CORRECTION

United States of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2017 No. 172

# House of Representatives

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

## DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
*October 25, 2017.*

I hereby appoint the Honorable SCOTT PERRY 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

## HEAD START AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, 35 years ago, President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed October as Head Start Awareness Month, and, proudly, we continue to raise awareness about Head Start and the benefits it brings to America's children.

Since its inception 50 years ago, Head Start has improved the lives of more than 32 million children and their families. Head Start gives every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, a chance to succeed in school and in life.

When Head Start was first launched in 1965, the idea of providing comprehensive health, nutrition, and education services to children in poverty was groundbreaking. The Head Start model, developed over the decades, has become one that has been built now on evidence-based practices and is constantly evolving, using the best available science and teaching techniques to meet the needs of local communities.

Head Start takes a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of young children across four major areas of development, including education. Head Start provides a variety of learning experiences to help children grow intellectually, socially, developmentally, and emotionally.

Health: Head Start offers health services such as immunizations, dental, medical, and mental health and nutritional services and early identification of health problems.

Parent involvement: Head Start involves parents in the planning and implementation of activities. Parents serve on policy councils and committees that make administrative decisions, participate in classes and workshops and child development, and volunteer in the program.

Social services: Head Start also provides outreach to families to determine what services they need.

Mr. Speaker, Head Start focuses on the whole child and the whole family. Research has suggested that educating children in their earliest years plays an important role in inspiring lifelong learning, school readiness, and preparing students before they begin kindergarten as an essential part of Head Start, and it is especially important for some of the most vulnerable among us to ensure access to quality education and the outcomes that can be derived from it.

Head Start and the Early Head Start programs are in small towns and big cities alike. They bring together parents, teachers, volunteers, and community leaders to create a quality program that truly does give lower income children a head start in life.

Studies have shown that students who have had access to Head Start were more likely to graduate from high school and attend college. They are less likely to commit a crime or become a teen parent. Head Start gives children equal footing from the start and allows them every opportunity to be successful, thanks to an early education.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Head Start programs in the Fifth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and throughout the Nation for helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. So many Americans from all walks of life were offered a fair start in life thanks to Head Start.

## EPIDEMIC OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise, yet again, because Americans are dying each and every day. The epidemic of gun violence has ended too many futures before they have begun, left too many empty seats at the dinner table, torn too many families apart, and left too many communities asking: How many more before Congress acts?

Mr. Speaker, I can't blame them. With 90 Americans dying from guns every day, this House and this Speaker continue to turn a blind eye to this epidemic.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, one man carried out this Nation's worst mass shooting in history in just 11 minutes, leaving 58 Americans dead. These are mothers and friends, sons



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and brothers, people just trying to enjoy some country music.

Instead of going home to their loving families, instead of going home and being greeted at the door by their toddler, they were carried away in bags. They are now another tragic statistic, another empty seat at Christmas dinner—lives taken, not lost—lives with such potential, lives that were doing amazing things, lives that were raising families and serving their community—lives taken, not lost—lives surrounded by hundreds of other lives that will never, never be the same.

Each life taken is a tragedy, but the hundreds of other lives impacted forever in those 11 minutes are, equally, now made tragic.

489 people were injured. Mr. Speaker, let me say that again, because we often focus on those killed but forget about the hundreds fighting for their lives in the intensive care unit. We forget about those who will need to learn to walk again or will never walk again. We forget about the mom who will never hold her baby again because her arms are paralyzed, the other grandfather who will never see his grandchildren again because he has been blinded.

Mr. Speaker, while Las Vegas marked that largest mass shooting in U.S. history, just 477 days earlier, the largest mass shooting was a preventable tragedy at Pulse nightclub in Orlando that took 49 lives and wounded 58.

How can you say there isn't a problem with gun violence when it takes less than 500 days for one horrific mass shooting to eclipse another as the deadliest in American history?

How can you say there is nothing we can do, as Americans die, as kids get shot and are never the same?

How is one man able to be so destructive in such a short amount of time?

The answer is in an after-market modification called the bump stock that turns an assault weapon into a machine gun, something outlawed by this House during the days of Al Capone. Yet it is still possible to walk into a gun store, purchase this device, and, within minutes, have a gun of war in your hands.

Mr. Speaker, how did we let this happen? More importantly, how are we still letting this happen? Why haven't we acted to outlaw these devices that allow people to make machines in their backyard?

There is a commonsense bipartisan bill awaiting action. Why haven't you called it to the floor? Is it because the NRA changed its mind and now opposes the bill?

Crickets—that is what I thought.

How can we keep our families safe when this House and this majority is beholden to the gun lobby dedicated to profits over people?

## REFORM AND REAUTHORIZE FAA

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

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning because the House must continue its work to reform and reauthorize the FAA. We have got to pass H.R. 2997, the 21st Century AIRR Act.

Thirty years ago—30 years ago—the FAA identified the need to modernize or upgrade the Nation's antiquated World War II era air traffic control system. This is a system, at the time, that used radar technology and paper strips for communications between controllers. They literally would take these paper slips and hand them from one controller to the next controller to the next controller as aircraft not only moved through the airwaves, but were moving through the airport systems.

Now, over the last 30 years, Canada, Australia, and many in the EU have changed to this GPS system. We have got countries all across the globe going to GPS, or decades ago have already switched. It is when they go through our airspace, we still use this old radar technology.

Now, during this time, we have upgraded GPS systems. We all carry around handheld devices that use GPS: the Wave app, Google app. There are many different mapping platforms that allow you to get through cities, towns, the countryside. If there is an accident, there is a delay, it allows you to get around it and move through so that we can actually have greater efficiencies on the road.

But 30 years have gone by, and today, after spending $7 billion, the FAA still uses this outdated radar technology, moving from beacon to beacon, getting passed along as you travel across the United States. And, yes, our air traffic control system still passes these little pieces of paper from one to the next to the next. Oftentimes, if you travel around, you will go through areas where you are not captured by the radar at all, while other countries continue with this GPS system.

This outdated air traffic control system negatively impacts the entire flying public. An outdated ATC means route inefficiencies, which means higher costs, which yields more congestion in our skies and sitting on our tarmacs.

I would like to see a system where you don't leave the gate to go sit on the runway until you know that you actually have a slot and are moving into the air and have a direct flight to your point. But today, you will see many airlines that will sit you out on the tarmac waiting for a slot.

More congestion is a direct factor of flight delays and canceled flights. The reforms in this bill will provide more on-time departures and arrivals and less canceled flights.

This bill is for the average flier. It doesn't matter which airline you take, we ought to have an air traffic control system that serves them all with a GPS system that allows you to get from point A to point B without the time delays.

This also has the Air Improvement Program fully funded, which actually increases the Airport Improvement Program from $3.3 billion to $4 billion. It has the ability to upgrade our airports.

Mr. Speaker, I also served my country in the Air Force for 16 years. As a veteran, I know that national security comes first. The 21st Century AIRR Act does not jeopardize the interaction between the Department of Defense and air traffic control; in fact, it strengthens it. The Federal Government retains exclusive sovereignty and control of the airspace, and the President maintains critical authority to assume control of the airspace during emergencies in times of war.

The time to bring up the bill, H.R. 3997, the 21st Century AIRR Act, is now. The public has waited way too long. We have been bypassed by other countries. If we can identify it 30 years ago that we had World War II technology, we ought to recognize it today and stop passing these little pieces of paper back and forth through our air traffic control systems.

Let's upgrade our systems, let's create efficiencies, and let's get people moving across this country in an efficient manner where they are not sitting on tarmacs waiting for flight delays.

## DEMAND ACTION FOR VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise, once again, to honor, mourn, and demand action for victims of gun violence.

On October 1, a gunman armed with semiautomatic weapons equipped with bump stocks fired hundreds of rounds in a matter of minutes at concert goers in my Las Vegas congressional district, killing 58 and injuring 489 others in attendance.

During my tenure in Congress, I have stood for too many moments of silence on this House floor to remember lives lost to senseless gun violence.

Many of my colleagues and I know all too well about the senseless loss of life in our streets, movie theaters, schools, and, now, concert venues. We have pleaded, we have watched, we have mourned as more and more victims suffer, and we have seen nothing from congressional Republicans.

This just can't go on. We can't ignore the lives lost due to gun violence in my district or in any other for any longer, and if we don't act soon, we will just be here doing it again.

So I want to call the names, say the names, remember the names of the 58 casualties who lost their lives in my district. Let us honor their memory, and let these 58 names give the Republicans 58 more reasons why we must take action now.

