive than they were in the first 4 years, and I think that is something that happens way too often.

I hear from families, farmers, and job creators who tell me that the biggest barrier to job creation and economic growth is exactly what we are hearing about here this morning; that people do not think out the real consequences of the regulations.

According to regulations.gov, Federal agencies finalized more than 4,000 new regulations in 2016 alone. That was an average of 11 new regulations a day in the final year of the Obama Presidency. Let's think about that. Every one of those 4,000 regulations was a regulation that the country had lived without for the entire history of the country and that the Obama administration had lived without for 7 years.

A number of those regulations had been done so late that we had had a chance to look at them through the Congressional Review Act because they were still available to the new Congress. That is how late they happened. One of them went into effect on January 18, and the Obama administration was over at noon on January 20.

They handed down a record-breaking 600 major new regulations that imposed more than $700 billion in costs on our economy. Senator ROUNDS just mentioned the estimated total annual compliance costs for regulations of $1.9 billion—almost $2 trillion. Imagine. If half of those regulations are either duplicative or unnecessary, talk about a stimulus, if somehow we go back and figure out how to eliminate the half that does not need to be done so one can really focus on the half that needs to be done. I am for every regulation that we absolutely have to have, but I am not for regulations that we do not absolutely have to have.

What is worse is that the completely unnecessary aim of these regulations is frankly the amount of effort some of them require.

There is a $12.3 billion regulation on efficiency standards for central air conditioners. Now, one has to find a lot of efficiency to find $12.3 billion in savings. That is a lot of efficiency. There is a $4.4 billion regulation that sets standards for ceiling fans. I like ceiling fans as much as the next person, but when you add $4.4 billion to standards, that has to be paid for by somebody just like the $3.6 billion in regulations of the control of commercial vehicle operators.

What the regulators so often do not seem to understand is that ultimately the consumers have to pay for the costs of these regulations. The cost of regulations is not really a reflection of the government's cost of being the regulator, it is the economic cost of having the regulations.

That is why I have been particularly encouraged to see President Trump taking the steps he has taken to roll back many of the late efforts by the Obama administration. Since taking office, President Trump has signed 13 Congressional Review Act resolutions which, according to the administration, will save $10 billion in regulatory costs over a 10-year period of time. With regard to the Congressional Review Act, the Congress's passing a rejection of the rule and the President's agreeing to it happened exactly one time in 25 years prior to this administration. It has happened 13 times this year. It will happen, I am confident, a few more times, and it will have a real impact.

When you look at the regulations that have been delayed or repealed by CRAs and Executive orders—Congressional Review Act resolutions or Executive orders—the American Action Forum estimates that $18.8 billion would be saved annually. Now, the President is not going to get much credit for that, and the Congress is not either, but if in the last few weeks we figured out how to take an $18.8 billion burden off of people by not moving forward with regulations that the country had not had prior to just a few weeks ago, in some cases, that is a good thing.

Many of the Missourians from whom I have heard are particularly relieved that the President is also moving back from a couple of rules—the power rule and the waters of the United States rule—that Federal courts, fortunately, up until now, had said to President Obama's administration they did not have the authority to do what they were trying to do in either of these rules. The rules would have had devastating impacts on job opportunities and on families in our State. The power rule would have doubled the utility bills in 10 or 12 years.

I have been reminding Missourians over the last several months that if you do not think that is going to impact you when you pay your electric bill the next time, just write it right out of your checkbook one more time—write it—because that is what you would be doing sometime in the next decade and see what impact that has on the kinds of things you and your family would have been doing with the money that you would have been spending on twice your utility bill.

A week ago, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt was in our State, at the Thomas Hill powerplant, to talk about how these rules would have affected the State and how one can still fulfill the mission of the EPA for clean air and clean water and a better environment without having rules that devastate families as well as deal with problems, many of which have now been on the priority list for 10 years and longer and have never been dealt with, while the EPA has been coming up with something else to do. They would have driven up the cost of groceries. They would have driven up the cost of the utility bill itself. Of course, when the utility bill goes up, the utility bill work goes up, too, and work might not be there at double the utility bill.

The combined cost savings is estimated to be as high as $67.3 billion over the very foreseeable future of the Congressional Review Act, the President's Executive orders, the announced decisions that they have made about things like the clean power rule and the waters of the United States rule. Even in Washington, $67.3 billion is a lot of money, not to mention the 52 million hours of paperwork that will be needed to comply with rules that were not necessary to be there and that Senator ROUNDS mentioned.

Our economy cannot grow and thrive with billions of dollars' worth of regulations dragging it down. Let me say again that I am for every regulation that we absolutely have to have—there is no argument about that—but we need to have a process by which we know whether we have to have them. That is why, in the next few weeks, I plan to reintroduce the bipartisan Regulatory Improvement Act, which the Congress looked at last year.

This bill would create a Regulatory Improvement Commission that would review outdated regulations with the goal of bringing the list back to the Congress and saying that we think that these can all be eliminated.

I have also cosponsored an act called the REINS Act, which would give me and the rest of the Congress the obligation to vote on any regulation that has more than $100 million of impact on the economy so that if we need it, we are going to go home and justify it, and the American people—where I live and the Presiding Officer lives—can get their hands on us if we cannot explain why we thought it was a good idea to do that.

I believe the government should work for the American people, not the other way around, and I believe the President and the Congress have taken advantage of this historic opportunity to drive that peg a little deeper in the ground.

I look forward to continuing to work on these issues. I think we need to take more responsibility for these issues. I know some of our colleagues have said: Well, why did we repeal these late regulations? Well, they were late regulations for a reason, and the country had done just fine without them up until now.

So I look forward to working with the Presiding Officer and others to continue working on this effort to have regulations that make sense when we need them and not to have regulations when we don't need them.

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY BEARCATS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr. President, I would also like to mention one more topic quickly. This is a very Missouri topic.

The Northwest Missouri State University Bearcats this year, in NCAA Division II, won both the football championship and the men's basketball championship. It has been a long time in Division II when any school was able to bring both of those championships back to their campus.

When I was a college president, we were in that conference, the MIAA, which is a competitive conference, and competitive enough that in that Division II level, the Bearcats brought home both of those championships.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING SNOWFLAKE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I have spoken a lot in recent years about how Arizona is quickly becoming one of our country's major tech hubs. From entrepreneurial startups to major technology companies, Arizona is supporting innovation like never before. In fact, it was just announced that Waymo, Google's self-driving car project, will be launching its first public trials of self-driving vehicles in the greater Phoenix area.

But, today, the biggest news in tech isn't coming from publicly traded Silicon Valley companies. No, today, the talk of the tech world is the students from my alma mater, Snowflake Junior High School. That is because these students from my small hometown of Snowflake, AZ, just won the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow contest.

This national contest tasks students from across the country with creating a solution to improve their local communities by using STEAM skills—Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.

The winning project from Mr. Eilertsen's students is something special. Snowflake students designed and constructed a low-cost animal detection system to prevent fatalities from vehicle collisions with wild animals. They were motivated by the fact that an estimated 200 people lose their lives each year in these collisions, which can be common around rural communities like Snowflake.

The winning design consists of a 10-inch, weather-resistant motion sensor that blinks to warn drivers when a large animal is near. These durable, affordable sensors can be placed atop existing fence posts like the thousands that line roads all over rural Arizona.

I had the opportunity to meet with these very bright students—2 of them from a class of, I believe, 23—and those 2 are in the Gallery today, along with their teacher Mr. Eilertsen. I had the opportunity to meet with them yesterday in my office and to hear all about this winning project. Let me tell my colleagues that they blew me away with their creativity, their knowledge, and, most of all, their desire to use the STEAM discipline to save lives.

Think about how remarkable this project is. Here is a device that can actually save hundreds of lives and prevent harm to wildlife and to livestock. With the grit and ingenuity of a great startup, these students at Snowflake Junior High have shown the country that big ideas come from small towns.

In recognition of their innovative project, the students won $150,000 in technology for their school and an additional $20,000 for having the most popular project on social media and with the public—not bad for some kids from Snowflake.

Before I yield the floor, I would like to thank Mr. Eilertsen for all that he has done to inspire his students to think big and for making a victory in this Samsung competition possible.

I would also like to thank all of the faculty and staff in Snowflake for their tireless work as educators.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the students of Snowflake Junior High for their victory. I am confident that your project will save lives, and by winning this competition, you have provided your school with educational resources that will help students for years to come.

To the winning students from Snowflake Junior High School: Congratulations. You make me proud to be a Lobo, and, as always, proud to come from Snowflake and proud to be an Arizonan.

NAFTA

Mr. President, we can't simply ignore the benefits of NAFTA for the U.S. economy. Experts have said that more than one-quarter of global GDP—some $20.5 trillion—is produced in NAFTA's combined markets of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Canada and Mexico are the largest export markets for the United States. U.S. trade with Canada and Mexico has more than tripled since 1993, and that was before NAFTA came into effect.

In 1993, U.S. foreign direct investment in Mexico was slightly more than $15 billion. In 2016, it was more than $92 billion in foreign direct investment.

NAFTA increased U.S. agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico by 350 percent, supporting U.S. farmers and ranchers like those back in Arizona. NAFTA has resulted in an integrated supply chain between the United States and other countries.

For example, the Wall Street Journal reported that ''tens of thousands of parts that make up a vehicle often come from multiple producers in different countries and travel back and forth across borders several times.'' Abandoning NAFTA would destroy these supply chains, making it harder for our country's private sector employers to grow and to do business.

Arizona has certainly benefited from NAFTA. In 2016, Arizona's trade with Mexico exceeded $15 billion. Total trade between Arizona and NAFTA countries reached nearly $20 billion last year.

The Arizona Daily Star noted back in November that ''trade with Mexico supports about 100,000 jobs in Arizona and retailers depend on roughly $8 million Mexican shoppers spend daily in Arizona.''

The bottom line is that trade is good for American businesses, it is good for American workers, and it is good for American consumers.

Trade deals like NAFTA make inputs for U.S. manufacturing cheaper than they would be otherwise. Cheaper inputs mean lower production costs for U.S.-based businesses, which, in turn, allows these companies to expand production and to reduce prices. That means everyday consumer products are more affordable for middle-class families.

If the protectionist trade policies of the past have taught us anything, it is that when we increase trade barriers, nobody wins. Do I agree that we should work to make U.S. businesses more competitive? Absolutely. Do I agree that we can modernize NAFTA? You bet. Pro-growth trade policies have been at the top of my list of priorities since I came to Congress. But any efforts to impose new restrictions on our ability to trade with Mexico and Canada will have serious consequences for Arizona, leading to jobs being lost and higher costs for consumers.

If we just think, in 2003 total U.S. trade with Mexico was just around $50 billion. Today, it is between $500 billion and $600 billion.

What is not to like about NAFTA? It is good for Americans. It is good for the Mexican economy. It is good for Canada.

We have noted many times that with regard to border security, the net flow of Mexican migrant workers has been south, not north, over the past couple of years. One of the biggest reasons for that, obviously, is the Mexican economy is doing better, and part of the biggest reason for that is because of NAFTA and their ability to trade. That is good for the United States. It is good for Mexico.

Trade is not a zero sum game where one party wins and the other party loses. Free trade benefits everyone. I hope that we remember this as we look toward NAFTA's future. We need to improve it and to modernize it, certainly, but we shouldn't abandon it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, before I begin my remarks, I just want to say, while the Senator from Arizona is still here, what a privilege it is to hear somebody come to this floor and actually speak about facts as they actually are—economic facts, facts related to immigration. If we had more people in the Senate who spoke on the floor the way the Senator from Arizona just did, there is nothing we wouldn't be able to accomplish together. It is a privilege to serve with him. It is a privilege to hear the clarity with which he spoke about these important issues. So I want to thank him through the Chair for that speech.

ANTIQUITIES ACT

Mr. President, at the close of the 19th century, many of our country's—almost all of our country's—most historic sites were completely unprotected. Places like Chaco Canyon and Cliff Palace, home to some of the most ancient dwellings in North America, faced looting and desecration. So in 1906, Congress actually passed pieces of legislation and thought about the next generation of Americans. Congress acted to protect these places by passing the Antiquities Act. The act empowered Presidents to preserve sites of cultural and historic importance and protect our most spectacular landscapes by designating them as national monuments using that authority.

Teddy Roosevelt moved to protect places like Devil's Tower, Muir Woods Forest, and even the Grand Canyon. Looking back, it is hard to imagine our country without those iconic places. It is hard to imagine our country without the legacy of those people who were thinking not between sound bites on the television but across generations.

Since Teddy Roosevelt, administrations from both parties, Democratic and Republicans—he was a Republican, as it happens, but both parties have used the Antiquities Act to preserve places critical to our heritage, including the designation of Colorado National Monument in 1911. I just visited there.

In Washington, we may differ over policies—sometimes sharply. There is no surprise that is true. But both parties have long risen above partisan squabbles of today to protect these special places for tomorrow. But with yesterday's Executive order, President Trump has upended that tradition by opening the door to attacks on our national monuments for generations to come.

I know there are people in this administration who have said they are ''lifetime supporters and admirers of Teddy Roosevelt's policies.'' If they are, now is the time they need to be heard because today's action is an offense to Teddy Roosevelt's vision for America and threatens his bipartisan legacy of conservation. The administration's latest Executive order initiates a review of all national monument designations since 1996 that are larger than 100,000 acres, with an interim report on its findings just 45 days later. I wonder if they know how long it takes to build a consensus in the West and in other places that a place is sacred enough that it should have one of these designations, and in 45 days they are going to threaten to disturb the work of people all over the West who have supported these designations.

Speaking yesterday, President Trump justified this action by calling earlier monument designations an ''egregious abuse of federal power.'' I wonder what he would call a Washington-led effort to undo protections for national monuments that enjoy deep support from communities all across the country, including in my State of Colorado?

For all their rhetoric about Washington overreach, this administration and its allies in Congress seem to have no problem substituting their rash judgment for the thoughtful, community-driven designations of national monuments across the United States of America. Had they studied this issue at all, they would have learned that existing monument designations come from exhaustive consultation and hundreds of meetings over thousands of hours.

Unlike this administration, western communities did our homework. We laid the groundwork and paved the way for these designations, which leads me to wonder what the administration's review hopes to achieve. I would challenge anybody in the Senate to come down here to this floor and explain exactly how this 45-day review will uncover information that somehow our western communities missed. They can't. They can't because that is not the point of this review, which is no more than a Trojan horse for advancing the agenda not of the West but for advancing the agenda of partisan think

tanks and politicians in Washington instead of the real-world interests of western communities.

Worse, if the administration ultimately repeals national monument designations—which I hope they will not—as a result of this order, it would cause real economic pain to Western States, especially in rural areas. A recent study found that rural counties in the West with protected public lands saw jobs grow at a rate more than three times faster compared to areas without protected lands. It just makes sense. Just ask outfitters and guides near Browns Canyon, a national monument, or local business owners around Chimney Rock, a national monument, what the effect has been on their businesses. In fact, those businesses were huge champions of both those national monuments. You can go buy a beer in Pagosa Springs from a brewery that is brewing it and putting a label on it that says ''Chimney Rock National Monument.'' You can buy the beer and take it rafting through Browns Canyon with outfitters who strongly support the monument.

National monuments not only preserve our heritage, they strengthen rural communities by supporting outdoor economies and attracting visitors from around the country and around the world. We should be more encouraging of that. Let's do more of that. Instead, this Executive order takes aim directly at our rural economies in the West.

Look at this. As we can see here, nationwide, Americans spend $887 billion on the outdoor economy each year, supporting $65 billion in Federal tax revenue and 7.6 million American jobs which can't be exported anywhere. There is not a country in the world that has a system of public lands like the United States of America and in particular the Western United States of America. There is not a country in the world that has what we have.

If this administration really is serious about creating jobs, strengthening our economy, and remaining faithful to the bipartisan legacy of Roosevelt, it should keep our national monuments intact and uphold the traditions honored by every President since 1906.

These are treasured places. Even though they have a huge value in dollars and cents, their value goes far beyond the economic value. It goes to the heart of who we are as a nation. It goes to our cultural heritage and to the legacy we want to pass on from our grandparents to our grandchildren.

Teddy Roosevelt called conservation ''a great moral issue, for it involves the patriotic duty of ensuring the safety and continuance of the nation.'' We must do our duty, our patriotic duty, and I will use every tool at my disposal to protect the Antiquities Act and our national monuments because in the end our character as a nation is revealed in what we choose to preserve now and for generations to come.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, yesterday President Trump issued an Executive order that undermined the protection of dozens of our national monuments that were established over the past two decades by three different Presidents. In continuing his administration's war on our public lands, President Trump and Secretary of the Interior Zinke have attacked one of our Nation's most prized conservation laws—the Antiquities Act, which gives the President the authority to protect our nationally important lands and waters on Federal land by designating them as national monuments.

In the 111 years since the Antiquities Act was signed into law by President Teddy Roosevelt, 16 Presidents—8 Republicans and 8 Democrats—have used the law's authority to designate over 150 national monuments. President Trump is trying to undo over 100 years of conservation in just a few days.

Many of our Nation's iconic national parks were first protected by using the authority of the Antiquities Act, including the Grand Canyon, Acadia, Glacier Bay, Joshua Tree, Zion, and in my home State of Washington, Mount Olympus National Monument, which later became Olympic National Park.

No doubt Presidents of both parties have used the Antiquities Act to preserve the most beautiful places in our country. However, President Trump appears to be very uninformed on the history or the importance of the Antiquities Act. In his remarks signing the Executive order yesterday, he described the designation of national monuments as an ''egregious use of federal power'' and vowed he would ''give that power back to the States.'' He truly does not understand the Antiquities Act, nor does he appreciate the bold leadership of all of those Presidents, both Democrats and Republicans, over a period of time—eight Republicans and eight Democrats—who have used this authority in an appropriate way to preserve for all Americans in the future and those in the past who have enjoyed these beautiful places—and to preserve our access to public lands.

I can't tell you how important access to public lands is for schoolchildren, our returning veterans, our families, hunters, fishermen, and hikers. Putting the Antiquities Act and the millions of acres of national monuments that have been protected back into the hands of a few who are more aligned with special interests to try to open these areas up to oil and gas exploration is the antithesis of what the Antiquities Act is all about.

We plan to continue to emphasize how wrong the President's Executive order is.

First and foremost, in the Executive order, the President directed the Secretary of the Interior to review the designation or expansion of national monuments under the Antiquities Act where the Secretary deems that the designation or expansion was made without adequate public comment or coordination with relevant stakeholders. That literally gives the Secretary of the Interior broad authority to look at all the land that has previously been designated since 1996 and potentially open it up to saying they are going to try to reverse that.

There have been many discussions about the last 20 years of the designation of some unbelievable, beautiful places in America that are so special—the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah, which is 1.7 million acres; the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument in Arizona; the Giant Sequoia National Monument in California; the Canyon of Ancients National Monument in Colorado—I know my colleague Senator BENNET from Colorado was speaking about it earlier; Hanford Reach National Monument in Washington, which covers 195,000 acres; the Ironwood Forest National Monument in Arizona; the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in Arizona; the Carrizo Plain National Monument in California; the Sonoran Desert National Monument in Arizona; the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Montana; the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument in New Mexico, on which my colleague Senator HEINRICH worked so hard; the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, also in New Mexico; the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in California; the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument in California; the Basin and Range National Monument in Nevada; the Mojave Trails National Monument in California; the Sand to Snow National Monument in California; Bears Ears, as I have mentioned, in Utah; and the Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada. That sounds like a lot of designations that we have made over the last 20 years. Presidents were very judicious about those designations. It took a lot of public comment, many community meetings, and a lot of scientific analysis about the preservation of these areas. The end result is that for these generations and future generations, national monuments have been designated on public lands that are in our national interests.

This has been so important to us as a nation. As I said, places like the Grand Canyon, Olympic National Park in my State—many places have created what has become an outdoor recreation economy. That outdoor recreation economy is now over $800 billion of annual revenue and dwarfs what the oil and gas industry represents as an economy of the future. In fact, this industry sector is on par to compete with

other large sectors of our economy—the financial service sector and the healthcare sector. So why are we taking away the very tool that has launched so much outdoor activity and a burgeoning job economy, with 7 million outdoor industry workers? Why are we taking away national monument designations that have been the priority of past Presidents and trying to return them because someone doesn't understand what the Antiquities Act is all about?

In addition to those large monuments that I just mentioned, also under review will be a group of other monuments that are marine national monuments. Yes, according to the definition I mentioned earlier, Secretary Zinke could review all of these monuments. In fact, I noticed that there were several people at the President's signing who represented some of these monuments. I don't know if they are urging the President to remove their areas, but it raises great concern about how important these marine monuments have been.

There is the Papahánaumokuákea marine national monument in the Hawaiian islands that was established in 2006; the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, also in Hawaii; the Rose Atoll National Monument in American Samoa; the Pacific Remote Islands National Monument in Hawaii; the Marianas Trench National Monument in the Mariana Islands; and the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument in the Atlantic.

In addition to all of those maritime national monuments of grand scale, these also under consideration are an additional two dozen or so—I think it looks like 25—smaller national monuments that could also be reviewed by the Secretary of the Interior. Even though they were designated with this Presidential authority, in previous administrations after great review, they could, by this President and this Interior Secretary, be wiped away very quickly.

We definitely do not believe the President has this legal authority, and we will pursue a vigorous fight. Why should we be wasting taxpayers' money when taxpayers' money was already spent to make these designations, and the taxpayer is getting the huge economic benefit of having these outdoor areas?

What else could be on the President's list according to this Executive order? The California Coastal National Monument; Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument; President Lincoln and Soldier's Home National Monument in Washington, DC; Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument in New Mexico; Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho; Pompeys Pillar National Monument in Montana; Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument; Governors Island National Monument in New York; the African Burial Ground National Monument in New York; Fort Monroe National Monument in Virginia; Fort Ord National Monument in California; Chimney Rock National Monument in Colorado; the Cesar Chavez National Monument in California; San Juan Islands National Monument in the State of Washington; the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument; the First State National Historic Park in Delaware; the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers Monument; the Honouliuli National Monument in Hawaii; the Pullman National Monument in Illinois; Browns Canyon National Monument in Colorado; Waco Mammoth National Monument in Texas; Castle Mountains National Monument in California; the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument; Stonewall National Monument in New York; the Birmingham Civil Rights Monument in Alabama; the Freedom Riders National Monument in Alabama; and the Reconstruction Era National Monument in South Carolina.

The Executive order says the Secretary of the Interior can review any national monument designation since 1996 ''Where the Secretary determines that the designation or expansion was made without adequate public outreach and coordination with relevant stakeholders.''

The Executive order says that for any national monument on the list I just mentioned, the Secretary of the Interior could decide there was not appropriate public outreach. Even though the process used by Presidents under the Antiquities Act makes sure you have that, this Secretary could decide there wasn't enough and recommend to undo any of these monuments and eliminate access to the public for the purposes of recreation and enjoyment.

So this administration has it dead wrong. He is no Teddy Roosevelt. In fact, I saw he had a press conference with a statue of Teddy Roosevelt behind him. Teddy Roosevelt would be appalled because his concept of preserving Federal land was so important. Teddy Roosevelt was an outdoorsman who spent many a time in these great places of our Nation and understood their great significance. That is why we have the Antiquities Act. He knew that these resources strengthened our country. They made us strong as a nation. They show the crown jewels of the United States of America in all their glory and beauty. He knew it was important to protect them for future generations to enjoy, not just for the special interests to take advantage of in the near term.

We have a lot of Federal land and offshore land that is used for resource exploration and development. As people know, natural gas is at an all-time high in the United States and driving an all-time low price. It is not as if you need access to Bears Ears National Monument to drive down the price of natural gas or other fossil fuel. What you are going to do by pursuing this wrongheaded approach on Bears Ears is take away one of the historic and beautiful archaeological histories of Native Americans and early Americans in the United States—and an area that has excellent outdoor recreation opportunities—and throw it, along with the concept of the Antiquities Act, over the side just because someone wants to try to reverse what our previous Presidents, starting with Teddy Roosevelt, have done to protect these monuments in our national interest.

Representing a State where we have several counties that have lots of Federal land, whether forest lands or BLM lands, I know that it can be challenging for local communities to maintain the infrastructure, the education, the hospitals, the law enforcement. I am a big believer in making sure that what are called PILT payments and the Secure Rural School Program are well funded and financed to make sure that these communities can be there to help us support these public lands. But the notion that with one act we would throw in Teddy Roosevelt's face all of these national monuments and now say that we are going to try to use it in reverse to review the work in the near term, of 3 different Presidents who used this authority is simply wrongheaded.

What we need to do is embrace the outdoor economy. As I said, it is 7 million jobs with over $800 billion of economic activity. In fact, since the last time they did their report, there has been a $200 billion annual increase in the economic impact in the United States of America. What great news. An industry and sector, particularly in retail, is growing by leaps and bounds. It is an industry that is providing people with more tools and opportunity to enjoy our beautiful places. The only thing we can do to screw that up is start taking away the beautiful places where people go to recreate. I would say we should be examining how well these areas we have protected are being used and figure out how we can continue to communicate to the general public about these wonderful experiences.

Do not think for one minute that the American people in their souls are not connected to the spiritual nature of these beautiful lands. They are. And that is what Teddy Roosevelt knew. He knew this is where we go to rejuvenate. Let's not take it away for some oil and gas exploration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Nevada.

NO BUDGET, NO PAY ACT

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, as we approach yet another deadline to continue funding for the government, I rise to speak today regarding my frustration and disappointment that Congress is once again kicking the can down the road. I am frustrated that I keep having to have this same conversation with my colleagues. I am disappointed in the lack of responsibility of everyone here in Washington, DC, to

do their job. Washington, DC, is the only place I can think of where people believe it is OK not to do their job, miss their deadlines, make up a new deadline, and then repeat that same process year after year after year.

I am upset that continually I have to remind everyone in Congress that the most basic responsibility that we have is to pass a budget and all of the appropriations bills and we should do it on time. It seems like Members of Congress now depend on the countdown clock at the bottom of every news channel to remind them to do their job.

Here we are, 4 months into 2017, and we still have not completed the appropriations process that was supposed to have been done half a year ago. If that is not bad enough, we only have 15 legislative weeks left to finish funding for the next fiscal year. My colleagues, I believe we are setting ourselves up for failure.

Washington is a consequence-free zone. That is why I will continue to advocate for my No Budget, No Pay Act. I have personally never seen Congress pass all 12 appropriations bills on time, on their own, without an omnibus or a CRomnibus. Regardless of who is in the majority, regardless of who is in the minority, my No Budget, No Pay legislation says that if Members of Congress do not pass an annual concurrent bipartisan budget resolution and all 12 spending bills on time, each year, then, they should not get paid.

Let me repeat that last part. If Congress fails to pass all 12 spending bills on time each year, then, they should not get paid. The American public is just as frustrated as I am. Since I have introduced No Budget, No Pay, I have been getting some much positive support for this idea. A woman by the name of Patricia from Fernley, NV, wrote to say No Budget, No Pay is long overdue.

Dorothy from Henderson, NV, wrote me to say No Budget, No Pay is a wonderful solution. Just last week, speaking in Reno, NV, I was asked when Congress is going to finally pass the No Budget, No Pay Act. Until the No Budget, No Pay Act is passed into law, I don't see any other way to motivate Members of Congress to do their job and avoid these continuing resolutions in the future.

I cannot support a CR that just boots our problems to another day without enacting the principles that are outlined in my No Budget, No Pay Act. There are important issues that need to be addressed through the appropriations process. For my home State of Nevada, we are looking at proposals from this new administration to cut funding to vitally important programs, such as the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, better known as SNPLMA, or payments in lieu of taxes, better known as the PILT program.

While these programs may not mean much to some of my colleagues, for Nevada they are vitally important to ensuring economic viability and competitiveness for our State. Moreover, Nevada has been a good steward of these dollars by utilizing them for job-creating projects within my State.

By taking up individual appropriations bills and engaging in debate on programs important to particular agencies, Members have the opportunity to fight for priorities that are important to their State. Right now, I am fighting to fund these programs. Sometimes this fight needs to ensure certain programs are not funded because they are a waste of taxpayer dollars, like Yucca Mountain. I cannot say it enough times for my colleagues: Congress should not provide any funding to this failed project that has already wasted so many taxpayer dollars.

Nevada will not be a federally subsidized national nuclear waste dump, plain and simple. If I can repeat that. Nevada will not be a federally subsidized national nuclear waste dump, plain and simple. Without exercising the power of the purse, which my No Budget, No Pay legislation ensures, we will all be right back here in a week, a month, or several months, making the same speeches, taking the same votes over and over.

So I would like to say to any of my colleagues who are tired of these continuing resolutions, regardless of what specific issues they are fighting for, to support the No Budget, No Pay Act. I believe the Congress can work again, but it will take some of that accountability—like the No Budget, No Pay Act—to get us there.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REGULATORY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about legislation to give our economy a shot in the arm and to help raise wages for Americans all across our country.

When I am back home, whether it is at a small auto body shop or whether it is at a big steel plant or whether it is at a soybean farm, I hear the same thing, which is people coming up to me and saying: Hey, ROB, with all of these regulations coming from Washington, I would love to hire more people, but I am spending too much time and money trying to keep up with these regulations.

I think that is true with every Member here, whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, when you are back home talking to people. They get frustrated. Sometimes it is local and State regulations as well, but a lot of them are coming from the Federal Government.

One example would be the Whitacre Greer Company, which makes bricks. It is a small family-owned business in Alliance, OH, just outside of Youngstown. They told me recently that complying with just one regulation is now costing this small company almost a million bucks a year that they don't have. They have had to go out and borrow the money, and that has been difficult for them. The cost of just complying with this one new regulation is about 10 percent of their annual revenue. Otherwise, that roughly million bucks would have been invested, they say, in plant, equipment and people. In other words, they would be able to create more jobs and modernize their facility if not for that compliance cost.

They are not alone. It is happening all over Ohio and across the country. Costly regulations are causing companies to pull back on expanding jobs and creating more opportunity for the people we represent.

Look, regulation has its place. There is no question about it. We need regulations. I think everybody acknowledges that. It has a proper role. We need reasonable laws that protect our health and the environment and prevent dishonest business practices. But let's make sure that, as we regulate more and more and more, we have smart regulations—regulations that make sense and that don't affect these small businesses, as I talked about with this brick company in Alliance, OH.

The reality today is that a lot of Federal regulations are more extensive in scope, more expensive to these companies—and, therefore, these workers—more unpredictable than they have to be to meet whatever the policy objectives are.

So Congress writes a law, and we have certain policy objectives, but then the regulators take that and they change the spirit of the congressional law instead of meeting that objective in the most cost-effective way possible. So I get that from my constituents, and the question is this: What do we do about it?

The other thing I hear about is the fact that regulators aren't accessible. People don't feel like they have any influence over it.

By keeping new businesses from starting and small businesses from growing, regulations are just making it harder for people to be able to make a living.

So how did we get here? Why are regulations so expensive and so burdensome on workers and jobs? I think a big reason is the way the Federal Government goes about writing regulations. Too often the process is unaccountable to the people. Too often it is based on sloppy or even bad information.

The current law that gives us the basic framework for all this process is called the Administrative Procedure Act. This has been around for a long time. But guess what. It has not been reformed in any significant way in 70 years.

The APA, or the Administrative Procedure Act, is something I have studied

in law school, as did other people here in this Chamber. It is something that you would expect to sort of change with the times, but it simply hasn't. That doesn't make sense.

Imagine if we didn't update our healthcare laws for 70 years. We are talking right now about updating the healthcare laws that were passed 7 years ago. Imagine if we didn't update our immigration laws for 70 years. Imagine if we didn't update our criminal laws for 70 years. You know, the world changes. It just doesn't make any sense not to update our regulation policy because we live in a growing and dynamic economy. Things are changing, and we have changed a lot in the last 70 years.

We didn't have things like microwave ovens or color TVs, and our economy was 10 percent the size of what it is today. Yet we are still using the same regulatory process that was put in place for a totally different kind of economy.

By the way, in 70 years, we have also learned a lot about how to regulate in a way that it is more cost effective and more efficient, and we need to put that into practice. So a reform of our regulatory process, in my view, is long overdue.

So far this year, we have taken some steps here in the Congress to give small businesses very specific regulatory relief by rescinding some of the recent regulations that the Obama administration had promulgated. We have done this about 10 times now with what is called the congressional review process. It is estimated that this has saved the economy a total of $65 billion in regulatory costs and about 45 million hours of paperwork.

I have supported most of these Congressional Review Act bills because I think they make sense. But this is just a handful of recent regulations. We have only addressed a few of the symptoms, not the underlying cause. We still have to deal with the underlying problem of the way regulations get made. If we don't do that, the regulatory burden will just continue to increase.

By the way, this should be true whether it is a Republican administration or a Democratic administration. The same rules ought to apply.

All of this is why yesterday Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP from North Dakota and I introduced bipartisan legislation called the Regulatory Accountability Act, or the RAA, which would put in place some really important and very reasonable safeguards on the regulatory process to get better outcomes.

Every President since Ronald Reagan—Republican and Democrat alike—has agreed with the idea that regulatory agencies should estimate the costs and the benefits of something that we all accept. So they put this into what are called Executive orders saying that they have to go through the cost-benefit analysis the same way that your family does and that families in Ohio do when they make a decision as to whether to buy that car or whether they can afford to send their kids to college. They figure out what it will cost and what the benefit will be. That has to go into regulations. Although every President from Ronald Reagan to Barack Obama has agreed on the need for that, it has never been put into law.

The first thing this legislation does is very simple. The Regulatory Accountability Act—the RAA—says that there should be a law, we should codify the practice so that businesses have the predictability of knowing that regulations are going to continue to use that commonsense cost-benefit practice.

The Regulatory Accountability Act would then take the next step of requiring regulatory agencies, once they have figured out the costs and benefits of these proposals, to choose the most cost-effective way to achieve their policy objectives. That is common sense, right? It is not done now. This is a big change and an important part of the legislation. Again, it is the same thing people do every day with their families. When they are deciding where they are going to go to school or what brand of milk they are going to choose, they go through that kind of analysis. Let's find the most cost-effective way to accomplish the goal, one that costs less and has the least impact on the ability to create jobs.

As I said before, a lot of regulations are expensive. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, from 2009 to 2014, in those 5 years, the Federal Government published more than 80 major rules a year, every year. A major rule costs the economy more than $100 million a year, and there have been 80 a year.

For these major rules, the RAA would let stakeholders ask a court to review the cost-benefit analysis used by the regulators, so that we ensure that agencies are using the best information available, not relying on faulty information or making mistakes. That seems fair to me, that we should have some process to make sure they are doing the right thing. This is going to have a huge impact on regulations.

The RAA makes regulators more accountable by bringing the public into the process. When folks talk about regulations, a lot of the time, their concern is that they feel they are cut off from the process. Although they can come to me or their other elected officials and state their concerns about this or that law, they have no access to the regulators. They are not elected; they don't feel as if they are accountable. They can't complain to them, and there is no influence if they do.

So under the RAA, agencies would have to listen to public comments and proposals before making a decision. Again, this is an important change. Instead of waiting until after the decision has been made and potentially triggering years of litigation, the RAA would move up that process. An ounce of prevention, my colleagues, is worth at least a pound of cure. It is a lot better for our companies and for job creation to put some time into the effort upfront to get it right than to have to fix it later. I think it is better for the regulatory process and better for a smart regulatory process in terms of taking our laws and putting them into practice.

So the RAA requires agencies to choose the most cost-effective regulations, creates more accountability by involving the public, ensures we are using better information, and takes existing practice and puts it into law. Ultimately, this is going to make smarter rules with better outcomes and will give us a better environment for creating more jobs with better wages. The RAA will free up more resources for small businesses to hire more people, raise wages, and purchase more equipment. That will boost economic growth and benefit all of us.

There are some critics who have suggested that this bill will kill the regulatory process and prevent new regulations from being issued, but clearly they have not read the bill. The reason this bill is bipartisan is because it gives the American people a voice in the regulatory process and it makes it more effective for both our economy and for our health and safety. That is the kind of commonsense regulatory process that hard-working taxpayers expect and deserve from their government.

We have a lot of support for this bill from workers all over the country and from a wide variety of industries, including organizations representing truckers, farmers, electricians, and manufacturers. It is a bipartisan bill because it is a common-ground bill. It is a middle-ground bill.

I first introduced the RAA 6 years ago, and it has passed the House of Representatives five times. By the way, on one of those stand-alone votes, 19 Democrats in the House supported it. Some Democrats who serve in the Senate today have supported it in the past; they were House Members then. By the way, that was when the regulatory burden was less of a problem than it is today. I have always had Democratic cosponsors of the RAA when I have introduced it here in the Senate.

I am happy to have Senator HEITKAMP, Senator MANCHIN, and Senator HATCH as the original cosponsors to this legislation because this idea is needed now more than ever. It is a great opportunity to break through the partisan gridlock and get something that creates more jobs, raises wages, and makes a difference in people's lives. I think that is what the American people are looking for. That is what my neighbors in Ohio tell me. They want us to get stuff done to help families. I urge my colleagues to join Senator HEITKAMP, Senator HATCH, Senator MANCHIN, and me in supporting this legislation that will create

a more stable and reliable regulatory process and give the people we represent more opportunity.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN STRAAYER

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, in Denver today, the Colorado General Assembly will gather to pay tribute to Colorado State University professor John Straayer, whose 50-year teaching career included 37 years of managing a legislative intern program during the spring semester. Every Tuesday and Thursday, rain or snow, Dr. Straayer, a van or two, and an over caffeinated, sleep-deprived, ambitious crew of college juniors and seniors would travel to Denver from Fort Collins under the tutelage of Dr. Straayer to learn the ''art of legislation.''

After publishing several seminal books on Colorado politics, accumulating roughly 140,000 miles back and forth to the State capitol, and supervising over 1,000 interns over the years, he is retiring from his service as Colorado's legislative professor emeritus.

Dr. Straayer has a true love of politics—the process, the policy, the people, and the place. He has a passion for every ounce of it, the kind of healthy obsession with a place that means so much to the lives of its citizens. He has seen it all—the good and the bad, the fights and the endearing moments. He watched the impacts of constitutional battles, term limits, and reforms, and 50 years later, he has never lost his passion.

To be a part of his intern program, students were required to take his class on the legislative process. As a young CSU Ram myself, I remember his class vividly, absorbing his drive and drawn into the intrigue of policy. We talked about the cowboy coalition and the Sagebrush Rebellion; about Speaker Bev Bledsoe and Roy Romer; about Anne Burford, who served in the legislature as one of the self-identified ''House Crazies,'' who in the 1980s became known as Ronald Reagan's EPA Administrator but who this past month became known as Neil Gorsuch's mom. We talked about the high-water mark of rural power and the rise of the suburban legislator.

Dr. Straayer introduced new generations of students to oatmeal with vanilla ice cream and topped with maple syrup.

Dr. Straayer introduced people to public service, including congressional and legislative staffers and many members of my own staff. According to a recent article in the Denver Post, those staffers and interns included former Democratic Governor Bill Ritter, Democratic State Senator Matt Jones, and Republican State Representative Dan Nordberg. They were all proteges of Dr. Straayer's. The article goes on to state that Straayer had arranged these internships, monitored them, and graded the reports of their experiences. Dozens of Straayer interns have risen to high electoral office or become key legislative lobbyists—and not just in Colorado; one of his former students is a city alderman in Chicago.

I remember visiting Dr. Straayer when I first joined the program and was getting ready to be assigned to a legislator. When I received the assignment, I was disappointed to learn that I hadn't been appointed to the legislator I was hoping to be assigned to. Instead, I was assigned to a legislator from the Western Slope of Colorado. I am from the Eastern Plains, and I wasn't used to the Western Slope issues. Soon I would discover that Dr. Straayer had placed me with an incredible legislator named Russell George, who went on to become Colorado's speaker of the house—an individual who Dr. Straayer knew would be an incredible tutor and an inspiration to me. Dr. Straayer was right. Speaker George taught me about issues I work on each and every day here in the U.S. Senate—about public lands, water, and the West. He was and is an inspiration to me, and it is because Dr. Straayer had the discernment to go above and beyond for his students.

After graduation, Dr. Straayer invited me to speak to his class and later would tease me in the State legislature that perhaps I talked too much from the well. He provided me interns from the very same program I was a part of 10 years before. Most of all, he reminded me of the good that comes from our teachers and mentors, those who look out for us because, from a special place in their heart, they know that through the gift of their teaching, they will have a lasting impact for generations to come.

Congratulations, Dr. Straayer. Thank you for your service to Colorado State University and to the State of Colorado, and thank you for impacting the lives of so many people. From this U.S. Senator, thanks for being that life-changing spark.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, on Monday night we confirmed former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue to be President Trump's Secretary of Agriculture, and I am here for my 164th ''Time to Wake Up'' speech to urge Secretary Perdue to listen to his agency, to scientific researchers in farm States across the country, to our major food and agricultural producers, and to farmers, fishermen, ranchers, and foresters about the serious and growing effects of climate change.

Carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels is changing the atmosphere and the oceans. We see it everywhere. We see it on drought-stricken farms and in raging wildfires. We see it in fish that are disappearing from warming, acidifying waters. We see it in our dying pine forests. We see it in extreme weather events.

Secretary Perdue is taking the helm of an agency with a key role in mitigating those very effects. The USDA provides farmers, foresters, commodities markets, and State and local officials with analyses of trends and emerging issues affecting agriculture, the food supply, the environment, and rural communities. In its own Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the Department notes: ''Climate change has the potential to confound USDA efforts to meet these core obligations and responsibilities to the Nation.''

During his tenure as Governor, Secretary Perdue issued a State energy strategy, stating: ''Strong scientific evidence exists that increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are affecting Earth's climate.''

That is encouraging. Yet, when asked by Senator LEAHY about climate change during the Secretary's confirmation process, he backpedaled and said: ''It is clear that the climate has been changing,'' but there is ''significant debate within the scientific community'' on whether human activities play a role in that.

Whoops, that is the classic denier dodge, and it is just not true.

Secretary Perdue said several times during his confirmation process that he will use the ''best scientific and statistical data available'' to make decisions. The National Climate Assessment uses the ''best scientific and statistical data'' to conclude this: ''In the long term, combined stresses associated with climate change are expected to decrease agricultural productivity.''

In the Midwest, for instance, the National Climate Assessment reports that temperatures are increasing, and the rate of warming tripled between 1980 and 2010. Under the assessment's worst-case scenarios, temperatures across the Midwest are projected to rise 8.5 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. If you are a farmer, 8.5 degrees changes everything.

In the western mountains, massive forests stand dead on the mountainsides as warmer winters allow the killer bark beetle to swarm into higher latitudes and higher altitudes. Over 82 million acres of national forests are under stress from fires, these insects, or both. Ominously, the assessment says that the combined effect of increasing wildfire, insect outbreaks, and diseases is expected to cause an ''almost complete loss of subalpine forests.''

The cost to taxpayers of fighting fires in those dead and dying forests is growing dramatically. Firefighting has gone from just 13 percent of the Forest Service's budget in 2004 to over 50 percent in 2015. The Forest Service estimates that by 2025 fighting fires will take up to two-thirds of its budget.

Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell testified to the Senate: ''This increase in the cost of wildland fire suppression is subsuming the agency's budget and jeopardizing its ability to implement its full mission.''

One place Secretary Perdue can go to find out a little bit about this is from our State universities.

The University of Wyoming's Center for Environmental Hydrology and Geophysics, for example, reports: ''Many of the most pressing issues facing the Western United States hinge on the fate and transport of water and its response to diverse disturbances, including climate change.''

At Kansas State University, professor of agronomy Charles Rice is using climate modeling to help anticipate climate effects in the Great Plains and to help the region mitigate and adapt to those effects.

In Wisconsin, Victor Cabrera, an assistant professor in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Dairy Science Department, says that higher summer temperatures and increasing drought will interfere with both livestock fertility and milk production, and dairy cows could give as much as 10 percent less milk. Secretary Perdue's own Department of Agriculture predicts that by 2030 climate change will cost the United States' dairy sector between $79 million and $199 million per year in lost production.

South Dakota State University professor Mark Cochrane is working with the Forest Service to better understand how a changing climate is affecting our forests. Professor Cochrane reported: ''Forest fire seasons worldwide increased by 18.7 percent due to more rain-free days and hotter temperatures.''

Secretary Perdue could travel to Iowa and hear from Gene Takle, an Iowa State University professor of agronomy and geological and atmospheric sciences, who told a United Nations conference recently that climate change is already affecting Iowa farmers. ''This isn't just about the distant future,'' he said. At Iowa State's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Secretary Perdue could also hear about what the center calls ''aggravated and unpredictable risk that will challenge the security of our agricultural and biological systems.''

I am from the Ocean State. So let's turn to the oceans, where the National Climate Assessment predicts: ''Fishing costs are predicted to increase as fisheries transition to new species and as processing plants and fishing jobs shift poleward.'' In the Pacific Northwest, ocean acidification caused a 70-percent loss of oyster larvae from 2006 to 2008 at an oyster hatchery in Oregon. Wild oyster stocks in Washington State have failed as weather patterns have brought more acidic water to the shore. This is an industry worth about $73 million annually. So we ought not to laugh this off.

In Alaska, the University of Alaska has an Ocean Acidification Research Center. That is how seriously they take it. The Ocean Acidification Research Center warns that ocean acidification ''has the potential to disrupt (the Alaskan seafood) industry from top to bottom''—a top-to-bottom disruption of one of Alaska's major industries, and we cannot get a word on climate change out of the Republican side of the aisle in this building.

It is, of course, not just scientists. Some of the largest agriculture and food companies are speaking out as well. For these companies, climate change is not a partisan issue. It is not even a political issue. It is a business survival issue. It is their new reality. In 2015, major food and beverage companies visited Congress to tell us how climate change is affecting their industry.

''Climate really matters to our business,'' said Kim Nelson, of General Mills. ''We fundamentally rely on Mother Nature.'' The choices we make to protect or forsake our climate, she said, will be ''important to the long-term viability of our company and our industry.''

Paul Bakus, of Nestle, agreed, saying that climate change ''is impacting our business today.'' His company cans pumpkins under the Libby's brand. They have seen pumpkin yields crash in the United States. Mr. Bakus told us: ''We have never seen growing and harvesting conditions like this in the Midwest.''

Chief sustainability officer for the Mars Corporation, Barry Parkin, was blunter in his assessment: ''We are on a path to a dangerous place.''

Greg Page, the former CEO of Cargill, has publicly stated that climate change must be addressed to prevent future food shortages. Specifically, he said:

> U.S. production of corn, soybeans, wheat, and cotton could decline by 14 percent by mid-century, and by as much as 42 percent by late century. From an agricultural standpoint, we have to prepare ourselves for a different climate than we have today.

In advance of the Paris climate conference, the heads of Mars, General Mills, Nestle USA, Unilever, Kellogg Company, New Belgium Brewing, Ben & Jerry's, Cliff Bar, Stonyfield Farm, Danone Dairy, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Hershey, and Hain Celestial signed a public letter—this one here—that said:

> Climate change is bad for farmers and agriculture. Drought, flooding, and hotter growing conditions threaten the world's food supply and contribute to food insecurity.

They continued:

> Now is the time to meaningfully address the reality of climate change. . . . We are ready to meet the climate challenges that face our businesses.

These big, successful companies don't take climate change lightly, and neither do our farmers, loggers, ranchers, and fishermen.

In South Carolina, farms that have been in families for generations, like that of Representative MARK SANFORD's, are under threat from climate change. Congressman SANFORD said: ''At our family farm in Beaufort, I've watched over the last 50 years as sea levels have risen and affected salt edges of the farm.''

Out West, ranchers are experiencing longer and more severe droughts. In a 2012 survey of Southern Colorado ranchers, roughly one-quarter of respondents said they would likely leave the industry if the drought persisted. Carlyle Currier, who owns a ranch in Molina, CO, said: ''We just can't grow enough to feed the cattle ourselves.''

In New Hampshire, Jamey French, President of Northland Forest Products, has seen hardwood tree species begin to migrate, with less valuable timber trees like oak and hickory beginning to take the place of sugar maple and yellow birch.

I sure hope Secretary Purdue will come to Rhode Island and meet our fishermen. Chris Brown is the owner of Brown Family Seafood and the president of the Rhode Island Commercial Fishermen's Association. He has fished in the waters of Rhode Island Sound for years: ''We used to come right here and catch two, three, four thousand pounds [of whiting] a day, sometimes 10,'' he told the New York Times. But the whiting have moved north to cooler waters. ''Climate change is going to make it hard on some of those species that are not particularly fond of warm or warming waters,'' Chris said.

And he is not alone. I have been told by other fishermen that it is getting weird out there in Rhode Island's waters, that this is not our grandfathers' ocean. These changes are serious for this industry.

So I hope Secretary Perdue will hear the message of our farmers, foresters, ranchers, and fishermen. They are sending this message loud and clear. Climate change is happening now, and they count on us to face the challenge.

The problem, of course, is the fossil fuel-funded denial machine that has so much influence over the Republican Party in Congress today. That fossil fuel-funded denial machine will do its best to change the subject, to muddy the waters, to create artificial doubt, and to use its anonymous dark political money to break up and thwart any signs of progress, but all the dark money in the world can't change the things that Iowa farmers, Wyoming ranchers, South Dakota forest managers, and Rhode Island fishermen see.

If this body—if our Republican friends here—will not listen to Mars Corporation, to General Mills, to Nestle USA, to Unilever, to Kellogg, to Coke and Pepsi and Hershey, it is really time to wake up.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. 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. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INCREASING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ACCOUNTABILITY TO VETERANS ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, this afternoon, the President will be signing an Executive order to increase accountability within the Department of Veterans Affairs. For several years, I have been calling on the VA to hold bad actors within the VA accountable. In my view, in too many instances, that has not occurred. There are far too many examples of those who commit wrongdoing while working at the VA, and even crimes against veterans and other VA employees have occurred without any consequence.

On his first day in office, I wrote the President urging him to make accountability within the Department of Veterans Affairs one of his top priorities. We see too many examples, and unfortunately one of those examples—one of those egregious examples—is in my home State of Kansas, where we face a terrible example of a VA employee violating the trust of veterans. Yet the VA seems to have no real sense of urgency in holding this person accountable or committing to fix the process by which he got into the position that he could commit the acts he did.

In 2015, we learned from local newspaper reports—not from the VA—that a physician's assistant at the Leavenworth VA hospital had been sexually abusing veterans. Shortly after that news broke, Leavenworth County prosecutors charged this individual with multiple counts of sexual assault and abuse against numerous veterans. He is currently awaiting trial.

The stories continue to come into our office and to the prosecutor about other victims. Veterans who sought services at the VA—the place they would expect to be cared for, respected, and the place they certainly should find safe—found something exactly the opposite.

As the story unfolded, we learned that Mr. Wisner—the person now charged with crimes—targeted vulnerable veterans suffering from PTSD, post-traumatic stress syndrome; he prescribed opioids that inhibited their thinking, and he used his position to deepen their wounds of war rather than to heal them.

Although Mr. Wisner is now beyond the reach of the VA, he and others like him who fail our veterans are not beyond the reach of Congress. It is ridiculous that taxpayers continue to fund pensions of VA senior executives and personnel convicted of crimes that harmed our Nation's veterans when they should have been serving and caring for them.

In the last Congress, we led significant efforts to develop, introduce, and pass legislation. Most of those efforts were with the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and we passed some legislation unanimously here in the Senate. That legislation increases the accountability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to make certain that senior VA executives and certain healthcare employees convicted of a felony do not receive the same benefits as those who diligently and honorably serve our Nation's veterans.

Not as an aside but as a separate sentence, let me take this moment to say thank you to those people within the Department of Veterans Affairs who conscientiously care for and fulfill their responsibilities to our Nation's veterans each and every day. How saddening it must be that they have to work side by side with people who commit crimes—and other failures for our veterans—and receive no consequence for that behavior.

We want to protect our veterans. We also want to make sure that those who work at the Department of Veterans Affairs know that their profession is honorable and that they are doing the right thing. It is difficult to reach that conclusion when surrounded by individuals who have not fulfilled that responsibility.

In light of the situation with Mr. Wisner—and other cases of wrongdoing so awful that they have been found guilty of a felony—we will not tolerate crimes against veterans that cause harm to their personal safety or that involve corrupt, backroom dealings with senior VA executives.

That legislation passed the U.S. Senate on the final day of our session last year. It passed unanimously. Unfortunately, that legislation did not then pass the House of Representatives, despite what we were told was significant support for it. It just didn't work in the schedule. So today I am back on the Senate floor. A hotline request is pending in which we ask—I ask—that legislation unanimously passed by the U.S. Senate on the final day of the previous session would pass today. That will then give the House of Representatives the time and the mechanics to see that this legislation becomes law.

In fact, the very first piece of legislation I introduced in this session, the 115th, was Increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability to Veterans Act of 2017. We today call for its swift passage. I am hopeful this legislation will provide an ounce of justice to those victims who have suffered at the hands of this VA employee, and I call on my colleagues to once again stand with me in passing this legislation.

In addition to the issues of accountability of wrongdoing employees of the Department, this legislation also has additional provisions. Those provisions include holding VA leaders accountable for Department mismanagement, hiring well-qualified people and addressing employee performance, preventing employees from conflicts of interest, and improving manager training.

We have a duty. Of all people in this country, whom should we pay respect and honor to? Whom should we care for? For whom should we make certain we live up to the commitments that were made? One would think that those who served in our military, who protected our freedoms and liberties are the ones we would put on a high pedestal and make sure everything possible to protect them is done.

We have a duty to taxpayers, as well, to make sure funds are not going to employees who are convicted of crimes against those veterans that they are charged to protect and to serve.

There have been a number of VA scandals, corruption, and illegal activity in nearly every State. Whether it has been a secret wait-list in a hospital that delayed critical care, opioid overmedication that led to death or suicide, or physical abuse and neglect, crimes must come to an end. There must be accountability for us to be able to say we are doing everything possible to bring those crimes to an end.

This legislation is an important step in making the VA worthy of the service of those who have sacrificed for this Nation. Given the previous unanimous support, I can't imagine—I hope there is no reason this legislation should not again pass today. I call upon my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to stand with me and Senator BLUMENTHAL and others as we work to make certain the VA is a department worthy of the veterans it serves.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, later this afternoon the Senate will vote on the President's nomination of Alexander Acosta to serve as the U.S. Secretary of Labor. Mr. Acosta has excellent credentials and is well qualified for the position. He understands that a good-paying job is critical to helping workers realize the American dream for themselves and for their families.

After immigrating to the United States from Cuba, Mr. Acosta's parents worked hard to create more opportunities for their son. Alexander Acosta became the first person in his family to go to college, and from there he has had quite an impressive career.

He has already been confirmed by the U.S. Senate three different times: He served as a Republican member of the National Labor Relations Board, he

served as Assistant Attorney General for the U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, and he served as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida.

Mr. Acosta's most recent role was serving as dean of Florida International University's law school. The school's president told the Miami Herald recently, ''Alex has a destiny in public service. . . . He's a person of integrity, conscientious, thoughtful, he doesn't overreach.''

On March 22, Mr. Acosta had a hearing in the Senate Labor Committee that lasted two and a half hours. Following his hearing, he answered 380 follow-up questions for the record—604 questions if you count the sub-questions. Then, on March 30, our committee approved Mr. Acosta's nomination, readying the nomination for consideration by the full Senate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of 140 groups, which includes business groups and labor unions, which support Mr. Acosta's nomination.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

140 GROUPS THAT SUPPORT MR. ACOSTA'S NOMINATION

Aeronautical Repair Station Association; Air Conditioning Contractors of America; Alaska Chamber; Alliance of Wyoming Manufacturers; American Apparel & Footwear Association; American Bakers Association; American Beverage Association; American Coatings Association; American Coke and Coal Chemicals Institute; American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association; American Fiber Manufacturers Association; American Fire Sprinkler Association; American Foundry Society; American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers; American Home Furnishings Alliance; American Hotel & Lodging Association; American Iron and Steel Institute; American Moving & Storage Association; American Staffing Association; American Supply Association; American Trucking Associations; AmericanHort; Americans for Tax Reform; Argentum.

Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Arizona Manufacturers Council; Arkansas State Chamber/Associated Industries of Arkansas; Asian American Hotel Owners Association; Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.; Associated Equipment Distributors; Associated General Contractors of America; Associated Industries of Missouri; Auto Care Association; Brick Industry Association; Can Industry Association; Center for Worker Freedom; Coalition of Franchisee Associations; Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry (CACI); Council of Industry of Southeastern New York; Corry & Associates; Delta Industries, Inc.

Fabricators and Manufacturers Association, International; The Fertilizer Institute; Franchise Business Services; Georgia Association of Manufacturers; Global Cold Chain Alliance; Harsco; Heating, Air-conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI); Hispanic National Bar Association; Hispanic Leadership Fund; HR Policy Association; INDA, The Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry; Independent Electrical Contractors; Independent Lubricant Manufacturers Association; Insured Retirement Institute; International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers; International Association of Fire Fighters; International Foodservice Distributors Association.

International Franchise Association; International Housewares Association; International Sign Association; International Sleep Products Association; International Warehouse Logistics Association; Investment Casting Institute; ISSA—The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association; Laborers' International Union of North America; The Latino Coalition; Leading Builders of America; League of United Latin American Citizens; The Linen, Uniform and Facility Services Association (TRSA); Manufacturer & Business Association; Metal Powder Industries Federation; Metals Service Center Institute; Michigan Manufacturers Association; Miles Sand & Gravel; Missouri Association of Manufacturers; MMC Materials, Inc.; Montana Retail Association.

Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA); MSPA Americas; National Association of Home Builders; National Association of Manufacturers (NAM); National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers (NAPIM); National Association of Professional Employer Organizations; National Automobile Dealers Association; National Christmas Tree Association; National Club Association; National Council of Chain Restaurants; National Federation of Independent Business.

National Franchisee Association; National Grocers Association; National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association; National Oilseed Processors Association; National Precast Concrete Association; National Ready Mixed Concrete Association; National Restaurant Association; National Retail Federation; National Roofing Contractors Association; National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association; National Wooden Pallet and Container Association; Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Nevada Manufacturers Association; New Mexico Business Coalition; North American Building Trades Union; North American Concrete Alliance; Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association; Plastics Industry Association; Port Aggregates, Inc.; Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute; Private Care Association.

Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association; Retail Industry Leaders Association; Rhode Island Manufacturing Association; San Jose Police Officers' Association; Seafarers International Union of North America; Sergeants Benevolent Association, Police Department, City of New York; Shipbuilders Council of America; Sioux Corporation; Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council; SNAC International; The Society of Chemical Manufacturers and Affiliates; Society for Human Resource Management; South Carolina Chamber of Commerce; Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association; Specialty Equipment Market Association; Spurlino Materials.

Technology & Manufacturing Association; Texas Assocation of Business; Texas Association of Manufacturers; Tile Roofing Institute; Tree Care Industry Association; Truck Renting and Leasing Association; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; United Motorcoach Association; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; The Vinyl Institute; Water & Sewer Distributors of America; Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America; Workforce Fairness Institute.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the supporters include the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Retail Federation, the National Federation of Independent Business, the National Association of Manufacturers, the International Franchise Association, the Associated Builders and Contractors, and the American Beverage Association.

Here are some examples of what these groups had to say about Mr. Acosta. The International Franchise Association said, ''Franchise owners around the country are facing a great deal of regulatory uncertainty as a result of the wreckage created by the previous administration's out-of-control Department of Labor. Mr. Acosta's exemplary record handling labor issues as a member of the NLRB has shown the appropriate balance needed to protect the interests of employees and employers.''

The National Federation of Independent Business said, ''Alexander Acosta is an experienced public servant with a distinguished record. His knowledge of labor issues and his service as U.S. Attorney make him an especially strong candidate to take on the entrenched bureaucracy, which has imposed unbelievably severe and costly regulations on small business in the recent years.''

The National Retail Federation said, ''Mr. Acosta's diverse experiences in both public service and the private sector position him well to be an effective and pragmatic leader at the Department of Labor.''

Why is this nomination so important? In his new book, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman uses the term ''Great Acceleration'' for all of the technological, social, environmental, and market changes simultaneously sweeping across the globe and argues that we are now ''living through one of the greatest inflection points in history'' as a result. Add Ball State University's finding that automation is responsible for the loss of 88 percent of our manufacturing jobs. Add globalization. Add social, cultural, climate changes, and terrorism, and you get a big mismatch between the change of pace and the ability of the average American worker to keep up and fit in the accelerating forces shaping the workplace.

Earlier this year, after a group of senators listened to a group of scientists talk about the advances in artificial intelligence, one Senator asked, ''Where are we all going to work?''

Tom Friedman says that probably the most important governance challenge is a great need ''to develop the learning systems, training systems, management systems, social safety nets, and government regulations that would enable citizens to get the most out of these accelerations and cushion their worst impacts.''

One of the federal government's chief actors in this drama should be the U.S. Secretary of Labor. In fact, as many have suggested and the House of Representatives has done, the title of the job for which Alexander Acosta has been nominated should be changed to the Secretary of Workforce, not Secretary of Labor.

Labor union membership in the private sector today is down to less than

7 percent. The issue for workers today is not whether they belong to a union. It is whether they have the skills to adapt to the changing workplace and to find and keep a job. To be accurate, to create and keep a job. My generation found jobs. This generation is more likely to have to create their own jobs.

In his inaugural address, President Trump said he heard ''forgotten men and women'' who are struggling to keep up and fit into today's changing world: ''[F]or too many of our citizens, a different reality exists: mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities; rusted out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation . . . '' That is what President Trump said in his inaugural address.

Ten days earlier, in his farewell address, President Obama said he, too, heard those same voices: ''[T]oo many families, in inner cities and in rural counties, have been left behind . . . if we don't create opportunity for all people, the disaffection and division that has stalled our progress will only sharpen in years to come. . . . ''

That was President Obama.

What can we do about this? The most important thing is to work with employers and community colleges and technical institutes and find ways to increase the number of Americans earning post-secondary certificates and two-year degrees or more.

Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce says that by 2020—3 years from now—65 percent of the jobs in this country will require some college or more. And at the rate we are going, Georgetown predicts the United States will lack 5 million workers with an adequate post-secondary education by 2020.

Unfortunately, too many of the federal government's actions over the last few years have made it harder for American workers to keep up, to adjust to the changing world, and to create, find, or keep a job.

President Obama's Department of Labor issued 130 percent more final rules than the previous administration's labor department. Overall, the Obama Administration issued an average of 85 major rules. These are rules that may have an impact of $100 million or more a year on the economy. Eighty-five major rules a year. President Bush, on the other hand, averaged about 62 a year. That is a 37-percent increase under President Obama.

Take the overtime rule. In my state, its costs would add hundreds of dollars per student in college tuition and it would force small businesses across the country to reduce the jobs that provide the stability that families need. This rule has been delayed by the courts until at least June 30th of this year.

Take the so-called joint employer policy. This is a policy that affects franchising and makes it more likely that a parent company will own and operate its stores instead of allowing franchisees to own and operate those stores. A Republican majority at the National Labor Relations Board can start undoing the damage caused by this harmful decision.

Then, there is the fiduciary rule, which is going to make it too expensive for the average worker to obtain investment advice about retirement benefits—again making it harder, not easier, to adjust to the changing world of work. The Department of Labor under the Trump administration has delayed this rule for 60 days, until June 9, 2017. Some parts of the rule are delayed until January 1, 2018.

One rule after another from the Obama administration has stacked a big wet blanket of costs and time-consuming mandates on job creators, causing them to create fewer jobs.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's EEO–1 form will require employers to provide to the government 20 times as much information as they do today about how they pay workers. Earlier this month, the Senator from Kansas, Senator PAT ROBERTS, and I asked the Office of Management and Budget to rescind this time-wasting mandate.

There is the ridiculously complex 108-question FAFSA, the federal aid application form that 20 million families fill out every year as students go to college. It turns away from college many of the very students who most need to adjust to this changing world.

The Affordable Care Act defined full-time work as only 30 hours, forcing employers to cut their workers' hours or reduce hiring altogether in order to escape the law's mandate and its unaffordable penalties.

Many of these rules, like the persuader rule, which chills the ability of employers to retain legal advice during union organizing activities, seemed designed for the purpose of strengthening the membership and the power of labor unions.

We are fortunate to have a nominee in Mr. Acosta who can use his good judgment to reevaluate labor policies that make it much harder to create jobs and to find jobs.

We know that Mr. Acosta has support from members of both political parties, and that raises a question for me: Why did the Senate yesterday have to vote to invoke cloture on Mr. Acosta's nomination? The vote was bipartisan, with 61 senators voting to end debate so Mr. Acosta could have had an up or down vote. He could have been approved by majority vote yesterday. That has been the tradition in the U.S. Senate for 230 years. There never has been a Cabinet member denied his or her position by requiring them to get more than 51 votes. There have been some cloture votes for delay or to take some extra time, but no one has ever been denied the position by requiring more than 51 votes.

During most of the 20th century, when one party controlled the White House and the Senate seventy percent of the time, the minority never filibustered to death a single presidential nominee. The practice in the Senate since the Senate's beginning has been that the President nominates and the Senate decides by majority vote whether to approve the nomination. Why are we having these cloture votes? We are getting into more and more of a difficult situation with these votes. It is a bad habit and both sides, Republicans and Democrats, have caused the problem.

During the Obama administration, over the 8 years, there were 173 cloture votes on nominations, and I voted to invoke cloture 41 of those times. For 10 of those nominees, I voted to end debate so that their nomination could have an up or down vote even though I opposed their confirmation.

No one has ever disputed our right in the Senate, regardless of who was in charge, to use our constitutional duty of advice and consent to delay and examine, sometimes causing nominations to be withdrawn or even defeating nominees by a majority vote.

What I would like to suggest today is that if we continue the trend of requiring cloture votes on presidential nominees—cabinet members and others—that may work fine as long as we have a president and a Senate of the same political party, but if we have a president and a Senate of different political parties and everybody has become accustomed to voting no on cloture, to requiring a cloture vote and voting no, the Senate may never be able to confirm any cabinet members or any subcabinet members when the Senate and the president are of different political parties.

I would suggest to my friends on the other side of the aisle that the Senate is a body of precedent, and I think it would be wise for us to stop and think, as we proceed, about whether it is wise to require cloture votes for presidential nominees. Why don't we simply go ahead and approve them or not approve them by majority vote?

We have an excellent nominee in Mr. Acosta. We are fortunate that someone of his intelligence and experience is willing to serve as our U.S. Secretary of Labor. I look forward to voting for and to the Senate approving his confirmation later today.

I yield the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I oppose the nomination of Alexander Acosta to be Secretary of the Department of Labor.

Our Nation's Labor Secretary has a responsibility to protect the safety and legal rights of the American workforce. From prosecuting civil rights violations to monitoring workplace safety, the Department of Labor ensures fair treatment. The Labor Secretary must also evaluate our economy and advocate for fair and equal pay and benefits for American workers. The Department provides the data and expertise for policymakers, employers, and workers to make economic decisions.

Unfortunately, Mr. Acosta's testimony on these points at his confirmation hearing was disappointing. He would not commit to support updating overtime rules to make sure that employees get fair pay for the hours they work. He would not commit to prioritize closing the gender pay gap. He would not commit to keeping workplace safety inspectors on the job.

Moreover, when Mr. Acosta led the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice during the George W. Bush Administration, the GAO reported that there was a ''significant drop in the enforcement of several major antidiscrimination and voting rights laws.'' The Secretary of Labor must be a vigilant defender of the rights of workers.

In a Cabinet where too many department heads are looking out for millionaires and billionaires, we need a Secretary of Labor who will look out for the American worker. I am not convinced that Mr. Acosta will do that job.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

COAL MINER PENSION AND RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, it is no great secret that the American people do not have a great deal of confidence in their government. It is no secret that the American people think the Congress is way out of touch with their needs and aspirations. In fact, just confirming that point, a recent poll appeared in the Washington Post and ABC News, and it found that 58 percent of the American people believe that President Trump is out of touch with the concerns of most people in the United States today; 62 percent of the American people believe that the Republican Party is out of touch with the concerns of most people in the United States; and 67 percent of the American people believe that the Democratic Party is out of touch with the concerns of most people in the United States today. Those are numbers that should cause a great deal of concern to Members of the Senate and the House, to Democrats and Republicans, to everybody.

I think one of the reasons is that there is a world outside of Capitol Hill where people are in pain; where people are working longer hours for lower wages; where people are scared to death about facing retirement because they have, in many cases, no money in the bank; where people today are paying 40 percent, 50 percent of limited incomes for affordable housing; where single moms can't afford childcare for their kids; where young people can't afford to go to college; where other people are leaving college deeply in debt. And all of that is taking place within the context of almost all new wealth and income going to the top 1 percent.

We have the absurd situation today where the top one-tenth of 1 percent owns almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent, and 52 percent of all new income is going to the top 1 percent. The middle class is shrinking. There are 43 million Americans living in poverty, and the very wealthy are getting wealthier.

In the midst of all that, my Republican colleagues and President Trump are desperately trying to provide hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks for the top 1 percent and cut back on programs that working families desperately need, whether it is Pell grants to make it easier for kids to go to college, whether it is afterschool programs, whether it is the Meals on Wheels program, whether it is affordable housing, or whatnot—tax breaks for billionaires, cutbacks on programs that people desperately need.

The American people will not regain confidence in the U.S. Congress unless we keep promises that were made to them. Today I want to talk about promises that were made to coal miners. For decades, coal miners contributed to their pension funds with the promise that when they retired, they would receive a pension and retiree health benefits that would last for a lifetime. Those were the promises to the people who went underneath the ground, who worked incredibly difficult jobs, who died of black lung disease or a myriad of other diseases or injuries. Promises were made to those workers, and those promises were broken.

If Congress does not act by tomorrow, the retiree health benefits of more than 22,000 coal miners will be eliminated. We cannot allow that to happen. It is not only unfair to the retired coal miners and their families, it once again will tell the American people that they cannot trust their government. Promises were made, but they were not carried out.

My understanding is that an agreement to protect these retiree health benefits may be included in the continuing resolution to keep the government from shutting down. As I have walked the hallways here in the Senate, I have met with members, retirees of the United Mine Workers, who have been back here week after week after week, and I applaud them for their persistence.

Let us hope that, in fact, the continuing resolution does contain an agreement to protect those retiree health benefits. It is absolutely imperative that the agreement contain those benefits and that those promises be kept.

Even if we do put that provision in the CR, it still does not address another problem faced by retirees in the coal industry and retirees all over the country, and that is the fact that we are doing nothing to protect the pension benefits of coal miners and tens and thousands of other workers. This is an issue that is of major crisis proportions all across this country, and it is an issue that must be addressed. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of the Miners Protection Act. That is also why I will be introducing legislation on May 9 to protect the pensions of not only 90,000 coal miners throughout this country, but the retirement benefits of 10 million workers in multiemployer pension plans—10 million workers.

Over 40 years ago, the Federal Government made a solemn commitment to the workers of this country. If a retiree is promised a certain pension benefit after a lifetime of hard work, a company could not renege on that promise. Making that commitment 40 years ago was exactly the right thing to do. When someone works for their entire life, when they give up pay raises, when they work overtime, when they work weekends in order to make sure that he or she has a secure retirement, it is absolutely unacceptable to pull the plug from that worker's benefit.

Guarantees were made, and those guarantees must be kept. This is not the negotiating of wage increases. This is not the negotiating of overtime. This is a promise made to workers and paid for by workers, which simply cannot be nullified if people are to have any faith in our political system.

But more than 2 years ago behind closed doors, a provision was slipped into a must-pass spending bill that now makes it legal to cut the pension benefits of about 10 million workers and retirees in multiemployer pension plans. As a result, retirees all over this country are waking up to the unacceptable reality that the promises made to them could be broken and that the pension benefits they are receiving today may soon be cut by 30, 40 or even 65 percent. What this means is that retirees who are currently receiving a pension benefit of $18,000 a year are in danger of seeing their benefits cut by $3,843, a 21-percent cut. Retirees who are currently receiving a pension benefit of $36,000 a year could see their pension benefits cut by up to $21,000, a 60-percent cut.

In other words, tens of thousands of retirees all over this country who today are in the middle class, who worked hard their entire lives, who gave up on wage increases, who worked overtime in order to protect those pensions may be seeing significant reductions in what they anticipated. We are talking about retirees who will no longer be able to pay their mortgages. We are talking about retirees who will not be able to pay their utility bills. We are talking about families who may have to go on food stamps to feed their families after working their entire lives. That is unconscionable. We cannot allow that to happen.

In my view, we have to send a very loud and very clear message to the Republican leadership in Congress and to the President of the United States, and that is when a promise is made to the working people of this country with respect to their pensions and retiree health benefits, that promise must be kept.

Today, about 150 multiemployer pension plans are in trouble financially, but let's be clear. The retirees are not

the reason these pension plans are struggling financially. The reason many of these pension plans are in trouble is because of the greed, recklessness, and illegal behavior on Wall Street that drove this country into the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Let us never forget, when the largest financial institutions were on the verge of collapse 7 years ago, it was the taxpayers of this country who bailed them out. I didn't vote for it, but a majority of the Members of Congress did.

Congress gave Wall Street some $700 billion in financial assistance. The Federal Reserve provided $16 trillion in virtually zero-interest loans to every major financial institution in this country and to foreign banks throughout the world because they were, as we will all recall, too big to fail. If Congress can bail out Wall Street, if Congress can bail out foreign banks, we have to protect the pension benefits of American workers.

The legislation that I will be reintroducing on May 9 would prevent the retirement benefits of about 10 million workers and retirees from being cut by repealing the anti-pension rider that was included in an appropriations bill 2 years ago. It establishes an emergency fund within the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to make sure that multiemployer pension plans can continue to provide every pension benefit owed to every eligible American for decades to come.

It is fully paid for by closing two tax loopholes that allow the wealthiest Americans in this country to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Closing these loopholes will allow us to protect the earned pension benefits of every worker and retiree in multiemployer pension plans in this country.

At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, when half of all older workers have no retirement savings at all, when 20 percent of seniors are living on less than $13,000 a year, we have to do everything we can to protect and expand the fine pension benefit plans in America.

I look forward to the support of my colleagues for this important legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. MERKLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 987 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. MERKLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REGULATORY REFORM AND THE BUDGET PROCESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, there is a lot of conversation about all that is moving this week in the Senate and the House and the executive branch. There is a lot of conversation about 100 days. It is somewhat of a look back, and it is reasonable for Americans to be able to look back and say the beginning of a new Presidency or the beginning of a new session of Congress has begun and what has already happened. There has been quite a bit that has actually happened, but let me highlight one specific area. I want to highlight an area that has moved and to, quite frankly, highlight an area that has not.

What has moved has been a lot of conversation about regulation. When I walked into Congress just a few years ago, I had a lot of people in my State who would catch me and ask for one specific thing. They said: I don't want anything other than to make it stop. Because every time they get news, every time they open up something from an association or try to be able to track something, all they got was a new regulation. Some of them were large and some small, but it seemed like every time they opened the mail, they had a new requirement from some entity they had never heard of, 1,000 miles away, telling them how to operate their business or to submit some new form. Whether they are a school or a hospital or a small business or a large business, whether they are doing manufacturing or are service-oriented or technology, the flood of regulations coming out of Washington, DC, caused people around my State to say: Make it stop; we are trying to catch up. And literally they are hiring more people for compliance than they are to actually do what their business is designed to do. At some point, they want to hire somebody to actually do their business.

A dramatic shift happened starting January 20 of this year when the administration stepped in and for a moment said: Pause on regulations. And literally the Nation could take a deep breath. They didn't turn anything back. They didn't turn anything off. America didn't become less safe. They asked a simple question: How can people actually get involved in the process? And before a regulation comes out, we make sure that it is, No. 1, consistent with the law, and No. 2, that the people who are affected by it actually get a chance to raise their hands and say: When you do a regulation, make sure you consider this.

It doesn't seem unreasonable. If we are going to be a nation of the people, by the people, and for the people, it is a good idea to have people involved in the process of the regulations that affect them. The government should not be their enemy. The government should be their ally. It should be the way to make sure that we have fair rules, that everyone has a consistent set of guidelines and that those guidelines don't change all the time.

Before this year, there had been only one time in the past decade that the Congressional Review Act was used. The Congressional Review Act was actually due to a fellow Oklahoman named Don Nickles who, in the Senate years ago, passed a simple piece of legislation to say that if a regulation is promulgated by an administration—any administration—that is not consistent with the desires of Congress, that Congress can pull it back out in the first few days after it was passed, and most of the time, it is legislative days—it is actually months in calendar time. In the first few months it is in existence, Congress can pull that regulation out and look at it and say: Is this consistent with what Congress passed? If it is not, Congress would have a fast-track process to be able to look at it and say: This is inconsistent with what Congress desired when it passed the law; that it had to go through the House, the Senate, and then to the White House to be signed. That has happened only one time.

In the past few months, Congress has passed now 13 Congressional Review Acts—13 different reviews of different regulations that were put down by the previous administration in their final months, some of them in their final days of—the administration—an administration that lasted 8 full years. These were the things they crammed into the very end, what are called midnight regulations. Those regulations cost billions of dollars, and some had very little review. Thirteen different times this Congress has pulled those out. It is literally billions of dollars in regulations that were laid on the economy and millions of hours of work on people filling out compliance forms and submitting things to Washington, DC, that most likely no one will ever read.

Those thirteen bills that have now been signed into law have helped free up our economy, and it has started a process that is very simple: What do we do to make sure that we have good regulations as a nation, that they stay consistent and have the maximum number of people involved?

The administration has also laid out something that many called a radical idea; that is, for every one regulation that goes in, an agency would pull two out; to go back and review old regulations and say: Are there other regulations that need to come out? For those who have called this a radical idea, I have had to smile and say: You realize the United Kingdom has done that for years. Canada has done that for years. Australia has done that for years.

It is not a radical, crazy idea; it is a simple statement to say that when regulations go in, we need to have consideration for those who are already regulated and say: Are we burying them in new compliance requirements? Is there an area where we can help free them of things that are not needed anymore, that are old, that are not used or not even appropriate anymore? It is a reasonable thing to be able to look at. It is not in statute, it is an Executive order, but it is one of those things that I think are wise for agencies to be able to take a look at.

Every administration over the past several decades has said they are going to do what is called a retrospective review—go back and look at it. This administration has said: We are really going to look at it. If a new regulation goes in, we have to go back and review and see if two can come out at the same time, to force that retrospective review.

Many other areas of regulations are coming out, but the primary issue that has come out is very simple; that is, slowing down the process and making sure it is wise to be able to impose new regulations. We should have them in health and safety areas, but we shouldn't do regulations just because someone in Washington, DC, thinks it is a good idea to be able to run everyone else's business.

With any set of decisions made by the executive branch, we should resolve many of these things in law. The Congressional Review Act—those are all in law. Those have all been settled. The executive actions like the ''one in, two out''—that is an executive action. A future executive can flip it back around and say: We are not going to go back and review it at all.

I proposed a whole series of issues that we need to deal with on regulatory actions. I chair the Regulatory Affairs Subcommittee, in fact. We have had very bipartisan conversations to say: Where can we find common ground, and what do we need to do to be able to resolve this issue of regulations just showing up?

So we have set out a simple set of ideas, one beginning in small business. If we are going to start with regulatory issues, let's start in the area where we have the greatest amount of agreement; that is, on small businesses. Small businesses should have an opportunity to have a voice at the table. Now, when regulations are put out, often those regulations are put out and only the largest businesses are consulted on them—those that might have lobbyists or government relations or have a team of attorneys to be able to go engage with the Federal Government and get their input considered.

We required years ago that small businesses get a voice. The problem is, many agencies actually don't do it. We need to be able to press the issue and put into statute an absolute requirement that small businesses be consulted. So when a regulation is created, the people who are affected the most—like in my State of Oklahoma, where 97 percent of the businesses are small businesses—that those folks actually get a voice.

It may shock some people in this Chamber to know that small business owners in Oklahoma don't wake up every day and read the Federal Register to see if there is an area they have to give notice and comment to. It may be stunning to know that they don't have a team of lawyers at every small business. In fact, there are towns in Oklahoma where there are many small businesses but there is not a lawyer in that town. We should not require every business to hire attorneys and to read the Federal Register every day for them to be able to stay in business. We should actually reach out to them and say: We are not opposed to small businesses; we want to make sure we facilitate them.

Here is a simple idea of many ideas in the small business bill that I have—not only getting greater input and to make sure they are in consideration, but how about this simple idea: If there is a paperwork violation for a small business, they are not fined immediately. They have forgiveness for that first-time offense. Many of them didn't even know there was a certain amount of paperwork that had to be turned in. It showed up as a requirement in the Federal Register. They are running their small business. They weren't tracking it. Someone comes in and evaluates and says ''There is a piece of paper you haven't turned in'' and drops a $5,000, $10,000, $15,000 fine on them for not submitting something, and they had no idea what it was.

First-time paperwork forgiveness is a simple idea. To actually be engaged where the Federal Government can go to a small business and say ''Hey, you missed one,'' and if they are not health or safety related issues, we give them forgiveness in the process—why should that be so hard for us to do?

We have another piece of legislation we proposed called early participation in regulations. Before a regulation is written by an agency, this would require that they actually put out the word that they are thinking about writing a regulation on a certain topic and get as much input as they can, so before they even write the regulation and we are fighting over whether we should use ''or'' or ''and'' in a section, we actually talk about whether it is needed at all, or if they are going to write it, make sure it has these certain issues in it—again, getting more people involved in the process.

Just a week ago, there was a march through this town and through many towns saying: We need to have great science in our Nation. I could not agree more. We should have quality science in our research. We should have engagement from science when we put policy papers together.

One of the challenges we currently have and one of the things we are trying to correct with another piece of legislation is just on using best science, just requiring agencies, when they make a decision about something in a regulation, to actually use peer-reviewed, good science that can be shared with other people. We bump into issues now commonly with agencies where they say they have made a decision on some of the regulations, and we ask for the science behind it, and they say that the science is proprietary and they can't share it with us or the American people. The American people aren't good about withholding a secret on something that actually affects their day-to-day life. Don't lay a new requirement on them and tell them: Trust us—we have thought about this, and this is the right way to go. Americans aren't great with that. They just want to be able to know the facts behind it so they can see that science themselves.

So getting best science is something we have talked about within the framework of the Administrative Procedures Act for a long time—something many administrations for the past several decades have said we should do. Well, let's go ahead and do it, and let's require that we actually have best science out there.

This body, with a voice vote, just a year ago, passed a bill called TSCA. That TSCA bill dealt with chemicals and how we are going to approve chemicals and how the EPA can do it. We put new language in that requiring good science, peer-reviewed science, and on a voice vote from everyone in this body, we agreed that is the best way to handle science on chemicals.

So what did I do? I took that exact language that we all agreed to on TSCA and said: Let's apply that to every agency so that whenever an agency of any type makes a decision that is science-based, it has good transparency and it is peer-reviewed. We have agreed that the EPA should do it dealing with chemicals; let's agree that everyone should do it. Let's agree on how we handle guidance, to not allow agencies to be able to create guidance documents. Let's have good transparency and simplicity.

We have a simple bill, as odd as this may sound, that just says that for whatever regulation is out there, the agencies also have to put a description out on it in plain language that a non-attorney can understand in just 100 words, just a 100-word description of what it is. Right now there are folks who actually do try to research things, and if you are not a trained attorney, you can't even understand what it means. So just plain-language descriptions of regulations are called for.

These should all be areas of common ground. These should all be straightforward issues that aren't partisan issues but are commonsense issues.

We have made progress on regulations over the past 100 days. The American people have now been able to take a breath as regulations are not coming

out at rapid speed. We still need them, though. In the days ahead, we need to do good regulations, so let's figure out a good way to do it.

Let me make one more note on the opposite side. We have made progress in regulations, with a ways to go. Where we have not made progress in the past 100 days is on how we do budgeting.

There is a group of us who have talked for several years now and have said that we have to change the way we do budgeting. Year after year, the American people have said: Are we going to have another continuing resolution? Are we going to have another omnibus bill? Are we going to be late again on budgeting?

Year after year, Congress has said: Yes, we are.

Folks around my State occasionally catch me and say: This is different.

I smile at them and say: No, it is not different.

The way we do budgeting was created right after Watergate in 1974 to create a more transparent process. What they actually created was a process so difficult that it has only worked four times since 1974—four times. So if it feels like every year you are saying ''How come the budget process didn't work again?'' it is because every year but four, since 1974, the budget process didn't work.

At some point, we have to say: The budget process is not in the Constitution. Let's change the way we are doing the process. They were well-meaning in 1974 when they made that process; it just didn't work. So let's fix it instead of saying that once again it didn't work.

We will never get a better product on our budget until we fix the process of our budget. We will never be able to solve the budget debt and deficit issues we have with this continuing resolution autopilot system and with an omnibus system that seems to just perpetuate the same issues over and over again.

We have made specific proposals: doing the budget every 2 years, getting time to get more predictability, to get more time to be able to walk through the research of it; eliminating budget gimmicks, and there are a mess of budget gimmicks that are out there; and getting a better long-term view. The budget has what is called a 10-year window now, where we have to budget over 10 years. So what happens? Congress creates a budget that blows up in the 11th year. Well, that has been done year after year after year, and we have a lot of eleventh-hour years now stacking up and a lot of major problems that are out there.

We need to find a way to prevent us from ever having to get in a conversation about a government shutdown. We have a bill called the government shutdown prevention bill that would keep us from ever having that, and it would put the pressure back on Congress and the White House to resolve the issues but would prevent us from ever having a government shutdown fight. We shouldn't argue about whether the government is going to be opened or closed. We should argue about how we are going to handle the issue of budgeting and how we are going to actually be able to get us back to balance.

There are a lot of simple, commonsense things that are out there that we can do, but we as a body have agreed that we are going to actually tackle the way we do budgeting. That is going to involve some focus and some time commitment and a risk to say: How it was done in the 1970s is not the way we should do it now. It didn't work. Let's change the system so we can actually get us back on track and bring some predictability again to what we are doing.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

REMEMBERING JAY DICKEY

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to address the urgent crisis taking place in Sudan, but, first, I wish to take just a moment to remember former Congressman Jay Dickey, who, as many in Washington and Arkansas now know, passed away last week.