Hannah Ahlers; Heather Alvarado; Dorene Anderson; Carrie Barnette; Jack Beaton; Steve Berger; Candice Bowers; Denise Burditus; Sandy Casey;

Andrea Castilla; Denise Cohen; Austin Davis; Thomas Day, Jr.; Christiana Duarte; Stacee Etcheber; Brian Fraser; Keri Galvan; Dana Gardner; Angela Gomez; Rocio Guillen Rocha; Charleston Hartfield, a police officer off duty; Chris Hazencomb; Jennifer Topaz Irvine; Teresa Nicol Kimura; Jessica Klymchuk; Carly Kreibaum; Rhonda LeRocque; Victor Link; Jordan McIldoon; Kelsey Meadows; Calla-Marie Medig; James ''Sonny'' Melton; Patricia Mestas; Austin Meyer; Adrian Murfitt; Rachael Parker; Jenny Parks; Carrie Parsons; Lisa Patterson; John Phippen; Melissa Ramirez; Jordyn Rivera; Quinton Robbins; Cameron Robinson; Tara Roe; Lisa Romero-Muniz; Chris Roybal; Brett Schwanbeck; Bailey Schweitzer; Laura Shipp; Erick Silva; Susan Smith; Brennan Stewart; Derrick ''Bo'' Taylor; Neysa Tonks; Michelle Vo; Kurt von Tillow; and Bill Wolfe.

These are the 58 people who lost their lives from gun violence in my district in Nevada; 58 more reasons why we shouldn't stand silent, but we need to take action now.

□ 1015

## RECOGNIZING NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS CENTER

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the critical and lifesaving work being done by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Aircraft Operations Center.

On September 23, I had a front row seat flying into the eye of Hurricane Maria as it headed toward Puerto Rico and the coastal United States. I rode through the hurricane aboard a NOAA P–3 Orion operated by the highly specialized workforce of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, civilian technicians, meteorologists from NOAA, and others, who have safely navigated these hurricanes for decades.

The P–3's instruments collect and transmit realtime weather data from storms far out to the sea back to the mainland. This data is critical for hurricane forecasters used by the American public and emergency managers.

Providing the most accurate forecasts of hurricane track and intensity, as early as possible, is the focus of these flights. Whether a strong hurricane directly hits a major U.S. city or weakens and spins out to sea with minimal impacts is a question that can impact billions of dollars and thousands of lives. These flights are vital to protect our Nation's lives and property.

In addition to the P–3 hurricane hunter I flew in, NOAA also has a G–IV jet that goes high above the storm. The specialized instrumentation on NOAA hurricane aircraft provides critical storm data. The dual-channel tail doppler radars provide three-dimensional views of the storm.

These advanced technology tools make NOAA's fleet a critical resource to safeguard lives and property when hurricanes threaten our shores. There is no doubt that this has been a challenging hurricane season for the country, with Hurricane Harvey's flooding in Louisiana and Texas, Hurricane Irma impacting Florida, and Hurricane Maria devastating Puerto Rico. NOAA's aircraft have performed tirelessly throughout these events. Over a 4-week period, two NOAA hurricane aircraft flew over 300 hours and dropped over 500 weather probes into these storms.

After the hurricanes pass, NOAA's work is not done. NOAA's fleet of light aircraft perform poststorm damage assessments, taking high resolution images that enable limited emergency response resources to be delivered to the most critical areas.

NOAA's King Air aircraft emergency response efforts to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria have resulted in more than 1.7 billion requests for damage assessment images. In total, more than 65,000 images were collected, covering more than 24,000 square kilometers of impacted areas. Think about that. These images allow emergency managers and the general public to be able to flee quickly, to react quickly, and to assess quickly in these impacted areas.

NOAA's light survey aircraft also perform a diverse set of missions, including river and snow pack surveys essential for flood forecasts and water management; coastal mapping required for safe maritime navigation by commercial, military, and recreational sectors; and fisheries assessments.

NOAA's aircraft are responsive and flexible, able to deploy at a moment's notice in support of national disaster response. NOAA aircraft provided critical data and support on scene following the Deepwater Horizon event and over the skies of New York after Hurricane Sandy. NOAA aircraft provide data critical for public safety, economic, and national security.

The NOAA aircraft fleet, the NOAA Commissioned Corps, and NOAA civilians are an invaluable natural resource, and it is one that we have a duty to maintain. These crews and aircraft require regular updates, readiness training, and technology enhancements that directly benefit us and our country.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and the President to ensure that NOAA aircraft fleet has all of the resources they need to safeguard lives and property for decades to come.

## PUERTO RICO NEEDS HELP

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, imagine waking up with no lights, imagine waking up with no running water, you cannot bathe yourself, you cannot feed your children, you get so desperate that you break into chemically contaminated water, into untreated sewage water, you are on dialysis, Mr. Speaker, and there is still no electricity, or you are running out of medication and supplies in hospitals that are very low.

What I am describing to you, Mr. Speaker, is not a dream. It is a living nightmare, and it has been a living nightmare in Puerto Rico for over a month. For over 4 weeks, while we now begin to focus and speak about tax reform and how this Congress attempts to assist the 1 percent—the wealthiest, the well-heeled—with a handsome tax break, with the elimination of the estate tax, when we attempt to shelve, to forget, to turn our head on this nightmare unfolded in Puerto Rico, it continues to be a living nightmare.

That doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Puerto Rico could lose funding also for thousands of low-income housing units if power to the island isn't restored soon. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which subsidizes 203 housing projects on the island, is prohibited by law from providing Section 8 assistance to buildings that are not decent, safe, and sanitary.

Every day that Puerto Rico goes without resources, potable water, medication, and electricity, the situation becomes more dangerous and the death tolls continue to go up. This has now become, Mr. Speaker, our Caribbean Katrina.

The official death toll reported by the government increased today to 49 deaths, but many folks fear that it is much higher than that, after confirming a death due to leptospirosis. According to the CDC, leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that affects humans and animals. Without treatment, this disease can lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, respiratory distress, and even death. To date, the island has reported 76 possible cases of the disease. Investigative reporting from various sources have tallied up deaths to potentially north of 450 people. As of Friday, October 6, at least 14 people have committed suicide in Puerto Rico. They are traumatized and in distress. This is our Caribbean Katrina. A list of 113 people remain missing after Maria's passage.

I was just in Puerto Rico for the second time this past week with Congressman LUIS GUTIÉRREZ. The Congressman and I helped distribute supplies and necessities to Comerio, a small town in a remote part of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico continues to need help. It needs to be woken up from this living nightmare. S.O.S. S.O.S. Get resources to them now. It is our Caribbean Katrina. Let's own it. Let's resolve it.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

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

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, the world is an ugly place right now. It seems that at every turn there is another crisis—another barrier to peace and prosperity, another obstacle to fight, or another cross to bear. More of our citizens, women, children, and grandkids are turning to something—anything—to mute the pain and create a false sense of peace. Society has been infected by drug addiction, a disease fueled by a loss of hope.

We see it on the news, we watch it online, we feel loss in our communities. This disease is killing our friends and neighbors. Last year alone, over 64,000 lives were lost. That is more casualties in a year than we saw during the height of the Vietnam war.

And this is a war, too—a war being fought in the streets and in our homes. And we are losing. Mothers, sons, daughters, and fathers are dying—from the cold streets of major cities to the quiet fields of rural America—we are all feeling the effects of the opioid crisis.

What can be done? That is a question I have asked countless law enforcement officials, doctors, nurses, addiction treatment professionals, and community leaders. There is no one solution to stopping the opioid epidemic in this country.

This is a man-made disaster. We must face it head on with education and awareness, addiction and recovery services, funding, prescription drug monitoring programs, and prevention. We need to prevent our loved ones from being dragged into the abyss of addiction and hopelessness.

According to the CDC, three out of four new heroin users report abusing prescription opioids before using heroin. There is an easy step each of us can take to help with prevention. We can get rid of our old opioid prescriptions at home. Why chance someone taking them? Why chance your loved one being a statistic?

This year alone, 153 individuals in St. Louis County have already died of an overdose. How many of them started with prescribed opioids? How many started by taking prescriptions from a parent or a family member? If we could have saved just one of these lives by throwing away old prescriptions, then isn't it worth it?

This Saturday, October 28, local law enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Agency will be set up all around the country and in our neighborhoods for National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. They are providing safe and easy locations for you to throw away unused prescription drugs.

I have no idea how many people can, and will, be saved by this one simple act. But multiply this one act times thousands, and now we are getting something done. Mr. Speaker, this is an epidemic this Nation has never seen. This is a disease of our own making.

This week, there is something we all can do. Think about your household. Go into your hidden cupboards and see if you have old prescriptions. I bet you do. Take them. Find your nearest drug take back location and throw them away.

We need to restore hope in this fight, and it won't happen overnight. It will take work, prayer, patience, and vigilance. Hope can be restored. If and when we band together to fight this epidemic, it will happen.

So let's restore a little hope this week. Let's all join the fight to end the opioid epidemic.

□ 1030

THE WHITEFISH ENERGY DEAL

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, there is something fishy about the Whitefish Energy deal that was reported in The Washington Post.

Whitefish Energy, based in Whitefish, Montana, was awarded a $300 million contract to repair and replace the electrical grid in Puerto Rico. We learned that the company is 2 years old and, as of about 6 weeks ago, had just two employees. It does not have a track record of working on massive projects, certainly not one as massive as rebuilding the power grid in Puerto Rico after a once-in-a-century storm like Hurricane Maria.

The Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority did not solicit bids for this contract. They did not do what most power utilities do under these circumstances, which is rely on mutual assistant relationships with other power companies.

In Florida and in Texas—and in Illinois, for that matter—after a big storm, power companies from around the country send linemen and other workers to assist the local company. But that is not happening here. The Florida Power and Light Company brought in 20,000 workers after Irma and, apparently, was willing to send workers to Puerto Rico and help, but the request for help never came.

So what is going on here?

A tiny company that does not have a track record gets one of the biggest contracts to help rebuild Puerto Rico in a no-bid, out-of-the-ordinary contracting procedure.

That is why I wrote yesterday to Attorney General Jeff Sessions and FBI Director Christopher Wray, because I want them to investigate this deal, how it was awarded, why this company got the contract, and whether there is any evidence of it being a sweetheart, corrupt deal to boost business allies and political allies of the President and members of his Cabinet.

I also plan to bring this issue up to the Oversight Committees in this body.

On the surface, the Whitefish Energy deal looks fishy, but when you look a little deeper, the Whitefish Energy deal looks corrupt.

Whitefish Energy is based in Whitefish, Montana. Guess what. That is the hometown of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who used to represent Montana in this body. His son even worked for the company. The chief executive of Whitefish Energy, Andy Techmanski, knows Secretary Zinke; but as a spokesperson for the Interior Department said yesterday, in Whitefish, ''everybody knows everybody.''

Guess what. That doesn't make me feel any better about the deal.

Go a little deeper and you find out that Whitefish Energy is financed by HBC Investments, which is a private equity firm founded by Joe Colonnetta, who holds the title of general partner.

The Daily Beast reported that Colonnetta gave $20,000 to the Trump Victory PAC, maxed out on contributions to Trump for his Presidential campaign in the primaries and general elections, about $32,000, then another $30,000 that he gave to the Republican National Committee. Kimberly Colonnetta, his wife, was also a maximum donor, meaning she gave the maximum allowed by law during the 2016 election to Trump and his various committees.

Now, please look here, and the pictures are right off the Internet. They certainly add additional evidence to the idea that Whitefish and the Colonnettas are pretty chummy with our President and his Cabinet. Right here is Mr. Colonnetta with the President of the United States, the two Colonnettas at the inauguration, and a picture of Mrs. Colonnetta with Ben Carson, one of the President's Cabinet members.

Don't forget, all you kids out there watching at home on C–SPAN, what you post on Facebook stays there forever.

Now, I know that not everything that looks corruption is in fact corruption. Sometimes what looks fishy on the surface turns out to be legit, but most of the time, you know what, it turns out to be corruption.

The reason this matters so much is that, without electricity, we can't get water restored to the people of Puerto Rico. Water doesn't flow uphill without pumps, and those pumps need power. You cannot live without water; you die. Dialysis machines, electrical wheelchairs, refrigeration for baby formula, insulin for diabetics, chemotherapy for those with cancer all require electricity. It is a matter of life and death.

I was just there and saw the suffering of the people in the villages and towns across the island of Puerto Rico. Without electricity, we cannot get Puerto Ricans back to work rebuilding their island and beginning to end the suffering.

Look, the last thing we and the people of Puerto Rico need right now is a fat cat lining his pockets with money because they are well connected.

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. That money should be saving lives, not ending them.

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. That is why I demand the FBI and the Attorney General investigate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

## INNOVATIVE APPRENTICESHIPS

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

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the PARTNERS Act, legislation I am introducing this morning with my friend, Representative BONAMICI from Oregon.

Our bill would establish a grant program to support the creation and expansion of innovative apprenticeships that prepare our workers for 21st century careers.

In the Third District of Georgia, the CEC in Newnan has led Georgia by implementing an apprenticeship model, and since then, we have seen apprenticeships continue to expand across our great State.

I, along with Ms. BONAMICI, are introducing the PARTNERS Act today to bring more programs like this to students and workers across the Nation.

By funding this grant with already existing H1–B visa fees, which are collected from foreign visa applicants, we are ensuring that workers can receive immediate work-based training at no cost to the American taxpayer.

## APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be on the floor this morning to introduce bipartisan legislation with my colleague on the Education and Workforce Committee, Congressman DREW FERGUSON from Georgia.

Our bill, Promoting Apprenticeships Through Regional Training Networks for Employers' Required Skills Act, or PARTNERS Act, will help close the skills gap by increasing opportunities for small- and medium-sized businesses to establish apprenticeships and work-based learning programs.

When I visit communities in northwest Oregon, I hear from many Oregonians who still feel left behind because they don't have the skills they need to compete in today's economy. They are not alone. Many jobs today do not require a 4-year degree, but do require more than a high school diploma. In fact, those jobs make up about 53 percent of today's labor market, but only 43 percent of today's workers are trained at this level.

This creates a skills gap, leaving businesses struggling to find workers with appropriate skills, and workers without meaningful pathways to better paying jobs.

I hear from employers and workforce organizations about the importance of a qualified workforce. They want to identify new opportunities to strengthen skills training.

Apprenticeships and work-based learning programs are a win-win. They provide individuals with paid, on-the-job training and classroom instruction. Employers can align training with the skills they need at their workplaces, and workers can learn while they earn.

Unfortunately, small- and medium-sized businesses often lack the infrastructure and resources to establish apprenticeships or work-based learning programs on their own. So the PARTNERS Act addresses this by establishing a grant program to support the creation and expansion of industry and sector partnerships that will help small-and medium-sized businesses develop work-based learning programs and provide support programs for workers.

Industry and sector partnerships will bring together employers, education, training, labor, and community-based organizations to develop work-based learning programs that benefit workers and the economy as a whole.

In Oregon, these partnerships could address, for example, workforce development needs in rapidly growing sectors like healthcare and technology.

Under the PARTNERS Act, the partnerships would use grant funds to recruit workers, develop training curriculum, and provide workers with access to tools, work attire, transportation, childcare services, and mentorship support. These support services help businesses retain employees and help workers balance caring for and providing for their families.

Importantly, Mr. Speaker, this bill results in no additional cost to taxpayers because it authorizes the use of 50 percent of the funds deposited in the H1–B nonimmigrant petition account, and these will be used by the Department of Labor for the partnership grants. This funding source was suggested by the administration in a June 2017 executive order on apprenticeships.

Through stronger investments and work-based learning programs, we can build pathways to get more people back to work, to provide our Nation's businesses with the workforce that will improve productivity and efficiency.

I thank Mr. FERGUSON for his leadership, and I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bipartisan legislation that will help people in our districts across the country access good jobs.

## TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today we will begin a journey that has been represented to be a lifeline for the American people in long awaited tax reform.

Sad to say that this is not a bipartisan bill. In addition, it is a bill that will cause a great deal of challenge to the American people.

For example, in moving firms across the ocean, overseas, the American people should know that those companies, in the construct of this bill, will cause them to be exempt from taxes forever.

In a discussion this morning, I heard that it will not boost the economy. The American people should know that it will destroy, undermine, crush the economy.

The representation of the level of growth is a misnomer. Take, for example, in 1986, in the tax reform, there was no surge in job creation after the Reagan tax cuts. There was no high numbers of blossoming jobs. Many in my congressional district need jobs.

It will be borrowing from the future and it will be a burden on our children, our children's children, and their children. But the most devastating part is the bill that we will be paying, the actual dollars to pay down the deficit.

Of course, it should be known that we have examples that no jobs will be created. In 2004, for example, when there was a repatriation from companies regarding their taxes, there was no creation of jobs that we can even recognize. Most of the money went for stock buybacks.

Now, I know that sounds completely technical, but let me be very clear. The question has to be: What will the middle class working families get?

I can assure you, it will be close to zero.

There are 2 million households, for example, in the State of Texas that will be impacted by not allowing the exemption of State and local taxes. We don't know whether mortgage deductions will be allowed, charitable tax credits. So if you have in some way been deducting, for example, those State and local taxes, you will not be able to do them anymore. That will be a great burden on the working families of America.

So my caution to the business community as well as the small businesses, families: Be very careful what you buy into. We will have discussions to provide you with that detailed analysis. The key is a distribution table. What and whom will get the most money.

As the bill is presently written, middle class working families, don't look for relief in the Ryan-McConnell tax bill. It will all go to the top 1 percent. They will relish while, you might not be jealous, but you will certainly be poorer for it.