Jay was a native of Pine Bluff and represented Southern Arkansas in the Fourth Congressional District for four terms between 1993 and 2001. Jay was known as a fierce advocate for Arkansas and worked hard to ensure that our State had a strong voice in Washington.

A successful business owner and attorney, Jay was a well-respected member of the Pine Bluff community. He served as Pine Bluff city attorney and had a brief tenure on the Arkansas Supreme Court. Jay was a friend to many and built a warm relationship with almost everyone he met—even those who disagreed with him politically. He also wore his faith on his sleeve as a proud born-again Christian.

I will always appreciate Jay's kindness to me when I first started serving in Congress and truly valued his friendship. He was a loving father, a dedicated public servant, and he will be missed by many.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends as they mourn his loss, but I know they are also incredibly proud, as I have been, of the legacy Jay leaves behind, which will continue to have an impact on us all in the years ahead.

SOUTH SUDAN

Mr. President, the Trump administration has stated it will pursue a foreign policy focused on American interests that puts our national security first. I appreciate the President's commitment to a stronger and more respected America and stand ready to work with him to achieve that goal.

A stronger, more respected America does not mean we disengage with the international community. In fact, it means just the opposite. While there are many important issues we must address here at home, we cannot lose sight of the places around the globe that are in need of American engagement.

As we have seen with Syria and North Korea, it makes a difference when the United States acts, but not every international crisis gets front page headlines like Syria and North Korea do. One such crisis with little attention but in desperate need of U.S. leadership is South Sudan. Hunger emergencies are on the rise across Africa, but the situation in South Sudan is so grim that it has led the U.N. to use the word ''famine'' for the first time since 2011.

''Famine'' is not a word the U.N. or the international community throws around lightly. In order for the U.N. to officially declare a famine, a population must reach certain death rate, malnutrition, and food shortage thresholds. In blunt terms, a formal famine declaration means that many people have already started dying of hunger.

The famine in South Sudan is almost entirely manmade. The much heralded August 2015 peace agreement has failed to bring peace to South Sudan, which has been mired in a civil war almost entirely throughout the young nation's lifetime.

Thousands of civilians have been killed and millions more were displaced as a result of the civil war in South Sudan. Millions of those who are left in the country are facing a severe hunger crisis. Fighting between rival factions has left an estimated 4.9 million people—more than 40 percent of the country—in urgent need of food. That total is expected to rise to over 5.5 million people—5.5 million people—by summer if the international community doesn't act quickly. These innocent civilians are victims of competing groups that use hunger as a weapon of war while accumulating wealth by exploiting South Sudan's resources. Millions are suffering in South Sudan, but that is not due to shortage of food. It is because they are being denied food by a small few getting rich off the country's oil, gold, and livestock.

Meanwhile, humanitarian aid workers trying to reach the hungry are being kidnapped and held for ransom. Some have even been killed. Food shipments are being blocked, crops are being torched, farmers and herders are being forced from the land, and civilians so fear for their lives, they have been driven away from the violence in population centers to remote locations where aid workers can't reach them to provide the relief they need.

There is plenty of evidence to show that when people don't have enough to eat, they get desperate. Desperation fuels conflict. Conflict in a young country, in an unstable region, poses the risk of spillover into neighboring countries, further exacerbating human suffering. This is why U.S. leadership is needed.

By that, I don't mean throwing money or military personnel into a conflict zone. In fact, that would likely exacerbate the situation as the structural causes will remain once the money dries out and the troops head home.

The approach I am advocating is two-pronged. First and foremost, there absolutely is a need for the United States to take a lead in coordinating relief with NGOs and our international partners like the World Food Program—aid which has proven effective channels, the dedication and compassion of doers, not takers.

Along with helping those who desperately need humanitarian aid, the international community must also take action to end the unchecked corruption that fuels the conflict in South Sudan. This is the structural cause of the crisis. We have to address this problem at its root. If we want to have any chance at long-term stability in South Sudan, we must seriously consider options that would end the corruption which enriches those in power at the expense of the citizens.

I believe President Trump would support these efforts. The President understands how dire the situation in South Sudan is. The administration recently announced the continuation of the national emergency declaration for South Sudan, which was set to expire earlier this month.

Earlier this week, Ambassador Haley rightfully called out the warring parties in South Sudan and urged the U.N. Security Council to move forward with further sanctions and an arms embargo. The Ambassador's words urging the Council to take action to break the cycle of violence in South Sudan are extremely encouraging. They show the administration understands that the United States must remain engaged in corners of the world that need our leadership. It is my hope that Congress and the President can work together to exert that leadership and put an end to the corruption that is causing so much suffering in the country.

There is a role for soft power in a hard-powered administration. Human suffering is never in our national interest, no matter where it is happening. U.S. leadership, through diplomacy and smart foreign aid programs, help prevent situations which lead to serious threats to our national security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, House Republicans have revived their efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

As a reminder, the original effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act—characterized by some as the TrumpCare bill—was so unpopular that it had to be withdrawn from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. That is because, after the Congressional Budget Office took a look, it would have taken away health insurance from 24 million Americans.

Think about that for a moment. The Republican answer to ObamaCare—the Affordable Care Act—was to remove health insurance protection and coverage from 24 million Americans. It would have devastated the Medicaid Program. The Medicaid Program, of course, is one that is easily characterized as a health insurance program for those who are in low-income categories, but that statement doesn't tell the real story.

For example, in my State, half of the children who are born in Illinois are covered by Medicaid. Their mothers and the kids are covered by Medicaid. So when it comes to new babies, particularly in low-income families, Medicaid provides the prenatal care, delivery, and care after the child is born, but the most expensive part of the Medicaid Program is the help it gives to senior citizens—mothers and grandmothers who are in nursing homes who have only a little bit of savings, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid cover their medical expenses. The Republican plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act would have decimated the Medicaid Program across the United States. It would have increased costs for the average person for health insurance by $3,000, and particularly for people in upper ages—I guess I fit in that category—these folks would have seen a change in the calculation of premiums.

The Affordable Care Act protects premiums so they cannot be more than three times the lowest premium for any individual. The Republican approach said: Let's make that five times. If it goes up to five times, it can mean almost doubling the premiums paid by many senior citizens—those approaching, I should say, being senior citizens, from 50 to age 65.

It also would have cut off funding for women's health centers, all while providing a massive tax cut for upper income, wealthy people and big businesses, including tax cuts for drug companies. What a deal—to eliminate health insurance for 24 million Americans, to devastate the Medicaid Program, to increase the cost of health insurance for the average individual, to cut off funding for women's health centers in order to give a tax cut to wealthy people and drug companies.

The new bill does all those things as well—and then something I didn't think was possible. The new version of the Affordable Care Act repeal Republicans are now considering in the House allows insurance companies to impose—get this—an age tax and charge seniors significantly higher premiums than younger people. It says that insurance plans do not have to cover hospital visits, prescription drugs, maternity care, substance abuse treatment, or mental health services.

The Affordable Care Act defined these as essential services so, if you are buying health insurance, you know you are buying that kind of protection. Well, Republicans have said: That is too much insurance for people. We ought to let them buy stripped-down versions of health insurance that may be cheaper. The obvious question, What happens to those people when they need coverage for substance abuse treatment? What if that son or daughter in high school begins an addiction to opioids, leading to heroin, and now your health insurance plan saved you money by not covering it or didn't cover mental health counseling?

It guts protections for people with preexisting conditions. Is there a person alive who doesn't know someone or have someone in their family with a preexisting condition? That used to be grounds for denying insurance coverage or charging outrageous premiums. We did away with it with the Affordable Care Act.

It is back, my friends, with the new Republican approach to the repeal of affordable care. It allows insurance companies to once again charge unaffordable premiums if someone in your family has a history of asthma, cancer, high blood pressure, or diabetes.

Republicans made these changes to win the votes of the most extreme conservative Members of the U.S. House, the so-called Freedom Caucus. What they are fighting for is for freedom from individuals getting protection when it comes to healthcare. These changes may appeal to a handful of extreme people who conveniently see their health insurance policies—their personal policies—protected under their bill, but these sorts of approaches don't appeal to anyone in the medical community.

Who opposes the new Republican repeal of the Affordable Care Act? The American Medical Association—that would be the doctors—the American Heart Association, the American Nurses Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, as well as every major medical and patient group out there. Every one of them opposes the changes proposed by the Republicans in the House to our healthcare system.

Of course, we have a bottom line that we measure proposals against. We go to the Congressional Budget Office, and we say to them: What impact will this have?

No one has sent this bill to the Congressional Budget Office, and no report has been given. So we don't know the impact on premiums of this new version. What is going to happen to seniors, to middle-income families?

Ramming through a bad bill that will harm Americans just because the President wants to have something to say on the 100th day of his Presidency is a bad idea. It is time to stop this

madness. It is time for Democrats and Republicans to sit down and talk seriously about improving our current system.

The Presiding Officer is from the State of Louisiana and is a medical doctor. He has joined on the Republican side with Senator COLLINS of Maine to open this conversation. Thank you. We should have this bipartisan conversation—not about repeal but repair, what we can do to make this better and fairer and more affordable while preserving quality healthcare for Americans. Thank you for your leadership in this. We have talked about it, and I want to continue the conversation.

This notion coming over from the House is unacceptable. I hope that many people will tell the President and tell those who support it that this is no way to celebrate 100 days—by taking health insurance away from 24 million people.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. President, during the Senate's consideration of Betsy DeVos to be Secretary of Education, I asked a basic question: As Secretary of Education, would she side with corporate and other for-profit interests or would she be on the side of the students and their families?

I was concerned that the record of Secretary DeVos indicated that she was on the side of corporate interests, looking for opportunities to profit off of students and often exploiting them in the process.

Months into the job, now that she was approved by a historic tiebreaking vote by the Vice President, we are beginning to see which side the Secretary is on. A recent Chicago Tribune article entitled ''Targeted by Obama, DeVry and other for-profit colleges rebounding under Trump'' put it this way:

> Less than 100 days into Trump's presidency, the Department of Education under Secretary Betsy DeVos has delayed implementation of gainful employment rules . . . withdrawn key federal student loan servicing reforms . . . and signaled a less onerous regulatory environment for the essentially taxpayer-financed career education [or for-profit] sector.

A group of State attorneys general, including Lisa Madigan of Illinois, warned of a return to ''open season'' on students in a letter to Secretary DeVos if she rolled back all of these protections.

I ask unanimous consent that the full text of that letter from the State attorneys general be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,
February 22, 2017.

Re How For-profit Schools Have Harmed Student Borrowers: the Need for the Gainful Employment Rule, Vigorous Federal Oversight of Accreditors, and the Borrower Defense to Repayment Rule

Hon. ELISABETH DEVOS,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.
Speaker PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
House Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Senate Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DEVOS, SPEAKER RYAN, SENATOR MCCONNELL, CONGRESSWOMAN PELOSI, SENATOR SCHUMER: We, the undersigned Attorneys General of Illinois, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and the District of Columbia, as well as the Executive Director of the Office of Consumer Protection of Hawaii, write to express our support for recent federal protections for students and taxpayers in higher education. We are deeply concerned that rollbacks of these protections would again signal ''open season'' on students for the worst actors among for-profit post-secondary schools. As the chief consumer law enforcement agencies in our states, our offices handle thousands of complaints concerning higher education every year. We also enforce laws to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive practices perpetrated by higher education providers.

I. BACKGROUND: THE NEED FOR RULES TO PROTECT STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS FROM UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE PRACTICES BY FOR-PROFIT HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Over the last ten years, student loan debt has soared from $450 billion to nearly $1.4 trillion. A major driver of this increase has been for-profit colleges. Of the top 25 schools where students hold the most student loan debt, over half were for-profit schools in 2014. This is up from only one for-profit institution in the top 25 in 2000.

In addition to driving the increase in student loan borrowing, for-profit institutions also have significantly more loan defaults than other types of institutions. Since 2013, for-profit institutions accounted for 35% of all federal student loan defaults, but enrolled just 27% of all borrowers. Many for-profit schools are almost entirely dependent on federal grants and loans. In December 2016, the U.S. Department of Education (''ED'') found that nearly 200 for-profit schools derive more than 90% of their income from federal sources. The only reason that many of these institutions are in compliance with the federal 90/10 Rule is that certain categories of federal money, including GI Bill money, are excluded from the rule and thus count toward the 10% that is supposed to be non-federal money.

Over the past fifteen years, millions of students have been defrauded by unscrupulous for-profit post-secondary schools. With accreditors asleep at the wheel, State Attorneys General Offices have stepped in to stop some of the worst abuses. The list of State Attorney General investigations and enforcement actions against for-profit colleges is long, including actions against: American Career Institute; Ashford University/Bridgepoint Education, Inc.; Corinthian Colleges, Inc.; Career Education Corporation; Education Management Corporation; Daymar College; DeVry University; ITT Tech; National College of Kentucky; and Westwood Colleges, among others. These schools, and others like them, engaged in a variety of deceptive and abusive practices. Some promised prospective students jobs, careers, and further opportunities in education that the schools could not provide. Many schools inflated job placement numbers and/or promised career services resources that did not exist. Many nationally-accredited schools promised that their credits would transfer, even though credits from nationally-accredited schools often do not transfer to more rigorous regionally-accredited schools. Many students were placed in loans that the schools knew from experience their graduates could not pay back. The schools were overseen by accreditors who failed to take action to protect students or the taxpayers who funded their federal student loans, despite ample evidence of these and other problems. In short, the entire for-profit education system was failing students and taxpayers. As investigations and prosecutions initiated by our offices shed light on these problems, ED began to take steps to remedy these harms, issuing new regulations and reformulating policies to help protect students and taxpayers.

Three of these recent steps—the Gainful Employment Rule, the policy of vigorous federal oversight of accreditors, and the Borrower Defense to Repayment Rule—are essential to protect both consumers and taxpayers from fraudulent actors in the for-profit education sector. The Gainful Employment Rule is a measure of graduates' debt-to-income and is designed to ensure that programs produce graduates that are able to pay back their student loans. Prospectively, the federal government recognizes accreditors who have standards sufficient to show that the schools they accredit provide a quality education and should have access to federal student loans and grants. Finally, where other protections fail and students are defrauded by bad actors, the Borrower Defense to Repayment Rule provides a formal process for students to assert a defense to repayment of their federal student loans.

II. CORINTHIAN COLLEGES: AN EXAMPLE OF THE HARM FACED BY STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS

The egregious conduct of Corinthian Colleges illustrates how each of these three policies is necessary to avoid harm to both students and taxpayers. In March 2016, after an extensive review of published job placement rates at Corinthian campuses nationwide, the Department of Education found that the job placement rates were fraudulent for hundreds of cohorts from 2010–2014. Corinthian was telling the world that far more of its students obtained jobs than actually did, inducing students to enroll. Many of these students were left without jobs in their field of study. Without these jobs, many are saddled with debt they cannot repay, defaulting on loans funded with taxpayer dollars.

Had the gainful employment regulations been in place, Corinthian's programs that weren't producing jobs for students would have been shut down because the median debt-to-income ratio would have shown that students were not making enough money to pay down their loans. Had Corinthian's accreditors reviewed the school's self-reported job placement data on a regular basis, the fraud would have been discovered and stopped much earlier, saving students and taxpayers billions of dollars.

The absence of policies in place to protect prospective students from Corinthian's fraudulent practices also demonstrates the

need for an effective process for students to assert a defense to loan repayment. This defense was established in the 1990s when Congress passed legislation allowing students to assert claims against their schools as a defense to repayment of their federal student loans. There was little detail, however, on the process for asserting such claims. The regulations set to take effect on July 1, 2017 give borrower defense to repayment set processes so that students, schools, and taxpayers have an orderly process, and a degree of certainty, moving forward.

Without the Gainful Employment Rule, meaningful oversight of accreditors, and an orderly borrower defense process, we face the prospect of for-profit schools continuing to line their pockets with taxpayer dollars while students and taxpayers experience another crushing wave of defaulted student loan debt.

III. THE GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT RULE

ED's gainful employment regulations are designed to further a simple idea—that students who attend career training programs should be able to repay their federal student loans once they graduate. The Rule allows prospective students to compare debt-to-income ratios across schools. By doing this, the Rule creates an incentive for schools to make good on their promises to students, and protects students from programs that will leave them saddled with debt and without job prospects in the careers for which they trained.

The Rule generally applies to vocational programs at for-profit institutions and to non-degree programs at community colleges. If graduates' annual loan payments exceed 30% of discretionary income and 12% of total earnings in two out of three consecutive years, the program loses access to Title IV federal student loans and grants. A program can also lose access if graduates' annual loan payments exceed 20% of discretionary income and 8% of total earnings for four consecutive years.

Data released on January 9, 2017 indicate that over 800 programs fail the Department's Gainful Employment metrics. For-profit institutions are responsible for 98% of the failing programs. But these 800 programs are only a portion of the for-profit school programs that have failed their students. With the Gainful Employment Rule pending, for-profit institutions have already eliminated hundreds of programs where students did not make enough money to cover their debt obligations, sometimes closing entire institutions that would have failed to provide students with gainful employment under the regulations.

It is essential that the Gainful Employment Rule be kept in place. Removing the Rule would open students and taxpayers up to the worst excesses of the for-profit higher education sector. It would greatly increase the regulatory and enforcement burden on states and accreditors by removing a central protection from the federal leg of the triad that oversees higher education in the United States.

IV. VIGOROUS OVERSIGHT OF ACCREDITORS BY ED

The federal government and states need strong partners with specialized knowledge of higher education to provide prospective quality assurance of schools in order to protect students and taxpayers. Accreditors are the organizations tasked with this role. Our experience, however, has shown that without substantive oversight by the federal government, some accreditors are negligent in their role.

The primary example of this dereliction of duty to students and taxpayers is the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). As noted in our April 8, 2016 comment to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) opposing ACICS's application for renewal of recognition, a recent study found that only 35% of students enrolled in ACICS accredited programs graduate, the lowest rate for any accreditor.

NACIQI, a bipartisan panel, voted to revoke ACICS's recognition in June 2016. The Senior Department Official at ED agreed with NACIQI and revoked ACICS's recognition as an accreditor in September, 2016. ACICS appealed the decision to the Secretary of Education, and in December 2016, the Secretary denied ACICS's appeal.

An accreditor's failure to verify program quality at its accredited institutions jeopardizes the effectiveness of state enforcement efforts and regulations, exposing each state's students to subpar educational programs that provide little value, but for which each student may borrow tens of thousands of dollars in student loans, that are nearly impossible to discharge in bankruptcy.

A prime example of the harm that stems from lax accreditation was brought to light by state action against Westwood College. The Illinois Attorney General's Office sued Westwood College for systematically misrepresenting the ability of its criminal justice graduates to pursue careers in law enforcement. Thousands of Westwood students in Illinois borrowed up to $75,000 each for careers they were unable to pursue because many police departments in Illinois, including the Chicago Police Department and the Illinois State Police, did not accept credits from nationally-accredited schools. Graduates of Westwood's criminal justice program have a median salary below the median salary of a 25–year old with a high school diploma, in part because they were locked out of the career they had been promised. This combination of high debt and limited job prospects is a crushing blow not only to students, but to taxpayers who bear the burden of defaults on these loans. Despite the Illinois Attorney General's January 2012 suit against Westwood, ACICS accredited Westwood up to the day it closed its doors in March 2016.

Similarly, on September 8, 2016, a Hennepin County Court found that the Minnesota School of Business and Globe University systematically misrepresented their criminal-justice program as allowing students to pursue careers as Minnesota police officers or probation or parole officers. The Minnesota School of Business and Globe University were accredited by ACICS throughout the time period of the fraud determined by the Court, and their Chief Operating Officer during that time was in fact the Chair of ACICS's board of directors. Terminating ACICS's recognition is a responsible action that will protect students and taxpayers for years to come.

V. THE BORROWER DEFENSE TO REPAYMENT RULE

In order to fairly and efficiently redress the harms suffered by for-profit college students, the borrower defense to repayment rule promulgated by ED must be allowed to take effect on July 1, 2017. As we noted in our August 1, 2016 comment to the proposed rule, students need a fair and transparent process to apply for borrower defense to repayment, and that process is missing from the existing regulation. The regulation finalized by ED also contains significant protections for taxpayers, including the requirement that schools cannot use arbitration agreements to bar students from bringing borrower defense claims directly against the school in court.

It is important to note that these regulations do not create a new defense to repayment. Congress established the borrower defense to repayment in the 1990s. Furthermore, over the last two years, ED has created substantial documentation of what constitutes a valid borrower defense claim under the existing regulation. Not only will the defense continue to be available, but it is likely that claims will continue to be asserted, particularly if regulations surrounding for-profit institutions, such as gainful employment, are loosened, allowing the bad practices of the past to return. Because the defense will continue to exist, a formal, transparent process to assert the defense, as reflected in the new repayment rule, is essential.

A basic sense of justice requires that the borrower defense to repayment rules be allowed to take effect. Millions of students paid tens of thousands of dollars each in federal student loan money to for-profit schools and received worthless degrees in return. Federal student loan debt is non-dischargeable in bankruptcy. These students cannot be left without a clear recourse. The new borrower defense to repayment regulations provide that recourse and should be allowed to take effect.

Our extensive experience in the higher education field, and our participation in the process of developing these recent policies and regulations, gives us unique insight into the abusive and deceptive practices of for-profit schools over the last ten years. We cannot overemphasize the harm to students and taxpayers that a rollback of federal protections would cause. Our offices hear from former for-profit students on a daily basis; sadly, many are hopeless. They have little hope of paying off their student loans without the career prospects promised by their schools. They have little hope of continuing their educations without the ability to transfer their credits from the many nationally-accredited for-profits to more rigorous regionally-accredited schools. Allowing for-profit schools unfettered access to federal student loan money without reasonable oversight and accountability is a mistake that American students and taxpayers should not be made to pay for again.

Sincerely,

Lisa Madigan, Illinois Attorney General; Matthew Denn, Delaware Attorney General; Tom Miller, Iowa Attorney General; Brian E. Frosh, Maryland Attorney General; Maura Healy, Massachusetts Attorney General; Hector Balderas, New Mexico Attorney General; George Jepsen, Connecticut Attorney General; Douglas S. Chin, Hawaii Attorney General; Andy Beshear, Kentucky Attorney General; Janet T. Mills, Maine Attorney General.

Lori Swanson, Minnesota Attorney General; Eric Schneiderman, New York Attorney General; Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General; Josh Shapiro, Pennsylvania Attorney General; TJ Donovan, Vermont Attorney General; Karl A. Racine, District of Columbia Attorney General; Ellen F. Rosenblum, Oregon Attorney General; Peter Kilmartin, Rhode Island Attorney General; Bob Ferguson, Washington State Attorney General; Stephen H. Levins, Executive Director, Hawaii Office of Consumer Protection.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we know what open season means when it comes to these students. Gilbert Caro of Chicago can tell us. He was profiled in the Chicago Tribune article that I mentioned. Gilbert received his master of business administration degree from DeVry University. It is possibly the second largest for-profit college in the United States.

He took on nearly $100,000 in debt for his master of business administration degree. He believed that debt was worth it because it was going to unlock the door to a high-paying job and financial security.

Do you have any idea what Gilbert Caro is doing now with his DeVry master of business administration degree? He is a prison guard in Joliet, IL.

While Gilbert has a good job, he certainly didn't need $100,000 in debt to be a prison guard. It is far from what he was promised by DeVry when he signed up. Gilbert, like so many other students who go to for-profit colleges, was lured in by an amazing marketing campaign, flashy advertisements and empty promises.

In 2016, DeVry University, a for-profit school, agreed to a $100 million settlement with the Federal Trade Commission for misleading ''prospective students with ads that touted high employment success rates and income levels upon graduation.''

DeVry is not alone. For-profit college giants like Corinthian and ITT Tech collapsed after they were caught engaging in similar deceptive, disgusting practices. The predatory practices of these and other for-profit colleges have left tens of thousands of students across the country, just like Gilbert Caro, with worthless degrees and a mountain of debt.

In fact, during the early part of this century, when for-profit colleges acted with near impunity, just the students from the for-profit colleges and universities accounted for 47 percent of all student loan defaults. Ten percent of the students coming out of high school went to for-profit colleges, and 47 percent of the student loan defaults were those same students—10 and 47. Why? Because they were overcharged for worthless degrees. That is why.

The University of Phoenix students held almost $35 billion in cumulative debt. When I look at their flashy advertising and the commercials about how life is going to be perfect if you sign up at the University of Phoenix, it is hard for me to imagine how many of those students are burdened with debt they will never be able to repay.

We also know what open season means for the for-profit college industry and its executives and investors. Between 1998 and 2008, enrollment at for-profit colleges exploded by 225 percent—a lot of advertising, a lot of marketing, a lot of recruiting. With it came exploding profits for these schools.

By 2009, the seven largest publicly traded for-profit college companies were worth a combined $51 billion—2009, $51 billion.

In 2010, the University of Phoenix alone enrolled nearly half a million students, more than the combined enrollment of all the Big Ten universities.

When former Senate HELP Committee Chairman Tom Harkin released his seminal report on the industry in 2012, for-profit colleges had grown to take in an incredible $32 billion a year in Federal taxpayer dollars, 25 percent of all Federal aid in education, despite enrolling only 10 percent of the students that went to college after high school.

For-profit colleges and universities are the most heavily subsidized private businesses in America that exist. No one rivals them. No other industry is even close, and 80, 85, 90, 95 percent of the revenue of these so-called private, for-profit universities ends up coming out of the Federal Treasury.

John Murphy, the cofounder of the University of Phoenix, talks about those days by saying that what started off as a serious venture to educate students soon became too focused on ''chasing stock prices.''

To pump up those stock prices, companies needed students and they needed Federal student aid dollars. They proved that they would do and promise nearly anything to get ''the juice,'' as Mr. MURPHY, the cofounder of the University of Phoenix, called it.

Boy, is this industry itching for the Trump administration to return to those bad old days. The Chicago Tribune reports that since the November 8 election, the stock prices of DeVry University, a for-profit college, have increased 52 percent.

In a recent New York Times article by Patricia Cohen entitled ''For-Profit Schools, an Obama Target, See New Day Under Trump,'' the paid spokesman for the for-profit college industry, former Congressman Steve Gunderson, said he ''has repeatedly spoken with members of Trump's transition team . . . White House domestic policy advisers . . . and congressional Republicans.''

He is truly an insider. Mr. Gunderson promised: ''We're going to get some regulatory relief.''

Sadly, it looks like he is right. Take for example the delay of the gainful employment regulation. The Obama administration spent years writing and rewriting regulations to ensure that career training programs meet the statutory requirement to prepare students for ''gainful employment.''

Is that a radical idea—that if the Federal Government is going to provide grants and loans for a student to go to a school, the school should provide education and training that would lead to ''gainful employment''?

My colleague from Oklahoma was on the floor a little while ago talking about overregulation, too many rules, and the impacts on small business. I would say that I am prepared to stand up and defend what the Obama administration did in saying that if you were going to lure a young man like Gilbert Caro into a school and put him $100,000 in debt for a master's of business administration, he ought to at least end up with a job that is consistent with his education.

Today, Mr. Caro is a prison guard with $100,000 of debt and a business administration degree of no value to him.

The gainful employment rule cuts off title IV funding for programs where graduates' ratio of student debt to earnings is too high. Literally, the students are too deeply in debt.

Prior to leaving office, the Obama Department of Education released the first set of gainful employment data. It showed that the graduates of public undergraduate certificate programs, like community colleges, earn $9,000 more than their for-profit counterparts on average.

Think about that. You go to the virtually free community college, get a certificate, and you are going to earn $9,000 more than if you get deeply in debt at one of the for-profit schools seeking the same degree. Of the programs that saddle students with too much debt compared to the income its students receive after their program, 98 percent of the violators were for-profit colleges.

This is not just a chance occurrence. It is a pattern. The rule is meant to protect students from taking on debt to attend programs that don't lead to a good-paying job. The rule is also meant to prevent billions in taxpayers' dollars on worthless programs.

Many for-profit colleges receive more than 90 percent of the revenue straight from Federal taxpayers. My Republican colleagues are committed to the free market system. So am I. I am committed to capitalism. I believe in it. Though, I think there is need for us to have regulation when it gets out of hand. That is why we have an antitrust division, for example.

In this circumstance, to argue that these are just private companies that are doing what ordinary people do when they start a business is to ignore the obvious. These for-profit colleges could not exist if they weren't receiving 80, 85, 90, and 95 percent of their revenue directly from the Federal Treasury.

In recent testimony before a House subcommittee, the Department of Education inspector general agreed that the gainful employment regulation ''is a good rule in terms of protecting [students] and protecting taxpayers.''

I sent a letter—along with Senators PATTY MURRAY, ELIZABETH WARREN, and nine other colleagues—expressing our concerns to Secretary DeVos about her delaying this rule. In our letter, we made clear that these delays undermine the rule and are going to be a danger to students and taxpayers.

It is also a betrayal of students not to ensure that they are treated fairly after they have been taken advantage of by for-profit schools.

Today, POLITICO reported that the Trump administration has dramatically slowed, if not stopped, processing applications from tens of thousands of students seeking to have their Federal student loans discharged after they have been defrauded by for-profit colleges.

Think about that. A student is about to sign up for a for-profit school.

Maybe he doesn't know much about higher education. His parents say: Listen, if you can get a Pell grant and a Federal student loan, this must be a really good school.

He is defrauded into signing up for a school that is too expensive and offers a worthless degree, and then they turn around and that school goes bankrupt. Now the student has the debt, no degree, and we are left holding the bag. What has happened in previous cases is the Federal Government stepped in and discharged the students from the debt if they were defrauded into signing up for the college.

Secretary Betsy DeVos has decided to slow that down—to slow down the discharge of these students' debt. Students who were misled or defrauded by their schools are eligible for discharge of their Federal student loans under the Higher Education Act—the law as it now exists. Yet during her confirmation process, Secretary DeVos would not commit to providing this relief to students—relief already specified in law—and has now effectively stopped processing the claims.

On the day before President Trump took office, more than 3,200 Illinois students applied to the Department of Education for relief. While the Department fails to process these claims, these students are left in the lurch. It adds insult to injury that students taken advantage of by for-profit colleges, nominally supervised and regulated by the Federal Government, are now being ignored by the Federal Government's Department of Education. That is unacceptable. It is unfair, and the Trump administration should change it.

We've started to see the true colors of the administration and Secretary DeVos when it comes to these students who have been victimized. As feared, the Department has thus far put for-profit and other commercial interests ahead of students and taxpayers.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). The Senator from Mississippi.

T–45 GOSHAWK FLEET

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about a troubling issue for our Navy, our national defense, and a problem that should be of concern to Members of this body. Our Navy pilot training installations, including Naval Air Station Meridian in my home State of Mississippi, produce some of the finest pilots on the planet. They trained on the T–45 Goshawk.

On Friday, March 31, a significant number of T–45 instructor pilots at NAS Meridian, NAS Kingsville in Texas, and NAS Pensacola in Florida decided not to fly because of safety concerns. As you can imagine, this was an almost unprecedented act and brought considerable attention to a problem plaguing the Navy's tactical fighter community: a dramatic and sustained increase in so-called physiological episodes, or PE events, across the FA–18 Hornet, the EA–18 Growler, and the training jet T–45 Goshawk fleets.

Physiological episodes occur when air crew experience diminished inflight performance related to loss or contamination of oxygen, depressurization in the cockpit, or other factors. There are some technical terms I am going to mention to my colleagues. Hypoxic hypoxia occurs when pilots are getting insufficient oxygen. A more serious phenomenon called histotoxic hypoxia occurs when they are breathing contaminated oxygen, and of course depressurization occurs when the cabin pressure drops.

I have been assured that solving this physiological episode problem is now naval aviation's No. 1 one safety priority. As chairman of the Armed Services Committee's Seapower Subcommittee, I intend to continue the committee's oversight on this issue and, if necessary, include provisions in the upcoming Defense authorization bill to help. I applaud the work of our full committee chairman, Senator MCCAIN, on his efforts so far. In fact, Senator MCCAIN knows NAS Meridian very well, having served there as an instructor pilot. The airfield named ''McCain Field'' is in honor of Senator MCCAIN's grandfather, ADM John McCain.

The Navy has told Congress and the American people repeatedly that its effort to mitigate and solve the problems of these PE events, including histotoxic hypoxia, are ''resource unconstrained.'' In other words, the Navy has told us that money is no object in solving this problem, time is no object, and personnel is no object. As chairman of the Seapower Subcommittee, I intend to put that claim to test.

I would like to update my colleagues on the situation—my factfinding trip to Meridian, the state of play, and the plan going forward.

Beginning around 2010, a significant increase in reported PE events occurred, which led to the establishment of a Physiological Episode Team to identify root causes, develop mitigation efforts and solutions. This team mainly addressed the less serious problem of hypoxic hypoxia, but in recent months, there has been an alarming uptick in histotoxic hypoxia, a relatively new phenomenon involving contaminated oxygen in the cockpit. This has presented new challenges. The Navy has not identified a root cause for either type of hypoxia but has taken steps to mitigate effects through new maintenance rules, equipment changes and redesigns, and by adding data collection tools. However, there is currently not adequate mitigation for the more serious type of hypoxia, which has led to this halt in training.

As a search for the root causes continues, data collection is worth stressing. These aircraft do not have automatic sensors. In effect, the pilot is the sensor. Maximizing data collection on every training flight is critical. The collection of more data can help in the analytical effort, which will get us closer to finding the root cause. After the instructor pilots' boycott—which I stress they had every right to do—the Navy issued a safety standdown and stopped all training flights for a period of days. This tactical pause allowed the Navy to send senior leadership to visit the training installations and hear directly from the instructor pilots and students. I respect the considered decisions of both of these groups, the instructor pilots who continued to fly and the ones who engaged in the boycott.

After meeting with Pentagon experts on this matter, I then made a factfinding trip to NAS Meridian on April 8. I met with VADM Mike Shoemaker, the commander of Naval Air Forces. Admiral Shoemaker is the air boss who commands operational naval aviation forces. I also met with RADM Dell Bull, who is the chief of Naval Air Training, and I met with NAS Meridian's excellent installation leadership. Perhaps most important, I convened two focus groups: one group of instructor pilots who chose to fly and another group who chose not to fly. Both groups agree that a serious communication problem existed. The meetings with pilots demonstrated that some in the Navy hierarchy did not fully appreciate that this histotoxic hypoxia, contaminated oxygen, was a new and different phenomenon. In addition, the efforts of the Navy leadership were not being communicated effectively to the instructors and the students. In other words, the message was not getting down to the flight line, and the people on the flight line did not feel the message was getting back up to the hierarchy. Many felt their concerns were being ignored. The lack of action on the relatively new emergence of histotoxic hypoxia in the Goshawk only exacerbated the feeling among some that the Navy's actions were not matching its rhetoric.

Following my visit on April 8, the Navy took the important step of establishing a Physiological Episode Team for the T–45 alone. This is an important action which should bring more focused attention to the Goshawk community. The Navy ended the safety standdown on April 14 and resumed flying the next week under restricted conditions, such as flying at lower maximum altitudes and pulling fewer Gs. Of course, this is not the optimal way of training.

Then, following a subsequent PE incident in Kingsville and feedback from instructor pilots on the mitigation plan, the Navy has chosen to restrict training flights even further. This is a problem. The Navy tells us the current practice would allow a student to complete only about 20 to 25 percent of the curriculum. That is the status today. The Navy is already short on pilots, and continuing the status quo could further constrict the pilot production pipeline.

Where do we go from here? The Navy has brought three T–45s that have experienced physiological episodes to

Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD, for extensive engineering investigation and analysis. They are taking the airplanes apart at Pax River. I applaud this action. Initial results of the testing should be available next week with more information to follow as the data is processed. At the same time, engineers have teamed up with pilots from both the test community and the training command, including at least one Meridian instructor pilot. They are investigating possible mitigations, such as alterations to pilot masks. This will allow our instructors and student pilots to get back to what they want to do most; that is, to fly and train new pilots to fly.

In addition, on April 21, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Moran, directed Admiral Scott Swift, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, to lead a month-long review of the facts, circumstances, and processes surrounding the recent episodes and how the Navy has addressed them. The Swift review will evaluate the Navy's organizational structures and processes and make recommendations for additional action.

These efforts are desperately needed. Still, we have no real diagnosis. Still, we have no real solution in the works. Senators should know this: As of 3 weeks ago, problems with histotoxic hypoxia at our naval training bases have earned the full attention of the top leadership in the Navy. These problems also have the full attention and oversight of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Seapower Subcommittee.

I look forward to continued interaction with the Navy leadership on this very important issue.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

ANTIQUITIES ACT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate an important day for Utah and the western way of life. Just yesterday, the President signed an Executive order calling for review of monument designations across the United States, with a specific focus on two national monuments that have caused significant damage in my home State of Utah: Bears Ears and the Grand Staircase-Escalante.

Yesterday's Executive action is the culmination of countless hours of hard work and close coordination with the White House. When I first spoke with President Trump in the Oval Office during his first week on the job, I asked for his help in addressing the Bears Ears debacle. From day one, our President has been committed to helping us fix this disaster and ensuring that our smallest counties get a fair shake.

Throughout my Senate service, I have fought to give voice to the needs of our rural communities in the debate over public lands. Too often, past Presidents have ignored the concerns of Utah's families in declaring massive monuments that threaten the western way of life. Too often, Presidents have abused the authority under the Antiquities Act to satisfy the demands of an extreme environmental agenda but no more.

Following yesterday's Executive order, I look forward to working with the Trump administration to address past abuses and restore the original meaning of the Antiquities Act. The Executive order directs Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke to review dozens of national monuments. This is a welcomed opportunity to set a new precedent for the responsible use of the Antiquities Act—a precedent that will take into account the needs of locals and foster greater trust between the States and the Federal Government as we work toward a shared goal of preserving our cultural antiquities.

For decades, I have sought to rein in Executive abuse under the Antiquities Act. That is why I traveled to Bears Ears just last week to hear firsthand from the local residents and Tribal members who have been hurt most by this monument designation. That is why, in the opening days of his Presidency, I met personally with President Trump in the Oval Office to discuss the public lands issue at length. I made clear to the President that Utahns have had enough of monument designations that come down unilaterally with zero support from locals, State officials, or Congress. Many of my own constituents have had their lives upended by this abuse of Executive power.

For too long, Utahns—many of whom depend on public lands for their very livelihood—have been at the mercy of out-of-touch bureaucrats who have little knowledge or personal connection to the land. President Obama only made their situation worse when he spurned the men and women of San Juan County by declaring the Bears Ears National Monument last December. In doing so, he defied the will of the State legislature, the Governor, and the entire Utah congressional delegation. President Obama's last-minute monument designation imposed even greater land use restrictions on a region that is already predominately controlled by the Federal Government.

As I have said before, in opposing the Bears Ears National Monument designation, I am in no way opposing the protection of lands that need to be protected. Indeed, there are many cultural sites in Utah that warrant preservation, and I am committed to working with the President and with Congress to protect those sacred places for future generations. But as I have also said previously, I believe that it is both unlawful and undemocratic for any President to seize millions upon millions of acres of land through the Antiquities Act—a law that was geared to give the President only narrow authority to designate special landmarks, such as a unique national arch or the site of old cliff dwellings.

We desperately need a new process for creating national monuments. Congress and impacted local communities, not the President alone, should have a say in decisions that restrict access to millions of acres of federally owned land. In making such decisions, the voice of the people is paramount.

Let me be clear: Abusing the Antiquities Act at the expense of local communities is not a sustainable public lands strategy. This strategy is counterintuitive because it puts Antiquities Act authority at great risk. The Antiquities Act was designed to provide specific protections for objects of antiquity, but out West, particularly in Utah, the law has become synonymous with land grabs and Federal overreach.

Restoring the legitimacy of Antiquities Act authority in the eyes of westerners requires a more measured approach to monument designations, an approach that takes into account the needs of locals and restores trust between States and the Federal Government.

To be clear, I have no objection when Presidents use the Antiquities Act according to its original purpose, which was to protect cultural antiquities by designating the minimum acreage necessary. Take, for example, the great State of Washington, which is home to several national monuments that were created in line with the law's original intent. The State's beautiful San Juan Islands cover only 970 acres, while the Hanford Reach encompasses 195,000 acres. At first glance, this amount of acreage may seem large, but compared to Utah's two most prominent national monuments, it is a tiny speck on the map. In fact, the total acreage of the San Juan Islands and Hanford Reach combined is only 6 percent of the size of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments.

In the State of Washington, Presidents have used the Antiquities Act within reason. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for my home State of Utah, where Presidents have repeatedly abused their authority under the law to declare eight national monuments that together span more than 3.3 million acres. In Utah, national monuments cover roughly 10 percent of all Federal land in a State where 67 percent of the land is already owned and dominated by the Federal Government. By contrast, only 28 percent of the land in the State of Washington is owned by the Federal Government. Of that Federal land, only 1.6 percent is locked away as a national monument. It is no wonder, then, that Utahns feel more threatened by the Antiquities Act than Washingtonians. This is a law that past Presidents have brandished as a weapon to cut up entire sections of our State.

This is far from the first time I have taken to the floor to speak out against Antiquities Act abuse. It certainly won't be the last. But I am encouraged by yesterday's Executive order with President Trump and Secretary Zinke

on our side. I believe we can plot a path forward to correct past abuses and forge a new precedent for future monument designations.

The President's Executive action signifies a critical milestone in the effort to include local voices in the management of our public lands. As the Trump administration reviews various national monuments, we must replace the top-down approach of past administrations with a grassroots strategy that engages local leaders, State officials, and Members of Congress in the decision-making process. Bringing all stakeholders to the table is essential to establish a new precedent that will undo the decades of abuse we have endured under, I think, false interpretations of the Antiquities Act.

I am eager to continue working with the President and the Secretary of the Interior to preserve our Nation's cultural treasures in a way that honors the original meaning of the Antiquities Act. I am likewise eager to involve locals in that process. With all parties working together, I firmly believe we can restore a relationship of trust between the States and the Federal Government in the management of public lands.

I am grateful for a President who is willing to work with us to reset the status quo. Better than any of his predecessors, President Trump understands the lasting damage wrought by past Presidents under the Antiquities Act. Indeed, in all my years of public service, I have never seen a President so committed to reining in the Federal Government and so eager to address the problems caused by these overreaching monument designations.

I wish to thank President Trump and Secretary Zinke for taking concrete steps to rein in abuse through yesterday's Executive order.

I also wish to thank the President's Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus, who helped make yesterday's victory possible. Reince has done exceptionally well in one of the toughest jobs in all of Washington. The President is lucky to have Reince in the White House. I am lucky to call him a friend.

I also wish to thank my former chief of staff, Ron Porter, who is now a special assistant to the President and the Staff Secretary at the White House. Rob is an invaluable asset to the President's team and ours as well. Without him, yesterday's Executive order would never have come to fruition, at least in my opinion. Rob was among the finest men ever to serve as my chief of staff. I have enjoyed watching him succeed at the White House.

Yesterday we took a meaningful first step to fix past abuses under the Antiquities Act. Yet there is still much work to be done, and I look forward to working with the White House every step of the way.