### OPIOID CRISIS

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to also entertain the questions about the pending opioid announcement of this White House. I want to bring to the attention the article in The New Yorker on the empire of pain.

I am working on these issues, but I realize that this has to be a comprehensive approach to opioid abuse.

The Purdue company launched OxyContin with a marketing campaign that attempted to counter this attitude and change the prescribing habits of doctors.

□ 1045

Many people know OxyContin. The company funded research and paid doctors to make the case that concerns about opioid addiction were overblown and that OxyContin would safely treat an ever-wider range of maladies. Sales representatives marketed OxyContin as a product to start with and to stay with. Remember that. A product to start with and to stay with.

Millions of patients found the drug to be a vital salve for excruciating pain, but many others grew so hooked on it, that between doses they experienced debilitating withdrawal.

If we are going to do real opioid reform, this must be a standup of the pharmaceutical companies, and they cannot be defended.

In addition, we have to understand that those languishing in jail that have suffered from criminal penalties for crack cocaine—crack—there now should be a compromise for their release. Opioid reform must include all of the neighborhoods of America, not just some.

## JENNIFER KEPNER WAS MOST COURAGEOUS AND INSPIRING

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and legacy of a wonderful person, an incredible wife, loving mother, exceptional citizen, and one of our Nation's finest servicemembers, Jennifer Kepner.

Jennifer passed away on October 18, 2017, at the young age of 39. She lived in my congressional district in Cathedral City, California. My heart breaks for her family and loved ones. She is, by far, one of the most courageous and inspiring people I have ever met. She put family, country, and community before self.

At 23, Jennifer answered the call to serve our Nation as a medic and a staff sergeant in the United States Air Force. She served for 6 years, from 2001 to 2007, and helped save countless lives on the battlefield.

After being honorably discharged at the rank of staff sergeant, Jenn continued her life of service, helping patients in our local communities as a radiology technician at Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.

She led a healthy and full life in so many ways. Her many hobbies included CrossFit, hiking, camping with her family, quilting, and even painting.

All who met her remember her love of country, her determined spirit, her passion for serving others, and her devotion to family.

Despite her healthy lifestyle and no other risks, in 2016, Jennifer was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, a terrifying diagnosis for anyone, let alone a young mother.

After exhaustive work to investigate the potential causes of her cancer, her oncologist linked Jennifer's exposure to burn pits in Iraq as the only identifiable and plausible risk for her cancer.

Burn pits are commonly used by the military to eliminate waste in Iraq and Afghanistan. The large burn pit at Balad Air Base in Iraq, where Jennifer was stationed for 6 months in 2006, covered 10 acres and burned over 240 tons of trash each day, including everything from computer parts, medical waste, plastics, and chemicals; some items we wouldn't allow to be burned in open air in our neighborhoods here in the United States. Yet, in a crowded camp of thousands, our men and women in uniform are exposed to giant plumes of black smoke.

After learning of the potential link between her exposure while she served our great Nation and her cancer, she went to the VA seeking answers and help. After being denied medical assistance and benefits from the VA initially, Jennifer reached out to the advocacy group Burn Pits 360 and my office.

Along with others, and as a team, we helped her navigate the complicated VA process, cut through the red tape, and get her the benefits that she had earned.

I visited Jennifer at her home. During our kitchen table talk, she told me about her daily struggle raising two small children while battling pancreatic cancer. She was brave and had an optimistic attitude.

She told me what it was like living every day in Iraq right next to the burn pits—the smoke, the smell, the irritated cough, and the sickness that followed.

Her main concern was to ensure her husband and children were going to be okay after she passed. Her second concern was for her fellow veterans who, like her, were exposed to burn pits. She wanted to bring awareness to what she called ''the Agent Orange of our generation.'' Imagine that. During the toughest battle of her life against an aggressive cancer, she elevated her family and fellow veterans above herself. Her advocacy was for us to prevent future exposure to burn pits and serve veterans who have already been exposed.

That is why we are here, to honor Jennifer and fight for her, her family, and fellow veterans. We must find a solution. Unfortunately, it is too late for Jennifer, but we can fight in her honor.

I was there with Jenn; her husband, Ben; children, Aida and Wyatt, at her bedside hours before she passed away, and I am honored to call Ben my friend.

On behalf of my wife, Monica, the 36th Congressional District, and our entire Nation, we join together as a community to grieve with you, Ben, little Aida and Wyatt, and to honor your wife, your mother, and the life of Jennifer Kepner. We are awed and humbled by Jennifer's life of patriotism and service, and her life and her love of family.

Jennifer, we thank you for your service and sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, Jennifer's memory will never be forgotten.

## A CIRCUIT BREAKER IS NEEDED FOR PROPOSED TAX CUTS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the exercise my Republican friends are going through with their budget and tax cut proposal would be amusing if the consequences were not so serious.

Coming to Congress, I worked hard to earn a position on the House Ways and Means Committee, which has been the focal point for critical decisions in the past dealing with tax reform, with Social Security. I respected its historic role and the way that its members worked together in a thoughtful and bipartisan basis.

Unfortunately, unlike what has happened for other major tax reform efforts, currently there has been no effort for laying the groundwork, working with people in both parties, dealing with the hard decisions that are necessary for tax reform that will move our country forward. My Republican friends refuse to deal with the heavy legislative lifting necessary for true reform.

In fact, my Republican friends now have given up on tax reform. They are rushing through, in a matter of days, not reform but as big a tax cut as they can possibly get, predicated on strong-arming their Members with narrow control in Congress and disregarding the fundamentals of responsible budgeting.

The budget resolution that the House will soon be considering by the Republicans to enact their tax cut via the process known as reconciliation is a fantasy. Read it carefully. It is predicated on increasing our national debt $1.5 trillion, when previously they promised that their tax reform would be budget neutral.

It is predicated on $4 trillion of unspecified budget cuts that will be concentrated on Medicare, Medicaid, and the other programs that Americans care the most deeply about.

The proof for this fantasy is the fact that even though Republicans have an ironclad grip on the appropriations process in both the House and the Senate and they don't have to worry about filibusters, they don't need any Democratic votes at all, but they still cannot summon the courage of their convictions to implement the beginning of this strategy.

It doesn't have to wait for 2 or 4 or 10 years. They could start now with the

budget cutting that they are relying upon for this fantasy budget, but they know that the American people won't stand for it and their own Members wouldn't vote for those cuts now even though there is nothing stopping them.

That is why it is absolutely essential that, even if they are modestly successful with this reckless agenda, that we take steps to prevent the resulting fiscal train wreck, because we have seen deficits explode in the past where rosy projections about economic growth and stern budget cuts fail to materialize.

The landmark 1986 tax reform legislation, the last time we had real tax reform, by the way, predicated on bipartisan cooperation and a lot of hard work, had no discernible impact on economic growth, even though it was, in fact, worth it.

As a result, I will be offering standalone legislation and amendments in the Ways and Means Committee to establish a circuit breaker that will suspend the tax cuts if the rosy projections fail to materialize. If deficits explode and budgets are not cut according to their plan, then the American people should be spared the economic chaos by calling a timeout and rolling back these reckless proposals, allowing us to catch our breath and hopefully develop better policy based on bipartisanship and facts, not fantasy.

America deserves a far-better vision than the Republican budget fantasy and the reckless tax cuts that they are pushing so hard to enact. At a minimum, we should have a circuit breaker to stop it if they can't follow through on their promises.

## AMRO FABRICATING CELEBRATES 40 YEARS

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 40th anniversary of AMRO Fabricating Corporation, whose Riverside manufacturing facility is adjacent to the March Air Reserve Base in my district.

AMRO is a small business manufacturer that plays an important role in supporting NASA, the Department of Defense, and our community.

Under the guidance of CEO Michael E. Riley, the grandson of founders Michael K. and Thora A. Riley, this family company is helping to develop a strong and skilled workforce in southern California.

AMRO is partnering with the State and Federal Government on projects that place high school and college students in internships and apprenticeships, which prepare them for a successful future and support our local economy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the AMRO team on this milestone, and I am proud to represent this terrific small business that is doing such great work for our community and for our Nation.

## THE BIG BANKS ARE MAKING BIG BUCKS

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, once again, I am honored to stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America, although I am sad to bring the news that I shall share with you.

I am saddened by something that has happened in this Congress. The big banks are making big bucks. They are doing very well, and they just received a big bonus from Congress.

The big bonus is this: if you do business with them, you will have to participate in arbitration, and you won't be allowed to sue them to resolve your dispute by way of litigation. Congress has decided that the big banks making the big bucks can force you to go to arbitration, and you will have to pay a fee to negotiate your way through the arbitration process. I think that there is something wrong with this picture.

There is something wrong with this picture when we realize that one bank—and I will just single one out, I won't go through all of the entirety of the industry, but one bank, Wells Fargo, one bank, opened 3.5 million accounts in the names of persons without their consent. In the names of customers, 3.5 million accounts without the consent of customers.

□ 1100

This one bank, Wells Fargo, paid $185 million as a part of the resolution. This one bank, Wells Fargo, paid $80 million for enrolling customers into auto insurance that they didn't need. One bank, Wells Fargo, paid $2.8 million in refunds to customers. One bank, Wells Fargo, in 2012, illegally foreclosed on servicemembers' homes and autos—one bank, Wells Fargo—and for this, they paid $311 million. This was about $125,000 per servicemember.

So we find ourselves in a circumstance where banks that do these ugly things to customers won't have to go to court. They won't have to face a jury. They will simply require the customer to negotiate with them. I find this quite shocking, to be quite frank with you, and I am very saddened by it, because I know that, if you take from the bank, you will go to court. But, apparently, Congress has concluded that, if the bank takes from you, you go to the bank and negotiate.

It is a sad state of affairs.

## RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 1 minute 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. POE of Texas) at noon.

## PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Christopher Girata, Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Dallas, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, we thank You for the gift of this life and ask Your blessing upon the world You have made. Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble.

Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance that we may use our liberty in accordance with Your gracious will. Guide all who govern and hold authority in this Nation, and kindle in every heart that true love of peace.

Make our lives a sign of Your love to this broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness, heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. Grant that the bonds of our common humanity, by which all Your children are united one to another, may be so transformed by Your grace that Your will may be done on Earth as it is in heaven.

All this, we ask in the name of God, our creator, redeemer, and sustainer.

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, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. PITTENGER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

## WELCOMING REVEREND DR. CHRISTOPHER D. GIRATA

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, it is my true honor to introduce and recognize our guest chaplain today, Father Chris Girata. I am honored because he is my rector, the rector of Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Dallas, Texas, where my family and I have worshipped for over 20 years.

Although he has been our rector for only a little over a year, Father Girata has brought a renewed spirituality and passion to our parish. His enthusiasm for God's Word and will is infectious to us all. His sense of humor always brightens our day, and he leads by example.

As one parishioner put it, Mr. Speaker: ''He is a true voice for the powerless and poor and is constantly challenging us to even better walk as Christ did.'' And whether it is through our service at the Jubilee Park and Community Center in South Dallas, the millions in charity provided through the St. Michael's Woman's Exchange, or any of the other ministries or outreach projects of our parish, under Father Chris Girata, Saint Michael is more humbly and effectively serving God's children.

And as we do, Father Girata leads us not to just serve our neighbors' physical needs, but to serve their spiritual needs as well. I am grateful that his prayer and his example could be shared with the House today.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC, October 25, 2017.*

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 25, 2017, at 9:07 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 226.

That the Senate passed S. 1766.

That the Senate concur in the House of Representatives amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2266.

That the Senate agree to without amendment H.J. Res. 111.

Appointments:

United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

## LIBERATION OF MARAWI, PHILIPPINES

(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, sadly, radical Islamic terrorists continue their assault on innocent victims across the world.

This month, there were ISIS-inspired knife attacks in France and Canada, as well as the surprise attack in Niger, with mass murders of worshippers at mosques in Kabul.

Gratefully, there are victories over the terrorists, such as the recent liberation of Raqqa, Syria, and now in the Philippines.

Congratulations to the people of the Philippines, successfully led by President Rodrigo Duterte and their courageous military, on the recent liberation of Marawi from ISIS militants.

Marawi is the capital city of over 200,000 citizens in the province of Lanao del Sur on the island of Mindanao, which has been under ISIS control since the end of May. Innocent families were persecuted in this murderous occupation.

While liberating Marawi from ISIS control is a milestone in combatting global terrorism, this fight is far from finished. We must be successful to defeat the terrorists overseas to protect American families at home.

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

## URGE IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF THE DREAM ACT

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the immediate passage of the Dream Act to bring certainty to the more than 10,000 DREAMers in Oregon and DREAMers across the country.

I have met with DREAMers in my State of Oregon, and tearing them away from their lives would be a tremendous loss for our communities. DREAMers like Daniel, a dedicated second grade teacher, DACA allowed him to come out of the shadows and give back to his community.

But with President Trump ending DACA, Daniel is rightly anxious about his future. He worries about the effect on his students if he is forced to leave abruptly in the middle of the school year.

When we threaten DREAMers, we put their futures at risk, but we also risk harming the many people who rely on them, like Daniel's students.

Mr. Speaker, we must work together and pass the Dream Act immediately. We just pledged, ''with liberty and justice for all.'' Let's bring justice to the DREAMers and pass the Dream Act.

## PREVENTING TAX-FREE BONDS FROM GOING TO ABORTION PROVIDERS

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the No Abortion Bonds Act, to end Federal tax-exempt bonds that support abortion providers.

Under a loophole in the current law, cities, counties, and States can issue Federal tax-free bonds to finance construction of abortion clinics.

In 2012, the New York City government issued a tax-free $15 million bond for a $30 million renovation of Planned Parenthood's national headquarters, which was subsequently sold 3 years later for $60 million. In 2007, Sarasota County, Florida, floated an $8 million tax-free bond to pay for a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic.

These tax-free bonds are intended to finance schools, hospitals, infrastructure—not abortion clinics.

The No Abortion Bonds Act has over 30 bipartisan cosponsors and is endorsed by Americans United for Life, Susan B. Anthony List, National Right to Life, March for Life, the Family Policy Alliance, and the Eagle Forum.

Please join me today in applying the spirit of the Hyde amendment to the Tax Code by preventing tax-free bonds from going to abortion providers.

## MEDICARE BUY-IN OPTION

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is the best public option that already exists to improve the Affordable Care Act and to provide immediate relief to Americans on the individual market.

Next week, the Nation's State insurance commissioners will make public insurers' price gouging increases for next year, including a 60 percent increase in Georgia, a 50 percent increase in Florida, and the remaining States up to a 50 percent 1-year increase.

A Medicare buy-in option for younger Americans is the only hedge against these price spikes that every American will look to Congress for relief from. Congress has been negligent in their 7-year near obsession with repeal and replace. You can no longer blame ObamaCare.

Mr. Speaker, I urge every Member of Congress to support the Medicare Buy-in and Healthcare Stabilization Act and Medicare X legislation. It is time to unleash the market power of Medicare to lower costs, improve quality,

and push back on private insurers' aggressive pricing.

## HONORING DONALD GILLEN, CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENT

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of one of my constituents, Donald Gillen, who is in Washington, D.C., today to receive the Congressional Gold Medal for his service to our Nation during World War II.

Donald joined the Army on July 26, 1945. He was stationed at Camp O'Donnell in the Philippines from November 1946 through June 1947. As part of the 12th Philippine Scout Division, he became a company commander in the 57th Infantry Regiment.

Donald moved to Belleville, Illinois, with his college sweetheart, Marilyn, to be close to his family, including four grandchildren. Now he is a guest staffer for the Belleville News-Democrat and supports his wife's singing in their church choir.

I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Donald to our Nation's Capitol and thanking him for his service. We are forever grateful.

## RECOGNITION OF LOS BANOS POLICE DEPARTMENT

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the men and the women of the Los Banos Police Department as Heroes and Heroines of the Month for California's 16th Congressional District, part of the people whom I have the honor and pride to represent.

These men and women tirelessly serve our community and truly are remarkable in embodying their motto: Pride in Service, Integrity in Action—Pride in Service, Integrity in Action.

But the pursuit of excellence is not without cost. We know that they risk their lives every day on a 24/7 basis.

Earlier this summer, two Los Banos police officers, Kristifer Hew and Aaron Pinon, were shot in the line of duty. I am happy to report that both officers are making spirited recoveries, but the risk police officers face every day to keep us safe cannot be overstated. So we salute them and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Los Banos Police Department Heroes and Heroines of the Month for California's 16th Congressional District, as well as recognizing all of America's law enforcement officers. We can never ever thank them enough for their dedicated service as they protect all of America throughout our Nation.

## NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK

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

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join 1.3 million fellow Mainers in celebrating National Forest Products Week.

Mr. Speaker, our great State is 90 percent covered by healthy, sustainable forests which support more than 30,000 good-paying jobs. Now, nationally, our working forests support 930,000 hardworking Americans who manage the forests, who harvest the trees, and who transport the wood to paper mills and energy plants across our great Nation.

Every day, products like paper and lumber and pet food bags and toothpicks and pencils make our lives better. And the best part, Mr. Speaker, is that these trees grow back after we cut them, so this entire green, sustainable industry creates good-paying jobs generation after generation.