With that, I am grateful for all those who have participated in helping us to right the wrongs that have been going on for far too long, as some of the Presidents have played pure politics with public lands at the expense of the States involved, especially my State. It is easy to pick on a State that is 67 percent owned by the Federal Government and up to well over 70 percent owned by the Federal and State governments. It is easy to pick on these States—a small State indeed. But our State is resilient. We have some of the better people in Congress, and we also have the ability to be able to raise all kinds of hell here.

All I can say is that I just want my State treated fairly. I want to make sure the bureaucrats here in Washington don't walk all over the West because they think they can because of the wide expanses of territory and the many, many other aspects of the Western States that make them vulnerable to this type of inappropriate activity.

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. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, one goal we share in this body, which is a very bipartisan goal, is keeping faith with our veterans, making sure no veteran is left behind.

I had the great honor to work as ranking member with Senator ISAKSON, the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, on a bill called the Veterans First Act that unfortunately failed to cross the finish line during the last session. One of the major goals of that bill was to ensure accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs so employees of the VA who fail to do their job are held accountable. That goal of accountability is one of a number that must be pursued and will be sought during this session, including ending the backlog of appeals and providing better healthcare, ensuring skills training and job opportunities for our veterans.

Today the President signed an Executive order at the Department of Veterans Affairs to designate an individual responsible for accountability and whistleblower protection, a worthwhile first step. It is a commendable step toward accountability. But that individual and the Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection must have real responsibility and power and must be insulated from any kind of political interference through establishment through statute. That office should be established by statutory authority. That is why I will be advocating and likely introducing legislation that involves supporting and training employees and listening to veterans about what they want from the VA through that Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, to provide real accountability to the Congress by requiring reporting to Congress about what it finds and real whistleblower protection, so that anybody who complains about the VA's misdirected or misguided action is assured protection against any kind of revenge or retaliation, which is the essence of whistleblower protection, and a Senate-confirmed director so that the accountability function is, again, accountable to us. That kind of statutory embodiment is necessary to make sure that the Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection has power and reporting requirements so that it is accountable to us as elected representatives and advocates for our veterans.

My hope is that the Senate and House will adopt that provision, one that was contained in the Veterans First bill that Senator ISAKSON and I championed during the last Senate and which I hope we will pursue again in a very bipartisan way.

I also hope that the Senate will take up and pass S. 12, the Increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability to Veterans Act of 2017. My colleague, Senator MORAN, a cosponsor with me, spoke about it earlier today. It would provide reduction of benefits for senior executives and certain healthcare employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs if they have been convicted of a felony in connection with their work. VA employees who commit serious crimes in connection with their employment should not be receiving pensions. That is one of the key provisions to activate a deterrent to misconduct and also to assure that misconduct is adequately punished.

Accountability for leaders who manage the Department of Veterans Affairs Employee Affairs would be another goal of this legislation, S. 12, so that the men and women who hire and fire are themselves evaluated when they do those jobs.

These kinds of details are important—as important as any new office with an individual whose unspecified powers may include them or not. Right now they do not, under the Executive order, specifically include such enumerated powers. That is our job, to make sure that this office of accountability is real in its responsibility, is clearly assigned in its functions, is held accountable for its performance and has real teeth, not just rhetoric.

I am hopeful that we will move ahead with this very, very important office to make sure that our veterans receive what they deserve—real accountability, a genuine assurance that the people who serve them will do their jobs, not just adequately but excellently. That is the goal that I believe we will share.

I welcome this Executive order. I believe we can and must do more to make sure that the VA keeps faith with our veterans and leaves no veterans behind.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. 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.

All time has expired.

The question is, will the Senate advise and consent to the Acosta nomination?

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 60, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 116 Ex.]

YEAS—60

Alexander	Gardner	Murkowski
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Blunt	Grassley	Paul
Boozman	Hatch	Perdue
Burr	Heitkamp	Portman
Capito	Heller	Risch
Cassidy	Hoeven	Roberts
Cochran	Inhofe	Rounds
Collins	Isakson	Rubio
Corker	Johnson	Sasse
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott
Cortez Masto	King	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Strange
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Manchin	Tester
Daines	McCain	Thune
Enzi	McCaskill	Tillis
Ernst	McConnell	Warner
Fischer	Menendez	Wicker
Flake	Moran	Young

NAYS—38

Baldwin	Feinstein	Murray
Bennet	Franken	Reed
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Sanders
Booker	Harris	Schatz
Brown	Hassan	Schumer
Cantwell	Heinrich	Shaheen
Cardin	Hirono	Stabenow
Carper	Kaine	Udall
Casey	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Coons	Leahy	Warren
Donnelly	Markey	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Merkley	Wyden
Durbin	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—2

Peters	Toomey

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—JOINT RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, colleagues, it is my understanding that the four corners who are working on the omnibus appropriations are very, very close to agreement. We still need a few days to process the larger bill. The House has posted a 1-week CR to keep the government open. We are prepared to clear the 1-week CR on this side of the aisle.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the text of a joint resolution, which is at the desk—that is, a 1-week continuing resolution—be printed in the RECORD; further, that if the Senate receives a joint resolution from the House, the text of which is identical to the text of the joint resolution printed in the RECORD, the joint resolution be considered to have been read three times and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered to have been made and laid upon the table; provided further, that if the language is not identical, then this order be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, colleagues, I am objecting because we still have to resolve the issue of poison pill riders before Democrats can agree to the short-term CR.

Let's make no mistake about it, we are indeed making great progress. I thank the majority leader. He has been cooperative and extremely helpful throughout the process. I thank Chairman COCHRAN and Senator LEAHY the same. But our position has been clear, and it is nothing new: no poison pill riders. The sooner we can resolve this issue, the quicker we can have an agreement on appropriations for 2017.

So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would only add—not to prolong the discussion, but I don't think the failure to pass the 1-week CR necessarily impacts in a positive way the concerns the Democratic leader has. But that is his call to make. This 1-week CR is cleared on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, there is a simple way to resolve it, and that is, the Republican leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House just agree to no poison pill riders.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to make sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle know that if we don't pass the 1-week extension, the miners' healthcare expires, but it is in the 1-week extension. If we don't pass the 1-week extension, the miners' healthcare revision expires.

Mr. SCHUMER. We are aware.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to table the motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

25TH ANNIVERSARY VERMONT SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Vermont Small Business Development Center, VtSBDC, is joining SBDC's across the country in celebrating its 25th anniversary as a crucial resource for entrepreneurs. These centers provide services to facilitate the creation, sustainability, and growth of viable businesses. In Vermont, it is no secret that we take particular pride in our local businesses. Our entrepreneurs and their businesses are at the heart of our vibrant communities, and they are the roots of a thriving economy.

Over the past 25 years, VtSBDC has helped countless businesses capitalize on their potential. From glassblowers to forestry and sugarmakers to restaurants, VtSBDC has delivered thousands of hours of professional business counseling and training that is focused on strategic planning, business development, financial planning, and cash flow management. After the devastation of Tropical Storm Irene, VtSBDC reached out with State and Federal partners to offer small business owners the assistance and support necessary to undergo full recovery efforts. I am regularly reminded of VtSBDC's worth to entrepreneurs through client testimonials, regularly highlighting that, without the assistance of VtSBDC staff, their business would not have been able to reach the next levels. In addition to working with individuals to achieve their dreams, VtSBDC has also supported business incubators, or coworking spaces, where fledgling businesses and industries find their footing alongside other new businessowners.

Founded as a pilot program run by the Small Business Administration in 1977, national small business development centers have a long history proving public-private partnerships and,

when done right, are a successful tool in expanding local pilot programs that benefit communities and States across our Nation. Small business owners always face many obstacles, but the professionals at VtSBDC provide invaluable resources, support, and advice to help overcome these challenges.

I want to congratulate the Vermont Small Business Development Center on their 25th anniversary and thank their dedicated staff for their commitment, energy, and time working to make sure that Vermont's small businesses remain strongly grounded and growing in Vermont.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for April 2017. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts the Senate agreed to in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2017, S.Con.Res. 3. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. The Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, prepared this report pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

My last filing can be found in the RECORD on March 1, 2017. The information contained in this report captures legislative activity since that filing through April 25, 2017.

Republican Budget Committee staff prepared Tables 1–3 of this report.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee exceeds or is below its allocation for budget authority and outlays under the most recently adopted budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. For this reporting period, 14 of the 16 authorizing committees are in compliance with their allocations. The two committees out of compliance are: the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, for spending $1 million more in budget authority and outlays than allowed over each enforcement window due to passage of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017, P.L. 115–10; and the Committee on Veterans Affairs, which violates its outlay allocation by $200 million over both the fiscal year 2017–2021 and fiscal year 2017–2026 periods. The latter violation—the largest of this reporting period—stems from passage of a bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes, P.L. 115–26. This measure removed the August 7, 2017, sunset from the program to allow funds previously appropriated to be fully exhausted.

Tables 2–3 remain unchanged from the last report as no new appropriations activity has occurred for the fiscal year 2017 cycle.

In addition to the tables provided by Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting CBO tables, which I will use to enforce budget totals approved by the Congress.

CBO provided a spending and revenue report for fiscal year 2017, which helps enforce aggregate spending levels in budget resolutions under CBA section 311. In its report, CBO annualizes the temporary effects of the latest continuing resolution, which provides funding through April 28, 2017. For the enforcement of budgetary aggregates, the Budget Committee excludes this temporary funding. As such, the committee views current-law levels as being $953 billion and $583.2 billion below budget resolution levels for budget authority and outlays, respectively.

Revenues are consistent with the levels assumed in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2017. Over the fiscal year 2017–2021 and fiscal year 2017–2026 period, however, revenues are $1 million below assumed levels due to the enactment of H.J. Res. 83, P.L. 115–21, a resolution considered under the Congressional Review Act for disapproving of the rule by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness.''

Social Security outlays and revenues are at the levels assumed in S.Con.Res. 3.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate pay-as-you-go, PAYGO, rule. The Senate's PAYGO scorecard currently shows increased deficits of $202 million over the fiscal year 2016–2021 and fiscal year 2016–2026 periods. For both of these periods, outlays have been increased by $201 million, and revenues have been reduced by $1 million. The Senate's PAYGO rule is enforced by section 201 of S. Con.Res.21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

Finally, included in this submission is a table tracking the Senate's budget enforcement activity on the floor. No budget points of order have been raised since my last filing.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the tables be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

[In millions of dollars]

	2017	2017–2021	2017–2026
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	1	1	1
Outlays	1	1	1
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Finance			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	200	200
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Total			
Budget Authority	1	1	1
Outlays	1	201	201

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS [1]

[Budget authority, in millions of dollars]

	2017	
	Security [2]	Nonsecurity [2]
Statutory Discretionary Limits	551,068	518,531
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	9
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0	7
Defense	45	0
Energy and Water Development	−340	−340
Financial Services and General Government	0	0
Homeland Security	0	9
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	120
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	24,570
Legislative Branch	0	−1
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	7,898	74,600
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	4,400
Current Level Total	7,603	103,374
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (−) Statutory Limits	−543,465	−415,157

[1] This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

[2] Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]

	2017
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2017	19,100
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0
Defense	0

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)—Continued

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]

	2017
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	0
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (−) Budget Resolution	−19,100

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2017.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2017 budget and is current through April 25, 2017. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

Since our last letter dated March 1, 2017, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–10). That act has significant effects on budget authority and outlays in fiscal year 2017.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF APRIL 25, 2017

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution [a]	Current Level [b]	Current Level Over/Under (−) Resolution
On-Budget			
Budget Authority	3,226.1	3,308.0	81.9
Outlays	3,224.6	3,254.7	30.1
Revenues	2,682.1	2,682.1	0.0
Off-Budget			
Social Security Outlays [c]	805.4	805.4	0.0
Social Security Revenues	826.0	826.0	0.0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

[a] Excludes $81,872 million in budget authority and $40,032 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 3 for non-regular discretionary spending, including spending that qualifies for adjustments to discretionary spending limits pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, that is not yet allocated to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

[b] Excludes emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

[c] Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF APRIL 25, 2017

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted [a]			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,682,088
Permanents and other spending legislation	2,054,297	1,960,884	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	138,258	619,553	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	−834,250	−834,301	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,358,305	1,746,136	2,682,088
Enacted Legislation:			
National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–10)	1	1	0
Continuing Resolution:			
Further Continuing and Security Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114–254) [b,c,d]	1,034,868	613,341	0
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	914,848	895,267	0
Total Current Level [e]	3,308,022	3,254,745	2,682,088
Total Senate Resolution [f]	3,226,128	3,224,630	2,682,088
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	81,894	30,115	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2017–2026:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,659
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,660
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	1

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

Includes the budgetary effects of enacted legislation cleared by the Congress during the 114th session, prior to the adoption of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

Emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 does not count for certain budgetary enforcement purposes. These amounts, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114–254)	−2	−1	0

[c] Division A of P.L. 114–254 contains the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017, which provides funding for those agencies within the jurisdiction of 11 of the 12 regular appropriations bills through April 28, 2017; those amounts are shown under the "Continuing Resolution" section of this table. Certain provisions in Division A provide funding until or beyond the end of fiscal year 2017; those amounts are shown in the "Previously Enacted" section of this table. In addition, Division B of P.L. 114–254 contains the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, which provides funding until or beyond the end of fiscal year 2017 for overseas contingency operations; those amounts are shown under the "Previously Enacted" section of this table.

[d] Sections 193–195 of Division A of P.L. 114–254 provided funding, available until expended, for innovation projects and state responses to opioid abuse. CBO estimates that, for fiscal year 2017:

The $20 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 193 would result in an additional $5 million in outlays for FDA innovation projects;

The $352 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 194 would result in an additional $91 million in outlays for NIH innovation projects;

The $500 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 195 would result in an additional $160 million in outlays for state response to opioid abuse.

Consistent with sections 1001–1004 of P.L. 114–255, for the purposes of estimating the discretionary budget authority and outlays for these provisions under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act of 1974 and the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Act of 1985, these amounts are estimated to provide no budget authority or outlays.

[e] For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.

[f] Excludes $81,872 million in budget authority and $40,032 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 3 for non regular discretionary spending, including spending that qualifies for adjustments to discretionary spending limits pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, that is not yet allocated to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF APRIL 25, 2017

[In millions of dollars]

	2016–2021	2016–2026
Beginning Balance [a]	0	0
Enacted Legislation: [b,c,d]		
Tested Ability to Leverage Exceptional National Talent Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–1)	*	*
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule (P.L. 115–5)	*	*
National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–10)	1	1
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 (P.L. 115–14)	*	*

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF APRIL 25, 2017—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

	2016–2021	2016–2026
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Clarification of Employees Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness" (P.L. 115–21)	1	1
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees (P.L. 115–24)	*	*

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF APRIL 25, 2017—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

	2016–2021	2016–2026
An act to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes (P.L. 115–26)	200	200
Current Balance	202	202
Memorandum:		
	2016–2021	2016–2026
Changes to Revenues	−1	−1
Changes to Outlays	201	201

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: P.L. = Public Law; * = between −$500,000 and $500,000.

[a] Pursuant to the statement printed in the Congressional Record on January 17, 2017, the Senate Pay-As-You-Oo Scorecard was reset to zero.

[b] The amounts shown represent the estimated effect of the public laws on the deficit.

[c] Excludes off budget amounts.

[d] Excludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT OF LEGISLATION POST-S.CON.RES. 3, FY 2017 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RESOLUTION

Vote	Date	Measure	Violation	Motion to Waive	Result
—	—	—	—	—	—

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–15, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Greece for defense articles and services estimated to cost $80 million, After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice-Admiral, USN Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–15

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Greece

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $34 million.

Other $46 million.

Total $80 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Five (5) CH–47D Aircraft.

Seven (7) Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (one (1) for each aircraft plus two (2) spares).

Twelve (12) T55–GA–714A Turbine Engines (two (2) for each aircraft plus two (2) spares).

Non-MDE includes: Also under consideration for this sale is mission equipment, communications and navigation equipment, ground support equipment, special tools and test equipment, spares, publications, Maintenance Work Order/Engineering Change Proposals (MWO/ECPs), technical support, and training, and other associated support equipment and services.

(iv) Military Department: Army.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: GR–B–JBK, GR–B–XMH.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc. Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 27, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Greece—CH–47D Helicopters

The Government of Greece requested the possible sale of five (5) CH–47D helicopters, seven (7) Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (one (1) for each aircraft plus two (2) spares), and twelve (12) T55–GA–714A turbine engines (two (2) for each aircraft plus two (2) spares). Also included are mission equipment, communications and navigation equipment, ground support equipment, special tools and test equipment, spares, publications, Maintenance Work Order/Engineering Change Proposals (MWO/ECPs), technical support, and training, and other associated support equipment and services. The total estimated cost is $80 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a NATO ally that has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress. Greece intends to use these defense articles and services to modernize its armed forces by increasing its rotary-wing transport capability. This will contribute to the Greek military's goal to upgrade its capability while further enhancing greater interoperability between Greece, the U.S. and other allies.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

There is no principal contractor as the systems will be coming from U.S. Army stocks. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require U.S. Government or contractor representatives to travel to Greece for equipment de-processing/fielding, system checkout and new equipment training.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–15

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The CH–47D is a medium lift aircraft, remanufactured from CH–47A, B, and C aircraft. The CH–47D aircraft, which includes two T55–GA–714A turbine engines, has been identified as Major Defense Equipment (MDE). The avionic system in the CH–47D helicopter consists of the communications equipment providing HF (AN/ARC–220), VHF AM/FM (AN/ARC–186) and UHF–AM (AN/ARC–164) communications. The voice secure equipment consists of the TSEC/KY–58 and the TSEC/KY–100. The navigation equipment includes ADF (AN/ARN–89 or 149, VOR ILS Marker Beacon, (AN/ARN–123, Doppler/GPS (AN/ASN–128, Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN) System AN/ARN–154(V), VGH FM Homing (AN/ARC–201D) is provided through the FM communication radio. Transponder equipment (AN/APX–118) consists of an IFF receiver with inputs from the barometric altimeter for altitude encoding. The AN/APX–118 and AN/APX–118A transponder is classified SECRET if Mode 4, or Mode 5 fill is installed in the equipment with a crypto device. Mission equipment consists of the radar signal detecting set, (AN/APR–39A(V)1) and the Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) (AN/AAR–57). The AN/APR–39 Series Radar Warning Receiver sets are sensitive items are classified SECRET if the Unit Data Module has threat data software installed. The software for this system determines the classification. Normally a customer has specific software developed to meet their requirements.

2. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Greece.

3. A determination has been made that the Government of Greece can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. The sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives as outlined in the Policy Justification of the notification.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–11, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $137.6 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–11

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Australia

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $119.5 million.

Other $18.1 million.

Total $137.6 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to seventy (70) AGM–88B High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM) Tactical Missiles.

Up to forty (40) AGM–88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missiles (AARGM) Tactical Missiles.

Up to sixteen (16) CATM–88B HARM Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM).

Up to sixteen (16) CATM–88E AARGM CATM.

Up to twenty-five (25) AGM–88B Control Sections.

Up to twenty-five (25) AGM–88B Guidance Sections.

Up to twenty (20) AGM–88E Control Sections.

Up to twenty (20) AGM–88E Guidance Sections.

Non-MDE includes: Up to forty-eight (48) Telemetry/Flight Termination Systems, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other associated support equipment and services.

(iv) Military Department: Navy.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: AT–P–AZN.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress:

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Australia—Anti-Radiation Missiles

Australia has requested a possible sale of up to seventy (70) AGM–88B High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM) Tactical Missiles; up to forty (40) AGM–88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missiles (AARGM) Tactical Missiles; up to sixteen (16) CATM–88B HARM Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM); up to sixteen (16) CATM–88E AARGM CATM; up to twenty-five (25) AGM–88B Control Sections; up to twenty-five (25) AGM–88B Guidance Sections; up to twenty (20) AGM–88E Control Sections; up to twenty (20) AGM–88E Guidance Sections; up to forty eight (48) Telemetry/Flight Termination Systems; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other associated support equipment and services. The total estimated cost is $137.6 million.

This sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a major contributor to political stability, security, and economic development in the Western Pacific. Australia is an important Major non-NATO Ally and partner that contributes significantly to peacekeeping and humanitarian operations around the world. It is vital to the U.S. national interest to assist our ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defense capability.

Australia is requesting these missiles for its Electronic Attack EA–18G Growler aircraft. The proposed sale will improve Australia's capability in current and future coalition efforts. Australia will use this capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. Australia will have no difficulty absorbing these additional missiles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractors will be Orbital ATK (OA), Ridgecrest, CA, and Raytheon Missile Systems Company, Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to travel to Australia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–11

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AGM–88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile (AARGM) weapon system is an air-to-ground missile intended to suppress or destroy land or sea-based radar emitters associated with enemy air defenses and provides tactical air forces with a lethal countermeasure to enemy radar directed, surface-to-air missiles, and air defense artillery weapons systems. Destruction or suppression of enemy radars denies the enemy the use of air defense systems, thereby improving the survivability of our tactical aircraft. It uses a multimode seeker that incorporates global positioning system/inertial measurement unit (GPS/IMU) midcourse guidance, a radio frequency (RF) radiation homing receiver, an active millimeter wave seeker, an Integrated Broadcast Service Receiver (IBS–R) and a Weapons Impact Assessment (WIA) transmitter. The AARGM AGM–88E when assembled is classified SECRET. The AARGM Guidance Section (seeker hardware) and Control Section with the Target Detector is classified CONFIDENTIAL.

2. The AGM–88B High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM) weapon system is an air-to-ground missile intended to suppress or destroy land or sea-based radar emitters associated with enemy air defenses and provides tactical air forces with a lethal countermeasure to enemy radar directed, surface-to-air missiles, and air defense artillery weapons systems. Destruction or suppression of enemy radars denies the enemy the use of air defense systems, thereby improving the survivability of our tactical aircraft. The AGM–88B HARM when assembled is classified CONFIDENTIAL. The HARM Guidance Section (seeker hardware), and Control Section with the Target Detector are classified CONFIDENTIAL.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements of this possible sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Government of Australia can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the technology being released as the US Government. The sale is necessary in furtherance of the US foreign policy and national security objectives as outlined in the Policy Justification of the notification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Australia.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–14, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the Slovakia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $150 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–14

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Slovakia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.

Other $150 million.

Total $150 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE: Nine (9) Bell 429 Light Utility Helicopters with customer-unique modifications. Also included are WESCAM MX–10 cameras, training, spare parts, and logistical support, mission equipment, communication and navigation equipment, special tools and test equipment, ground support equipment, airframe and engine spare parts, technical data, publications, maintenance work order/electronic change proposals, technical assistance, repair and return, quality assurance team, and transportation of aircraft.

(iv) Military Department: Army.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 27, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Slovakia—Bell 429 Light Utility Helicopters

Slovakia has requested a possible sale of nine (9) Bell 429 Light Utility Helicopters with customer-unique modifications. Also included are WESCAM MX–10 cameras, training, spare parts, and logistical support, mission equipment, communication and navigation equipment, special tools and test equipment, ground support equipment, airframe and engine spare parts, technical data, publications, maintenance work order/electronic change proposals, technical assistance, repair and return, quality assurance team, and transportation of aircraft. The estimated cost is $150 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a NATO ally that has been, and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress within Europe.

The proposed sale of the Bell 429 light utility helicopters will improve Slovakia's capability to meet current and future threats. Slovakia will use the enhanced capability to strengthen its homeland defense and deter regional threats. Slovakia will have no difficulty absorbing these helicopters into its armed forces.

The proposed sale will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Bell Helicopter of Piney Flats, Tennessee. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Slovakia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–14

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Bell 429 is a light twin, newly manufactured helicopter and is optimized for Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), Category A, and JAROPS–3 compliant operations. The Bell 429 features two/three multi-function displays, dual digital 3-axis autopilot and an integrated electronic data recorder provides enhanced situational awareness and post flight analysis. The Bell 429 standard configuration for Communications, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) consists of Garmin GTN 650/750 NAV/COM/WAAS GPS system. The Identifier, Friend or Foe (IFF) will be the APX–123, which provides the Mode 4/5 capability. One (1) each Multi Sensor Cameras, L3 WESCAM MX10s will be equipped on four (4) of the nine (9) Bell 429 Helicopters. The communications suite is as follows: one (1) each AN/ARC–231 Multi-mode radios providing VHF FM, VHF–AM, UHF, HQII and DAMA SATCOM. Aircraft survivability equipment (ASE) will not be provided on this LOA.

Identification and security classification of sensitive technological information and/or restricted information contained in the equipment, major components, subsystems, software, technical data (Performance, Maintenance, R&M, etc.) documentation, training devices and services to be conveyed with the proposed sale to include a brief justification/explanation of why information is sensitive provided as follows:

(1) The AN/APX–123A, Identification Friend of Foe (IFF) Transponder, is a space diversity transponder and is installed on various military platforms. When installed in conjunction with platform antennas and the RCU (or other appropriate control unit), the transponder provides identification, altitude and surveillance reporting in response to interrogations from airborne, ground-based and/or surface interrogators. The transponder provides operational capabilities for Mark XIIA Identification Friend of Foe (IFF) capabilities of Modes 1, 2, 3/A,C and 4&5 and Mode S (levels 1, 2, and 3 capable). Additionally, the AN/APX–123 also provides automated ID, position and latitude of the aircraft, and unencrypted ADS–B and is compatible with the Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) II equipment.

(2) The WESCAM MX–10 is a small Multi-Sensor, Multi-Spectral Imaging System with Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) and Embedded with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) Standard Positioning Service (SPS). The WESCAM MX–10 camera system contains a LN–200 IMU manufactured by Northrop Grumman in the United States. WESCAM MX–10 is embedded with GPS SPS. SPS is a three-dimensional position and time determination capability provided to a user equipped with a minimum capability GPS SPS receiver in accordance with GPS national policy.

(3) The AN/ARC–231 (V)(C) is a secure communication system that provides Line-of-Sight (LOS) communications and Beyond Line-of-Sight (BLOS) satellite communications (SATCOM), as well as Voice and data communications capabilities. In addition to Satellite Communications, the AN/ARC–231 (V)(C) provides Secure/Electronic Counter-Countermeasures (ECCM) communications in the following waveform, The Single Channel Ground and Airborne System (SINCGARS) and the HAVE QUICK (HQ). The AN/ARC–231 functions by transmitting and receiving the Radio Frequency (RF) in the 30 MHz–511.995 MHZ range. The Receiver Transmitter provides communication in Frequency Modulation (FM), Very High Frequency—Amplitude Modulation Air Traffic Control Band (VHF AM ATC), Very High Frequency—Frequency Modulation Public Service & Maritime Band, Ultra High Frequency—Amplitude Modulation (UHF AM) HAVEQUICK/Ground-Air Band, Ultra high Frequency Satellite (UHF SATFCOM) Band and Ultra High Frequency—Frequency Modulation Public Service Band.

2. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government.

3. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweighs the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Slovak Republic.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(I) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–06, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency for defense articles and services estimated to cost $33.5 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures:

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–06

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA)

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $25.0 million.

Other $8.5 million.

Total $33.5 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The NATO Support and Procurement Agency requested the sale of AN/AAQ–24(V) Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) components to support the upgrade of the LAIRCM system on three C–17 aircraft, along with spares.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Fourteen (14) Guardian Laser Terminal Assemblies (GLTA) (9 + 5 spares).

Six (6) LAIRCM System Processor Replacements (LSPR) (3 + 3 spares).

Non-MDE: This request also includes contractor spares, consumables, support equipment, technical data, aircraft installation, flight test, certification, publications, training, program and logistics support services.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: K8–D–QAE.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 27, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA)—Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) System Components

The NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) requested the sale of fourteen (14) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) and six (6) LAIRCM System Processor Replacements (LSPR) along with contractor spares, consumables, support equipment, technical data, aircraft installation, flight test, certification, publications and training in order to upgrade the AN/AAQ–24(V) LAIRCM system on three (3) of its C–17 aircraft. The estimated total value is $33.5 million.

This proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by enhancing the aircraft self-protection capabilities of C–17 aircraft operated by the NATO Airlift Management (NAM) Programme, a consortium of 12 nations, including the United States. The partner nations in this program fly missions in and around Europe, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Levant, and North Africa. This sale an enhanced military capability for the NAM, and will assist its associated nations in providing airlift for personnel and equipment to locations requiring enhanced threat countermeasures.

The proposed sale advances U.S. and NATO policy goals of expanding the capabilities of strategic airlift to NATO allies and partners. The capabilities associated with this proposed sale bolster the military strength of the NATO alliance and its partners by increasing the self-protection capabilities of NAM airlift aircraft. NSPA will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment.

As these systems are defensive in nature, the proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor for production is Northrup Grumman of Rolling Meadows, Illinois. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to NATO.

There will be no adverse impact to U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–06

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The ANIAAQ–24V Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) is a self-contained, directed energy countermeasures system designed to protect aircraft from infrared-guided surface-to-air missiles. The system features digital technology and microminiature solid-state electronics. The system operates in all conditions, detecting incoming missiles and jamming infrared-seeker equipped missiles with aimed bursts of laser energy. The LAIRCM system components required to upgrade the system are the Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) and LAIRCM System Processor Replacement (LSPR). The upgraded LAIRCM for the C–17 uses three (3) GLTA and one (1) LSPR. LAIRCM system software, including Operational Flight Program is classified SECRET. Technical data and documentation to be provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

a. The LSPR component analyzes the data from each Missile Warning System Sensor and automatically deploys the appropriate countermeasure via the GLTA.

b. The GLTA uses aimed bursts of laser energy to jam infrared seeker equipped missiles when directed by the LSPR. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. The software is SECRET. Technical data and documentation to be provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific

hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems which might reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency, NATO Airlift Management Program pursuant to the NATO C–17 SAC MOU.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–19, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency for defense articles and services estimated to cost $300 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–19

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA).

(ii) Total Estimated Value: Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.

Other $300 million.

Total $300 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE: Follow-on support for three (3) C–17 aircraft to include participation in the Global Reach Improvement Program, contract labor for Class I modifications and kits, in-country contractor support, alternate mission equipment, major modification and retrofit, software support, aircraft maintenance and technical support, support equipment, personnel training and training equipment, additional spare and repair parts, technical orders and publications, airworthiness certification support, engine logistics support, inspections, and other U.S. Government and contractor engineering, logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7–D–QAC).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: K8–D–QAG.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 27, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA)—Continuation of C–17 Logistics Support Services and Equipment

The NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) has requested the possible sale of follow-on support for three (3) C–17 aircraft to include participation in the Global Reach Improvement Program, contract labor for Class I modifications and kits, in-country contractor support, alternate mission equipment, major modification and retrofit, software support, aircraft maintenance and technical support, support equipment, personnel training and training equipment, additional spare and repair parts, technical orders and publications, airworthiness certification support, engine logistics support, inspections, and other U.S. Government and contractor engineering, logistics and program support. The total estimated program cost is $300 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States (U.S.) by providing sustainment for three (3) C–17s operated by a consortium of twelve nations, including the U.S. This program flies missions in and around Europe, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Levant, and North Africa. This proposed sale will provide a similar readiness level for these C–17s as U.S.-operated C–17s. The current FMS case supporting these C–17s will expire on 20 September 2017.

The proposed sale will advance U.S. and NATO policy goals of expanding the capabilities of strategic airlift to NATO allies and partners and sustain the ability to deploy in support of contingency operations outside of Europe. As the C–17 is a support asset, it would not affect the basic military balance in the region. NSPA will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The prime contractor will be the Boeing Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency.

There will be no adverse impact to U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the NSPA.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–13, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of New Zealand for defense articles and services estimated to cost $1.46 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–13

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) *Prospective Purchaser:* New Zealand.

(ii) *Total Estimated Value:*

Major Defense Equipment* $1.03 billion.

Other $ .43 billion.

Total $1.46 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Four (4) P–8A Patrol Aircraft, which includes: Eight (8) Multifunctional Information Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio System (MIDS JTRS) (one (1) for each aircraft, two (2) for the ground operations support center, and two (2) spares).

Five (5) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N Large Aircraft Infrared Counter Measures (LAIRCM) system (one (1) for each aircraft and one (1) spare).

Five (5) System Processors for AN/AAQ–24(V)N LAIRCM system (one (1) for each aircraft and one (1) spare).

Thirty (30) AN/AAR–54 Missile Warning Sensors for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N LAIRCM system (six (6) for each aircraft and six (6) spares).

Ten (10) LN–251 with Embedded Global Positioning Systems (GPS)/Inertial Navigations Systems (EGIs) (two (2) for each aircraft and two (2) spares).

Non-MDE includes: Commercial engines; Tactical Open Mission Software (TOMS); Electro-Optical (EO) and Infrared (IR) MX–20HD; AN/AAQ–2(V)1 Acoustic System; AN/APY–10 Radar; ALQ–240 Electronic Support Measures; support equipment; operation support systems; maintenance trainer/classrooms; publications; software, engineering, and logistics technical assistance; foreign Liaison officer support, contractor engineering technical services; repair and return; transportation; aircraft ferry; and other associated training, support equipment and services.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (XX–P–SAH).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: This would be New Zealand's first purchase of the P–8A Patrol Aircraft. New Zealand has one related P–8A case, NZ–P–GEE, which provides P–8A study and technical analysis support.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 27, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

New Zealand—P–8A Aircraft and Associated Support

New Zealand has requested the potential sale of up to four (4) P–8A Patrol Aircraft. Each includes: commercial engines, Tactical Open Mission Software (TOMS), Electro-Optical (EO) and Infrared (IR) MX–20HD, AN/AAQ–2(V)1 Acoustic System, AN/APY–10 Radar, ALQ–240 Electronic Support Measures. Also included are eight (8) Multifunctional Information Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio System (MIDS JTRS); five (5) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N; five (5) System Processors for AN/AAQ–24(V)N; thirty (30) AN/AAR–54 Missile Warning Sensors for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N; ten (10) LN–251 with Embedded Global Positioning Systems (GPS)/Inertial Navigations Systems (EGIs); support equipment; operation support systems; maintenance trainer/classrooms; publications; software, engineering, and logistics technical assistance; foreign Liaison officer support, contractor engineering technical services; repair and return; transportation; aircraft ferry; and other associated training, support equipment and services. The total estimated cost is $1.46 billion.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security of the United States by strengthening the security of a Major Non-NATO ally which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability within the region. New Zealand is a close ally in the region and an important partner on critical foreign policy and defense issues.

The Government of New Zealand intends to use these defense articles and services to continue its Maritime Surveillance Aircraft (MSA) capability, following retirement of its P–3K maritime patrol aircraft. The sale will strengthen collective defense and enhance New Zealand's regional and global allied contributions.

New Zealand has procured and operated U.S. produced P–3 MSA for over 40 years, providing critical capabilities to NATO and coalition maritime operations. New Zealand has maintained a close MSA acquisition and sustainment relationship with the U.S. Navy over this period. The proposed sale will allow New Zealand to recapitalize, modernize and sustain its MSA capability for the next 30 years. As a long-time P–3 operator, New Zealand will have no difficulty transitioning its MSA force to the P–8A and absorbing these aircraft into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be The Boeing Company, Seattle, WA. Additional contractors include:

Air Cruisers Co LLC.
Arnprior Aerospace, Canada.
AVOX Zodiac Aerospace.
BAE.
Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC)/EMS.
Compass David Clark.
DLS/NiaSat, Carlsbad, CA.
DRS.
Exelis, McLean, VA.
GC Micro, Petaluma, CA.
General Electric, UK.
Harris.
Joint Electronics.
Marin Baker.
Northrop Grumman Corp, Falls Church, VA.
Pole Zero, Cincinnati, OH.
Raytheon, Waltham, MA.
Raytheon, UK.
Rockwell Collins, Cedar Rapids, IA.
Spirit Aero, Wichita, KS.
Symmetries Telephonics, Farmingdale, NY.
Terma, Arlington, VA.
Viking.
WESCAM.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require approximately five (5) contractor representatives to support the program in New Zealand.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–13

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The P–8A aircraft is a militarized version of the Boeing 737–800 Next Generation (NG) commercial aircraft. The P–8A is replacing the P3C as the Navy's long-range Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), Anti-Surface Warfare (ASuW), Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft capable of broad-area, maritime and littoral operations. The overall highest classification of the P–8A weapon system is SECRET. The P–8A mission systems hardware is largely UNCLASSIFIED, while individual software elements (mission systems, acoustics, ESM, EWSP, etc.) are classified up to SECRET.

2. P–8A mission systems include:

a. Tactical Open Mission Software (TOMS). TOMS functions include environment planning, tactical aids, weapons planning aids, and data correlation. TOMS includes an algorithm for track fusion which automatically correlates tracks produced by on board and off board sensors.

b. Electro-Optical (EO) and Infrared (IR) MX–20HD. The EO/IR system processes visible EO and IR spectrum to detect and image objects.

c. AN/AAQ–2(V)1 Acoustic System. The Acoustic sensor system is integrated within the mission system as the primary sensor or the aircraft ASW missions. The system has multi-static active coherent (MAC) 64 sonobuoy processing capability and acoustic sensor prediction tools.

d. AN/APY–10 Radar. The aircraft radar is a direct derivative of the legacy AN/APS–137(V) installed in the P–3C. The radar capabilities include GPS selective availability anti-spoofing, SAR and ISAR imagery resolutions, and periscope detection mode.

e. ALQ–240 Electronic Support Measures (ESM). This system provides real time capability for the automatic detection, location, measurement, and analysis of RF-signals and modes. Real time results are compared with a library of known emitters to perform emitter classification and specific emitter identification (SEI).

f. Electronic Warfare Self Protection (EWSP). The P–8A aircraft Directional Infrared Countermeasures (DIRCM) suite consists of the ALQ–213 Electronic Warfare Management System (EWMS), ALE–47 Countermeasures Dispensing System (CMDS), and the AN/AAQ–24(V)N Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasure (LAIRCM) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) processor, and AAR–54 Missile Warning Sensors (MWS). The AN/AAQ–24(V)N LAIRCM is a self-contained, directed energy countermeasures system designed to protect aircraft from infrared guided surface-to-air missiles. The system features digital technology and microminiature sold state electronics. LAIRCM system software, including Operation Flight Program is classified SECRET. Technical data and documentation to be provided are UNCLASSIFIED.

g. Multifunctional Information Distribution System-Joint Tactical Radio System (MIDS JTRS) is an advanced Link–16 command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) system incorporating high-capacity, jam-resistant, digital communication links for exchange of near real-time tactical information, including both data and vice, among air, ground, and sea elements. The MIDS JTRS terminal hardware, publications, performance specifications, operational capability, parameters, vulnerabilities to countermeasures, and software documentation are classified CONFIDENTIAL. The classified information to be provided consists of that which is necessary for the operation, maintenance, and repair (through intermediate level) of the data link terminal, installed systems, and related software.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain access of the P–8A specific hardware and software elements, systems could be reverse engineering to discover USN capabilities and tactics. The consequences of the loss of this technology, to a technologically advanced or competent adversary, could result in the development of countermeasures or equivalent systems, which could reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the recipient government can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to New Zealand.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–87, concerning the Department of the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Israel for defense articles and services estimated to cost $440 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–87

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Israel.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $400 million.
Other $ 40 million.
TOTAL $440 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Thirteen (13) 76mm Naval Guns (includes the Digital Control Console).

Non-MDE: Shipboard spares to support operation and preventive maintenance; spares to support repairs; special tools needed for maintenance; holding and transportation fixtures; test equipment; technical manuals, other documentation, and publications; U.S. Government and the contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; site surveys of ships and maintenance facilities; installation, checkouts and testing of the systems on the boats; operations and maintenance training; and other related support services.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (LHN).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 26, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Israel—76mm Naval Gun and Technical Support

The Government of Israel has requested a possible sale of thirteen (13) 76mm naval guns. Also included are shipboard spares to support their operation and preventive maintenance; spares to support repairs; special tools needed for maintenance; holding and transportation fixtures; test equipment; technical manuals, other documentation, and publications; U.S. Government and the contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; site surveys of ships and maintenance facilities; installation, checkouts and testing of the systems on the boats; operations and maintenance training; and other related support services. The estimated cost is $440 million.

The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense

capability. This proposed sale is consistent with those objectives. This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic regional partner that has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will improve Israel's capability to meet current and future threats in the defense of its borders and territorial waters. The naval guns will be installed on Israeli Navy SA'AR 4.5 and SA'AR 6 Missile Patrol Boats. One gun will be located at an Israeli Naval Training Center to be used for training maintenance personnel. Israel will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The potential principal contractor will be DRS North America (a Leonardo company). There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Israel.

There is no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–87

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) Of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The naval gun system proposed in response to this request is a modem variant of the MK–75 naval gun system. The naval gun system is mounted aboard the ship and supports multiple missions while deployed at sea and at home port stations. The missions include ship's surface to air defense and surface to surface defense or attack modes. It also can be used for sea surface to land surface for bombardment or as offshore artillery to support troops on the ground. This gun system does not include Global Positioning System (GPS) or sensors. The naval gun hardware and support equipment, test equipment, and maintenance spares are UNCLASSIFIED.

2. Some of the prospective ammunition types that may be used with the gun system are either laser or GPS guided. Ammunition is not part of this proposal.

3. The naval gun system provides an interface (Digital Control Console) so that it can be used in conjunction with the ships' Fire Control System (FCS) and Combat Management System (CMS). The FCS and CMS are not proposed as part of this sale.

4. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the policy justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Israel.

ANTIQUITIES ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, apparently the Trump administration couldn't let its first 100 days go by without going after America's National Monuments. Anybody who cares about protecting some of the greatest treasures in Oregon and across the country ought to be worried.

The President is lining up an Executive order requiring a review of the boundaries of all National Monuments designated since 1996. It might sound bureaucratic, but it is more than that. The President's Executive order is a short-sighted attempt to roll back protections for some of America's most cherished landscapes.

The Executive order flies in the face of a century-old tradition that has ensured generations of Americans can enjoy natural treasures like the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in my home State.

Colleagues, for over 100 years, Presidents from both parties have used authority granted by the Antiquities Act to permanently protect special Federal lands as National Monuments, to preserve natural, cultural, and historic values for the benefit of everyone. Two of Oregon's most cherished areas were established as National Monuments through the Antiquities Act: Oregon Caves and Cascade-Siskiyou. Both of these areas have a remarkable diverse range of biological, geological, and historic objects.

I am proud to have worked with President Clinton to establish the original boundaries of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in 2000. I am proud to have worked with Senator MERKLEY to expand the monument earlier this year and to expand the boundary of the Oregon Caves National Monument in 2014.

There are two important points to make about this debate.

First, it is important that the individuals who live near and recreate on these lands have an opportunity to make their voices heard. As public lands everywhere, they ultimately belong to all of the people.

Some people, the President included, say these monuments are an example of overreach and designated without the right process.

On this issue, the President is wrong. These monuments are not the result of administrative overreach. The boundaries of these monuments are based on years of collaboration between the administration, States, and local stakeholders.

The second point to make is about rural economies. National Monuments, National Parks, and public lands across the United States are important economic generators for rural communities.

According to a report released just this week, public lands generate billions of dollars in consumer spending and millions of jobs every year. In Oregon, the outdoor recreation economy generated $12.8 billion in consumer spending in 2012 and over 140,000 direct jobs. Nationally, the numbers are even bigger; in 2012, the outdoor rec economy generated $889 billion nationwide and over 7 and a half million jobs.