Now, Democrats and Republicans must do everything humanly possible to help make sure our forest products industry is healthy and thrives. And to that end, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank everybody in this Chamber to make sure that we continue to treat biomass fairly in our regulations, make sure biomass is carbon neutral. This will avoid unnecessary and costly regulations being imposed on our mills, factories, and energy plants.

□ 1215

## HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are one week away from the open enrollment period—an opportunity for Americans to purchase health insurance for 2018.

President Trump ended the cost sharing reduction—the CSR—payments, which reduce out-of-pocket costs for low-income working families.

A Congressional Budget Office analysis says ending these payments would likely increase premiums by 20 percent next year and by 25 percent by 2020.

In the Senate, there is a bipartisan agreement, led by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY, to stabilize the marketplaces by funding the CSR payments and increase resources for open enrollment outreach.

Last night, unfortunately, a couple of the Members in the majority added partisan objectives to the bill, cutting mandates, which will keep costs low, and adding anti-abortion restrictions to CSR payments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the majority to drop the poison pills and work with Democrats to bring the Alexander-Murray bill to the floor as soon as possible to stabilize markets and lower costs for American families. The failure to fix the health reform will cause millions of Americans to lose healthcare, and, that is, ''No Care TrumpCare.''

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUNBELT AG EXPO

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition.

Last week, I had the pleasure in attending the expo with a few of my colleagues. Known as North America's Premier Farm Show, this annual event in Moultrie, Georgia, attracts visitors from across the Nation to showcase farming technology, research, and equipment. More than 1,200 exhibitors participated to display the latest and greatest agricultural technology and innovation.

Agriculture is the largest and oldest industry in the State of Georgia, and it is only fitting that an event that celebrates and encourages the success of agriculture be held in Georgia's Eighth Congressional District.

American agriculture depends on strong and tireless advocates, and I commend the participants for creating an opportunity to educate the public on the importance of strengthening our farmers.

As the world's agricultural leader, the expo recognizes the tireless work of American farmers and their role in providing a safe and affordable food supply. I could not be more delighted to stand here today and honor a truly spectacular event and look forward to its continued success.

## CONGRATULATING REVEREND DR. JONATHAN L. WEAVER

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Reverend Dr. Jonathan L. Weaver on his 30th pastoral anniversary.

As the pastor of the Greater Mt. Nebo African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was founded 140 years ago, Reverend Weaver provides outstanding spiritual leadership in Maryland's Fourth Congressional District and the entire region.

Pastor Weaver has a deep and active faith, and lives that faith not just with words, but with deeds. He has committed his life to lifting up people—to feeding the hungry and caring for the poor, comforting the afflicted and making peace—where there is strife. He has overseen not only the church's growth, but the charitable works of more than 50 ministries that serve its members and the wider community.

Pastor Weaver has led missions to Africa, serves as national president of a 500-church ecumenical association, and board chairman of the oldest and largest African-American community bank in the national capital region.

Mr. Speaker, as Reverend Weaver continues his service to our community, I am confident that he will continue ''to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.''

## SPARTA, NORTH CAROLINA

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Forbes magazine recently discovered something many of us have known for a long time, which is that Sparta, North Carolina, is a wonderful place to live and work.

Sparta, located in Alleghany County, is a wonderful community made up of people with vision, strong work ethic, big hearts, and dreams.

Forbes encouraged young entrepreneurs to move to seven locations around the country—and, in particular, to Sparta—for the high-speed fiber internet and relatively low cost of living. This would allow innovators and job creators to live affordably and work globally.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great reason to move to Sparta, but it is not the only reason. I urge entrepreneurs and families to live in Sparta for the wonderful quality of life, sense of community, and incredible heart that makes this town a wonderful place to call home.

## BUDGET RESOLUTION

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

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with millions of middle class Americans, to oppose the Republican budget resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support tax reform. Unfortunately, this budget resolution is a partisan tax reform package. I support tax reform, which will help lower taxes for low-income Americans, I support tax reform that will rebuild our middle class, and I support tax reform that simplifies the Tax Code for small businesses. I will not support a tax plan that disproportionately gives advantages to the rich.

But, Mr. Speaker, this tax plan will raise our deficit by $2.4 trillion over the next decade. Mr. Speaker, this tax plan will take away critical dollars from an infrastructure bill that our Nation so desperately needs.

We still have time. Let's work together to do what is right for all Americans. Let's work together and do what is right for our country.

## RECOGNIZING ANTHONY SMITH

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, 1 week ago, I had the privilege of presenting a Purple Heart to Mr. Anthony Smith of Warsaw, Illinois, in my congressional district.

During the Vietnam war, Anthony served in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division. In 1968, on a particular bad day for our troops, Anthony was able to single-handedly take out several enemy machine gun units, protecting his fellow soldiers from harm and death.

Anthony's bravery on that day was rewarded with a Bronze Star with Valor, and with a Purple Heart, although he was not given a physical Purple Heart medal at the time. Almost 50 years later, our office worked to help correct this, and it was one of the highest honors of my time in office to present Anthony Smith with this well-deserved medal in front of a crowd of his friends and family in Warsaw last Tuesday, October 17.

I want to thank Anthony Smith for his bravery and service to our country, his dedication and commitment to our military, and to the entire Warsaw community for coming out to support this true American hero. We are indebted to his service, and we honor him today.

## TRIBUTE TO GAIL KEMLER

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an inspiring woman in my district, Mrs. Gail Kemler. Gail is celebrating her 100th birthday this month on October 28.

Gail has lived in Rochester, Michigan, since 1931, and has been an integral part of the city—through her steadfast volunteerism with the Rochester Board of Education; Daughters of the American Revolution, Stoney Creek Chapter; Rochester-Avon Historical Society; Rochester Lions Club; and Questers Organization.

Gail's longest tenure as a volunteer was with the Rochester Area Neighborhood House, an organization that she has helped from its inception. She remained a dedicated volunteer with the organization for over 50 years.

An active supporter of the Rochester Community Schools, Gail also served as a room mother and scout leader, and was one of the original PTA founders. She has been a member of the First Congregational Church in Rochester for over 85 years, and has served on the building committee, pastoral search committee, and board of trustees.

Gail and her late husband, Donald Kemler, have four children, nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have such a selfless, giving, and inspirational woman in my district. Thank you, Mrs. Gail Kemler, for your service to the entire Rochester community, and happy 100th birthday.

## RECOGNIZING BRUCE HARBACH

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

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the head coach of the Lancaster Catholic High School football team, Bruce Harbach, who has recently announced his retirement.

Coach Harbach has been coaching for a remarkable 41 years and has spent the last 16 years of that career leading the Crusaders. His accomplishments at Lancaster Catholic are too many to mention, but let me provide just a few highlights: two State championships, eight section championships, nine district playoff appearances, six district championship appearances, and a perfect 16–0 season in 2011.

In fact, I was glad to host Coach Harbach and the team at the Pennsylvania State Capitol following their State championships in 2009, and then again in 2011. Our coaches for our youth, it is not only about the scores and about their winning, but they are responsible as a role model—their players look up to them—and the most successful coaches also practice what they preach. We want our coaches to instill integrity in our kids and to show them the value of teamwork, commitment, and perseverance.

That is exactly what Coach Harbach has done for these many years. I know the Crusader community joins me in thanking Coach Harbach for his 16 years leading their team from the sidelines.

## WILDFIRES IN THE WEST

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the wildfires in the West have been very devastating for a lot of people, a lot of property, and a lot of habitat.

One of the subjects this week in the Natural Resources Committee was a sage-grouse habitat that has affected so many western States, including my own district in northern California, and my friend in Nevada as well. We worked very hard to have a good sage-grouse plan, except what is the common bond in all this and the inability to have a successful recovery of this species as well as use of the land? The Federal Government.

In the past, its involvement has been to merely slow down a process or say no to wise management practices. Cattle graze is a very effective tool, when prescribed correctly, to help make this habitat better and more sustainable long-term.

We need more cooperation, we need the Federal Government to be more

bold in putting out the type of policy that will help the grazing be an effective tool in that and not cower every time an environmental organization may come along and wish to threaten the entanglement of lawsuits that are stopping good management like that. It is hurting the habitat, it is hurting the sage-grouse population, it is hurting western lands, and western economy.

Mr. Speaker, we need solutions coming from Washington, D.C., not impediments.

## PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H. CON. RES. 71, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 580 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 580

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027, with the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget or her designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adoption without intervening motion.

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

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, it is budget day. I don't know if you were as excited about that when you got out of bed this morning as I was, but, to be fair, I sit on the Budget Committee.

I have the great honor of serving on the Rules Committee, and that is why I have the great honor of bringing this rule to the floor today. But I serve on the Rules Committee by night. By day, I serve on the Budget Committee with my friend Mr. PASCRELL and others, and we have been working since January to produce a budget for the United States of America.

I have got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, we produced a whale of a budget coming out of the House Rules Committee. You remember that budget, you supported that budget. We did a fantastic collaborative job bringing that budget to the floor, and then it went to the United States Senate.

Now, you know how this happens, Mr. Speaker. We all grew up watching, ''I am just a bill sitting here on Capitol Hill. Well, it is a long, long journey to the capital city, it is a long, long wait while I am sitting in committee.'' We all know the song from our childhood.

It is a long process to move a bill through, and nine times out of ten, it comes back differently from the United States Senate than the way we sent it over there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity today by concurring with the Senate amendment, and if we pass this rule, that is what we will have an opportunity to do. If we pass this rule, we will have an opportunity to have the debate, concur in the Senate amendment, and bring a unified budget to the floor.

Now, what does that mean, Mr. Speaker?

We have already been working on appropriations bills this cycle, and for the uninitiated, that is the bulk of the Federal spending that goes on. All of the mandatory spending that you and I both know about, Mr. Speaker, Medicare, Social Security, those important income support programs on which so many Americans depend, that money is already going out the door.

So today what we have an opportunity to do in passing this budget is to create what they call reconciliation instructions, because contained inside this unified budget of which the House and the Senate agree are reconciliation instructions that allow us to bring what I believe will be the most comprehensive, fundamental reform of our Tax Code since Tip O'Neill and Ronald Reagan did it in 1986.

Since 1986, 4 decades ago, Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity today to do something that no other Congress has been able to do since I have been an adult, and I am excited about that opportunity.

Now, to be fair, we are going to have a lot of disagreement about how to get that done. That is not the debate we are having today. For any of my colleagues or anybody back home, Mr. Speaker, who is worried that right here in this debate on a Wednesday, we are going to sort out our entire Tax Code, fear not, fear not. That is not the debate we are having today.

The debate we are having today, Mr. Speaker, is will we or will we not take on the challenge of reforming our Tax Code. I believe that we will.

The debate that we are going to have today is will we or will we not confront the fact that America has one of the least competitive tax codes in the world, but Americans deserve one of the most competitive tax codes in the world.

The debate we are going to have today, Mr. Speaker, is not about the details of tax reform, but about the premise of can we do better for the American people or can we not.

I have the great benefit, Mr. Speaker, of not having to learn what I know about this Chamber from watching it on TV or reading it in the headlines. I consider myself very blessed to have the opportunity to serve among these men and women. If I just had to read about them in the headlines, I would have a very low opinion of them. I confess, I would have a low opinion. But because I get to work with these men and women, Mr. Speaker, I get to see the real commitment to their constituencies, the real commitment to their home States, the real desire to deliver on behalf of their constituencies and on behalf of the United States of America.

We may have a divisive debate today. We sometimes do. But my prediction here in hour one, Mr. Speaker, is that by the time we leave this floor, we are going to have an agreement to take on one of the challenges that no party has been able to take on since Democrats and Republicans came together in 1986 to get it done.

It is my great hope that we will use that model, that we will repeat that model, that we will improve upon that model, and that we will produce something that all of our constituency can be proud of. I know that America is hungry for tax reform, and I believe we can deliver it for them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this rule, support the underlying concurrence in the Senate amendment.

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

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

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, my friend Mr. WOODALL, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong opposition to this rule. Today, House Republicans are pushing a job-killing budget so they can use fast-track reconciliation procedures to steamroll through their billionaires-first tax plan.

Mr. Speaker, we are supposed to be the people's House. We ought to have the people's budget, a budget that helps the millions of Americans who sent us here to Congress, not a budget that helps only a few, the well-connected and the well-off.

I disagree with Mr. WOODALL. This is not a time to celebrate. This is a terrible budget. This budget will devastate America's investments in good

paying jobs, it threatens growing wages and the bedrock promise of a secure and healthy retirement. It makes cuts across the board that would hurt seniors, children, veterans, and the hardworking people across this country who are already struggling to get by.

Why are Republicans doing this?

Well, it is all in the name of fast-tracking the Ryan-McConnell tax plan, which explodes the deficit by $1.5 trillion, and then provides multitrillion-dollar tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. We Democrats think this is a horrible idea.

What is particularly astonishing is the blatant hypocrisy of Republican leaders pushing this deficit-busting budget. Republicans are always telling us how much they care about the deficit, but when it comes to giving their beloved tax cuts to their billionaire friends, they suddenly develop a convenient case of amnesia. They say: What deficit? Don't worry. These tax breaks will pay for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, this is absurd. In this Republican-controlled Congress, we can now say with certainty that the deficit and debt no longer matter. All of the talk by Republicans, well, they didn't really mean it.

If Republicans really cared about the deficit, they would in no way imaginable bring up a bill, a budget that is as reckless as this to the floor. This kind of shows what they truly believe, where their values are, where their priorities are.

How many times have Republicans talked about the importance of a balanced budget?

The Speaker called for a deficit-neutral tax plan in his Better Way agenda. Well, I guess this debt-creating budget is the ''Somewhat Less Better Way'' plan.

Your budget chair took to Twitter just 2 weeks ago to chastise Senate Republicans for not pursuing a balanced budget, yet now she is fully in support of their budget, which adds $1.5 trillion to the deficit with no way to pay for it.

Now, let me spell this out for my Republican friends. This is not a balanced budget. Clearly, Republicans desperately need a refresher on basic arithmetic.

Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely nothing balanced about hitting middle class families and millions of hardworking Americans with cuts while giving billionaires and corporations tax cuts they simply do not need. Billionaires aren't knocking down our door asking for more tax breaks. This is disgusting. This is shameful.

The Republican budget destroys middle class jobs by stealing hundreds of billions of dollars from investments in infrastructure, job training, advanced energy, and research and development. It devastates Medicare and Medicaid. It demands deep cuts to safety net programs like SNAP. I am talking about food for hungry children and hardworking families. It goes after college affordability. It makes college more expensive for working families. It undercuts key supports for veterans and their families.

What is particularly offensive is that Republicans are using this terrible budget as a means of passing tax cuts for the wealthy as quickly as possible regardless of the consequences and without bipartisan support.

The tax reform framework supported by Republicans in Congress will raise taxes on the middle class and cut taxes for the wealthy. Under the Republican plan, the top 1 percent would receive 80 percent of all tax benefits. Let me repeat that. The top 1 percent would receive 80 percent of all tax benefits. Give me a break.

Those making more than $900,000 a year would receive an average tax cut of more than $200,000. Think about that. A person working full time in minimum wage makes $290 a week before taxes. And under this plan, people who make over $432 an hour, $900,000 a year, would get a massive tax break. Corporations will receive a tax cut totaling $2 trillion.

Who loses in this plan, Mr. Speaker?

According to the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, one in three middle class taxpayers earning between $50,000 and $150,000 would actually receive a tax increase, and nearly half of middle class families with kids will see their taxes go up.

Can you believe that: raising taxes on the middle class to pay for tax cuts for billionaires and corporations?

This is insane.

To make matters worse, Republicans are planning to steamroll their tax plan through Congress. We are reading in the press that we might see actual text of their plan next week and maybe a markup and floor consideration a week or two after that.

Really? Don't you think we owe it to our constituents to have thoughtful, open debate on this legislation which will impact every single one of them?

I guess not.

Democrats agree that our tax system needs to be updated, to be more fair, and especially to be more fair to the middle class and to working families. We have always been willing to engage in real bipartisan tax reform, but the Republican tax framework is not tax reform. It is just one more GOP multitrillion-dollar giveaway to the wealthiest at the expense of the middle class and working Americans.

In all my time in Congress, I have never seen a budget and a tax plan that harms so many just to benefit so few. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule, to vote against this cruel Republican budget, and to oppose a tax plan that puts wealthy corporations and the top 1 percent ahead of hardworking middle class families.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to mention at the beginning that we might be debating the details of the tax reform plan that does not exist today. I see that we are, in fact, going to do that.

There are a lot of studies out there on this tax reform plan that does not yet exist, but let me tell you that we can all agree that we have the single least-competitive Tax Code on the planet today. We can all agree that with the click of a mouse, a company can transfer its assets overseas and grow jobs there instead of growing jobs here.

Let us have the debate that we want to have about who should bear the burden of American taxation. That is a legitimate debate and we should have it. But let us not have the debate about whether foreign workers should benefit or American workers should benefit from American capital, because that answer should be clear in the hearts and minds of every single Member of this Chamber.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to go from worst to first. Now, I confess that I don't actually expect to get all the way to first. I will settle for getting up in the top five and getting out of the bottom five when it comes to being able to lead in this country. But I want to mention, Mr. Speaker, what I think is a source of frustration of constituencies on both sides of the aisle, and that is the us-against-them conversation that goes on day in and day out.