Colleagues, there is an agenda behind this Executive order, and it puts some of our greatest outdoor treasures and a lot of jobs in danger.

Some members of this administration—including the Secretary of the Interior—have said the right things about public lands, and that was reassuring to millions of people who care about recreation. I hope it wasn't just talk, and I certainly hope the President's Executive order is not the first step in dismantling America's National Monuments and public lands.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ''EXODUS 1947''S ARRIVAL IN HAIFA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, July 18, 2017, marks the 70th anniversary of the day that the ship *Exodus 1947* arrived in Haifa, Israel.

The story of *Exodus 1947* is as important today as it was 70 years ago. In 1947, the world was horrified and outraged by the British policy of violently preventing Holocaust survivors from reaching Palestine and forcing their return to Europe and refugee camps in Germany. Watching the British Navy ram the *Exodus 1947*, which had 4,515 Holocaust survivors on board, inflamed world opinion and prompted the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, UNSCOP, to scrutinize the actions of the British. Eventually the British were forced to end their policy of preventing Jewish immigration to Israel, and the State of Israel was born.

Why is the story of the *Exodus 1947* so important that we are still talking about it 70 years later? After all, geopolitical transitions have launched multiple large-scale refugee migrations around the world in the 20th century, including Armenians in 1915, Russians in 1917, Chinese in 1949, Hindus from Pakistan and Muslims from India in 1947, East Germans between 1945 and 1961, Bosnians in the 1990s, Rwandans in 1994, Syrians in 2016—and many more.

The story of the *Exodus 1947* is important to remember and consider today because it reminds us of our responsibility to protect human rights, help people outside of our own borders, stand up for Americans values, and work with our allies and international organizations to advance our goals. It reminds us that our work is not finished. It reminds us that, while it was the Jews on the *Exodus 1947* 70 years ago, political outrages around the world continue to require our leadership and our action.

As a U.S. Senator from Maryland and vigilant friend of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's Maritime history, I would like to highlight the fact that, prior to its service in support of Jewish refugees from the Holocaust, the *Exodus 1947* was called the *President Warfield* and it sailed the Chesapeake Bay for the Baltimore Steam Packet Company. The *President Warfield* changed hands many times, from the Baltimore Steam Packet Company to the British Navy to the U.S. Navy to the Potomac Shipwrecking Company, which was actually acting as clandestine purchasing agents of the Haganah who wanted the

ship because the conditions that made it ideal for navigating the Chesapeake Bay, shifting sand of 3 feet or less in depth, made it ideal for getting immigrants quickly and closely up to the coastal areas of Palestine.

After the Haganah secured the ship, she was retrofitted in Baltimore from where she sailed towards France to pick up 4,515 Holocaust the refugees and deposit them in Palestine—a plan which was destroyed after the British rammed the ship, prevented the refugees from disembarking in Palestine, detained them in inhumane conditions, and eventually returned them to Germany.

The world witnessed the inhumane treatment of the *Exodus*'s passengers and some righteous people cried out. We continue to talk about the *Exodus 1947* to remind ourselves never to forget both our suffering and our empowerment.

I would like to acknowledge all who have made the creation of this memorial possible. Along with a series of associated commemorative projects, the *Exodus 1947* memorial is the culmination of decades of tireless effort by the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation, JASHP, to recognize the historic events that led to the formation of Israel. In particular, I applaud the work of Dr. Barry S. Lever, chairman of the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Final Voyage of the SS *President Warfied—Exodus 1947*, the Jewish Museum of Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay Museum, and the individuals and organizations here and abroad who have aided in the efforts to honor the *Exodus 1947* and its passengers.

Thank you.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEWISTON-AUBURN ROTARY CLUB

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on May 1, 1917, the International Association of Rotary Clubs welcomed a new member into its growing global network of neighbors, friends, and leaders working together for positive change in their communities and around the world. I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Lewiston-Auburn in my home State of Maine.

There are more than 35,000 Rotary Clubs worldwide. The Lewiston-Auburn club was the 291st to be chartered and is part of the first great wave of expansion that took the Rotary movement from major American cities to smaller communities and to Canada and Europe.

It is remarkable that what began as a small group of civic leaders in Chicago in 1905 has grown to a service organization of 1.2 million dedicated members in more than 200 countries and territories around the world. In any language, Rotarians live up to their motto of ''Service Above Self.''

Rotary International is a powerful force for good around the world. The global effort to eradicate polio is considered to be the most successful public health campaign in human history, one that would not be possible without Rotary's commitment. When Rotary launched its PolioPlus program back in 1985, it was described as a ''gift from the 20th century to the 21st.'' It has been just that.

In addition to its strong support for PolioPlus, the Lewiston-Auburn Club is part of a Rotary International effort to make affordable and safe water more widely available in Haiti. As a result of this effort, a tanker truck was purchased to address this great humanitarian need.

Locally, the Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club has a special focus on families and children. The club has been a leader in the creation of Lewiston's Universally Accessible Playground, which will provide recreation for all, regardless of physical or developmental limitations. The club also sponsors an annual event to benefit the Autism Society of Maine and awards scholarships to area high-school graduates pursuing higher education.

''Service Above Self'' has a special meaning to the members of the Lewiston-Auburn Rotary. The application for membership in Rotary International was signed on March, 21, 1917, by Frank W. Hulett of Lewiston. On June 6, 1918, Captain Hulett gave his life in the defense of freedom during the World War I Battle of Belleau Wood in France. Hulett Square in Lewiston, the Frank W. Hulett VFW Post, and the Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club all help to preserve the memory of this great hero.

When Paul Harris led the way in founding Rotary International 112 years ago, he said this: ''Whatever Rotary may mean to us, to the world it will be known by the results it achieves.'' The results are inspiring and the world is grateful. The Rotary Club of Lewiston-Auburn, ME, is part of that effort, and I congratulate its members for this accomplishments and contributions.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Lewiston-Auburn, ME. There are over 35,000 Rotary Clubs worldwide, with the LA Rotary being the 291st. Since 1917, the LA Rotary has demonstrated a commitment to community and global service by supporting local organizations, awarding scholarships to local students, and providing clean water to communities in Haiti. In their 100 years of service, this exceptional organization has gained members who represent the unique and diverse business community of the Lewiston-Auburn area.

The LA Rotary was founded by Captain Frank W. Hulett, who gave his life during WWI on June 6, 1918, at the Battle of Belleau Wood in France. Since Captain Hulett signed the application for membership of Rotary International on March 21, 1917, the LA Rotary has made great contributions to the worldwide Rotary organization of business and professional leaders. The LA Rotary has upheld an international presence by providing humanitarian service, encouraging high ethical standards in all vocations, and helping to build and maintain goodwill and peace throughout the world.

I applaud the LA Rotary's emphasis on local and global charity and giving back to their local communities. The LA Rotary is sponsored by the many donors who attend their successful fundraisers, including one that takes place at the famous Lewiston Hot Air Balloon Festival. The money raised from these fundraisers has gone towards several valuable projects like the Autism Movie Events, an ongoing project in partnership with a local movie theatre and the Autism Society of Maine. The LA Rotary has sustained their all-inclusive pattern by donating to the construction of the Lewiston Universally Accessible Playground Project. The playground will be barrier free, with smooth and level surfaces to make it easier for those with physical limitations, and is meant to provide an attractive and meaningful space for all, regardless of physical or sensory development. Another example of their excellent charity work is that, each May, the LA Rotary also gives back to local students by choosing seven high school seniors throughout the State to award $1,000 college scholarships.

I wish to join the communities of Lewiston and Auburn, as well as the State of Maine, in congratulating the LA Rotary for this remarkable achievement. I look forward to following their continued growth and service, and I thank them for their commitment to bettering Maine and the world.

OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ARMED SERVICE ENLISTMENT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor 374 high school seniors in eight northeast Ohio counties for their decision to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces. Of these 374 seniors from 118 high schools in 98 towns and cities, 86 will enter the Army, 98 will enter the Marine Corps, 55 will enter the Navy, 26 will enter the Air Force, 3 will enter the Coast Guard, 95 will enter our Ohio Army National Guard, and 11 will enter the Ohio Air National Guard. In the presence of their parents/guardians, high school counselors, military leaders, and city and business leaders, all 374 will be recognized on May 10, 2017, at the Northeast Ohio Foundation for Patriotism ''Our Community Salutes'' event.

In a few short weeks, these young men and women will join with many of their classmates in celebration of their high school graduation. At a time when many of their peers are looking forward to pursuing vocational training or college degrees or are uncertain about their future, these young men

and women instead have chosen to dedicate themselves to military service in defense of our rights, our freedoms, and our country. They should know that they have the full support of this Senate Chamber and the American people, who are with them in whatever challenges may lie ahead.

It is thanks to their dedication and the dedication of an untold number of patriots just like them that we are able to meet here today in the U.S. Senate and openly debate the best solutions to the problems that confront our country. It is thanks to their sacrifices that the United States of America remains a beacon of hope and freedom in a dangerous world. We are grateful to them, and we are grateful to their parents and their communities for instilling in them not only the mental and physical abilities our Armed Forces require, but also the character, the values, and the discipline that leads someone to put service to our Nation over self.

I would like to personally thank these 374 graduating seniors for volunteering to risk their lives in defense of our Nation. We owe them, along with all those who serve our country, a deep debt of gratitude.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the names of the 374 high school seniors.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES ARMY—86

Allan–Berea; Anderson–Medina; Ashford–Maple Heights; Barnes–Cleveland; Bartoe–Medina; Bonzcek–Fairport Harbor; Brogan–Brunswick; Brown–Eastlake; Burhoe–Fairlawn; Carey–Cleveland; Cawrse–Mentor; Clark–Warrensville Heights; Clements–Maple Heights; Copen–Cleveland; Dachtler–Parma; Daugherty–Madison; Davis E.–North Royalton; Davis T.–Mentor; DeGeorge–Mentor; Dohar–Strongsville; Dolan–Willoughby Hills; Dorsey–Akron; Dunn–Maple Heights; Eakin–Tallmadge; Flanders–Akron; Frazier–Lorain; Gamble–Euclid; Gatrell–Lorain; Grissom–LaGrange; Hagan–Perry; Hayes T.–Euclid; Hayes E.–Strongsville; Hochenberry–Brook Park; Horvat–Medina; Jackson–North Ridgeville; Johnson–Hudson; Karl–Elyria; Kelly–North Ridgeville; Kincer–Amherst; Kline–Rootstown; Kurtz–Elyria; Lebron–Lorain; Lee–Conneaut; Lin–Lakewood; Major–Tallmadge.

Marthe–Mentor; Martin–Cleveland; McCraw–Cuyahoga Falls; McVay–Akron; Mooney–Eastlake; Morales Rubio–Cleveland; Motsinger–Strongsville; Nagy–Wickliffe; Nelson–Elyria; Oyola–Lorain; Patterson–Euclid; Plymel–Mentor On The Lake; Reeves–Garfield Heights; Reid–Elyria; Ripley–North Ridgeville; Rodriguez–Lorain; Rohlman–Wogaman–Akron; Ryman–North Olmsted; Sikora–Parma; Smith–Medina; Sokolowski–Medina; Solon–Streetsboro; Stillisano–Wickliffe; Surovey–Wellington; Szabo–Olmsted Falls; Taveras Smith–Euclid; Vance–Olmsted Falls; Volak–Lorain; Walker–Perry; Washko–Hinckley; Webb–Medina; White–Maple Heights; Whitelaw–Reminderville; Wilfong–Garrettsville; Wilkinson–Medina; Williams–Medina; Wilson–Cleveland; Workman–Ravenna; Wright–Cuyahoga Falls; Zalek–Sheffield Lake; Zaranko–Medina.

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE—26

Bibby–Brecksville; Brezovsky–North Ridgeville; Caraballo–Brooklyn; Cottingham–Olmsted Falls; Cummings–Akron; Dominguez–Cleveland; Evans, II–Akron; Freed–Brook Park; Genovese–Akron; Griffith–Ravenna; Hamilton–Bay Village; Hicks–Brook Park; Hocker–South Euclid; Jones–Akron; Kerr–LaGrange; Maximovich–North Olmsted; Patton–Elyria; Pritts–Mogadore; Robinson–Akron; Ryder–Strongsville; Sandoval–Chagrin Falls; Schillero–Garfield Heights; Swatson–Akron; Waites–Lakewood; Williams–Akron; Williams–Kipton.

OHIO AIR NATIONAL GUARD—11

Aguiar–Medina; Alston–Amherst; Brittian–Richmond Heights; Burton–Ashland; Chappell–Brunswick; Delzoppo–Eastlake; Fassnacht–Warren; Pauly–Ashland; Reik–Eastlake; Tector–Medina; Winterfield–Oak Harbor.

OHIO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD—95

Anderson–Cleveland; Ashdown–Willowick; Asian–Mayfield Heights; Bailey–Kent; Bailey–Elyria; Bailosky–Elyria; Baxter–Akron; Becerra–Cleveland; Bertrand–Conneaut; Blevins–Elyria; Bowens–Lorain; Boyes–Ravenna; Brosky–Lorain; Burkhard–Barberton; Cacho–Cleveland; Clements–Brook Park; Cornier–Akron; Cooper–Ashtabula; Deets–Highland Heights; Doepel–Mogadore; Earlenbaugh–Peninsula; Elliott–Painesville; Ewart–Lodi; Felix–Euclid; Ferguson–Akron; Fields–Akron; Figueroa–Akron; Flemister I.–Bedford; Flemister J.–Bedford; Fohner–Cuyahoga Falls; Garrison–Medina; Gerlach–Avon Lake; Gibbs–Stow; Gilbreath–Wadsworth; Glaze–Akron; Grimm–Barberton; Harrison–Barberton; Hoover–Hiram; Hoyle–Akron; Huffriagle–Mayfield Heights; Jackson–Euclid; Jones–Akron; Kelly–Twinsburg; Keown–Mogadore; Klinehamer–Bratenahl; Koloda–Medina; Lane–Grafton; Layne–Doylestown; Lebron –Lorain; Lero–Munroe Falls.

Lietke–Uniontown; Light–Parma Heights; Lockhart–Cleveland; Loparo–Wadsworth; Lutkus–Cuyahoga Falls; Madigan–Rittman; Massaro–Akron; Miles–Cleveland; Mobley–Sheffield Lake; Moore–Barberton; Nicely–Novelty; Novak–Elyria; Ohara–Fairport Harbor; Pennington–Cleveland; Pescatrice–Medina; Pierce A.–Mogadore; Pierce J.–Sheffield Lake; Piper–Cleveland; Priestly–Twinsburg; Prochniak–Stow; Prunty–Elyria; Raines–Elyria; Reyes–Cleveland; Riley–Bedford; Rinearson–Seville; Robinson–Twinsburg; Russell–Cleveland; Scurlock–Chardon; Sellers–Eastlake; Simmons–Jefferson; Sims–Cleveland; Singleton–Wadsworth; Sinsel–Mogadore; Smith–Bay Village; Spigner–Euclid; Thompson–Cleveland; Trujillo–Grafton; Veon–Olmsted Township; Vroman–Sheffield Lake; Warner–Doylestown; Wells–Parma Heights; Williams–Maple Heights; Workman–Ravenna; Yontz–Rittman; Yurtz–Medina.

UNITED STATES MARINE CORP—98

Allen–Willowick; Anglin–Cleveland; Anthony–Brook Park; Baggett–Chagrin Falls; Banks–Rootstown; Barr–Kent; Bell–Streetsboro; Benefield–Akron; Bentley–Kent; Bly–Cuyahoga Falls; Boose–Medina; Bouhall–Cleveland; Boyer–Akron; Brady–Painesville; Breault–Brook Park; Brown–Cleveland; Bruce–Middleburg Heights; Bufkin–Mentor; Caradine–North Olmsted; Collins–Perry; Cooper–Barberton; Cox–Solon; Creter–Brook Park; Cupedro–Parma; Dabydeen–Cleveland; Devore–Parma; Fincham–Mogadore; Flanagan–Munroe Falls; Frankland–Norton; Frejofsky–Twinsburg; Garrett–Akron; Geiss–Brunswick; Gerber–Clinton; Gerson–Mentor; Green–Hudson; Haas–Solon; Hall–Barberton; Harasyn–Ravenna; Harte–Cleveland; Hernandez–Cleveland; Hill–Middleburg Heights; Houston–Brunswick; Hughes–Mentor; Hurst–Cuyahoga Falls; Johnson–North Olmsted.

Kawalek–Strongsville; Ken–Mentor; Kiel–Ashtabula; Kimmel–Norton; King–LaGrange; Konicek–Stow; Kramer–Akron; Krickhan–Brunswick; Kucharski–Ravenna; Lord–Parma; Manigault–Cleveland Heights; McConahy–Kent; McCraney–Akron; McElroy–Wadsworth; McHugh–Mentor; McLaren–Rock Creek; McLaughlin–Bay Village; Mendez–Painesville; Morris–Mentor; Moyer–Twinsburg; Nagy–Conneaut; Navratil–Chagrin Falls; Nelson–Litchfield; Ortizramos–Cleveland; Pachecorangel–Painesville; Palchesko–Aurora; Paulo–North Olmsted; Phillipp–Ashtabula; Ploskonka–Parma; Pollay–Ashtabula; Purtell–Eastlake; Ratigan–Parma; Ray–Akron; Roth–Clinton; Schlauch–Wadsworth; Serrano–Olmsted Falls; Serva–Ravenna; Shanley–Ravenna; Simon–Willoughby; Skidmore–Ravenna; Smigel–Cleveland; Smith–Ashtabula; Stack–Brook Park; Staley–Parma; Stansky–Norton; Strausser–Stow; Sturgill–Conneaut; Watkins–Strongsville; Watts–Stow; Weiss–Mentor; Wilmoth–Medina; Wilson–Cuyahoga Falls; Wood–Conneaut.

UNITED STATES NAVY—55

Acadimia–Geneva; Bowles–Rock Creek; Branham–Barberton; Bryan–Ashtabula Coyle–Brooklyn; Czworkowski–Strongsville; Davis–Brunswick; Dreger–Ravenna; Dudek–Bay Village; Gibson–Medina; Grays–Cleveland; Gregoire–Streetsboro; Halabica–Fairview Park; Hardman–Mentor; Higgins–Geneva; Hill–Mentor; Horton–Ashtabula; Irizarry–Olmsted Township; Juncker–Grafton; Koehring–Wadsworth; Konopa–Geneva; Kozma–Alliance; Lada–Lakewood; Martin S.–Chippewa Lake; Martin A.–Willoughby.

McClanahan–New London; Miller–Kirtland; Mills–Kent; Moore–Wadsworth; Morgan–Parma; Muzic–Ravenna; O'Donnell–Parma; On–Akron; Palcic–Chardon; Phillips–Willoughby; Piper–Mentor; Rayburn–Medina; Rodriguez N.–Cleveland; Rodriguez A.–Olmsted Falls; Selders–Medina; Sharpe–Geneva; Shepherd–Avon Lake; Singleton Jr. –Ravenna; Skipper–Akron; Sledz–Painesville; Sokalski–Mentor; Soto–Painesville; Sweeney–Mentor; Tirado–Lorain; Trimble–Parma; Verdi–Geneva; Walker–Ashtabula; Welk–Madison; Williams–Ashtabula; Wimberly–Streetsboro.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD—3

Montgomery–Fremont; Reese–Sagamore Hills; Sanders–Brunswick.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE STIVERS

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to join my colleagues from Ohio in congratulating our good friend and colleague, Congressman STEVE STIVERS, on his new promotion to the rank of brigadier general in the Ohio Army National Guard.

This is a big deal. STEVE is one of the highest ranking National Guard officers ever to serve simultaneously in Congress. I think that is really important because it gives him a unique perspective as a legislator and puts him in an unique position to advocate on behalf of our troops.

The title is a great honor, but what is more important, in my view, is the fact that he earned it. STEVE has been serving Ohio as a soldier for 30 years. He deployed to the Middle East during Operation Iraqi Freedom, while simultaneously serving as a State senator in Columbus, and he even earned a Bronze Star for his accomplishments.

Since he came home, he has been serving his neighbors in central and southern Ohio as a legislator for more

than a decade. We are really grateful for that because he has been a faithful Representative in speaking up for his constituents.

I want to congratulate STEVE, Karen, and the kids on this exciting time for them. On behalf of the people of Ohio, I want to thank STEVE and all of our troops for their service.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO DR. CANDACE KENDLE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the contributions of Dr. Candace Kendle, recipient of the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Corporate Growth, Cincinnati.

As the visionary cofounder of one of the largest international providers of drug development services to the biopharmaceutical industry, Dr. Candace Kendle is being honored for her achievements in founding and growing Kendle International, Inc., from a small, private startup in 1981, to a global clinical research organization traded on NASDAQ, KNDL, and acquired by INC Research in 2011.

Under Dr. Kendle's leadership, Kendle International delivered a wide range of clinical development and clinical trial services to biopharmaceutical companies around the world, including the development of Celebrex.

Prior to founding Kendle International, Inc., Kendle held senior faculty positions at several leading academic institutions, including the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Schools of Pharmacy and Medicine; the University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine; Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science; and the University of Cincinnati College of Pharmacy.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Candace Kendle earned a bachelor of science and doctorate in pharmacy from the University of Cincinnati, College of Pharmacy, and was awarded an honorary Ph.D. in science from the University of Cincinnati in 2010.

Dr. Candace Kendle is recognized worldwide as a leader in the CRO industry and is a founding member and past chairperson of the Association of Clinical Research Organizations. She has served as a mentor for the Fortune—U.S. State Department Global Women Leaders Mentoring Partnership and as a member of the Committee of 200, where she served on the board of directors for its foundation. She has also served on biotechnology task forces for the U.S. Department of Commerce, as well as for two Ohio Governors.

Dr. Kendle serves on the boards of directors for USP, Emerson, and the H.J. Heinz Company. She is cofounder of Next Chapter Press and ReadAloud.org, an organization to encourage children and adults to read aloud to encourage lifelong learning. She is also a former trustee for the University of Cincinnati, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and numerous other nonprofit organizations.

TRIBUTE TO DAVE SHOJI

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate retiring University of Hawaii women's volleyball coach Dave Shoji on an outstanding 42-year career.

In 1975, at just 28 years old, Dave Shoji tallied his first win as head coach of the Rainbow Wahine volleyball team. Since then, he has gone on to compile one of the most decorated resumes in collegiate volleyball history. In fact, there has been no such thing as a losing season during Dave's tenure with the Rainbow Wahine. In 2013, he earned the title of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's alltime winningest coach. In 2016, he became just the second coach in NCAA history to win 1,200 matches.

He departs the university with an astonishing record of 1,202 wins, 204 losses, and 1 tie, including 4 national titles, 25 conference championships, and more than 30 postseason national tournament appearances.

Coach Shoji leaves the confines of the Stan Sheriff Center with a legacy much larger than the numbers.

It is fitting that Coach Shoji's tenure began just a few short years after the enactment of title IX, a law now named for Hawaii Congresswoman Patsy Mink who championed its passage. Title IX seeks to ensure equal opportunity and prohibit sex discrimination in higher education. It is most widely known for expanding opportunities for women in collegiate athletics. Coach Shoji's tenure at the helm of Rainbow Wahine volleyball has clearly demonstrated the value of opportunity for young people—not just young women—in Hawaii. His teams have been examples of what can be achieved through hard work, professionalism, and teamwork. That example has led many local players to aspire to 1 day don the green and white Wahine jersey, play in front of sold-out crowds, and look to Coach Shoji in the center of the huddle during a nail-biting set. Parents were always hopeful, too, that they would witness their daughter's transition from girl to woman in the care of Coach Shoji and company.

During his tenure, Coach Shoji's has coached 86 All-American selections, 35 conference players of the year and, 175 all-conference picks. His players' successes extended beyond the court. More than 100 players have earned all-academic conference recognitions under his guidance.

Over the past 42 years, Coach Shoji has built a reputation for excellence built on hard work, integrity, and love for the game. He has helped shape countless student athletes and brought pride to their families and legions of fans. Coach Shoji has set the standard for those who follow.

Hawaii extends our warmest aloha and mahalo nui loa to Coach Shoji for his passion and commitment to not only the sport of volleyball but the State of Hawaii. ''Let's go 'Bows!''

TRIBUTE TO TERESA SHOOK

Ms. HIRONO, Mr. President, one of the life lessons that I try to keep in mind is that one person can make a difference.

Today I wish to recognize one of these remarkable people—Hawaii resident Teresa Shook.

Most of my colleagues probably don't know who Teresa Shook is, but I am certain all of them know what difference she has made.

Teresa lives in the idyllic but isolated community of Hana on Maui. Following the recent Presidential election, like many Americans, Teresa had concerns about where our country was headed. She felt that it was time to pursue real action. Unsure of where to begin, she took to social media, posing the following question: ''What if women marched on Washington around Inauguration Day en masse?''

Little did she know what that simple Facebook post would lead to. She created a public events page, which caught the attention of 40 people in the first few hours of its posting. She woke up the following morning to find that the event had garnered international attention, and more than 10,000 individuals had pledged their attendance. The numbers and support would only go up from there.

On January 20, 2017, the President delivered his inaugural address in which he painted a grim picture of America. The next day, millions across the United States and around the globe took to the streets to demonstrate against his bleak view of our shared future. Coined the Women's March on Washington, the event united women, men, and children of all ages, races, and religions. From Hilo to Hanalei, San Francisco to New York City, the march assisted in generating meaningful conversations about how to combat the hateful rhetoric and discriminatory agenda of the new President. It has helped and encouraged everyday citizens, many of whom have never been involved in politics, to get outside of their comfort zone and participate.

The need for progressive solutions to reform our criminal justice system, protect and expand access to affordable health care, improve immigration, fight climate change, and protect a woman's right to choose are just a few of the many reasons why Teresa and many others alike decided action needed to take place.

The Women's March on Washington was one event, but the network it generated remains engaged. It is now a global movement against nationalism, discrimination, and hate. It all started when a retired attorney, grandmother of four, and breast cancer survivor decided to speak up. While demonstrations are integral to democracy, the Women's March on Washington pointed

to the need for everyday individuals to take their desire for political advancement beyond the streets.

Teresa started a global movement from her rural Maui home, showing us the difference one person can make. It is up to all of us to keep that momentum going, to stay engaged. For those who feel as though their voice has no place within a conversation to pursue change, Teresa has shown a path forward. If there is anything to learn from Women's March on Washington, it is that we are not alone. There is no greater time than now to mobilize your communities and make your voices heard.

Teresa, who has been honored by the Maui County Council and continues to be recognized by many internationally, is a shining example of what we call ''Living Aloha.'' A heartfelt mahalo nui loa to Teresa.

REMEMBERING PAUL LEVENTHAL

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, this year we mark the 10th anniversary of the untimely passing of our friend Paul Leventhal. Paul was a trailblazer when it came to addressing the dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. I personally relied on Paul's insight to craft my approach to preventing the spread of dangerous nuclear technology and nuclear weapons.

As a Senate staffer during the 1970s, Paul made major contributions to our Nation's security by working on two landmark laws.

The first was the Energy Reorganization Act, which created the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the agency that later became the Department of Energy. Before this legislation, a single agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, was responsible for both promoting nuclear energy and regulating the nuclear industry, to the detriment of public safety.

Paul was also instrumental for passage of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, which required countries to adopt full-scope safeguards from the International Atomic Energy Agency before they could receive civilian nuclear technology from the United States. This requirement later became an international standard when the Nuclear Suppliers Group adopted it.

During the 1980s, Paul played an important role in helping to kill the Clinch River Breeder reactor, which shut down U.S. efforts to develop a full plutonium fuel cycle. Throughout this time, he was also a strong proponent of my efforts to close loopholes in U.S. nuclear nonproliferation law, including tightening nuclear export controls affecting China following Tiananmen Square. He actively worked to ensure House passage of the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act, which imposed sanctions on those who knowingly contribute to efforts to acquire unsafeguarded fissile material or nuclear weapons.

Paul was ahead of his time in raising alarms about the threat of nuclear terrorism. His warnings about the need to reduce reliance on highly enriched uranium and to limit the use of plutonium for commercial nuclear power later formed the core of the global nuclear security agenda. His warnings about the flaws in nuclear cooperation agreements continue to reverberate in today's debates over the export of nuclear technology.

Today's ongoing nuclear challenges remind me of our solemn responsibility to carry out Paul's legacy.

The nuclear industry continues to push against stringent safety standards. The Trump administration wants to promote the export of nuclear technology and walk away from the Obama administration's nuclear security mission. The India nuclear deal continues to increase the risk of a nuclear clash in South Asia. Plans for commercial-scale plutonium reprocessing in East Asia threaten to create a new nuclear arms race in the region.

All of these challenges will require us to take inspiration from Paul's work to promote nuclear security and nonproliferation. To honor Paul, we must rededicate ourselves to fighting these threats to international peace and human survival.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO NEIL SMIT

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a great Pennsylvanian and a great American: Neil Smit. Neil has made extraordinary contributions to our country through his service as a Navy SEAL, his leadership and innovation in the business world, and his dedication to community service.

Neil has served as a leader in the business community for decades with Comcast, Charter Communications, AOL, Pillsbury, and Nabisco. His notable career began serving his country as a member of the elite Navy SEAL Team Six. He retired from Active Duty as a lieutenant commander. He has never lost his commitment to his country and his comrades. In the private sector, he has worked on behalf of veterans by championing Comcast's pledge to hire veterans and to help Active-Duty servicemembers transition from the military to the civilian workforce.

In all of his roles, Neil has always exemplified the best traits of a leader. During his time as CEO of Comcast Cable, Neil led his team to innovate and develop game-changing products and businesses that benefited consumers.

His devotion to his community is evident in his role with the executive committee of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's board of trustees. Neil is also a member of the board of visitors for Nicholas School of the Environment at his alma mater, Duke University. He also serves as chairman of the executive committee and is a member of the board of directors of C–SPAN.

Neil's life of service and leadership is an inspiration to many, and we thank him for his service to our great country.•

TRIBUTE TO EMMA HOMER

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Emma Homer of Ashland for the many years she has helped children in eastern Montana. Her generosity and compassion is commendable.

Emma began fostering children in 1979. For nearly 38 years, she has opened her home, and her heart in order to help the local community. The longevity of her noble accomplishment is truly remarkable. Over the years, Emma has directly helped to improve the lives of over 40 children through her service as foster parent. The children she has cared for have varied in age from infants just a few months old to teenagers in high school.

In addition to her contributions as a foster parent, since 1981, Emma has worked in the food service department at St. Labre Indian School. During that time, she has helped prepare hundreds of thousands of nutritious meals for the students and staff.

A loving home and a warm meal are essential elements in every Montana community. Emma has helped provide both of these essentials to many children for well over a generation. Thank you, Emma, for the outstanding example you have set for the next generation.•

REMEMBERING CLYDE SEE, JR.

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Clyde See, Jr., a noble veteran, a dedicated community leader, and a beloved member of my home State of West Virginia.

Clyde and I were friends for many years, and I witnessed his unwavering dedication to public service, firsthand.

Clyde was born in Hardy County and continued to give back to his community throughout his life. He was a high school dropout, who received his GED after serving in the U.S. Army. With use of his G.I. Bill, Clyde earned his undergraduate degree from West Virginia University and then attended WVU's Law School. He served as an attorney in Hardy County for 47 years.

Clyde always took great pride in helping others achieve their goals. From 1975 through 1984, he served in the West Virginia House of Delegates, with 6 years as speaker of the house. Among his many achievements and roles in leadership, he served as president of the board of directors of the Mutual Protective Insurance Association for the 20 years, serving on its board for more than 40 years.

He ran unsuccessfully for Governor in 1984 and 1988, but never gave up the opportunity to give back to the State he loved.

He was a member of the Moorefield Volunteer Fire Company and fought

fires years ago because he believed so deeply in public service. He knew that, if you can count your blessings, you can share your blessings, and he did indeed share them with the Moorefield region and with our entire State.

Clyde was especially passionate about the passage of Hardy County School Bonds that would enable new schools to be built in the county. He worked tirelessly for this cause and was so very proud to see the passage of the bond for the new Moorefield High School. Clyde knew that our students are the future of our State and Nation and that we must do everything in our power to equip them with the tools they need for success. He had great compassion for students who needed support and was very proactive in making sure they were prepared for the future.

One of Clyde's favorite projects was Brighton Park, located just outside of Moorefield. It is a project that came to fruition, thanks to Clyde's design, development, and funding efforts, as well as with his determination to create something special for the entire region to enjoy. Clyde often enjoyed walking through this beautiful park, and now it remains in our hearts as a place to cherish his memory.

Clyde had the most wonderful sense of humor and such a quick wit. He was also one of the most brilliant and eloquent speakers I have ever heard. It is my hope that his friends and family have found comfort in one another and in the support of our entire home State for their loss.

What is most important is that he lived a full life, surrounded by his loved ones. Clyde was a true West Virginian, always willing to help a neighbor in need. I extend my condolences to his loving companion, Marion Marshall, his children Josh, Lucas, Jenny, and Amy and their families, and to his brother Jack. Again, I am honored to recognize Clyde's memory, as well as the unwavering love he had for his family, friends, and our home State.●

REMEMBERING DR. ROLANDO ALUM, SR.

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of the late Dr. Rolando Alum, Sr., of West New York, NJ. At the age of 104, Dr. Alum passed away on March 27, a month ago today, leaving behind a legacy of community service and a family full of achievements. I had the distinct pleasure of knowing Dr. Alum personally. He was my constituent from when I first served in the New Jersey State Assembly over 25 years ago to when I became U.S. Senator. I could not be more impressed with the accomplished life of Dr. Rolando Alum, Sr., and his embodiment of the American spirit.

Dr. Alum was born and raised in Havana, Cuba. He began his career as a professor and dean at a local technical college, educating his students on literature and grammar. He then went on to become a dentist, treating patients with whom who he would keep in touch throughout his life. In 1961, Dr. Alum and his family fled Cuba in pursuit of liberty and a better life after the Castro brothers turned the island-nation into a Soviet-modeled totalitarian country.

When Dr. Alum came to the United States, he decided to settle and raise his family in Hudson County, NJ. His first job was at a cardboard box factory in Essex County. Wanting more for his family, Dr. Alum worked tirelessly to become a successful research scientist for a pharmaceutical company, eventually joining a research team that included a Nobel Prize winning doctor. At his company, Dr. Alum established important quality control measures and developed influential drugs.

The light of Dr. Alum's life was his family. Rolando and his pre-deceased wife, Sara, raised a truly exceptional family by any measure. I have worked side by side with his oldest son Roland Alum, Jr., on many civic and community engagement activities to better the State of New Jersey. Dr. Alum's youngest son Luis is an accomplished attorney and a leader in New Jersey's legal community. Rolando's grandson, Alexander, is the Assistant U.S. Attorney in Puerto Rico. Janelle, Dr. Alum's granddaughter, is a school teacher in my hometown of Union City. With such a successful family, I have no doubt that Dr. Alum was proud of each and every member of his family.

One of Dr. Alum's dreams was to one day see democracy in Cuba. Fearing violence from the Castro regime, Dr. Alum, like countless other Cubans who fled from the Castro regime, never returned to his native land. As a U.S. Senator of Cuban descent, I have dedicated my entire career to fighting for the Cuban people and will continue to work towards bringing freedom to Cuba.

Dr. Rolando Alum, Sr., was a model U.S. citizen and is a testament to what Cuban Americans, Latinos, and immigrants contribute to our great country.●

RECOGNIZING THE ALASKA ACES

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Alaska's one and only professional sports team and an organization that has become part of the fabric that makes up the Alaskan society, the Alaska Aces.

The team started as a small semi-professional hockey team in the late eighties known as the Anchorage Aces, but quickly gained the support and popularity of the community and rose through the ranks to become a professional hockey organization in 1995. In 2003, after becoming the Alaska Aces, the team joined the East Coast Hockey League and almost immediately became one of the league's powerhouses, winning three ECHL Kelly Cups in 2006, 2011, and most recently 2014.

The Aces have produced some of the biggest Alaskan professional athletes such as Scotty Gomez, who went on to win two Stanley Cups and became an NHL All-Star on multiple occasions, and Eagle River's Brian Swanson, whose hockey career took him to the National Hockey League, Europe, and finally back home to the Aces before he retired in 2012.

As good as the team has become, it is their dedication to the community that made them a staple with multiple generations of Alaskans. Whether it was their ''Skate with the Aces'' events in which families could skate with the players and get to know them after home games or the ever-popular military appreciation games, this organization has made a lasting impact on the lives of many hockey players and fans alike.

The Aces are full of fond memories and traditions such as the cowbell crew, which is the name given to its enthusiastic fan section. Then there is Bobby Hill, also known as ''The Horseman,'' who is not only the Alaska Aces superfan in charge of keeping the energy alive at every home game by going up and down the length of the ice riding a hockey stick, but is also a Special Olympics Gold medalist.

The Alaska Aces will be dearly missed in what is certainly an unfortunate end for such a storied franchise. Economic times have taken a hit on many sectors of the Alaskan economy, and we have seen the impact with our sporting events, but Alaskans are resilient and our sports teams and athletes are no different. Hockey has a rich history in Alaska and is culturally ingrained in the fabric of our State. Alaska has over 45 hockey associations, reflecting the passion and involvement shared by Alaskans of all ages. It is this passion and dedication to the sport that will surely keep the spirit and memory of our Alaska Aces alive.

I want to commend the leadership of the team's owners, the dedication of its fans and players, and the community for making the Alaska Aces one of the league's best franchises and perennial contenders for the ECHL Kelly Cup every season. The Aces play their very last game on April 8, 2017; however, the memories that countless Alaskans have with our hockey team will not fade, but will last a lifetime.●

REMEMBERING DR. ANDRE LARSON

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Andre Larson, who passed away on March 24, 2017, at the age of 74. Dr. Larson grew up in Brookings, SD, and graduated from the University of South Dakota, USD, in Vermillion with a BFA in music education and later, a MM degree in music literature.

A lifelong advocate for fine arts and music, Dr. Larson created the renowned National Music Museum in Vermillion, on USD's campus. Today it has the most complete collection of well-preserved and historically important musical instruments in the world.

The National Music Museum houses and preserves over 15,000 rare musical instruments: Stradivarius violins, and one of the only two Stradivarius mandolins that exist, dombaks and didgeridoos, the oldest playing harpsicord, more than a dozen saxophones made by the instrument's inventor, Adolphe Sax, bouzoukis, hurdygurdies, and a bombardon, a 1772 bowlback mandolin, a Javanese gamelan, lutes, flutes, harmonicas, and zithers, the world's oldest cello, called the King cello and created around 1550 A.D., Johnny Cash's guitar, and everything in-between, including a substantial collection of historic instrument documents.

Dr. Andre Larson was inspired by his father, Arne B. Larson, who was a high school music teacher, bandleader, and later a college music professor. Arne began collecting musical artifacts and instruments while serving in World War II, and his passion for music was not lost on his son, Andre. Wanting to share his and his father's passion, Andre conceptualized, planned, and implemented the development of the National Music Museum in Vermillion. In 1972, he was hired as the first director of the museum, then named the Shrine to Music Museum, with his father's 2,500 instruments as the foundation. Andre served as director of the museum until his retirement in 2011.

Under Dr. Andre Larson's leadership, the museum expanded significantly from one room in the Carnegie Library to now occupying the entire building today. His intelligence and great knowledge of instruments and history enabled him to select the best instruments for the collection. He also had a very unique skill in matching instruments to generous donors who would allow the museum to showcase their purchases.

In addition to teaching at the University of South Dakota and running the museum, Dr. Larson also created, produced, and marketed many musical events every year that sometimes included internationally known musicians performing music with the museum instruments. He also created the Nation's only graduate degree program in the history of musical instruments.

Throughout his life, Dr. Larson also served three terms as the president of the American Musical Instrument Society. He edited its newsletter for 18 years, and he was honored with the Curt Sachs Award, the highest honor given by the American Musical Instrument Society. In 2016, he was elected to the South Dakota Hall of Fame for his contributions to the arts in South Dakota.

Dr. Andre Larson's commitment to excellence and his dedication to music have inspired thousands of students and music lovers, not just across South Dakota, but throughout the entire Nation. His work in creating the National Music Museum will continue to inspire others for as long as there is music and there are people.●

TRIBUTE TO ALEC DIFRUSCIA

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the hard work of my Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee intern Alec DiFruscia. Alec hails from Tewksbury, MA, and is a senior at George Washington University.

During his internship, Alec assisted the committee's press office. He is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his internship. I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Alec for all of the fine work he did for the committee and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN ''JACK'' KILL

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the hard work of my Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee intern Jack Kill. Jack hails from Houston, TX, and is a rising senior at Notre Dame University.

While interning on the Commerce Committee, Jack assisted the Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security Subcommittee. He is a dedicated worker who was committed to getting the most out of his internship. I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jack for all of the fine work he did for the committee and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ALTER WIENER

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes today to honor Alter Wiener, a selfless Oregonian who endured the horrors of the Holocaust and has shared his powerful story with countless students and adults. I would like to share his story with the Senate so that my colleagues can hear how he survived the Nazi atrocities and came to live in Hillsboro, OR, teaching young men and women in my home State the dangers of intolerance and exclusion.

Alter Wiener's story begins more than 90 years ago in the Polish town of Chrzanów, where he was born on October 8, 1926. Like many Jewish children, he attended both public and religious school and was taught the importance of family and faith. What was a happy childhood ended abruptly when the Nazis invaded his hometown in September of 1939. Mr. Wiener fled with his mother and siblings, but his father, forced to stay behind, was ultimately murdered by the Germans.

Barred from practicing his faith or attending school, Mr. Wiener was eventually ripped from his home in the middle of the night and deported to Blechhammer, a forced labor camp. He saw and experienced unimaginable horrors as he was moved from labor camp to labor camp, spending 3 long years in five concentration camps. When the Russian Army freed him in May 1945, he weighed only 80 pounds.

Mr. Wiener made his way to New York City, where he joined his cousins, the only other members of a family that numbered 123 to survive the Nazi atrocities. In New York, he worked tirelessly to rebuild his life, earning his high school diploma at age 38 and then a degree from Brooklyn College. He got married, started a family, and worked as an accountant. Through it all, he rarely spoke of surviving the Holocaust or the atrocities he had witnessed and endured. He says now that he simply didn't feel others would understand.

In 2000, Mr. Wiener moved to Hillsboro, OR. The Oregon Holocaust Resource Center asked him to share his story, and, though he hesitated at first, he ultimately agreed to speak at Century High School. To his surprise, Mr. Wiener received hundreds of letters from students thanking him for changing their lives.

Mr. Wiener has since gone on to volunteer his time and energy to Holocaust education, giving more than 850 presentations to a wide range of audiences. In 2007, he published his autobiography ''64735: From a Name to a Number,'' detailing his harrowing experiences under the Nazi regime and his life thereafter.

Many of my colleagues have heard me talk about my own family's experience: how my parents fled Nazi Germany, how not everybody made it out, how we lost family in Kristallnacht and at Theresienstadt. Tolerance and inclusiveness are issues the Wydens take very seriously. That is why it is so special for me to be able to pay tribute to Alter Wiener today and to honor his work.

There is a concept in Judaism called tikkun olam, which means to repair the world. Truly, I can think of no bigger way to describe Alter Wiener's work than repairing the world. Every time he shares his story, more people understand the horrors of Nazi persecution and the inhumanity of the Holocaust. People also understand the importance of tolerance, pluralism, and inclusion, and they see the power of the human spirit to endure.

Today I offer my deepest affection and a heartfelt thank you to Alter Wiener for using your voice to teach generations to come to never, ever forget.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:55 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 bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1695. An act to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide additional responsibilities for the Register of Copyrights, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 4003(e) of the 21st Century Cures Act (Public Law 114–255), the Minority Leader appoints the following individual on the part of the

House of Representatives to the Health Information Technology Advisory Committee: Dr. Steven Lane of Palo Alto, California.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1695. An act to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide additional responsibilities for the Register of Copyrights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 954. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 955. A bill to ensure high-income earners pay a fair share of Federal taxes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 956. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to limit the authority of the President to withdraw areas from oil and gas leasing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 957. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that women members of the Armed Forces and their families have access to the contraception they need in order to promote the health and readiness of all members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 958. A bill to authorize Federal agencies to establish prize competitions for innovation or adaptation management development relating to coral reef ecosystems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 959. A bill to restore protections for Social Security, Railroad retirement, and Black Lung benefits from administrative offset; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 960. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to protect open, machine-readable databases; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. YOUNG:

S. 961. A bill to develop a database of projects that are proven or promising in terms of moving welfare recipients into work; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. DAINES):

S. 962. A bill to establish a grant program to support landscape-scale restoration and management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 963. A bill to encourage and support partnerships between the public and private sectors to improve our Nation's social programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 964. A bill to protect broadband users from unfair or deceptive practices relating to privacy or data security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 965. A bill to improve passenger vessel security and safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 966. A bill to establish a program to accurately document vehicles that were significant in the history of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 967. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase access to ambulance services under the Medicare program and to reform payments for such services under such program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 968. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to designate certain medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs as health professional shortage areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 969. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to expand the military student identifier program to cover students with a parent who serves in the reserve component of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 970. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the care provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to newborn children; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 971. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to include in each regulatory impact analysis for a proposed or final rule an analysis that does not include any other proposed or unimplemented rule; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 972. A bill to promote democracy and the rule of law on Nicaragua, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself and Mr. CORKER):

S. 973. A bill to designate as wilderness certain public land in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 974. A bill to promote competition in the market for drugs and biological products by facilitating the timely entry of lower-cost generic and biosimilar versions of those drugs and biological products; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 975. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the Indian coal production tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. WARREN, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 976. A bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 977. A bill to permit occupational therapists to conduct the initial assessment visit and complete the comprehensive assessment under a Medicare home health plan of care for certain rehabilitation cases; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 978. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish an award program recognizing excellence exhibited by public school system employees providing services to students in prekindergarten through higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 979. A bill for the relief of Arturo Hernandez-Garcia; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 980. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 981. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an energy efficiency materials pilot program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 982. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to require mandatory reporting of incidents of child abuse or neglect, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 983. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the work opportunity credit for certain youth employees, and to extend empowerment zones; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 984. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide funding, on a competitive basis, for summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth ages 14 through 24; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. NELSON, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 985. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from revising the approved oil and gas leasing program for fiscal years 2017 through 2022; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. COONS):

S. 986. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit hospitals in all-urban States to be considered Medicare dependent hospitals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 987. A bill to transition away from fossil fuel sources of energy to 100 percent clean and renewable energy by 2050, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 988. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make qualified biogas property and qualified manure resource recovery property eligible for the energy credit and to permit new clean renewable energy bonds to finance qualified biogas property, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. Res. 144. A resolution designating May 1, 2017, as ''National Purebred Dog Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COONS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. Res. 145. A resolution designating April 2017 as ''Financial Literacy Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. Res. 146. A resolution designating April 30, 2017, as El Dia de Los Ninos-Celebrating Young Americans; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Ms. HARRIS):

S. Res. 147. A resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. Con. Res. 14. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 104

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 104, a bill to provide for the vacating of certain convictions and expungement of certain arrests of victims of human trafficking.

S. 109

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 109, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency may not regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 223

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 223, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 236

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 236, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 251

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 251, a bill to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board in order to ensure that it cannot be used to undermine the Medicare entitlement for beneficiaries.

S. 260

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor 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. 319

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 319, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits.

S. 322

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 372

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 372, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to ensure that merchandise arriving through the mail shall be subject to review by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and to require the provision of advance electronic information on shipments of mail to U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 379

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 379, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the five month waiting period for disability insurance benefits under such title for individuals with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 393

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 393, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers a credit against income tax for employees who participate in qualified apprenticeship programs.

S. 404

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 404, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve the process for inspections of device establishments for granting export certifications.

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 404, supra.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 428

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 428, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to authorize States to provide coordinated care to children with complex medical conditions through enhanced pediatric health homes, and for other purposes.

S. 445

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 445, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 486

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 486, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories.

S. 538

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 538, a bill to clarify research and development for wood products, and for other purposes.

S. 540

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 540, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

S. 652

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 652, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 652, supra.

S. 708

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 708, a bill to improve the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to interdict fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances that are illegally imported into the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 736

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 736, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

S. 750

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 750, a bill to prohibit drilling in the outer Continental Shelf, to prohibit coal leases on Federal land, and for other purposes.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 751, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 794

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 794, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act in order to improve the process whereby Medicare administrative contractors issue local coverage determinations under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 829

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 829, a bill to reauthorize the Assistance to Firefighters Grants program, the Fire Prevention and Safety Grants program, and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. KING, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 849, a bill to support programs for mosquito-borne and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control.

S. 856

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 856, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 858

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 858, a bill to provide protection for survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault under the Fair Housing Act.

S. 900

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 900, a bill to improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 914

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 914, a bill to improve and coordinate interagency Federal actions

and provide assistance to States for responding to public health challenges posed by emerging contaminants, and for other purposes.

S. 916

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 916, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with regard to the provision of emergency medical services.

S. 918

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 918, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S.J. RES. 16

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 16, 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.

S. CON. RES. 12

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 12, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who served in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, should be presumed to have served in the Republic of Vietnam for all purposes under the Agent Orange Act of 1991.

S. RES. 60

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 60, a resolution designating May 5, 2017, as the ''National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls''.

S. RES. 106

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 106, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to support the territorial integrity of Georgia.

S. RES. 108

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 108, a resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to the United States-Egypt partnership.

S. RES. 136

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 136, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 102nd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 959. A bill to restore protections for Social Security, Railroad retirement, and Black Lung benefits from administrative offset; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President. Every day, Social Security provides vital benefits to millions of Americans who worked and paid into the system. To ensure workers would receive full access to these fundamental lifeline benefits, for many years, the law protected these earned benefits from attempts to recover debts. However, 20 years ago, Congress suddenly reversed course, and made a change to the law that allowed the government to cut Social Security and other hard-earned benefit payments in order to collect student loan and other federal debts, like home loans owed to the Veterans Administration, and food stamp overpayments. Now, more and more seniors are finding themselves subject to government garnishment of their already modest Social Security benefits in order to recoup student loan debts. In fact, the New York Times published an editorial recently titled, ''Haunted by Student Debt Past Age 50'' that highlighted the worsening struggle that seniors face with student debt.

Student loan debt is becoming an increasingly serious problem in Oregon and across the Nation, with students and their families burdened by crushing student loan debt. Even in the best circumstances, many families will struggle to pay off crippling loans for years to come. However, for people who rely on benefits like Social Security after retirement, disability, or the death of a family member, making payments on student loans or other Federal debts can become an insurmountable hardship.

Because of the lifeline nature of these earned benefits, for more than 40 years the law prevented all creditors from collecting hard-earned Social Security, railroad retirement, and black lung benefits to recoup debts. The only exceptions included unpaid Federal taxes, child support or alimony payments, and court-ordered victim restitution. These protections helped ensure that our social safety net programs were functioning as intended—something I think we can all agree is essential to preserving Social Security and other earned benefits.

Astonishingly, when the law changed as part of a 1996 omnibus budget bill, these changes were never fully debated in Congress. This means Members of Congress never had the chance to really explore how this policy would affect beneficiaries. The legislation ultimately included some protections for the most vulnerable, but even those protections have not been updated in 20 years.

We now realize what a profound effect the loss of these protections has had on retirees and individuals with disabilities, who often live on fixed incomes. More and more seniors and people with disabilities are having their Social Security and other lifeline benefits taken away to pay federal debts. For example, according to a GAO report, in 2004, about 8,000 seniors were living in poverty after having their benefits garnished to recover a student debt. In 2015, over 67,000 seniors were subject to garnishment for a student debt and living in poverty. Congress should restore sanity to the system, and reestablish the protections that these beneficiaries deserve.

That is why I, along with Senators BROWN, MERKLEY, FEINSTEIN, HIRONO, SCHATZ, LEAHY, NELSON, WHITEHOUSE, GILLIBRAND, SANDERS, and WARREN are reintroducing the Protection of Social Security Benefits Restoration Act. The bill would restore the strong protections in the law that prevented the government from taking away earned benefits to pay federal debts, and guarantee beneficiaries will be able to maintain a basic standard of living by receiving the benefits they have earned. The bill is supported by Social Security Works, the Arc of the United States, Latinos for a Secure Retirement, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, PSARA, AFL-CIO, the Economic Opportunity Institute, the National Organization for Women, Justice in Aging, Gray Panthers NYC, Alliance for Retired Americans, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Global Policy Solutions, AARP, the American Federation of Government Employees, and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 959

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 ''Protection of Social Security Benefits Restoration Act''.

SEC. 2. PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY, RAILROAD RETIREMENT, AND BLACK LUNG BENEFITS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET.

(a) PROHIBITION ON ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET AUTHORITY.—

(1) ASSIGNMENT UNDER SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.—Section 207 of the Social Security Act

(42 U.S.C. 407) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) Subparagraphs (A), (C), and (D) of section 3716(c)(3) of title 31, United States Code, as such subparagraphs were in effect on the date before the date of enactment of the Protection of Social Security Benefits Restoration Act, shall be null and void and of no effect.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 14(a) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231m(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''. The provisions of section 207(d) of the Social Security Act shall apply with respect to this title to the same extent as they apply in the case of title II of such Act.''.

(B) Section 2(e) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''The provisions of section 207(d) of the Social Security Act shall apply with respect to this title to the same extent as they apply in the case of title II of such Act.''

(b) REPEAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section 3716(c) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking ''(3)(A)(i) Notwithstanding'' and all that follows through ''any overpayment under such program).'';

(B) by striking subparagraphs (C) and (D); and

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as paragraph (3).

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (5) of such section is amended by striking ''the Commissioner of Social Security and''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any collection by administrative offset occurring on or after the date of enactment of this Act of a claim arising before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 974. A bill to promote competition in the market for drugs and biological products by facilitating the timely entry of lower-cost generic and biosimilar versions of those drugs and biological products; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, over the past few years, the national headlines have been dominated by stories about the high cost of pharmaceuticals. We have seen jaw-dropping examples, such as the unconscionable price increase overnight by Turing Pharmaceuticals of their drug for patients with HIV, from $13.50 to $750 per pill.

Pharmaceutical companies should be compensated for their important work developing lifesaving treatments. But when companies engage in predatory practices at the expense of consumers, we must act. That is why today I am reintroducing the Creating and Restoring Equal Access to Equivalent Samples, or CREATES, Act, bipartisan legislation to end inappropriate delay tactics that are used by some brand-name drug manufacturers to block competition from more affordable generic drugs. I am glad to be joined by Senators GRASSLEY, KLOBUCHAR, LEE, and FEINSTEIN, and several other Senators of both parties in introducing this bill today.

The first delay tactic addressed by the CREATES Act involves the withholding of drug samples that generic manufacturers need to gain regulatory approval. Federal law requires generic competitors to prove that their low-cost alternative is as equally safe and effective as the brand-name drug with which they wish to compete. Unfortunately, some brand-name companies are preventing generic manufacturers from obtaining the samples they need to make the necessary comparison. This simple delay tactic uses regulatory safeguards as a weapon to block competition. The FDA has reported receiving more than 100 inquiries from generic product developers who were unable to access samples of a brand-name drug to compare their generic product.

The second delay tactic addressed by the CREATES Act involves the development of shared safety protocols. For some high-risk drugs, Federal law requires a generic drug manufacturer to join the brand-name drug manufacturer in a single, shared safety protocol for distribution of the drug. Despite this requirement, some brand-name companies are refusing to negotiate shared safety protocols with potential generic competitors, again undermining those competitors' ability to gain FDA approval for their generic versions of such drugs.

The revised version of the CREATES Act also allows the FDA more discretion to approve alternative safety protocols, rather than require parties to develop shared safety protocols. Any safety protocol approved by the FDA must meet the rigorous statutory standards already in place.

These exclusionary practices thwart competition and deny consumers the benefit of lower drug prices. I share the concerns of Vermonters and Americans across the country that many prescription drugs are simply too expensive. When brand companies can artificially raise the price of drugs by using predatory practices, patients suffer. Illnesses get worse. Families, government programs, and other payers in the healthcare system ultimately bear those added, unnecessary costs.

This legislation is not a silver bullet to address all of the complex problems driving the high costs of medications. In addition to the delayed entry of generic drugs, I am troubled by the rising cost of treatments for opioid overdoses, which remain expensive for local law enforcement agencies, even though there are generic competitors. In Vermont, many patients are grappling with the extremely high cost of a new drug for hepatitis C that will likely have years of market exclusivity before generic alternatives can be made. Last year we learned the price of EpiPen had increased by almost 500 percent since 2009, now costing roughly $600 for a two-pack. The sharp increase in price combined with the relatively short shelf life of the product—1 year to 18 months—has put this lifesaving drug out of reach for many.

Think for a moment about the impact of price hikes on the family of a patient facing a life-threatening illness. Across the country, hardworking Americans feel like the system is rigged against them by corporations that are looking to make a profit at any price. With examples like Turing and Mylan, it is no wonder they feel that way.

The CREATES Act is one piece of the puzzle, addressing anticompetitive behavior that delays the creation of affordable generic drugs. Drug affordability is a bipartisan issue that affects each and every American. These reforms will make a difference. I hope other Senators will join us in supporting these bipartisan reforms.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 975. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the Indian coal production tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the legislation to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the Indian coal production tax credit be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 975

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT EXTENSION OF INDIAN COAL PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 45(e)(10)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''per ton of Indian coal—'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''per ton of Indian coal—

''(i) produced by the taxpayer at an Indian coal production facility, and

''(ii) sold (either directly by the taxpayer or after sale or transfer to one or more related persons) to an unrelated person.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to coal produced and sold after January 1, 2017.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 977. A bill to permit occupational therapists to conduct the initial assessment visit and complete the comprehensive assessment under a Medicare home health plan of care for certain rehabilitation cases; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to introduce the Medicare Home Health Flexibility Act of 2017. I am pleased that my colleague, the senior Senator from Nevada, Mr. HELLER, has agreed to cosponsor this bipartisan, no-cost legislation that would allow occupational therapists to perform the initial home health assessment visit and comprehensive assessments in cases in

which occupational therapy is ordered by the physician, along with speech language pathology and/or physical therapy services, and skilled nursing care is not required. Our bill will help ensure that Medicare beneficiaries receive timely access to essential home health therapy care.

Occupational therapists have long been recognized as a valuable component of our Nation's healthcare workforce and a critical aspect of home healthcare because of their focus on patients' functional capabilities and their expertise in home safety. Physicians frequently order occupational therapy as part of an initial plan of care for patients requiring home health care, alongside the qualifying services of physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and skilled nursing. Under certain circumstances, an occupational therapist is allowed to perform the comprehensive assessment to determine a Medicare beneficiary's continuing need for home healthcare. However, under current Medicare law, occupational therapists are not permitted to conduct the initial assessment for home health cases, even when occupational therapy is included in the physician's order and when the case is exclusively related to rehabilitation therapy. Additionally, occupational therapists are not allowed to complete the comprehensive assessment unless occupational therapy is the qualifying service.

By permitting occupational therapists to perform initial home health assessment visits and comprehensive assessments in limited circumstances, the Medicare Home Health Flexibility Act can help prevent delays in the time it takes for Medicare beneficiaries to receive essential home healthcare, especially in underserved areas where access to physical therapists and speech language pathologists may be limited. On January 13, 2017, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, or CMS, released the final conditions of participation, or COPs, for home health agencies participating in Medicare and Medicaid. These new COPs expand the content of the home health comprehensive assessment to include the patient's functional, psychosocial, and cognitive status, all of which are areas of expertise for occupational therapists. The new COPs also require the creation of a patient-centered plan of care that is informed by the comprehensive assessment. As a result of their comprehensive education and unique training, occupational therapists are qualified to perform the necessary assessments to adhere to these new CMS home health guidelines.

It is important to note that the Medicare Home Health Flexibility Act would apply only to rehabilitation therapy cases in which skilled nursing care is not required. Nurses would still be required to conduct the initial assessment for all home health cases in which skilled nursing care is ordered by the physician. Also, although the legislation would allow occupational therapists to conduct the initial home health assessment visit and comprehensive assessments, it would not alter the existing criteria for establishing eligibility for the Medicare home health benefit.

I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator HELLER and to support the Medicare Home Health Flexibility Act to correct the discrepancy in Medicare regulations between therapy providers and to help ensure timely access to essential, high-quality home health therapy care for Medicare beneficiaries.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 977

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 ''Medicare Home Health Flexibility Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. PERMITTING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS TO CONDUCT THE INITIAL ASSESSMENT VISIT AND COMPLETE THE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT UNDER A MEDICARE HOME HEALTH PLAN OF CARE FOR CERTAIN REHABILITATION CASES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 484.55(a)(2) or 484.55(b)(3) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other provision of law, an occupational therapist may be designated to conduct the initial assessment visit and to complete the comprehensive assessment for an individual who is eligible for home health services under title XVIII of the Social Security Act if the referral order by the physician—

(1) does not include skilled nursing care;

(2) includes occupation therapy; and

(3) includes physical therapy or speech language pathology.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to provide for initial eligibility for coverage of home health services under title XVIII of the Social Security Act solely on the basis of a need for occupational therapy.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 983. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the work opportunity credit for certain youth employees, and to extend empowerment zones; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 983

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 ''Helping to Encourage Real Opportunities (HERO) for At-Risk Youth Act''.

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION AND EXTENSION OF WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT FOR CERTAIN YOUTH EMPLOYEES.

(a) EXPANSION OF CREDIT FOR SUMMER YOUTH.—

(1) CREDIT ALLOWED FOR YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT.—Section 51(d)(7)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking clauses (i) and (iii) and redesignating clauses (ii) and (iv) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively,

(B) in clause (i) (as so redesignated), by striking ''(or if later, on May 1 of the calendar year involved),'' and inserting '', and'', and

(C) by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(iii) who will be employed for not more than 20 hours per week during any period between September 16 and April 30 in which such individual is regularly attending any secondary school.''.

(2) INCREASE IN CREDIT AMOUNT.—Section 51(d)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B).

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Subparagraph (F) of section 51(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''summer''.

(B) Paragraph (7) of section 51(d) of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking ''summer'' each place it appears in subparagraphs (A),

(ii) in subparagraph (B), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking ''subparagraph (A)(iv)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (A)(ii)'', and

(iii) by striking ''SUMMER'' in the heading thereof.

(b) CREDIT FOR AT-RISK YOUTH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 51(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of subparagraph (I), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (J) and inserting '', or'' , and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(K) an at-risk youth.''.

(2) AT-RISK YOUTH.—Paragraph (14) of section 51(d) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

''(14) AT-RISK YOUTH.—The term 'at-risk youth' means any individual who is certified by the designated local agency—

''(A) as—

''(i) having attained age 16 but not age 25 on the hiring date,

''(ii) as not regularly attending any secondary, technical, or post-secondary school during the 6-month period preceding the hiring date,

''(iii) as not regularly employed during such 6-month period, and

''(iv) as not readily employable by reason of lacking a sufficient number of basic skills, or

''(B) as—

''(i) having attained age 16 but not age 21 on the hiring date, and

''(ii) an eligible foster child (as defined in section 152(f)(1)(C)) who was in foster care during the 12-month period ending on the hiring date.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to individuals who begin work for the employer after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF EMPOWERMENT ZONES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1391(d)(1)(A)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN TERMINATION DATES SPECIFIED IN NOMINATIONS.—In the case of a designation of an empowerment zone the nomination for which included a termination date which is contemporaneous with the date specified in subparagraph (A)(i) of section 1391(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as in effect before the

enactment of this Act), subparagraph (B) of such section shall not apply with respect to such designation if, after the date of the enactment of this section, the entity which made such nomination amends the nomination to provide for a new termination date in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's designee) may provide.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 984. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide funding, on a competitive basis, for summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth ages 14 through 24; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 984

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 ''Creating Pathways for Youth Employment Act''.

SEC. 2. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is amended—

(1) by redesignating subtitle E as subtitle F; and

(2) by inserting after subtitle D the following:

''Subtitle E—Youth Employment Opportunities

''SEC. 176. DEFINITIONS.

''In this subtitle:

''(1) ELIGIBLE YOUTH.—The term 'eligible youth' means an individual who—

''(A) is not younger than age 14 or older than age 24; and

''(B) is—

''(i) an in-school youth;

''(ii) an out-of-school youth; or

''(iii) an unemployed individual.

''(2) HARDEST-TO-EMPLOY, MOST-AT-RISK.—The term 'hardest-to-employ, most-at-risk', used with respect to an individual, includes individuals who are homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile or criminal justice system, or are not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution and who live in an underserved community that has faced trauma through acute or long-term exposure to substantial discrimination, historical or cultural oppression, intergenerational poverty, civil unrest, a high rate of violence, or a high rate of drug overdose mortality.

''(3) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The terms 'Indian tribe' and 'tribal organization' have the meanings given the terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

''(4) IN-SCHOOL YOUTH; OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.—The terms 'in-school youth' and 'out-of-school youth' have the meanings given the terms in section 129(a)(1).

''(5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

''(6) SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT.—The term 'subsidized employment' means employment for which the employer receives a total or partial subsidy to offset costs of employing an eligible youth under this subtitle.

''(7) TRIBAL AREA.—The term 'tribal area' means—

''(A) an area on or adjacent to an Indian reservation;

''(B) land held in trust by the United States for Indians;

''(C) a public domain Indian allotment;

''(D) a former Indian reservation in Oklahoma; and

''(E) land held by an incorporated Native group, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation under the provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.).

''(8) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term 'tribal college or university' has the meaning given the term 'Tribal College or University' in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)).

''(9) TRIBALLY DESIGNATED HOUSING ENTITY.—The term 'tribally designated housing entity', used with respect to an Indian tribe (as defined in this section), has the meaning given in section 4 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4103).

''SEC. 176A. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

''(a) ALLOCATION.—Of the funds appropriated under section 176E that remain available after any reservation under subsection (b), the Secretary may make available—

''(1) not more than $1,500,000,000 in accordance with section 176B to provide eligible youth with subsidized summer employment opportunities; and

''(2) not more than $2,000,000,000 in accordance with section 176C to provide eligible youth with subsidized year-round employment opportunities.

''(b) RESERVATION.—The Secretary may reserve not more than 10 percent of the funds appropriated under section 176E to provide technical assistance and oversight, in order to assist eligible entities in applying for and administering grants awarded under this subtitle.

''SEC. 176B. SUMMER EMPLOYMENT COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) GRANTS.—Using the amounts made available under 176A(a)(1), the Secretary shall award, on a competitive basis, planning and implementation grants.

''(2) GENERAL USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall award the grants to assist eligible entities by paying for the program share of the cost of—

''(A) in the case of a planning grant, planning a summer youth employment program to provide subsidized summer employment opportunities; and

''(B) in the case of an implementation grant, implementation of such a program, to provide such opportunities.

''(b) PERIODS AND AMOUNTS OF GRANTS.—

''(1) PLANNING GRANTS.—The Secretary may award a planning grant under this section for a 1-year period, in an amount of not more than $200,000.

''(2) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—The Secretary may award an implementation grant under this section for a 3-year period, in an amount of not more than $5,000,000.

''(c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a planning or implementation grant under this section, an entity shall—

''(A) be a—

''(i) State, local government, or Indian tribe or tribal organization, that meets the requirements of paragraph (2); or

''(ii) community-based organization that meets the requirements of paragraph (3); and

''(B) meet the requirements for a planning or implementation grant, respectively, specified in paragraph (4).

''(2) GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS.—An entity that is a State, local government, or Indian tribe or tribal organization referred to in paragraph (1) shall demonstrate that the entity has entered into a partnership with State, local, or tribal entities—

''(A) that shall include—

''(i) a local educational agency or tribal educational agency (as defined in section 6132 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7452));

''(ii) a local board or tribal workforce development agency;

''(iii) a State, local, or tribal agency serving youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system;

''(iv) a State, local, or tribal child welfare agency;

''(v) a State, local, or tribal agency or community-based organization, with—

''(I) expertise in providing counseling services, and trauma-informed and gender-responsive trauma prevention, identification, referral, and support (including treatment) services; and

''(II) a proven track record of serving low-income vulnerable youth and out-of-school youth; and

''(vi) if the State, local government, or Indian tribe or tribal organization is seeking an implementation grant, and has not established a summer youth employment program, an entity that is carrying out a State, local, or tribal summer youth employment program; and

''(vii) an employer or employer association; and

''(B) that may include—

''(i) an institution of higher education or tribal college or university;

''(ii) a representative of a labor or labor-management organization;

''(iii) an entity that carries out a program that receives funding under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5601 et seq.) or section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532);

''(iv) a collaborative applicant as defined in section 401 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360) or a private nonprofit organization that serves homeless individuals and households (including such an applicant or organization that serves individuals or households that are at risk of homelessness in tribal areas) or serves foster youth;

''(v) an entity that carries out a program funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), including Native American programs funded under section 116 of that Act (20 U.S.C. 2326) and tribally controlled post-secondary career and technical institution programs funded under section 117 of that Act (20 U.S.C. 2327);

''(vi) a local or tribal youth committee;

''(vii) a State or local public housing agency or a tribally designated housing entity; and

''(viii) another appropriate State, local, or tribal agency.

''(3) COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION PARTNERSHIPS.—A community-based organization referred to in paragraph (1) shall demonstrate that the organization has entered into a partnership with State, local, or tribal entities—

''(A) that shall include—

''(i) a unit of general local government or tribal government;

''(ii) an agency described in paragraph (2)(A)(i);

''(iii) a local board or tribal workforce development agency;

''(iv) a State, local, or tribal agency serving youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system;

''(v) a State, local, or tribal child welfare agency;

''(vi) if the organization is seeking an implementation grant, and has not established a summer youth employment program, an entity that is carrying out a State, local, or tribal summer youth employment program; and

''(vii) an employer or employer association; and

''(B) that may include 1 or more entities described in paragraph (2)(B).

''(4) ENTITIES ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICULAR GRANTS.—

''(A) ENTITIES ELIGIBLE FOR PLANNING GRANTS.—The Secretary may award a planning grant under this section to an eligible entity that—

''(i) is preparing to establish or expand a summer youth employment program that meets the minimum requirements specified in subsection (d); and

''(ii) has not received a grant under this section.

''(B) ENTITIES ELIGIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award an implementation grant under this section to an eligible entity that—

''(I) has received a planning grant under this section; or

''(II) has established a summer youth employment program and demonstrates a minimum level of capacity to enhance or expand the summer youth employment program described in the application submitted under subsection (d).

''(ii) CAPACITY.—In determining whether an entity has the level of capacity referred to in clause (i)(II), the Secretary may include as capacity—

''(I) the entity's staff capacity and staff training to deliver youth employment services; and

''(II) the entity's existing youth employment services (as of the date of submission of the application submitted under subsection (d)) that are consistent with the application.

''(d) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), an eligible entity desiring to receive a grant under this section for a summer youth employment program shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including, at a minimum, each of the following:

''(A) With respect to an application for a planning or implementation grant—

''(i) a description of the eligible youth for whom summer employment services will be provided;

''(ii) a description of the eligible entity, and a description of the expected participation and responsibilities of each of the partners in the partnership described in subsection (c);

''(iii) information demonstrating sufficient need for the grant in the State, local, or tribal population, which may include information showing—

''(I) a high level of unemployment among youth (including young adults) ages 14 through 24;

''(II) a high rate of out-of-school youth;

''(III) a high rate of homelessness;

''(IV) a high rate of poverty;

''(V) a high rate of adult unemployment;

''(VI) a high rate of community or neighborhood crime;

''(VII) a high rate of violence; or

''(VIII) a high level or rate on another indicator of need;

''(iv) a description of the strategic objectives the eligible entity seeks to achieve through the program to provide eligible youth with core work readiness skills, which may include—

''(I) financial literacy skills, including providing the support described in section 129(b)(2)(D);

''(II) sector-based technical skills aligned with employer needs;

''(III) skills that—

''(aa) are soft employment skills, early work skills, or work readiness skills; and

''(bb) include social skills, communications skills, higher-order thinking skills, self-control, and positive self-concept; and

''(IV) (for the hardest-to-employ, most-at-risk eligible youth) basic skills like communication, math, and problem solving in the context of training for advancement to better jobs and postsecondary training; and

''(v) information demonstrating that the eligible entity has obtained commitments to provide the non-program share described in paragraph (2) of subsection (h).

''(B) With respect to an application for a planning grant—

''(i) a description of the intermediate and long-term goals for planning activities for the duration of the planning grant;

''(ii) a description of how grant funds will be used to develop a plan to provide summer employment services for eligible youth;

''(iii) a description of how the eligible entity will carry out an analysis of best practices for identifying, recruiting, and engaging program participants, in particular the hardest-to-employ, most-at-risk eligible youth;

''(iv) a description of how the eligible entity will carry out an analysis of best practices for placing youth participants—

''(I) in opportunities that—

''(aa) are appropriate subsidized employment opportunities with employers based on factors including age, skill, experience, career aspirations, work-based readiness, and barriers to employment; and

''(bb) may include additional services for participants, including core work readiness skill development and mentorship services;

''(II) in summer employment that—

''(aa) is not less than 6 weeks;

''(bb) follows a schedule of not more than 20 hours per week; and

''(cc) pays not less than the applicable Federal, State, or local minimum wage; and

''(v) a description of how the eligible entity plans to develop a mentorship program or connect youth with positive, supportive mentorships, consistent with paragraph (3).

''(C) With respect to an application for an implementation grant—

''(i) a description of how the eligible entity plans to identify, recruit, and engage program participants, in particular the hardest-to-employ, most-at-risk eligible youth;

''(ii) a description of the manner in which the eligible entity plans to place eligible youth participants in subsidized employment opportunities, and in summer employment, described in subparagraph (B)(iv);

''(iii) (for a program serving the hardest-to-employ, most-at-risk eligible youth), a description of workplaces for the subsidized employment involved, which may include workplaces in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors;

''(iv) a description of how the eligible entity plans to provide or connect eligible youth participants with positive, supportive mentorships, consistent with paragraph (3);

''(v) a description of services that will be available to employers participating in the youth employment program, to provide supervisors involved in the program with coaching and mentoring on—

''(I) how to support youth development;

''(II) how to structure learning and reflection; and

''(III) how to deal with youth challenges in the workplace;

''(vi) a description of how the eligible entity plans to offer structured pathways back into employment and a youth employment program under this section for eligible youth who have been terminated from employment or removed from the program;

''(vii) a description of how the eligible entity plans to engage eligible youth beyond the duration of the summer employment opportunity, which may include—

''(I) developing or partnering with a year-round youth employment program;

''(II) referring eligible youth to other year-round programs, which may include—

''(aa) programs funded under section 176C or the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);

''(bb) after school programs;

''(cc) secondary or postsecondary education programs;

''(dd) training programs;

''(ee) cognitive behavior therapy programs;

''(ff) apprenticeship programs; and

''(gg) national service programs;

''(III) employing a full-time, permanent staff person who is responsible for youth outreach, followup, and recruitment; or

''(IV) connecting eligible youth with job development services, including career counseling, resume and job application assistance, interview preparation, and connections to job leads;

''(viii) evidence of the eligible entity's capacity to provide the services described in this subsection; and

''(ix) a description of the quality of the summer youth employment program, including a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential.

''(2) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—An eligible entity that is an Indian tribe or tribal organization and desires to receive a grant under this section for a summer youth employment program may, in lieu of submitting the application described in paragraph (1), submit an application to the Secretary that meets such requirements as the Secretary develops after consultation with the tribe or organization.

''(3) MENTOR.—For purposes of subparagraphs (B)(iv), (B)(v), and (C)(iv) of paragraph (1), a mentor—

''(A) shall be an individual who has been matched with an eligible youth based on the youth's needs;

''(B) shall make contact with the eligible youth at least once each week;

''(C) shall be a trusted member of the local community; and

''(D) may include—

''(i) a mentor trained in trauma-informed care (including provision of trauma-informed trauma prevention, identification, referral, or support services to youth that have experienced or are at risk of experiencing trauma), conflict resolution, and positive youth development;

''(ii) a job coach trained to provide youth with guidance on how to navigate the workplace and troubleshoot problems;

''(iii) a supervisor trained to provide at least two performance assessments and serve as a reference; or

''(iv) a peer mentor who is a former or current participant in the youth employment program involved.

''(e) AWARDS FOR POPULATIONS AND AREAS.—

''(1) POPULATIONS.—The Secretary shall reserve, from the amounts made available under section 176A(a)(1)—

''(A) 50 percent to award grants under this section for planning or provision of subsidized summer employment opportunities for in-school youth; and

''(B) 50 percent to award such grants to plan for planning or provision of such opportunities for out-of-school youth.

''(2) AREAS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In awarding the grants, the Secretary shall consider the regional diversity of the areas to be served, to ensure that urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas are receiving grant funds.

''(B) RURAL AND TRIBAL AREA INCLUSION.—

''(i) RURAL AREAS.—Not less than 20 percent of the amounts made available under section 176A(a)(1) for each fiscal year shall be made available for activities to be carried out in rural areas.

''(ii) TRIBAL AREAS.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available under section 176A(a)(1) for each fiscal year shall be made available for activities to be carried out in tribal areas.

''(f) PROGRAM PRIORITIES.—In allocating funds under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities—

''(1) who propose to coordinate their activities—

''(A) with local or tribal employers; and

''(B) with agencies described in subsection (c)(2)(A)(i) to ensure the summer youth employment programs provide clear linkages to remedial, academic, and occupational programs carried out by the agencies;

''(2) who propose a plan to increase private sector engagement in, and job placement through, summer youth employment; and

''(3) who have, in their counties, States, or tribal areas (as compared to other counties in their State, other States, or other tribal areas, respectively), a high level or rate described in subsection (d)(1)(A)(iii).

''(g) USE OF FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section may use the grant funds for services described in subsection (d).

''(2) DISCRETIONARY USES.—The eligible entity may also use the funds—

''(A) to provide wages to eligible youth in subsidized summer employment programs;

''(B) to provide eligible youth with support services, including case management, child care assistance, child support services, and transportation assistance; and

''(C) to develop data management systems to assist with programming, evaluation, and records management.

''(3) ADMINISTRATION.—An eligible entity may reserve not more than 10 percent of the grant funds for the administration of activities under this section.

''(4) CARRY-OVER AUTHORITY.—Any amounts provided to an eligible entity under this section for a fiscal year may, at the discretion of the Secretary, remain available to that entity for expenditure during the succeeding fiscal year to carry out programs under this section.

''(h) PROGRAM SHARE.—

''(1) PLANNING GRANTS.—The program share for a planning grant awarded under this section shall be 100 percent of the cost described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

''(2) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The program share for an implementation grant awarded under this section shall be 50 percent of the cost described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary—

''(i) may increase the program share for an eligible entity; and

''(ii) shall increase the program share for an Indian tribe or tribal organization to not less than 95 percent of the cost described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

''(C) NON-PROGRAM SHARE.—The eligible entity may provide the non-program share of the cost—

''(i) in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including plant, equipment, or services; and

''(ii) from State, local, tribal or private (including philanthropic) sources and, in the case of an Indian tribe or tribal organization, from Federal sources.

''SEC. 176C. YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) GRANTS.—Using the amounts made available under 176A(a)(2), the Secretary shall award, on a competitive basis, planning and implementation grants.

''(2) GENERAL USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall award the grants to assist eligible entities by paying for the program share of the cost of—

''(A) in the case of a planning grant, planning a year-round youth employment program to provide subsidized year-round employment opportunities; and

''(B) in the case of an implementation grant, implementation of such a program to provide such opportunities.

''(b) PERIODS AND AMOUNTS OF GRANTS.—The planning grants shall have the periods and amounts described in section 176B(b)(1). The implementation grants shall have the periods and grants described in section 176B(b)(2).

''(c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a planning or implementation grant under this section, an entity shall, except as provided in paragraph (2)—

''(A) be a—

''(i) State, local government, or Indian tribe or tribal organization, that meets the requirements of section 176B(c)(2); or

''(ii) community-based organization that meets the requirements of section 176B(c)(3); and

''(B) meet the requirements for a planning or implementation grant, respectively, specified in section 176B(c)(4).

''(2) YEAR-ROUND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any reference in section 176B(c)—

''(A) to a summer youth employment program shall be considered to refer to a year-round youth employment program; and

''(B) to a provision of section 176B shall be considered to refer to the corresponding provision of this section.

''(d) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), an eligible entity desiring to receive a grant under this section for a year-round youth employment program shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including, at a minimum, each of the following:

''(A) With respect to an application for a planning or implementation grant, the information and descriptions specified in section 176B(d)(1)(A).

''(B) With respect to an application for a planning grant, the descriptions specified in section 176B(d)(1)(B), except that the description of an analysis for placing youth in employment described in clause (iv)(II)(bb) of that section shall cover employment that follows a schedule—

''(i) that consists of—

''(I) not more than 15 hours per week for in-school youth; and

''(II) not less than 20 and not more than 40 hours per week for out-of-school youth; and

''(ii) that depends on the needs and work-readiness level of the population being served.

''(C) With respect to an application for an implementation grant, the descriptions and evidence specified in section 176B(d)(1)(C)—

''(i) except that the reference in section 176(d)(1)(C)(ii) to employment described in section 176B(d)(1)(B) shall cover employment that follows the schedule described in subparagraph (B); and

''(ii) except that the reference to programs in clause (vii)(II)(aa) of that section shall be considered to refer only to programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

''(2) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—An eligible entity that is an Indian tribe or tribal organization and desires to receive a grant under this section for a year-round youth employment program may, in lieu of submitting the application described in paragraph (1), submit an application to the Secretary that meets such requirements as the Secretary develops after consultation with the tribe or organization.

''(3) MENTOR.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any reference in subparagraphs (B)(iv), (B)(v), and (C)(iv) of section 176B(d)(1) to a mentor shall be considered to refer to a mentor who—

''(A) shall be an individual described in subparagraphs (A) and (C) of section 176B(d)(3);

''(B) shall make contact with the eligible youth at least twice each week; and

''(C) may be an individual described in section 176B(d)(3)(D).

''(4) YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT.—For purposes of this subsection, any reference in section 176B(d)—

''(A) to summer employment shall be considered to refer to year-round employment; and

''(B) to a provision of section 176B shall be considered to refer to the corresponding provision of this section.

''(e) AWARDS FOR POPULATIONS AND AREAS; PRIORITIES.—

''(1) POPULATIONS.—The Secretary shall reserve, from the amounts made available under section 176A(a)(2)—

''(A) 50 percent to award grants under this section for planning or provision of subsidized year-round employment opportunities for in-school youth; and

''(B) 50 percent to award such grants to plan for planning or provision of such opportunities for out-of-school youth.

''(2) AREAS; PRIORITIES.—In awarding the grants, the Secretary shall—

''(A) carry out section 176B(e)(2); and

''(B) give priority to eligible entities—

''(i) who—

''(I) propose the coordination and plan described paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 176B(f), with respect to year-round youth employment; and

''(II) meet the requirements of section 176B(f)(3); or

''(ii) who—

''(I) propose a plan to coordinate activities with entities carrying out State, local, or tribal summer youth employment programs, to provide pathways to year-round employment for eligible youth who are ending summer employment; and

''(II) meet the requirements of section 176B(f)(3).

''(f) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section may use the grant funds—

''(1) for services described in subsection (d);

''(2) as described in section 176B(g)(2), with respect to year-round employment programs;

''(3) as described in section 176B(g)(3), with respect to activities under this section; and

''(4) at the discretion of the Secretary, as described in section 176B(g)(4), with respect to activities under this section.

''(g) PROGRAM SHARE.—

''(1) PLANNING GRANTS.—The provisions of section 176B(h)(1) shall apply to planning grants awarded under this section, with respect to the cost described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

''(2) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—The provisions of section 176B(h)(2) shall apply to implementation grants awarded under this section, with respect to the cost described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

''SEC. 176D. EVALUATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

''(a) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish performance measures for purposes of annual reviews under subsection (b).

''(2) COMPONENTS.—The performance measures for the eligible entities shall consist of—

''(A) the indicators of performance described in paragraph (3); and

''(B) an adjusted level of performance for each indicator described in subparagraph (A).

''(3) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The indicators of performance shall consist of—

''(i) the percentage of youth employment program participants who are in education or training activities, or in employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;

''(ii) the percentage of youth employment program participants who are in education or training activities, or in employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

''(iii) the percentage of youth employment program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to subparagraph (B)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program; and

''(iv) the percentage of youth employment program participants who, during a program year, are in a youth employment program that includes an education or training program that leads to an outcome specified by the Secretary, which may include—

''(I) obtaining a recognized postsecondary credential or employment; or

''(II) achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

''(B) INDICATOR RELATING TO CREDENTIAL.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(iii), youth employment program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion under such subparagraph only if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in a youth employment program that includes an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 1 year after exit from the program.

''(4) LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For each eligible entity, there shall be established, in accordance with this paragraph, levels of performance for each of the corresponding indicators of performance described in paragraph (3).

''(B) IDENTIFICATION IN APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity shall identify, in the application submitted under subsection (d) of section 176B or 176C, expected levels of performance for each of those indicators of performance for each program year covered by the application.

''(C) AGREEMENT ON ADJUSTED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.—The eligible entity shall reach agreement with the Secretary on levels of performance for each of those indicators of performance for each such program year. The levels agreed to shall be considered to be the adjusted levels of performance for the eligible entity for such program years and shall be incorporated into the application prior to the approval of such application.

''(b) ANNUAL REVIEW.—The Secretary shall carry out an annual review of each eligible entity receiving a grant under this subtitle. In conducting the review, the Secretary shall review the performance of the entity on the performance measures under this section and determine if the entity has used any practices that shall be considered best practices for purposes of this subtitle.

''(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(1) PREPARATION.—The Secretary shall prepare a report on the grant programs established by this subtitle, which report shall include a description of—

''(A) the eligible entities receiving funding under this subtitle;

''(B) the activities carried out by the eligible entities;

''(C) how the eligible entities were selected to receive funding under this subtitle; and

''(D) an assessment of the results achieved by the grant programs including findings from the annual reviews conducted under subsection (b).

''(2) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Creating Pathways for Youth Employment Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report described in paragraph (1) to the appropriate committees of Congress.

''(d) APPLICATION TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary may issue regulations that clarify the application of all the provisions of this subtitle to Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

''SEC. 176E. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated—

''(1) to carry out section 176B, $300,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022; and

''(2) to carry out section 176C, $400,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022.''.

SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) REFERENCES.—

(1) Section 121(b)(1)(C)(ii)(II) of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3152(b)(1)(C)(ii)(II)) is amended by striking ''subtitles C through E'' and inserting ''subtitles C through F''.

(2) Section 503(b) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3343(b)) is amended by inserting before the period the following: ''(as such subtitles were in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act)''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by striking the item relating to the subtitle heading for subtitle E of title I and inserting the following:

''Subtitle E—Youth Employment Opportunities

''Sec. 176. Definitions.
''Sec. 176A. Allocation of funds.
''Sec. 176B. Summer employment competitive grant program.
''Sec. 176C. Year-round employment competitive grant program.
''Sec. 176D. Evaluation and administration.
''Sec. 176E. Authorization of appropriations.''.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 987. A bill to transition away from fossil fuel sources of energy to 100 percent clean and renewable energy by 2050, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I rise to address the important urgency of addressing climate change. Across the country, we are seeing the impacts of the warmer climate, and it is having devastating consequences on our forests, on our farming, on our fishing, and on our urban populations.

Years ago, people talked about what we might see if we continued to burn fossil fuels and continued to put carbon dioxide into the air, but no longer do we have to talk about what we might see, because it is here. The facts are on the ground right now.

We can look at my home State of Oregon. In Oregon, we have the challenge of forest fire seasons that are longer by several months than they were just decades ago. We have the challenge of warmer winters, resulting in pine beetles doing more damage to our trees. The fact that we have lower snowpacks in the Cascade Mountains means warmer trout streams and less water for irrigation. We have had the worst-ever droughts in the Klamath Basin in the past 15 years. Over on the coast, we have a big impact on oysters. Because we have burned so much in fossil fuels to create so much carbon dioxide that has been absorbed by the oceans and turned into carbonic acid, the oceans have acidified. They are 30 percent more acidic than they were 150 years ago, meaning our oysters are having trouble reaching out and pulling the molecules out of the water to form a shell. In fact, it takes so much energy to do so that they are dying.

That is what is happening. That is just in Oregon. We can look across the United States and see impact after impact.

If we were in Minnesota, we could talk about the tick populations that are killing the moose because it is not cold enough in the winter to kill the ticks. If we are in Maine, we can talk about the fact that the lobsters are migrating to Canada because that is where the colder waters can be found. If we are in Florida, we can talk about sunny day floods, because the ocean levels have risen and the ocean water—the saltwater—is contaminating the freshwater that cities depend on. If we are up the Atlantic coast, we can talk about Hurricane Sandy and how its devastating power was enhanced by an ocean that is much warmer than it was decades ago. If we are in Texas, we can talk about the spread of mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus affecting folks. So the list goes on and on. But it is not just in the United States of America. It is on the entire planet.

As we are talking about oysters on the west coast of the United States, across the globe folks are talking about coral reefs. The Great Barrier Reef has virtually died over the last few years. Scientists say 80 percent of the Great Barrier Reef off Australia has died in the last 3 years. If we are looking at the mountainous regions of the world, you can trace the flow of glaciers and find that across the globe glaciers have diminished by an enormous amount. Some say that if you

want to see a glacier in Glacier National Park, you better get there soon. That is just in the United States.

If we turn north to the upper reaches of Canada and the permafrost, you can visit what are called the drunken forests, because the permafrost is melting and the trees are starting to lean in every which direction. If you turn to Alaska, you are finding that Native populations are having to relocate because of changing circumstances of a warmer Alaska.

Go to the Arctic Ocean and what you see is a massive amount of missing ice, and, because that ice is missing, the ocean is absorbing more energy from the sun, and it is creating a feedback loop that is having further devastating consequences. And so the list goes on and on.

It is not just time to address climate change boldly. It is time to address it aggressively. It is time for 100 by 50. What that means is 100 percent clean and renewable energy to power the economy by the year 2050 and the steps to get there in between and to have 50 percent of our energy clean and renewable by the year 2030. That is not far away. That is just 13 years away, and for 2050, add another 20 years.

We have to act quickly because right now human civilization is failing the test. Our responsibility is to stop burning fossil fuels and to stop putting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. That is why we have to rapidly transition from an energy economy based on fossil fuels to one based on clean and renewable energy.

Why do I say we are failing the test at the moment? We are failing the test because if you look at the flow of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from human civilization, the rate of carbon dioxide pollution has not leveled out. In fact, the speed of pollution and the amount of pollution per year is increasing. So we have a tremendous challenge ahead of us. We have to take and not only reduce the amount but reduce it enormously in a short period of time.

Now some say this vision is too bold. Some say this vision is too difficult, that it is too hard. It makes me think of President Kennedy's call. He said decades ago:

> We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard. Because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.

I tell you today that we must, as a Nation, be willing to accept the challenge of transforming our energy economy. We must be unwilling to postpone tackling this challenge of transforming our energy economy, and this challenge is one where we must be committed to winning. It is not just time. It is way past time.

I came to the Senate floor last September to lay out the concept of 100 by 50—100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2050. I come today to the Senate floor to say that today a group of Senators are introducing a bill to lay out a roadmap to get there.

Just as President Kennedy laid out the vision of putting an American on the moon, NASA went to work and laid out a plan on how we would get there. They didn't know at first how it would be done. They hadn't proceeded to invent the staged rocket that would enable someone to escape the gravity of Earth in a fashion to get us to the moon. They didn't know how to create a lunar landing operation to put people safely on the planet surface. They weren't even sure of the composition of the surface of the moon, but they figured it out. They put forward a draft. They reworked that draft.

Today we are putting forth a roadmap. I thank my colleagues who are standing with me today to be the original cosponsors: Senator BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont, Senator ED MARKEY of Massachusetts, and Senator CORY BOOKER of New Jersey. I know other colleagues will join us as time progresses, but it is important not to wait until we have, if you will, a large population to begin the conversation—a large set of sponsors to begin the conversation of laying out a roadmap. It is important to lay it out now. It is important to lay it out now because it is a statement of values. It is important to lay it out now so that there is a vision that can be discussed—a detailed vision of how to take on different sectors of the energy economy that can be discussed and debated.

So we are focused not on whether to get to 100 by 50, but on how we are going to get to 100 by 50. I invite and encourage that debate because each of us can envision a roadmap that is slightly different. So let's have that conversation, but let's not forget the importance of getting to this destination—100 percent clean, renewable energy—and getting thereby the year 2050.

Yes, it is audacious when you think about how we use energy today, to think about how we can transform it in just a few decades, but we have many of the tools we need right now. With focused research and development, we can add the other tools that we need.

Let us not fail to accept this challenge, because our planet is crying out in anguish. In addition to the facts on the ground that I have been mentioning, we can simply take the temperature of the planet. Month after month after month, year after year, in the past 2 years we have been setting new records for having the hottest month—not the hottest month in Washington, DC, not the hottest month in the United States of America but the hottest March in the history of the planet, the hottest April since we have been measuring the temperature of the planet—May, June, and so on and so forth.

So the time for conversing about whether we have a problem is over. Now is the time to say how we will achieve this vision.

One important element of achieving this vision is greening the grid. That means that we need to phase out electricity that is generated by fossil fuels. We need to invest in clean and renewable energy that puts green electrons in the grid instead, and we need to advance and develop the deployment of technologies that contribute to this, including high-voltage transmission lines that will move energy between different parts of the United States. We certainly need to develop the ability to store electricity and to use automated demand management and automated supply management so we can match the supply of green energy to the demand at different times of the day or just the demand of different times of the day to make renewable energy fit to the operation of the economy.

Now, we have some specific powerful gifts in this effort. One is that we have a dramatically declining cost of solar energy. A second is that we have a dramatically declining cost in wind energy. A third is that we have a dramatically declining cost of battery storage. This isn't an accident. This has happened because of the innovation economy where these ideas were developed and promoted and researched and advanced right here in the United States of America. But it really helps change the conversation. There have been many who are deeply invested in the fossil fuel world who would like to say that advancing to a clean and renewable energy economy will hurt the economy. But now we are coming to the point that it is less expensive to generate renewable energy than to generate fossil fuel energy. The fact is that we can create a tremendous number of jobs as we rebuild this energy economy.

If we turn specifically to the issue of a Federal emissions vehicle standard—because that is one of the pieces of this puzzle—it means that we have to make national investments in electrical recharging stations along our roads and highways to support these vehicles. There are already half a million plug-in electric vehicles on our roads today, and these vehicles—these cars—are becoming cheaper as the numbers continue to grow.

One of the factors that is enabling the car to become cheaper is the dropping cost of lithium in the batteries that power them. They are getting smaller, lighter, and cheaper. So in the same space you can put more energy with less weight to drive cars further. Since 2008, the cost of these batteries per kilowatt hour has fallen fourfold. They will continuously grow. Having more of these cars on our roads and our highways as the costs keep falling, it is vital that we have an infrastructure in place to support them.

We need to ensure that everyone is part of this clean and renewable energy resolution, including low-income and disadvantaged communities. We addressed that in the 100 by 50 legislation. To do this, we established grants

to bring affordable clean energy and energy efficiency to individuals' homes and communities. We invest in zero emission public transportation that is affordable and accessible. We also want to ensure that no workers are left behind in this transformation, especially the workers in the fossil fuel industry. That is why we need to provide a just transition for those workers and job training programs. We need to have a strategy to ensure that there are opportunities to move from jobs in the fossil fuel world to positions in the clean and renewable energy industry. Those industries are, in fact, booming, with jobs in solar and wind growing 12 times faster than the rest of the U.S. economy. Already, the number of clean and renewable industry jobs has surpassed those in the fossil fuel industry by a margin of 5 to 1.

We want to enable everyone to have the skills they need to succeed in these emerging industries, but to move to this future, we must come to a point at which we stop investing in new fossil fuel infrastructure. We cannot proceed to make this pivot quickly to a cleaner, brighter, renewable future if we continue to tie ourselves and our government to a fossil fuel-powered past. To achieve this clean break, the 100 by 50 Act ends future fossil fuel investments at the Federal level. That would affect projects similar to the Keystone XL Pipeline and the Dakota Access Pipeline, and we would end the tax subsidies for the fossil fuel industry.

This burning of fossil fuels is destroying our planet. We must stop subsidizing the destruction of our planet. This burning of fossil fuels is destroying our forests, which our rural communities depend on. We must stop subsidizing the destruction of our forests. The burning of these fossil fuels is driving droughts, reducing irrigation water, and hurting our farmers. We must quit subsidizing the destruction of agriculture in America. The burning of fossil fuels is also impacting our fishing—from warmer, smaller trout streams to a fishing industry that depends on the critical ecosystem in the ocean. We must stop subsidizing the destruction of our fishing industry.

It is also important to make sure that America remains a leader in the energy economy and leads in the effort to make sure that we do not have a disadvantage with regard to manufacturing in other countries. What that means is that, with regard to countries that are not pursuing this on the same aggressive level, we need to have an effort to drive this transaction. We need to make sure that if there are additional costs, those are offset with a border tax so that we do not encourage the movement of production out of our economy here at home. We have done so with trade policy—in a massively destructive way—to the middle class of America. If we do not make things in America, we will not have a middle class in America, and we need to make sure that we do not do that in the transition of our energy economy.

To fund this plan, we propose a new source of revenue. When I say a ''new source of revenue,'' that is a little misleading because we are taking a cue from history, specifically World War II, and modeling bonds—climate bonds—on the war bonds that helped fund our fight against totalitarianism—to fund our fight against Germany and the Soviet Union. Auctioning off climate bonds is a way to raise the funds to drive the grants to power this transformation—to accelerate this transformation—and make sure that we do not leave out disadvantaged communities but, rather, bring them fully into this transition. The 100 by 50 Act is ambitious, but the circumstances require no less.

Furthermore, we cannot, simply, propose a Federal Government strategy because we live in the United States of America, where important things are done at many different levels. Here in this Chamber—right now in the U.S. Senate—we do not have a committee chair who is going to say that we need to have committee hearings in order to take on this issue. We do not have a committee chair on the House side who is going to drive this conversation. We do not have a President who understands the damage that is being done to our forests and our fishing and our farming and to our planet and who is going to lead the battle.

We have to turn to the wisdom of the American people. We have to turn to the wisdom of the States and the wisdom of the counties and the wisdom of the cities and the wisdom of individuals across America who are willing to go to the leadership of their mosques or the leadership of their temples or the leadership of their churches, who are willing to go to the leadership of nonprofits that they are a part of, who are willing to go to their city councils or their county commissions, who are willing to go to their State legislators.

They are going to say that we need to have a 100 by 50 resolution for our nonprofits, for our religious organizations, for our cities, for our counties, for our States because we need to own this issue. We Americans at every level need to own this issue. This is an issue that depends upon citizens across the globe taking hold of this in a powerful way that cannot be blocked by the dark money of the fossil fuel industry.

In so doing, by passing that 100 by 50 resolution for the city or the nonprofit or the church or the mosque or the synagogue or the temple, we will also adopt an action plan that involves the specific steps that local organizations are going to take over the next 2 to 3 years. This year, maybe they are going to convert their hot water heaters to electrons rather than burning natural gas. Maybe they are going to sign up for green electrons from their local utilities, which is an option that is offered in many places across America. The following year, maybe they are going to invest in energy-saving retrofits of their buildings. The year after that, maybe they are going to say that we have to revamp our fleet of vehicles and start using rechargeable vehicles, like the Volt or the Bolt or the LEAF or a whole set of cars that has been appearing in the economy over the last few years. One can charge them up and, thereby, run them off green electrons rather than off fossil fuels.

These are things that can be owned and done. In fact, it is already happening. It is happening with local organizations across this country that are committing themselves to 100 percent clean and renewable energy. More than 25 cities across the country have already adopted this vision—from Madison, WI, to Abita Springs, LA; from San Diego, CA, to Salt Lake City, UT; from Georgetown, TX, to Greensburg, KS—cities that are working toward a 100 percent clean and renewable future. There are 88 major businesses that are getting in on the action as well—Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble, Nike, Coca-Cola, General Motors, and Apple. These are only a few of the major companies that have committed to powering themselves with 100 percent clean and renewable energy.

What is driving this move toward clean and renewable energy? It is that Americans everywhere are seeing the effects on the ground. They are calling for action, and community leaders and business leaders are responding. We need to respond here in the U.S. Senate. We should be holding hearings on how to put this plan into action. We should be taking the best ideas from the city actions and the business actions and the nonprofit actions from across the country and from the ideas generated on the right side of the aisle and the left side of the aisle because the destruction we face—the threat we face—is not a blue issue or a red issue; it is a human civilization issue.

America has been a driver of the technology that can transform our economy and also the technology that we can sell to the world. In adopting this vision and in fighting for this vision, America can be a leader with other nations around the world. It has been beyond strange to have other countries lecture us over the last few months to maintain our commitment as a Federal Government to this vision. Other countries are saying: America, you have to be part of the solution. You have benefited enormously from the burning of fossil fuels, perhaps more than any other economy in the world. You have one of the highest per capita footprints for carbon. You must be part of this effort because every country in the world is affected.

More than 40 countries have now adopted the vision of clean and renewable energy, so there is no time for America to step out and not be part of the solution, not be part of the leadership, not be part of the driving force, not benefit from being on the cutting edge of this transformation of the energy economy.

Just as President Kennedy laid out the vision for going to the Moon, Americans from every walk are coming together to lay out the vision for a 100 percent clean and renewable energy economy. They are adopting a framework—a time, a goal—as to where we are going and when we are getting there; 100 by 50 sums it up.

After President Kennedy laid out the vision, America went to work to make it happen, and we landed American citizens on the Moon. Now it is time for all of America to get to work and implement this vision and ensure that we succeed in transforming our energy economy within the next few decades by taking important steps every single year—driving ourselves forward, understanding the urgency, applying the technology, accelerating the implementation—to achieve 100 percent clean and renewable energy by 2050.

If there were an asteroid coming toward the Earth, we would not be talking politics or political advantage. We would all be working together to take it on—destroy it before it destroyed us. We have the equivalent of an asteroid that is coming at the Earth in global warming. The time to play politics has passed. The time to play partisanship has passed. It is time for every citizen and every organization at every level—every chair representing every Senator from every State in the Union—to come together to take on this challenge together.

I call upon my fellow Senators to be part of, perhaps, the most important effort we have to solve the biggest challenge to the health of America and the health of the planet—global warming. Step forward and be part of the effort.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 144—DESIGNATING MAY 1, 2017, AS ''NATIONAL PUREBRED DOG DAY''

Mr. TILLIS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 144

Whereas the human-canine bond predates history and individuals have enjoyed the companionship and assistance of dogs since the dawn of civilization;

Whereas dog ownership has existed in all cultures, races, climates, and economic situations;

Whereas more than 350 dog breeds exist worldwide, and more than 180 breeds are recognized by the American Kennel Club;

Whereas purebred dogs and breeders of purebred dogs have played a crucial role in United States history, dating to colonial times, during which George Washington had a foxhound breeding program, which established the American Foxhound breed;

Whereas responsible breeders of purebred dogs dedicate their lives to improving the health and well-being of dogs and preserving unique breeds of dogs;

Whereas purebred dogs were created to work alongside humans, and provide inestimable service as—

(1) search and rescue dogs;
(2) service dogs;
(3) disease detection dogs;
(4) police dogs;
(5) conservation dogs;
(6) livestock guardians;
(7) therapy dogs; and
(8) companions and guardians of families, homes, and property;

Whereas purebred dogs provide unparalleled service to the disabled as guide and service dogs, and are the choice of leading service dog breeding programs because of the heritable intelligence, and desirable and predictable qualities, of purebred dogs;

Whereas purebred military working dogs serve alongside the men and women of the United States Armed Forces in combat and in peacetime;

Whereas breed instinct enables purebred dogs to readily serve as—

(1) avalanche dogs;
(2) trackers and trailers;
(3) herders;
(4) controllers of vermin;
(5) water rescuers;
(6) carting and sled dogs;
(7) retrievers;
(8) protectors;
(9) hunters; and
(10) bird dogs;

Whereas the first ''National Purebred Dog Day'' was established on May 1, 2015;

Whereas millions of individuals, through social media and other avenues, recognize May 1 each year as ''National Purebred Dog Day'' and desire, on May 1, to expressly recognize the contributions of the purebred dog; and

Whereas individuals value all dogs, regardless of the ancestry of the dogs, and especially cherish a purpose-bred dog and the predictability of each respective breed of purpose-bred dog: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 1, 2017, as ''National Purebred Dog Day'' in celebration of purebred dogs and the many service and companion benefits purebred dogs have and continue to provide to the United States; and

(2) honors the dedicated and responsible breeders who work to preserve and advance their breeds and responsible dog ownership throughout the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 145—DESIGNATING APRIL 2017 AS ''FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH''

Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COONS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 145

Whereas, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (referred to in this preamble as the ''FDIC''), at least 26.9 percent of households in the United States, or nearly 33,500,000 households with approximately 66,700,000 adults, are unbanked or underbanked and therefore have not had an opportunity to access savings, lending, and other basic financial services;

Whereas, according to the FDIC, approximately 30 percent of banks reported in 2011 that consumers lacked an understanding of the financial products and services banks offered;

Whereas, according to the 2016 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey final report of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling—

(1) approximately 44 percent of adults in the United States gave themselves a grade of ''C'', ''D'', or ''F'' on their knowledge of personal finance;

(2) 75 percent of adults in the United States acknowledged that they could benefit from additional advice and answers to everyday financial questions from a professional;

(3) 22 percent of adults in the United States, or approximately 51,600,000 individuals, admitted to not paying bills on time;

(4) 1 in 3 households reported carrying credit card debt from month to month;

(5) only 40 percent of adults in the United States reported keeping close track of their spending, a percentage that held steady since 2007; and

(6) 14 percent of adults in the United States identified not having enough ''rainy day'' savings for an emergency, and 15 percent of adults in the United States identified not having enough money set aside for retirement, as the most worrisome area of personal finance;

Whereas the 2016 Retirement Confidence Survey conducted by the Employee Benefit Research Institute found that 19 percent of workers were ''not at all confident'' that they had enough money to retire;

Whereas, according to the statistical release of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the fourth quarter of 2016 entitled ''Financial Accounts of the United States: Flow of Funds, Balance Sheets, and Integrated Macroeconomic Accounts'', outstanding household debt in the United States was $14,800,000,000,000 at the end of the fourth quarter of 2016;

Whereas, according to the 2016 Survey of the States: Economic and Personal Finance Education in Our Nation's Schools, a biennial report by the Council for Economic Education—

(1) only 20 States require students to take an economics course as a high school graduation requirement; and

(2) only 17 States require students to take a personal finance course as a high school graduation requirement, either independently or as part of an economics course;

Whereas, according to the Gallup-HOPE Index, only 52 percent of students in the United States have money in a bank or credit union account;

Whereas expanding access to the safe, mainstream financial system will provide individuals with less expensive and more secure options for managing finances and building wealth;

Whereas quality personal financial education is essential to ensure that individuals are prepared—

(1) to manage money, credit, and debt; and

(2) to become responsible workers, heads of household, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens;

Whereas increased financial literacy empowers individuals to make wise financial decisions and reduces the confusion caused by an increasingly complex economy;

Whereas a greater understanding of, and familiarity with, financial markets and institutions will lead to increased economic activity and growth; and

Whereas, in 2003, Congress—

(1) determined that coordinating Federal financial literacy efforts and formulating a national strategy is important; and

(2) in light of that determination, passed the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9701 et seq.), establishing the Financial Literacy and Education Commission: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2017 as ''Financial Literacy Month'' to raise public awareness about—

(A) the importance of personal financial education in the United States; and

(B) the serious consequences that may result from a lack of understanding about personal finances; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the people of the United States to observe Financial Literacy Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 146—DESIGNATING APRIL 30, 2017, AS EL DÍA DE LOS NIÑOS—CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 146

Whereas, each year in the United States, El Día de Los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans is recognized on April 30 as a day to affirm and recognize the importance of young children in the United States;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States, and the well-being of children and adolescents is emphasized as a top priority in the United States;

Whereas children and adolescents should be nurtured and invested in to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the spirit of the United States through the free and open exchange of ideas;

Whereas, according to data of the Bureau of the Census, Hispanics are the youngest major racial or ethnic group in the United States, as nearly ⅓, or 17,900,000, of the Hispanic population of the United States is younger than 18 years old, and approximately ¼, or 14,600,000, of the Hispanic population of the United States are millennials (18 to 33 years old in 2014);

Whereas the United States Hispanic population continues to grow, representing the youngest and largest ethnic minority group in the United States, and is a significant part of the workforce of the United States, comprising future consumers, taxpayers, and voters;

Whereas, as the United States becomes more culturally and ethnically diverse, the people of the United States must strive to bring about cultural understanding and celebrate a tradition that honors all children on April 30, 2017, El Día de Los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans, a day that acknowledges and shares traditions and customs with all people in the United States;

Whereas parents represent the center of teaching family values, morality, life preparation, health, survival, and culture;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children and adolescents in the United States will help affirm the significance of family, education, health, and community among the people of the United States;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity to reflect on their futures, to articulate their aspirations, to find comfort and security in the support of their family members, communities, and schools, and to grow to contribute to the United States;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, which serves as an advocate and a voice for children, will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2017, and has partnered with States and cities throughout the United States for the last 19 years, will declare April 30, 2017, as El Día de Los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans, a day to bring communities and Latinos together across the United States to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children and to help children take their rightful place in the future of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2017, as El Día de Los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with children, families, communities, churches, cities, and States across the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center on children and are free or minimal in cost so as to facilitate full participation of all people;

(B) uplift and help children positively envision a path to their futures by voicing their hopes and dreams;

(C) offer opportunities for children of diverse backgrounds to learn about the cultures of one another and to share ideas;

(D) include family members, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote understanding and communication between generations within families and to enable young people to respect and benefit from the experiences of, and learn from, their family elders;

(E) enable diverse communities to build relationships; and

(F) provide children with the long-term support the children need to learn, develop, and become confident young adults who are ready and eager to contribute to the United States, a country the children believe in.

SENATE RESOLUTION 147—COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1992 LOS ANGELES CIVIL UNREST

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Ms. HARRIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 147

Whereas Saturday, April 29, 2017, marks the 25th anniversary of the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest;

Whereas the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest is also referred to as the 1992 Los Angeles riots, the South Central riots, the Rodney King riots, the Los Angeles uprising, the 1992 Los Angeles civil disturbance, and ''Sa-I-Gu'', which means April 29 in Korean;

Whereas the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest began in South Central Los Angeles, California, following the acquittal of 4 Los Angeles Police Department officers who were charged with using excessive force against an African-American taxi driver named Rodney King;

Whereas the acquittal immediately resulted in the formation of large crowds and a public outcry over concerns of racial injustice and police brutality, which soon led to civil unrest at the intersection of Florence Avenue and Normandie Avenue in Los Angeles and continued throughout Los Angeles;

Whereas, during the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, more than 60 individuals lost their lives amid the looting and fires, more than 2,000 individuals suffered injuries, and more than 11,000 individuals were arrested;

Whereas more than $1,000,000,000 of property damage was incurred during the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, with approximately 3,600 fires set and destruction to over 1,100 buildings throughout Los Angeles;

Whereas the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest continued for a total of 6 days, during which the unrest spread through multiple neighborhoods, including Koreatown, Inglewood, Hawthorne, Lynwood, Compton, and Long Beach;

Whereas the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest ended following the deployment of thousands of United States Armed Forces personnel;

Whereas, on May 2, 1992, an estimated 30,000 individuals gathered in a peace march in Koreatown during the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, calling for healing and supporting merchants in Koreatown whose businesses were decimated; and

Whereas, on April 29, 2017, local leaders, business owners, and individuals in the African-American, Latino, and Korean-American communities will join together to remember the lives lost during the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest and to discuss continued work to promote unity in Los Angeles: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and offers condolences to all who lost their lives, suffered injuries, and suffered losses to their businesses and property during the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest;

(2) recognizes and commends the communities throughout Los Angeles for the work done to bring different constituencies together to recover and rebuild Los Angeles, improve police oversight, and continue the momentum for change gained in the ensuing months and years following the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest; and

(3) expresses hope that the memory of the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest will promote greater dialogue, civility, and unity among all of the communities throughout Los Angeles.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to introduce a Senate resolution to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest.

On March 3, 1991, an African American named Rodney King was driving on a Los Angeles interstate when officers attempted to pull him over for allegedly speeding. By the time he pulled over and exited his car following a high-speed chase spanning 8 miles, there were multiple LA police department units on the scene.

King was tasered two times, and camcorder video footage recorded by a civilian witness—George Holliday—from his nearby apartment balcony depicted the brutal beating of King by four officers who surrounded him. The officers struck King repeatedly until he was bloodied and disfigured with a fractured cheekbone, 11 broken bones at the base of the skull, and a broken ankle. The video footage shows King being struck by batons over 50 times,

Holliday's video was sent to news outlets and aired around the world. It shook the Nation and raised outcries about excessive force by police officers. But even before the videotape had become public, community leaders in Los Angeles had highlighted on numerous occasions the use of excessive force by LAPD officers.

In fact, in the immediate aftermath of the Rodney King beating, then-Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley formed

the Christopher Commission to thoroughly examine thousands of excessive force complaints made against LAPD officers in the late 1980s. So when—a year later on April 29, 1992—the four LAPD officers caught on tape were acquitted after standing trial for using excessive force against Rodney King, the entire Nation was in shock. The verdict appeared completely incompatible with the brutal videotape footage that flooded our TV screens at the time.

When the verdict became public, hundreds gathered at the Los Angeles County Courthouse to protest, and a national debate immediately began over racial injustice and excessive use of force by police against racial minorities. Shortly thereafter, at the intersection of Florence and Normandie in South Central Los Angeles, the public's frustration boiled over and violence erupted, setting off a flash point that the police simply could not quell. Looting, vandalism, and physical attacks became rampant, and I will never forget the image of Reginald Denny being dragged out of his semi-trailer truck to be severely beaten in the middle of the street.

From then on, the unrest overtook the city, including neighborhoods like Koreatown, Hawthorne, Compton and Long Beach. The city, quite literally, was on fire. For 6 days, the city was in a state of emergency.

All told, there were more than 60 individuals who lost their lives amid the looting and fires, and thousands of individuals were injured or arrested, while countless more lost their businesses and places of employment. Over 3,600 fires were set and over 1,100 buildings in Los Angeles were damaged or destroyed.

Images of the smoke clouds over the city evoked the devastation felt by so many Angelenos. The 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest was felt so deeply and so personally by so many communities throughout the city.

The African American community decried not only the verdict returned against Rodney King but also mourned the death of high-schooler Latasha Harlins and so many other victims of violence and excessive use of force. The civil unrest was symptomatic of the deep frustrations felt by the African-American community against a criminal justice system that continually failed to protect them.

Similarly, the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest was sharply felt by the Latino community in Los Angeles.

According to one report following the unrest, one-third of those killed and half of those arrested were Latino, and countless Latino businesses were looted or destroyed.

The Korean-American community in Los Angeles was also deeply impacted, referring to the unrest as ''Sa-I-Gu,'' to commemorate the date ''April 29'' in Korean to mark it as a significant date in Korean history. Amidst the torched and decimated businesses, 35 to 40 percent of the property damage was suffered by those businesses owned by Korean-Americans—with estimates of up to 1,600 Korean-American-owned stores completely destroyed.

There is no question that those fateful 6 days have impacted generations of Angelenos. We must resolve to never forget the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest and what emerged from those fires.

We must offer our condolences for the families who lost their loved ones or who bear the scars, both mental and physical, from that time and commend those who have worked so hard to come together to heal community rifts, rebuild a stronger Los Angeles, and continue to promote ongoing dialogue, civility, and unity among all communities.

That is the purpose of this resolution we are introducing today.

I want to thank Senator HARRIS for working with me on the resolution to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of this historic event in California.

I yield the Floor.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR AN EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I

Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 14

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR EVENT TO CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on June 11, 2017 for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the event described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the majority and minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Countering Russia: Further Assessing Options for Sanctions.''

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 10 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 10 a.m. in SD–419.

COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017, in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building beginning at 9:45 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017 from 2 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Senate Hart Office Building.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 2:30 p.m.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 11 a.m., Friday, April 28; further, 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; finally, that following leader remarks, 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.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SULLIVAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO MADISON ENGLUND AND JENNIFER TROUTMAN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week I have been coming down to the

floor for months now to recognize someone in my State who has made a difference, someone who has devoted time and energy to making Alaska a better place to live for the community and for others. We call these individuals our Alaskan of the week. It covers Alaskans from all over the State.

As I have said repeatedly in every one of my ''Alaskan of the Week'' speeches, I believe Alaska is the most beautiful State in the country—I would argue, in the world. I urge everybody in the room—the pages, the Presiding Officer, and the folks watching on TV—to come see for yourself. It will be a trip of a lifetime, I guarantee it. But it is the people who truly make Alaska unique, people who are helping each other, people who face tough odds and conquer them, strong-willed, warm-hearted, tenacious people who have carved generous lives and sometimes in very extreme conditions.

Today, our Alaskan of the week is going to be a twofer. We are going to do two today. So I would like to recognize two Alaskans, Madison Englund of Fairbanks and Jennifer Troutman of Anchorage, as our Alaskans of the week. These are two special athletes who have made all of us in Alaska very proud.

Last month, Madison and Jennifer returned to Alaska with a slew of medals from the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria. First, these young women did everything in their power, including training their hearts out, to qualify for these world Olympic games, and when they got there, they excelled. Madison won a Gold Medal in the advanced super-G snowboard race and added a Silver Medal in the advanced giant slalom. Jennifer claimed a Silver Medal in Monday's advanced super-G ski race, as well.

Jennifer has been an athlete with Special Olympics for 11 years. During her freshman year of high school, she participated in bowling, track and field, and floor hockey through the Partners Club. During her junior year, she found a passion for skiing and has been excelling on the slopes ever since, as you can see from these incredible medals from the Special Olympics. She also works at Petco during her free time.

Madison has been part of Special Olympics for 7 years. Aside from sports, she enjoys other hobbies, to include playing the cello, camping, fishing, and caring for animals. She is proud of her dogs, and she has three of them. She also loves to make jewelry. She said it is her favorite hobby. In addition to all this, she has also won the Good Citizens Award from the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Since its founding nearly 50 years ago and subsequent growth to all corners of the globe, the Special Olympics has brought hope and joy and self-esteem to countless children and adults with intellectual disabilities and, of course, to their families and friends and their supporters like me. Special Olympics has shown what can happen when a group of people get together and sweat it out and work hard in the name of fair competition, camaraderie, and perseverance. These Special Olympians—all Special Olympians, really—make us in Alaska proud.

I want to thank Jim Balamaci, who has been the Special Olympics Alaska head for many years, and his whole team for giving so many Alaskans the opportunity to get out to the field or the slopes and experience the fulfillment of sports for all.

In Alaska, we love our Special Olympics athletes. They are an inspiration to all of us, whether it is when they are competing or even participating in the Polar Plunge in the icy waters of Alaska every winter to raise money for Special Olympics.

Congratulations again to Jennifer and Madison on your hard work and incredible achievements and representing Alaska so well. Congratulations. You have earned it, being our Alaskans of the week.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 14, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

AUTHORIZING USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 35, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 35) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 35) was agreed to.

AUTHORIZING USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 36, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 36) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 36) was agreed to.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 127.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 127) supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 127) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 7, 2017, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CONGRATULATING THE ASHLAND UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2017 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 132.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 132) congratulating the Ashland University women's basketball team for winning the 2017 National Collegiate Athletic Association division II championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 132) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 7, 2017, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 145, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 145) designating April 2017 as ''Financial Literacy Month.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 145) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

EL DÍA DE LOS NIÑOS—CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 146, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 146) designating April 30, 2017, as El Día de Los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 146) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94–304, as amended by Public Law 99–7, appoints the following Senator as a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 115th Congress: the Honorable CORY GARDNER of Colorado.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:15 p.m., adjourned until Friday, April 28, 2017, at 11 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 27, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE SECRETARY OF LABOR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE STEVE STIVERS

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, as the Dean of the Ohio Republican delegation (MARCY KAPTUR has served a few more years in total), it's my honor to recognize STEVE STIVERS for his service to the House of Representatives, and also to our nation.

Since being elected in 2010, STEVE has brought an enthusiasm and dedication to his work in Washington, and back home in Ohio. He is not only an incredible asset to this body and to his constituents, but he also has a gregarious personality that draws people in and puts them immediately at ease. To put it another way, you always know when STEVE STIVERS enters the room.

But, perhaps the most impressive thing about STEVE is his service in the Ohio Army National Guard. Having served his country with great distinction both here at home and overseas in Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Djibouti, he was recently promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. And fortunately, Mr. Speaker, STEVE brought the leadership skills he learned in the military to Congress, and we are all better for it.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL LAX FOR A CAUSE EVENT

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Southwestern Youth Association (SYA), the Chantilly Youth Association (CYA) and an outstanding young woman, Tatum Bulger, whose collaborative efforts have made ''Lax for a Cause,'' a local, annual pre-season lacrosse tournament for charity, a tremendous success. This year, the event raised $22,000 for Special Love, a nonprofit organization that provides support and resources to children in the Mid-Atlantic region with cancer.

The tournament originated in 2014 when Damien LaRuffa, the Commissioner of SYA Lacrosse, Scott Stewart, the Vice Commissioner of SYA Lacrosse, and Chris Saben, the Commissioner of CYA Lacrosse, came together to brainstorm ideas for charitable sporting events in Northern Virginia. Since its inception, the annual event has been a tremendous success, previously donating proceeds to the Wounded Warrior Project, the Fisher House Foundation, and more. This year, Tatum Bulger, a sixth grader at Virginia Run Elementary School and avid lacrosse player, who was diagnosed with Ewing Sarcoma last year, approached the organizers with the idea of donating the proceeds to Special Love, and the SYA and CYA immediately moved forward with the idea.

Tatum is truly a special and inspirational young woman. She has used her individual battle to benefit others and increase awareness about pediatric cancer. Additionally, as a member of the SYA Lady Warriors, she has maintained her commitment to her lacrosse team, attending weekly practices and games, and she has a unique and special impact on her teammates and friends.

Throughout the years, local sponsors and community members have covered the majority of the expenses for the all-day ''Lax for a Cause'' tournament, which has enabled a majority of the donations to go to charity. And while the event organizers were extremely satisfied with this year's event, they hope that other teams and youth organizations will host similar charity games or tournaments.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me as we recognize ''Lax for a Cause'' and the charitable efforts set forth by the SYA, the CYA, and Tatum Bulger. Dedicating their time and efforts to helping children and their families fight an unthinkable battle with cancer attests to their unselfish character and determination to better their community. I wish them all of the best in their future endeavors.

TOM NOLAN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE BOARD OF THE SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that long-time board member Tom Nolan is leaving after having served on the board of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency since 2006 and as Chairman since 2010. I want to add my congratulations to those of countless others for the contributions that Tom made during his decades of public service.

Tom has been a longtime friend and colleague and I have always admired his ability to bring peace to the negotiating table and to get to yes. He is truly a regional thinker and a transportation visionary. He was my colleague on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors during the 1980's, and it was from this position that he first became immersed in the subject of public transportation. While San Francisco has long had a well-developed public transit system, San Mateo County lagged far behind. Tom was instrumental in creating the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, the operator of Caltrain. He successfully fought for extension of BART to San Francisco airport and served the entire region as a member of the MTC. Even Santa Clara County owes a debt of gratitude for its transit system to Tom Nolan, as the light rail system relies upon a segment brought into the system by Tom's advocacy.

He could have rested on his laurels when he left San Mateo County to become a resident of San Francisco, but instead he decided to once again become a leader in transportation issues. It takes the genius of a heart surgeon and the patience of a saint to serve on the MTA board. Tom met these standards with his tireless advocacy for service improvements, sound labor relations, a vast bicycle network to reduce reliance upon cars, bike sharing, replacement of the bus fleet, and support of the staff and transit system when the economic downturn brought painful adjustments.

Every board member deserves our thanks for his or her dedication to the public, but the enormity of these responsibilities is often apparent only in hindsight. Few cities in America have tried to do what the MTA is doing over time: Create a transportation system that relies upon multiple modes of movement to create a modern city and to extend economic opportunity to all neighborhoods of San Francisco, all the while integrating this system with the region's needs. The new Central Subway and the T Third Line are just two of the latest examples. Tom's advocacy was essential to creating these options, just as his persistent advocacy led in the creation of Caltrain and the airport extension.

When a pedestrian is not hit while crossing a busy intersection, Tom Nolan's advocacy is in part responsible for this wonderful outcome. When a father is on time picking up his child from daycare, he probably never stops to thank Tom Nolan for the bus ride that brought him to the center, but he should. When a housing advocate rises to support the creation of workforce housing along a transit corridor, I doubt that Tom's name ever comes up as one of the reasons that robust service exists along that particular public right of way. As the Giants fans pull into the 4th and King station, I'll bet that exactly zero riders pause to wonder who made that trip possible. In part, it was countless professionals and advocates over decades, but in large part it was Tom Nolan.

As Tom leaves his position on the MTA board, his legacy is evident in concrete and steel, as well as painted bike paths and floral dividers between bikes and vehicles. It is evident in the quality of life that is led by San Franciscans and those in the Bay Area who quietly go about their business each day.

Long before San Francisco had Uber, our region had Tom Nolan. One trades on a public stock exchange and is highly valued by financial analysts while the other quietly serves in modest but influential public service. There is no doubt in my own mind which is more valuable. Let us all give thanks for Tom Nolan, the ultimate transportation app because he doesn't require a smartphone, a charged battery or a good cell phone connection to get the job done. He's just a guy with a big heart and a mighty vision who delivers value to the public the old fashioned way: He earns it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote numbers 224, 225, 226, 227 and 228. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on votes 226 and 227. I would have voted ''nay'' on votes 224, 225, and 228.

TRIBUTE TO PUNAHOU SCHOOL NATIONAL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM

HON. COLLEEN HANABUSA

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Punahou School's win in the Hawaii Regional Science Bowl and for earning the opportunity to compete in the National Science Bowl for the second year in a row.

Created by the Department of Energy's Office of Science in 1991, the National Science Bowl is one of the largest and most prestigious academic competitions in the United States. Over 265,000 students have participated throughout the National Science Bowl's 26 years. This year, over 14,000 students competed for a coveted spot in the National Science Bowl. Each team completed a series of daunting hands-on challenges that tested their knowledge. This meeting of some of the brightest student minds has encouraged thousands to expand their understanding of mathematics and science and pursue careers in such fields.

This week, Punahou School will compete against 62 other high schools in the National Science Bowl. To the Punahou School team—John Winnicki, Andrew Winnicki, Anna Kimata, Deborah Wen, Conrad Newfield, and Coach Warren Huelsnitz—all the best in this year's competition. They are a great example to their peers and I wish them continued success in their education and careers.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent these students and their families in the United States Congress and I know all my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating them on competing in the National Science Bowl Finals 2017.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am here to recognize the month of April as National Minority Health Month. The Affordable Care Act is a transformative piece of legislation that has helped millions of uninsured people to acquire affordable health insurance who otherwise would not have access to quality patient-centered care. This legislation was not just relegated to help the poor and the needy but also the 177 million employer sponsored insured employees with additional health benefits that never existed before the Affordable Care Act. For instance, ACA prohibited insurance companies from discriminating individuals with pre-existing conditions, and imposing lifetime cost caps on patients. Under ACA, parents can keep their children on their insurance plan up to the age of 26. Also, insurance companies are required to spend 80 percent of all premium dollars toward direct medical expenses and 20 percent toward insurance companies' administrative costs. Otherwise, they must reimburse the customer some of their money back. Currently, ACA has allowed more than 20 million U.S. residents to have health insurance coverage, which has improved the racial and ethnic disparities among minority population.

The purpose of the Affordable Care Act consisted of five basic goals:

1. Expand health insurance coverage for nearly 50 million uninsured people in the United States, which consist of 44 percent Whites, 32 percent Latinos, 16 percent African Americans, 6 percent Asians, 2 percent Native Americans and 0.4 percent Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders.

2. Reduce health care costs by establishing marketplaces called exchanges where federal and state-based marketplaces will have a single process to determine whether someone is eligible for tax credits to reduce the cost of premiums, in the form of cost sharing, Medicaid, or Children's Health Insurance Program. ACA requires a minimum standard of essential health benefits to include ambulatory patient services, prescription drugs, emergency services, rehabilitative and facilitative services, hospitalization, laboratory services, maternity and newborn care, preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management, mental health and substance use disorder services (including behavioral health treatment), and pediatric services (including oral and vision care). Whereas before, ACA's essential benefits did not exist, thus leaving the prospective patients without quality access to care.

3. Reduce health care fraud and abuse

4. Improve health care quality through several initiatives: (1) a national quality strategy; increased reliance on value-based purchasing; expansion of meaningful use of electronic health records (EHRs); better care coordination; development of quality measures for Medicaid and Medicare; and measures of quality in the marketplace.

5. Improve population health that includes reducing racial and ethnic disparities among the minority population. One aspect of the ACA helping people of color to reduce disparities is by requiring health plans to cover certain preventative services such as blood pressure and cholesterol screening, mammograms and Pap smears, and vaccinations, with no cost-sharing. The ACA increased funding for community health centers, which provide quality primary and comprehensive services to underserved communities. They served approximately 25 million people in rural and urban centers where more than half of the patients were members of various ethnic and minority groups.

We need more doctors and allied health professionals to assist a healthcare system that for decades was not adequately addressing health disparities among millions of racial and ethnic minority Americans. Many of our minorities are disproportionately more likely to suffer deleterious health disparities just because they are low-income wage earners, poorer in health and suffer worse health outcomes, and are more likely to die prematurely and often from preventable causes compared to their White counterparts. Some of the examples of these health disparities include the following:

The infant mortality rate for African Americans and American Indian/Alaska Natives are more than two times higher than that for whites;

African Americans with heart disease are three times more likely to be operated on by ''high risk'' surgeons than their White counterparts with heart disease;

Hispanic/Latina women have the highest incidence rate for cancers of the cervix; 1.6 times higher than that for white women, with a cervical cancer death rate that is 1.4 times higher than for white women;

Puerto Ricans have an asthma prevalence rate over 2.2 times higher than non-Hispanic whites and over 1.8 times higher than non-Hispanic blacks;

Together, African Americans and Hispanics account for 28 percent of the total U.S. population, yet account for 62 percent of all new HIV infections;

American Indian/Alaska Natives have diabetes rates that are nearly 3 times higher than the overall rate; and

Of the more than one million people infected with chronic Hepatitis B in the United States, half are Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

In addition to the unacceptable costs of human suffering and premature death, there are significant economic repercussions of allowing health disparities to persist. A 2010 study from the Health Policy Institute at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found that the total costs of health disparities were $1.24 trillion over a three-year period. This same report found that eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities would have reduced direct medical care expenditures by $229.4 billion over the same three-year period.

Many analysts over the past several years have reported that investments through the Affordable Care Act and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 have helped double the number of clinicians in the National Health Service Corps by providing scholarships and loan repayments to medical students and primary care physicians and other healthcare professionals as incentives for them to practice in underserved communities. The ACA helped bridge some of the gap in workforce diversity to include dentists and other primary oral health care providers.

Increasing the proportion of African-American dentists is critical because studies show that they are more likely to serve in underserved communities than their white cohort. In 2010, underrepresented minority (URM) Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino of any race, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander-students composed 13 percent of the overall applicant pool for dental school programs. For the 639 URM applicants who enrolled in 2010, the enrollment rate increased only by 1 percent since 2009. A statistic that shows that progress is needed. Dental schools today are graduating 300 Black dentists out of 5,000 each year. Today, 5 percent of dentists are African-American. Black dentists treat nearly 62

percent of Black patients; White dentists only treat 10.5 percent; Hispanics treat 9.8 percent; and Asian dentists only treat 11.5 percent Black patients. The Affordable Care Act helps ensure that dental visits and oral and dental health care become a routine part of everyone's health care regimen.

IN CELEBRATION OF MRS. PEARL BIGGS' 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my sincerest congratulations and Happy Birthday wishes to Mrs. Pearl Biggs, who is celebrating her 100th birthday on Tuesday, May 2, 2017. A birthday celebration will be held for Mrs. Biggs on Saturday, April 29, 2017.

In 1917, the United States entered World War I, women did not yet have the right to vote, and segregation was rampant in the South. This is the year Mrs. Pearl Biggs was born to Mahaley Jones and Wiley Bunkley. Indeed, Mrs. Biggs has seen much in her lifetime and through it all, she has relied on her faith in the Lord.

Mrs. Biggs began working as a cook at a young age and so it was inevitable that she would become known as a very good cook. In 1937, she married Pedro Biggs and they would spend the next 76 years together until his passing in 2014.

Pearl and Pedro Biggs opened one of the first Black-owned businesses in the Geneva and Box Springs area in Southwest Georgia. They owned several businesses, including Biggs Sandwich Shop, a movie theatre, and a pulpwood company. They were also farmers.

Mrs. Biggs loves to sing and she sang in the choir at her church. Her favorite song is ''Let Jesus Lead Me.'' She loves collard greens and the color pink. She enjoys fishing and talking on the phone. Mrs. Biggs has never met a stranger—she always wants to feed people and no one ever goes hungry around her.

George Washington Carver once said, ''How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong because someday in your life you will have been all of these.'' Mrs. Biggs has advanced far in life because she never forgot these lessons and always kept God first.

As she celebrates 100 years of life, Mrs. Biggs will be surrounded by her sons, Monroe and Allen; daughters-in-law, Mildred and Cynthia; grandchildren, Timothy, Kelton, and Amelia; and great-grandchildren, Jackson and Christopher; plus a host of other family members and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, along with my wife Vivian and the almost 730,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in honoring an outstanding citizen and woman of faith, Mrs. Pearl Biggs, as she, her family, and friends celebrate her 100th birthday.

IN RECOGNITION OF VISTA MARIA AND ITS 2017 WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT HONOREE GLENDA REED

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vista Maria and its 2017 Woman of Achievement Honoree Glenda Reed. As founder and CEO of Crossroads Learning Center, Ms. Reed has dedicated her life to protecting children, teens and adolescents.

Founded in 1883, Vista Maria is a private, non-profit agency that provides treatment and care for vulnerable youth with emotional and behavioral problems resulting from neglect or abuse. Since its establishment by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, the organization has evolved into a multi-service agency that provides comprehensive support to children and their families. In addition to its community youth assistance programs, Vista Maria runs two on-campus charter schools at their 37-acre Dearborn Heights campus, as well as a health clinic, residential treatment programs, and foster care initiatives. Collectively, these initiatives provide critical services to support and improve outcomes for high-risk youth and adolescents. Vista Maria also raises awareness and recognizes outstanding women in the community at its annual Celebrating Women event.

Vista Maria's 2017 Woman of Achievement Honoree is Glenda Reed, an educator who founded the Crossroads Learning Center, an early childhood education facility in Detroit. Crossroads provides high-quality childcare and after-school care for children ages 0–12. In addition, Ms. Reed runs Once Upon a Time, a nonprofit organization that recognizes and supports survivors of childhood abuse. Her efforts to support these individuals have helped empower them to take control of their lives and fulfill their potential. She has also traveled around the country as an advocate for these women, and her exceptional work on their behalf is more than deserving of this prestigious honor. It is my hope that Ms. Reed and Vista Maria continue to build on their legacy of service on behalf of these youth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Vista Maria and its 2017 Woman of Achievement Honoree, Glenda Reed. Their work has had a tremendous impact and helped improve the lives of countless women.

CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF TECHNET

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, twenty years ago, Bay Area innovation leaders John Doerr, John Chambers, and Jim Barksdale spurred a new era of American technological advancement by creating TechNet.

Today, TechNet represents the spirit of technological innovation that continues to thrive in Silicon Valley.

TechNet stands as a remarkable example of how bringing people together can inspire innovation, strengthen our economy, and create a more productive future.

TechNet's network of CEOs and senior executives have worked with leaders in Congress to drive an Innovation Agenda that creates jobs and opportunities for Americans.

As we look to the future, the iconic companies and dynamic startups that form TechNet will continue to lead our nation in the development of transformative technologies that create more opportunities for more Americans.

Congratulations on 20 years of inspired leadership and shining achievement. Best wishes on many more years of success unleashing the full potential of American innovation.

HONORING LONNIE CARPENTER OF WEST VIRGINIA

HON. EVAN H. JENKINS

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent, Lonnie Carpenter. Lonnie, a lifelong Wayne County resident, served his country as a seaman onboard the USS *Ault* destroyer during the Korean War.

After his service, Lonnie returned back to his home in the beautiful hills of West Virginia and started a family with his wife of more than 63 years, Edna Davis. Together they had three wonderful children, and Lonnie provided for them through his career in the banking and finance industry. Lonnie is a proud Mason, having been conferred the 33rd Degree, and chronicled the history of Freemasons in many articles for the Scottish Rite.

Lonnie also served a term as a councilman for the town of Ceredo and volunteers his time for numerous organizations that have improved the lives of the people of his community. I thank Lonnie for all he has done for the people of West Virginia and for his service to our nation.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL VINCENT B. MYERS

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in gratitude for the hard work and commitment of Lieutenant Colonel Vincent B. Myers, who has served as the Medical Army Legislative Liaison to my office for the past two years.

A Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army and an experienced health care provider, Vince has been essential to my office and the House Armed Services Committee, as we work toward the goal of enhancing medical readiness and providing top care for our service members.

On May 11, Vince will continue his committed service to the United States as he takes command of McDonald Army Health Center at Fort Eustis, Virginia. I know that in this role, Vince will serve with conviction and honor.

I congratulate Vince, and thank him for his work and friendship.

HONORING JOHNSON CHAPEL

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Johnson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church and its pastors for 100 years of teaching, preaching the Gospel, and making strides in our community.

The Johnson Chapel A.M.E. Church was founded in 1915 by John Fair, James Craig, Roxie Graves, Cora Martin, Ed Ackers, and Nancy Craig. It was formally established in 1917 with Reverend S.E. Edwards as its first pastor. Originally a small congregation meeting in a house on State Street, the church is now highly regarded within the community and has relocated to a significantly larger building on Hamilton Street in El Centro, California.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was formed out of the Free African Society, established in 1787. African Americans faced unending discrimination while trying to practice their faith in American Methodist churches. Some churchgoers went as far as pulling African Americans off their knees as they prayed. Black members of St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church split off to create their own African congregation. Wanting to avoid discrimination and obtain religious autonomy, many black Methodists began to switch over to African Methodist Episcopal churches.

Currently, the A.M.E. Church has membership across twenty Episcopal Districts in thirty-nine countries, on five continents. Although the church was founded by people of African descent and heritage, it is open to people of any background or race. They place emphasis on the plain and simple gospel and tirelessly work to spread the word of Jesus Christ.

The Johnson Chapel A.M.E. Church has been led by thirty-one dedicated ministers over the past 100 years. They have worked to improve the church and build a community around it. Not only does the church take care of their own members, they have also provided educational programs and outreach to benefit youth in their area.

I would like to recognize the Johnson Chapel A.M.E. Church for their 100 years of dedicated teaching and service within our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL'S CHARITY PROM

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the students, faculty, and Principal, Doug Fulton, of Freedom High School located in Loudoun County, Virginia, for their leadership and efforts to raise money and awareness for pediatric cancer. For the second year in a row, Freedom High School will be forgoing a lavish, expensive prom and instead will be hosting the event in their cafeteria and gymnasium, where the proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to pediatric cancer organizations.

Two years ago, Principal Fulton and several students saw an opportunity for the school to engage with their community and join the fight against childhood cancer when they learned about the Prom Challenge, an initiative set forth by St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Through this initiative, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital provides schools with the tools needed to transform their normal prom events into pediatric cancer fundraisers.

Last spring marked the first time that Freedom High School partook in the challenge, and this unique event truly sparked interests and efforts of the entire student body, faculty, and community. When the decision was made to transform the school's cafeteria and gym into a dining room and ball room in an effort to save money on a venue, many students were at first skeptical and disappointed. Yet once they learned about the challenge, they became excited and very eager to raise money and awareness for the event. Additionally, the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, the venue that had already been arranged for the event prior to the conception of this charity ball, generously returned the school its $5,000 deposit.

The theme of last year's prom was "Hats on to Fight Pediatric Cancer," inspired by Ellie's Hats, a local charity in Loudoun County that provides hats to children who lose their hair during cancer treatments. To raise awareness students were asked to wear hats to the event, and some of the proceeds were in fact donated to this local organization. At the event, the food provided was all donated by Whole Foods and the National Conference Center, and the musical performers and photographers each volunteered their time. Lastly, the prom king and queen were not chosen by the student body, but they were instead selected based on who raised the most money in their name. Every final detail and moment of this event was thoroughly planned with the intent of assisting those with pediatric cancer, and ultimately, the event raised $48,000.

Mr. Speaker, while the students and faculty take great pride in last year's tremendous prom, they now hope to make this event a permanent tradition at Freedom High School and hope that other schools will follow their lead. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Freedom High School's students and faculty for their extraordinary work on last year's charity prom and their continuous efforts to champion this initiative. Dedicating their time and efforts to helping children and their families fight an unthinkable battle with cancer attests to their unselfish character and determination to better their community.

RECOGNIZING MS. KATHY O'KEEFFE, A RECIPIENT OF THE FBI DIRECTOR'S COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR 2016

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Cathy O'Keeffe—the Director of the Braking Traffik organization, who is being recognized in Washington, D.C. as a recipient of the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award for 2016.

As the Director of Braking Traffik, Cathy has made remarkable contributions to our community, helping bring justice and resources to victims and survivors of labor and sex trafficking. Through education, legislative advocacy and community partnerships, Braking Traffik has helped raise awareness about this important issue and has strengthened trafficking laws in both Iowa and Illinois. Cathy has devoted her drive, energy and fierce determination to this organization since 2011, and has tremendously helped make our community a safer place to live.

I'm very proud of Cathy's work on this issue and am pleased she's gained the recognition of the Director of the FBI. Mr. Speaker, I want to again formally congratulate Cathy on her award, and I join the rest of our community to wish her every success in the future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF EDWARD J. DONLEY

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Edward J. Donley, former Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Ed was a dear friend and mentor to me. After 95 years of life, many of which were spent as a prominent figurehead in the Lehigh Valley's business community and as an impassioned advocate for early-childhood education, he passed away in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on April 1, 2017. As a testament to Ed's legacy, his son John wrote a tribute to him, a portion of which I summarized and would like to include in the Record today:

Ed Donley was born in Detroit on November 26, 1921. During the Depression, his family moved back to their farm near Richmond, Michigan. After graduating from high school, Donley won a scholarship to Lawrence Institute of Technology (now Lawrence Technological University) in Detroit and earned an engineering degree in 1943. Shortly before graduating, Donley was hired by a new industrial gas company, Air Products, located in Chattanooga, Tennessee, to design portable oxygen generators for Allied bombers in World War II.

Donley met his future wife in Chattanooga: Ms. Inez Cantrell. They wed on October 24, 1946 and were happily married for 66 years until Inez passed away in 2013 from Alzheimer's disease. The couple had three children—Martha, Tom, and John, ten grandchildren, and a growing bevy of great-grandchildren.

Air Products relocated to the Lehigh Valley in 1949, and Donley became Vice President of Sales in 1957, President and Chief Operating Officer in 1966, Chief Executive Officer (1973–86), and Chairman of the Board (1978–86). During his time at Air Products, he was especially proud of his commitment to promoting employee safety, recruiting top students each year, and creating long-term shareholder value.

In the Lehigh Valley, Donley led many local projects. In the 1960s and 70s, he was a trustee of Cedar Crest College, the Allentown Art Museum, and WLVT public television. He and his wife Inez gave their time and financial support to Community Services for Children, the

Allentown Library, KidsPeace, Lehigh Carbon Community College, and the Da Vinci Science Center.

Additionally, Donley served on many business and non-profit boards, including a stint as director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for 11 years. He was active in the health care industry as well, helping to create the predecessor of the Lehigh Valley Health Network in the 1970s and working with the Rotary Club to found Lehigh Valley Hospice, Inc. in 1980—just the second hospice in the U.S. at that time.

Similarly, Donley held a great passion for early-childhood education. In addition to leading education initiatives, he and his wife gave most of their assets to The Donley Foundation, a trust now run by their children and grandchildren, which supports the work of literacy and early-childhood education groups.

While philanthropy and a strong business acumen served as catalysts for many of Ed's lifetime endeavors, his commitment to his wife, his children, and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren will ultimately be how he is remembered. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House please join me in celebrating a giant of a man and a life well lived, as well as expressing sympathy to his family and our community, both of which have been made better by his outstanding life and legacy. Rest in peace, dear friend.

RECOGNITION AND COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, I joined with over 80 of my House colleagues in calling upon President Trump to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide for what it is—a genocide.

Unfortunately, the president continued to extend U.S. complicity in Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide by failing to properly characterize the near annihilation of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire as a genocide.

The facts are indisputable. Over 1.5 million Armenians were massacred during the first genocide of the 20th century.

As crimes of genocide continue to plague this world, Turkey's policy of denying the Armenian Genocide gives license to those who perpetrate genocide everywhere.

As we recognize and commemorate the 102nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide I join my colleagues in calling upon the Turkey government to ends its campaign of denial and urge the administration to end American complicity of this crime against humanity.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM ADAMS KIMBROUGH, JR.

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mr. William Adams Kimbrough, Jr. Billy, as he was known, was a leader in the Mobile community and a former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama.

Billy was born in Selma and grew up in Thomasville. He attended the University of the South, or Sewanee, where he was a member of the football team and active in campus affairs. He later graduated from the University of Alabama School of Law.

Under President John F. Kennedy, Billy served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney before working in the legal department at the GM&O Railroad in Mobile. He later joined the law firm of Stockman & Bedsole. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed him to serve as the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. He held his position until 1981. Following his service as U.S. Attorney, Billy joined the law firm of Turner Onderdonk where he practiced law until his retirement in 2012.

Billy was a proud Mobilian and participated in many groups and organizations around Southwest Alabama. He was active in politics throughout his life and took part in many political campaigns. He also worked with the Greater Gulf State Fair, of which he was the President in 1967.

He was also a man of strong and steady faith. He sang in the choir and taught Sunday School at Dauphin Way United Methodist Church in Mobile. He took great pride in seeing his church grow and flourish.

Sadly, Billy passed away on March 31st after a lengthy illness. Billy was more than just a colleague and fellow member of the Mobile Bar Association; he was also a friend of mine and my family.

On behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to share my deepest condolences with his wife of 58 years, Kay, his two children, Mary Elizabeth and Will, and his entire family. I hope you can take great comfort in the many memories together and the fact that Billy had such a profound impact on our community, state, and country.

HONORING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED WAY OF MIDLAND

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished service of the United Way of Midland as they celebrate their 70th Anniversary.

For the past 70 years, The United Way of Midland has been dedicated to enriching the Permian Basin through their various outreach programs. UWM works directly with program providers in supporting over 50 programs and services that target individual needs throughout the community. These initiatives focus on three building blocks to a better life, which are: promoting quality education that leads to stable employment; empowering individuals to achieve economic stability and financial security through proven methods like job training and financial planning courses; and vital health services that promote healthy lifestyles and choices. Through their work, UWM assists roughly 65,000 people annually and invests over $3 million back into the community.

As a Lifetime Member of the Board of Directors for the United Way of Midland, I have been fortunate enough to see firsthand the great work that this organization does for the Permian Basin community. I wish them best of luck with their future endeavors.

CURTIS RHYNE

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank an exceptional North Carolinian, Curtis Rhyne, who has served our state well here in Congress. After getting his start in my office several years ago, he worked for several Chairmen of the Republican Study Committee and later with my colleague, Rep. RICHARD HUDSON. He brought conservative Carolina values to that service, which were instilled in him by his parents, Jerry and Elaine Rhyne, and his entire family during his formative years in Statesville, N.C.

As an East Carolina University Pirate and graduate, Curtis was well prepared intellectually for his work here in Washington, which was primarily on energy, trade, and other policy issues. He is well known in Washington for his personal attention to individuals and issues and is held in the highest regard for his professionalism and knowledge.

Regardless of where he resides, I'll always think of Curtis as a constituent and wish him well as he moves on to serve our state as a Policy Advisor for North Carolina House Speaker Tim Moore in Raleigh.

U.S. WANTS TO COMPETE FOR A WORLD EXPO ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ERIK PAULSEN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2017

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, it's been more than three decades since the United States hosted a World's Fair, even as there has been a recent upsurge in local and national interest to do so. Under rules from the Bureau of International Expositions, the U.S. is effectively prevented from hosting Expos and World's Fairs because we are no longer a part of the organization.

That's why I'm joining with my fellow Minnesotans, led by Congressman EMMER, and a bipartisan coalition to authorize the U.S. to rejoin the BIE. This effort also urges U.S. government assistance in advancing Minnesota's bid to host EXPO 2023.

I believe my home state of Minnesota is the perfect place to usher in a new era for American membership in the BIE. Business, civic, and community leaders in Minnesota have already created the Minnesota's World's Fair Bid Committee to start preparing for this unique opportunity to show what our state, our region, and our country have to offer.

We should work with the appropriate federal departments and agencies, and take the necessary steps to ensure the United States rejoins the BIE so that we are not at a disadvantage and so our great cities and states can experience being on display on the world stage.

REV. PATRICIA BRUGER

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the outstanding achievements of Rev. Patricia Bruger and her contributions to the Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community (CUMAC) on this special day, Thursday, April 27, 2017.

Born and raised in Washington, DC, Patricia is a graduate of the University of Maryland, where she earned her BS in Education in 1969. She worked for the Girl Scouts of America and was a public school teacher. From 1969 until 1972 she served as a high school teacher in Silver Spring, Maryland. She later moved to New Jersey, and served as a substitute teacher in Bergen County from 1985 to 1991.

She then received her Masters of Divinity at the Drew Theological Seminary in 1995 with over 25 years of experience in social and civic ministries. She is an ordained Elder of The United Methodist Church, a certified Mentor for the Board of Ordained Ministry, a certified counselor for the Clergy Partnership on Domestic Violence, and a member of the Bishop's Task Force on Urban Minorities.

Patricia is a committed social servant dedicated to the eradication of hunger and poverty through direct source and broad advocacy efforts. Patricia has been the Executive Director of CUMAC for over 26 years. She has led the organization through a tremendous period of growth from operating out of an abandoned church to purchasing its own 28,000 square foot facility and from a small food pantry to a multi-service agency serving over 40,000 people in need every year, providing food assistance, disaster relief, job training, supportive housing, and hope to a community facing pervasive poverty.

She was a founding and active member of the Emergency Food Coalition of Passaic County (newly operating as a CUMAC program), the NJ statewide Anti-Hunger Coalition, and the Paterson Alliance. Patricia has been a leading voice for her community, advocating for hunger to be addressed in the state budget, as well as rallying support for SNAP benefits and Breakfast after the Bell, to feed hungry students so they can concentrate on their education instead.

Patricia's forward-thinking and leadership abilities has encouraged and inspired staff and volunteers to partake in CUMAC's mission of taking care of others. She has raised awareness about pervasive poverty through this organization, and strives to fulfill the needs of people who do not have the adequate resources to function in their daily lives. She has worked closely with other feeding programs throughout Passaic County and northern New Jersey to bring about change in the community, and to assist in eradicating poverty.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating individuals who have dedicated their lives to serving the people. Patricia has truly left an everlasting mark on my hometown of Paterson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, family and friends, all those whose lives she has touched, and me, in recognizing the work of Rev. Patricia Bruger and her strong desire to help those in need across the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, April 26th, I was unavoidably detained and I missed roll call votes 224 and 225.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on roll call vote 224.

Had I been present, I would have voted NO on roll call vote 225.

FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH 2017

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as Co-Chair of the House Financial and Economic Literacy Caucus in recognition of Financial Literacy Month.

Every day, Americans are faced with financial decisions that impact their lives and their families. That is why promoting financial and economic literacy is so important and why we draw attention to it each and every April.

Financial literacy is a lifelong journey, whether writing a monthly budget, managing your credit, or saving for retirement, every American needs to understand the basic principles of planning, saving and investing for the future.

In that spirit, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor/support bipartisan House Resolution 243, which promotes the ideals and goals of Financial Literacy Month, and to also participate in tomorrow's Financial Literacy Day on the Hill.

Let's ensure more Americans can build a better financial future this Financial Literacy Month and all year round.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. JACK W. SCHWARTZ

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Jack W. Schwartz on his 102nd birthday.

Mr. Jack W. Schwartz is from Hanford, California. Growing up, Mr. Schwartz graduated from Hollywood High School at the age of fifteen and went on to earn both his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees in Civil Engineering from California Institute of Technology. After working in various engineering jobs, Mr. Schwartz joined the United States Navy in 1940 as a Lieutenant Junior Grade in the Civil Engineering Corps. His first Navy assignment was at Pearl Harbor, and he was later transferred to Guam in January 1941. Barely a year later, on December 8, the Japanese Navy attacked Guam.

On December 10, 1941, Guam became the first American territory to formally surrender to an enemy in World War II. Lt. Schwartz and the sailors and Marines on the island became prisoners of war (POW) for nearly the next four years. Lt. Schwartz and the other officers were sent by boat to the Japanese port of Tadotsu on the island of Shikoku to become slave laborers for Japanese corporations. Upon arrival in mainland Japan, Mr. Schwartz was taken to the Zentsuji POW Camp nearly 400 miles west of Tokyo. While in this camp, Lt. Schwartz was beaten and denied food, water, and medical service whenever he defended and advocated for those under his command. In September 1942, he was transferred to Tokyo 2B Kawasaki and later sent to Zentsuji in August of 1944. His final transfer was in June 1945 to POW Camp 11–B Rokuroshi. This camp was located in the Japanese Alps, where food was scarce, conditions were overcrowded, and winter clothes were unavailable, leading many to believe they would not survive the harsh mountain winter. However, the camp was discovered and liberated on September 8, 1945, several days after the formal surrender of Japan on September 2. After the war, Lt. Schwartz remained in the United States Navy and later retired in 1962 as a Commander.

At the age of ninety nine, Mr. Schwartz was invited to take part in the Fifth Delegation of American Former POWs of Japan where he met with Japanese officials, students, and visited the sites of former POW camps. He felt the experience was important for remembrance and reconciliation.

Mr. Schwartz served as the Public Works Director and City Engineer for eighteen years in Hanford, California. Since his retirement in 1980, Mr. Schwartz has been active on many city and council projects including serving eight years as City Planning Commissioner and five years on the Kings County Grand Jury. The most prideful accomplishment of Mr. Schwartz's long career in public service is his work in helping to procure the funds to create and design Hidden Valley Park in Hanford.

Today, Mr. Schwartz has a son, a stepdaughter, and a grandson. His favorite hobbies are woodturning and making things out of wood, reading, and writing with the Remington Ramblers, a local writing workshop.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in wishing this extraordinary American, Mr. Jack W. Schwartz, well on his 102nd birthday and thanking him for his years of military and public service.

RECOGNIZING PASTOR WALLSTONE E. FRANCIS

HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an accomplished individual, a distinguished pillar of our community, and a personal friend, Pastor Wallstone E. Francis, on the occasion of his 25th anniversary as pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Waukegan, Illinois. For 25 years, Pastor Francis has shared his

passion, his vision and his dedication to scripture and service, not just with his church but with the entire community.

Pastor Francis was born in Nassau, Bahamas, and moved to the United States in 1971. After earning a Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Arts Degrees from American Baptist College of American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee and an Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree from Selma University, in Selma, Alabama, Pastor Francis began his ministry in Smyrna, Tennessee and later Franklin, Kentucky.

On May 3, 1992, Pastor Francis was installed as pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church. In his two and a half decades of service, Pastor Francis has become known as an incisive teacher of the Scripture, a dedicated minister to his congregation, and an upstanding leader in his community. In addition to his Christian ministry, Pastor Francis gives back through his service on the Waukegan Civil Service Commission and as a volunteer Chaplain at Victory Memorial Hospital and the Lake County Jail.

Pastor Francis has been blessed with more than forty years of marriage to Mrs. Angelia Rene Otey William. Their loving family includes grown children and grandchildren, including children who came to the family as foster children. I am also honored to celebrate their commitment to foster care.

Illinois's Tenth District and the Waukegan community is lucky for Pastor Francis's leadership. On this moment of anniversary, I wish him, his family, and the entire Shiloh Baptist Church community all the best in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONGRESSMAN EARL E. HILLIARD

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2017

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend, former Congressman Earl Hilliard, who will celebrate his 75th birthday this weekend, at a gathering of his family and friends in Birmingham, Alabama.

While a Member of this body, Earl and I worked very closely together, preserving the integrity of historically black colleges and universities and supporting the preservation and restoration of historic sites and buildings. At his weekend gathering they will establish a scholarship in his honor in order to help more rural Alabama young men and women have opportunities to further their education.

I want to congratulate my friend for reaching this milestone in his life, a place I got to more than a year ago, and wish him a happy birthday and further success in establishing more benefits for young men and women throughout Alabama.

Family: Former Congressman Earl Frederick Hilliard was born in Birmingham, Alabama on April 9, 1942 to Iola Frazier and William Hilliard. In 1967, Earl Hilliard married Mary Franklin. Both were the first person on both sides of their families to attend and graduate from college. They have two children: Alesia Hilliard-Smith (R. J. Smith) and Earl Hilliard, Jr. (Janine Hunt-Hilliard) and four grandchildren: Roderick Smith, Jr., Reginald Smith, Earl Hilliard, III and Nya Hilliard. In June 2016, the couple celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Education: Earl graduated from Western-Olin High School in 1960. Because of his experiences growing up in segregated Birmingham, he chose to attend historically black colleges and universities. He received a B.A. from Morehouse College in 1964, a J.D. from Howard University School of Law in 1967, and an M.B.A. in 1970 from Atlanta University (now Clark-Atlanta University) School of Business. He was awarded an Honorary Degree—Doctor of Humane Letters—in 2000 from Talladega College.

Civil Rights/Black History: While a student at Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Georgia, Hilliard met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The meeting had a powerful effect on him, and he became ''one of King's foot soldiers in the war for racial equality. He worked with voter-registration drives and participated in many protest marches. He continued his work when he was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives where he chaired the first Alabama Black Legislative Caucus.

Political Career: In 1974, Earl F. Hilliard was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives where he chaired the Alabama Black Legislative Caucus. In 1980, he was elected to the Alabama State Senate and chaired the Alabama State Judiciary, Commerce, Transportation and Utility Committees. His Senate career focused on helping the urban poor, who constituted the bulk of his Birmingham-area constituents. He earned a reputation as a hard-fighting, tactical legislator.

In 1992, Hilliard won a seat in the U.S. Congress, becoming the first black Representative from Alabama since Jeremiah Haralson left office after Reconstruction. ''We have not had a voice in 117 years,'' Hilliard declared upon his first election. ''I will be able to articulate the views and opinions of a group that hasn't had representation in a very long time. His district included three major cities—Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham—all of which were battlegrounds at the heart of the 1960s civil rights movement.

Hilliard's initial focus in Congress was creating economic opportunity for his constituents. He supported legislation that would help Alabama's urban poor. He called for a Southern Rural Development Commission, modeled after the Appalachian Regional Commission to assist economic development in rural communities in ten southern states. Congressman Hilliard reestablished Gees Bend Ferry. He attempted to protect and expand the Alabama military installations used by the U.S. Army and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He worked to protect a Tuscaloosa-area airport that was difficult to sustain because of the region's sparse population. ''Tuscaloosa and the surrounding communities would suffer terribly without local air service, and this travel option will become increasingly important as industrial development continues in the area,'' he wrote to a colleague. Due in large part to Congressman Hilliard's lobbying, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees diverted limited funding to Tuscaloosa in the Essential Air Service legislation. He successfully pushed funding to support Alabama's historically black colleges and universities and provided scholarship money for minority students. Hilliard was also crucial in convincing a Korean-based car manufacturer to open a plant outside Montgomery. While in Congress, he served on the Agriculture, Small Business, International Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees. An active member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressman Hilliard was elected vice chairman of the organization for the 105th Congress (1997 through 1999).

Academic Career: Earl F. Hilliard began his career as a teacher at Miles College (1967 through 1968) and later was an assistant to the president of Alabama State University (1968 through 1970). While in Congress, he didn't forget what he'd learned and the importance of procuring funding to support Alabama's historically black colleges and universities and to provide scholarship money for minority students. Over the years, he has helped countless relatives, friends, and constituents achieve their educational goals by providing financial support to students who desired to pursue advanced degrees, but were financially unable to do so. He has mentored an innumerable amount of people, from high school and college students to seasoned professionals.

Awards/Honors: In 1974, Earl F. Hilliard received Omega Psi Phi's Businessman of the Year Award and he was given Delta Sigma Theta's Distinguished Service and Achievement Award in 1975. He was awarded the Outstanding Alumnus Award, in 2010, from Morehouse College National Alumni Association. In 2011, Earl F. Hilliard received an Outstanding Alumnus Award from National Alumni Council of the United Negro College Fund and in 2015, he was one of the recipients of an Alabama Majesty Award from Miles College.

Community Involvement and Associations: Earl Hilliard holds Life Memberships in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He also holds or has held memberships in the National Bar Association, the Alabama State Bar Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Alabama Lawyers Association, the Morehouse College Alumni Association, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Morehouse Athletic Foundation, Inc., of which he was one of the incorporators. He has served as Trustee of both Miles College Law School and Tuskegee University. He currently serves as a Deacon, Elder and a Sunday school teacher for the Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church of North Pratt and previously served as Chairman of both the Deacon and Trustee Boards.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of R. Alexander Acosta, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2565–S2631

Measures Introduced: Thirty-five bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 954–988, S. Res. 144–147, and S. Con. Res. 14. **Pages S2615–16**

Measures Passed:

Authorizing Use of Capitol Visitor Center: Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 14, authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I. **Page S2630**

Authorizing Use of Capitol Grounds: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 35, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition. **Page S2630**

Authorizing Use of Capitol Grounds: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 36, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. **Page S2630**

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 127, supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S2630**

Congratulating the Ashland University Women's Basketball Team: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 132, congratulating the Ashland University women's basketball team for winning the 2017 National Collegiate Athletic Association division II championship, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S2631**

Financial Literacy Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 145, designating April 2017 as ''Financial Literacy Month''. **Page S2631**

El Dia de Los Ninos—Celebrating Young Americans: Senate agreed to S. Res. 146, designating April 30, 2017, as El Dia de Los Ninos—Celebrating Young Americans. **Page S2631**

Appointments:

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki): The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94–304, as amended by Public Law 99–7, appointed the following Senator as a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 115th Congress: Senator Gardner. **Page S2631**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 60 yeas to 38 nays (Vote No. EX. 116), R. Alexander Acosta, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor. **Pages S2566–S2600, S2631**

Messages from the House: **Pages S2614–15**

Measures Referred: **Page S2615**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S2615**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2616–18**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2818–29**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2612–14**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2629**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—116) **Page S2600**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:15 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Friday, April 28, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2629.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

PREVENTING VETERAN SUICIDE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine preventing veteran suicide, after receiving testimony from Carolyn M. Clancy, Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Organizational Excellence, Harold S. Kudler, Chief Consultant for Mental Health Services, and Stephanie A. Davis, Suicide Prevention Coordinator and Staff Psychologist, VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, each of the Veterans Health Administration, and Michael L. Missal, Inspector General, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Melissa D. Jarboe, Military Veteran Project, Topeka, Kansas; and Rajeev Ramchand, Rand Corporation, Arlington, Virginia.

U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND AND U.S. FORCES KOREA

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States Pacific Command and United States Forces Korea, after receiving testimony from Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr., USN, Commander, United States Pacific Command, Department of Defense.

CYBER-ENABLED INFORMATION OPERATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity concluded a hearing to examine cyber-enabled information operations, after receiving testimony from John C. Inglis, former Deputy Director, National Security Agency; Michael D. Lumpkin, Neptune Computer Incorporated, and former Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; Rand Waltzman, RAND Corporation; and Clint Watts, Foreign Policy Research Institute.

COUNTERING RUSSIA

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine countering Russia, focusing on further assessing options for sanctions, including S. 94, to impose sanctions in response to cyber intrusions by the Government of the Russian Federation and other aggressive activities of the Russian Federation, and S. 341, to provide for congressional oversight of actions to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, after receiving testimony from Chip Poncy, Financial Integrity Network, Fairfax, Virginia; and R. Nicholas Burns, Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS ECONOMIC EXPANSION ACT

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine H.R. 339, to amend Public Law 94–241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, after receiving testimony from Representative Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan; Nikolao I. Pula, Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, Department of the Interior; David Gootnick, Director, International Affairs and Trade, Government Accountability Office; Northern Mariana Islands Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, and Jim Arenovski, Island Training Solutions, both of Saipan.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

AGING WITHOUT COMMUNITY

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine aging without community, focusing on the consequences of isolation and loneliness, after receiving testimony from W. Mark Clark, Pima Council on Aging, Tucson, Arizona; Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Lenard W. Kaye, University of Maine Center on Aging, Bangor; and Rick Creech, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 40 public bills, H.R. 2183–2222; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 100; and H. Res. 286–288, 290–292 were introduced. **Pages H2939–41**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2942–44**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 289, providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 99) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–97). **Page H2939**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Mitchell to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2901**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:49 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2906**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Pastor Melissa Hatch, Prosper United Methodist Church, Prosper, TX. **Page H2906**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a recorded vote of 249 ayes to 163 noes with answering 2 ''present'', Roll No. 234. **Pages H2906, H2925**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, April 25th.

Repealing the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled "Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform": S. 496, to repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled ''Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform'', by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 417 yeas to 3 nays, Roll No. 231. **Pages H2019–20**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:44 p.m. and reconvened at 3 p.m. **Page H2923**

Fannie and Freddie Open Records Act of 2017: The House passed H.R. 1694, to require additional entities to be subject to the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), by a yea-and-nay vote of 425 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 233. **Pages H2910–19, H2920–25**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–14 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule, modified by the amendment printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–96, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform now printed in the bill. **Pages H2910, H2921**

Agreed to:

Ross amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–96) that makes technical and conforming changes to the bill; **Pages H2921–22**

Clay amendment (No. 3 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–96) that clarifies that nothing in the bill may be construed to preclude or restrict disclosure of information regarding new products or significant new product terms prior to loan purchasing; and **Pages H2922–23**

Johnson (GA) amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–96) that ensures that the traditional Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) exemptions apply to this sub-section (by a recorded vote of 410 ayes to 5 noes, Roll No. 232). **Pages H2922, H2923–24**

H. Res. 280, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1694) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 226 ayes to 192 noes, Roll No. 230, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 230 yeas to 193 nays, Roll No. 229. **Pages H2910–19**

Recess: The House recessed at 5:41 p.m. and reconvened at 11:03 p.m. **Page H2938**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2918, H2918–19, H2919–20, H2923–24, H2924–25, H2925. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 11:04 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MEMBER DAY

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Member Day''. Testimony was heard from Chairman Chabot, and Representatives Walz, Carter of Texas, Loebsack, Crawford, Dunn, and Johnson of Louisiana.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER/ TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a hearing entitled ''Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder/Traumatic Brain Injury''. Testimony was heard from Captain Mike Colston, U.S. Navy, Director, Department of Defense, Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury; Lieutenant Colonel Chris Ivany, M.D., Chief, Behavior Health Division, Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army; Captain Thomas Johnson, M.D., U.S. Navy, Site Director, Intrepid Spirit Concussion Recovery Center, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; and Colonel Steven Pflanz, Deputy Director of Psychological Health, U.S. Air Force.

STRENGTHENING ACCREDITATION TO BETTER PROTECT STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Strengthening Accreditation to Better Protect Students and Taxpayers''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OUTDOOR RECREATION: VAST IMPACT OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection held a hearing entitled ''Outdoor Recreation: Vast Impact of the Great Outdoors''. Testimony was heard from Representative Beyer, and public witnesses.

SAFEGUARDING THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM FROM TERRORIST FINANCING

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance held a hearing entitled ''Safeguarding the Financial System from Terrorist Financing''. Testimony was heard from Jamal El-Hindi, Acting Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury.

SYRIA AFTER THE MISSILE STRIKES: POLICY OPTIONS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Syria After the Missile Strikes: Policy Options''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AFGHANISTAN'S TERRORIST RESURGENCE: AL-QAEDA, ISIS, AND BEYOND

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Afghanistan's Terrorist Resurgence: Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Beyond''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CHECKPOINT OF THE FUTURE: EVALUATING TSA'S INNOVATION TASK FORCE INITIATIVE

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security held a hearing entitled ''Checkpoint of the Future: Evaluating TSA's Innovation Task Force Initiative''. Testimony was heard from Steve Karoly, Acting Assistant Administrator, Office of Requirements and Capabilities Analysis, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; Roosevelt Council, Jr., General Manager Hatsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Department of Aviation, City of Atlanta, Georgia; and Jeanne M. Olivier, Assistant Director, Aviation Security and Technology, Security Operations and Programs Department, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 115, the ''Thin Blue Line Act''; H.R. 510, the ''Rapid DNA Act of 2017''; H.R. 613, the ''Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Correctional Officer Self-Protection Act of 2017''. H.R. 115, H.R. 510, and H.R. 613, were ordered reported, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 220, to authorize the expansion of an existing hydroelectric project, and for other purposes; H.R. 497, the ''Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act''; H.R. 660, the ''Bureau of Reclamation Transparency Act''; H.R. 1073, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a structure for visitor services on the Arlington Ridge tract, in the area of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, and for other purposes; H.R. 1135, to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation program; H.R. 1500, the ''Robert Emmet Park Act of 2017''; H.R. 1654, the ''Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act''; H.R. 1715, the ''Medgar Evers House Study Act''; H.R. 1769, the ''San Luis Unit Drainage Resolution Act''; H.R. 1807, the ''Public Water Supply Invasive Species Compliance Act of 2017''; H.R. 1873, the ''Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act''; H.R. 1967, the ''Bureau of Reclamation Pumped Storage Hydropower Development Act''; and H.R. 2085, to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau, and for other purposes. H.R. 660, H.R. 1073, H.R. 1135, H.R. 1500, H.R. 1715, and H.R. 2085 were ordered reported, without amendment. H.R. 220, H.R. 497, H.R. 1654, H.R. 1769, H.R. 1807, H.R.

1873, and H.R. 1967 were ordered reported, as amended.

THE BORDER WALL: STRENGTHENING OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled ''The Border Wall: Strengthening our National Security''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.J. Res. 99, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes. The Committee granted, by record vote of 8–2, a closed rule for H.J. Res. 99. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Frelinghuysen and Representative Lowey.

SMALL BUSINESS: THE KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access held a hearing entitled ''Small Business: The Key to Economic Growth''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: MITIGATING DAMAGE AND RECOVERING QUICKLY FROM DISASTERS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Mitigating Damage and Recovering Quickly from Disasters''. Testimony was heard from Andrew Phelps, Director, Oregon Office of Emergency Management; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a markup on H.R. 105, the ''Protect Veterans from Financial Fraud Act of 2017''; H.R. 1328, the ''American Heroes COLA Act of 2017''; H.R. 1329, the ''Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2017''; H.R. 1390, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay costs relating to the transportation of certain deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries owned by a State or tribal organization; H.R. 1564, the ''VA Beneficiary Travel Act of 2017''; and H.R. 1725, the ''Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act of 2017''. H.R. 1329, H.R. 1390, and H.R. 1725 were forwarded to the full committee, as amended. H.R. 105, H.R. 1328, and H.R. 1564 were forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

Joint Meetings

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission received a briefing on Russia's human rights violations against Ukrainian citizens from Halya Coynash, Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group, Mustafa Nayyem, Member of Ukrainian Parliament, and Natalya Kaplan, all of Kiev, Ukraine.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, to continue hearing entitled ''A Legislative Proposal to Create Hope and Opportunity for Investors, Consumers, and Entrepreneurs'', 9:15 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

11 a.m., Friday, April 28

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will be in a period of morning business.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, April 28

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.J. Res. 99—Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017 (Subject to a Rule).

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