I looked at the chart my friend from Massachusetts brought down to the House floor. It happened to be in university colors of Georgia's red and black, but I can see that as a representative of all the hardworking families in my district, that chart didn't do anything to inspire me about the impact of tax reform going forward.

My friend quoted the Tax Policy Center. Now, The Wall Street Journal called the Tax Policy Center a shill for those groups that don't want to see any tax reform of any kind, but that is currently. The Tax Policy Center has been doing research for a long time. The research my friend from Massachusetts quoted was a study of a bill that does not yet exist. The research I am going to quote is of historical tax rates in this country.

What my friends at the Tax Policy Center said is that about 30 percent of Americans—one-third of Americans—pay no income taxes today; that the Tax Code, as it exists today, protects them from any tax liability at all.

Now, what we are proposing when we get into fundamental tax reform, Mr. Speaker, is to double the standard deduction. For those families that are already claiming the standard deduction, we are talking about doubling it. Now, the brackets are still in question, the details are still in question, but we are talking about doubling the number of folks who don't have to deal with the IRS at all.

Today, about 30 percent of American families don't pay any income taxes,

and that same 30 percent gets a refundable tax credit that rebates to them their entire Social Security and Medicare contribution that they make and the entire Social Security and welfare contribution that their employer makes on their behalf.

Now, these are not my numbers; these are the Tax Policy Center's numbers, that a full third of Americans aren't paying one penny in Federal income tax or Federal payroll tax of any kind.

□ 1245

Now, I am not here to debate the wisdom of that, Mr. Speaker. I am here to tell you that I don't know how much lower I can cut taxes in that group. I don't know how in the world I can lower the tax burden on folks who are not only paying no income taxes, but are having all of their payroll taxes rebated to them also.

Is this a group we should talk about, Mr. Speaker? Should we talk about folks who are grabbing onto the bottom rung of the economic ladder and struggling to climb to the top?

We should, and we do.

Should we talk about how it is that the entitlement system, the benefit system in this country, is trapping people at the bottom of the ladder and not allowing them to climb to the top?

We should.

I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it would be misleading to the American public to suggest that this tax bill is focusing its attention in one direction instead of another direction. The fact simply is that I can't lower taxes any more at the bottom of the spectrum.

We are talking about lowering taxes on corporations. That doesn't inspire many people. I have that conversation regularly: ROB, what in the world are you doing lowering taxes on corporations?

I support the FairTax, and in the spirit of folks who are not particularly enthusiastic about tax reform, I am not in that camp. I am enthusiastic about tax reform. I just thought there was a better way. I couldn't get the votes to have my better way done.

My better way is the FairTax, and what I would say to you is corporations don't pay taxes. Corporations do not pay taxes. They collect taxes from their consumers in the form of higher prices, from their employees in the form of lower wages, or from their shareholders in the form of lower capital—lower capital returns.

Now, lest you think: ROB, you are just a conservative Republican from the Deep South. What do you know about this?

I will again quote the Tax Policy Center, which says that a full 20 percent of the corporate income tax burden falls on workers. Fair enough. If we want to argue about where the tax rates are going to end up and how the cuts are going to look and what the policies are going to be, let's have that debate.

Let us not mislead the American people into believing there is a free lunch anywhere in this Tax Code. We have an opportunity to move from worst to first, and every single American, regardless of their region, regardless of their politics, is going to benefit from that change. They benefited from it when Democrats and Republicans came together to do it in 1986, and they will benefit from it when we come together and get it done today, as I believe that we will. We must.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, boy, I don't even know where to begin after that.

My good friend, the gentleman from Georgia, made reference to the Tax Policy Center, and I have the report from the Tax Policy Center here. In fact, it is their analysis that was the basis for that chart that I held during my opening remarks, which said that the top 1 percent would receive 80 percent of the tax breaks based on the Republican framework.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD excerpts from the Tax Policy Center report.

[From the Urban Institute & Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center Staff, Sept. 29, 2017]

A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE UNIFIED FRAMEWORK

ABSTRACT

The Tax Policy Center has produced preliminary estimates of the potential impact of proposals included in the ''Unified Framework for Fixing Our Broken Tax Code.'' We find they would reduce federal revenue by $2.4 trillion over ten years and $3.2 trillion over the second decade (not including any dynamic feedback). In 2018, all income groups would see their average taxes fall, but some taxpayers in each group would face tax increases. Those with the very highest incomes would receive the biggest tax cuts. The tax cuts are smaller as a percentage of income in 2027, and taxpayers in the 80th to 95th income percentiles would, on average, experience a tax increase.

The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Urban Institute, the Brookings Institution or their funders.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF PRESENTING CHANGE IN DISTRIBUTION OF TAX BURDENS

BY EXPANDED CASH INCOME PERCENTILE

Expanded cash income percentile, Percent change in after-tax income, Share of total federal tax change (%), Average federal tax change, Dollars, Percent, Share of federal taxes, Change (% points), Under the proposal (%).

Panel A: 2018.

Lowest quintile, 0.5, 1.1, −60, −10.4, 0.0, 0.9; Second quintile, 0.9, 4.1, −290, −9.3, 0.0, 3.8; Middle quintile, 1.2, 8.2, −660, −7.2, 0.2, 10.1; Fourth quintile, 1.2, 11.6, −1,110, −5.5, 0.6, 18.7; Top quintile, 3.3, 74.5, −8,470, −9.6, −0.7, 66.5; All, 2.1, 100.0, −1,570, −8.6, 0.0, 100.0.

Addendum.

80–90, 0.8, 5.1, −1,140, −3.1, 0.9, 15.1; 90–95, 0.7, 3.3, −1,500, −2.6, 0.7, 11.4; 95–99, 2.3, 12.8, −7,620, −6.9, 0.3, 16.4; Top 1 percent, 8.5, 53.3, −129,030, −17.6, −2.6, 23.5; Top 0.1 percent, 10.2, 30.3, −722,510, −20.4, −1.7, 11.1.

Panel B: 2027.

Lowest quintile, 0.2, 0.8, −50, −5.4, 0.0, 1.0; Second quintile, 0.5, 3.0, −230, −5.0, 0.1, 4.1; Middle quintile, 0.5, 4.9, −420, −3.4, 0.4, 10.2; Fourth quintile, 0.4, 4.3, −450, −1.7, 0.9, 17.3; Top quintile, 3.0, 86.6, −10,610, −8.5, −1.3, 67.4; All, 1.7, 100.0, −1,690, −6.7, 0.0, 100.0.

Addendum.

80–90, −0.4, −3.5, 820, 1.8, 1.2, 14.4; 90–95, −0.3, −1.5, 760, 1.1, 0.8, 10.3; 95–99, 1.8, 11.9, −7,640, −5.3, 0.2, 15.4; Top 1 percent, 8.7, 79.7, −207,060, −17.4, −3.5, 27.2; Top 0.1 percent, 9.7, 39.6, −1,022,120, −19.0, −1.8, 12.2.

Source: Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center Microsimulation Model (version 0217–1)

The full report can be found at: http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/sites/default/files/publication/144971/a preliminary analysis of the unified framework 0.pdf

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, where did I get this figure about adding to the deficit by $1.5 trillion? Did I just make that up?

I will tell the gentleman where I got it from. It is basically the Republican report in the Senate on the budget. Let me read from their report here.

It says: ''This title includes two reconciliation instructions to the Senate committees. The first would allow the Finance Committee to reduce revenues and change outlays to increase the deficit by not more than $1.5 trillion over the next 10 years.''

These are the words of Republicans in the Senate.

The gentleman wants to know why we are talking about the tax plan. It is because we are presented here with a budget that essentially fast tracks a tax plan. He is right, we don't have all the details yet because it is being negotiated and written in some back room somewhere in this building. I wish I knew where it was so we could maybe try to find out some more details. But what we do know is the framework that the Republicans have put forward, and that is the basis for the analysis that economist after economist have stated that this budget basically is a giveaway to the wealthiest individuals in this country, and it is not somehow a break for the middle class. It is the exact opposite.

This is a gift for billionaires and millionaires, and it does nothing for working families. That is why this is all relevant. This budget puts in place procedures for the Republicans to fast track a tax bill that they are now writing in some back room somewhere that nobody will see probably until the last minute, and basically it will be rushed through here, and it is a big giveaway to the wealthiest individuals in this country. I just wanted to clarify that for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that Republican plans for tax reform would also eliminate the State and local tax deduction, called SALT. This deduction prevents millions of middle class families from being taxed twice on the same income by deducting already-paid State and local taxes from their Federal income tax.

Half the people hit by this tax hike would be middle class families earning a household income of less than $100,000, and local communities will also feel that pain.

Repealing the SALT deduction, which would effectively make State and local taxes more costly for taxpayers, would put pressure on local governments to lower taxes.

The bipartisan National Governors Association said in a September 22 letter that the SALT deduction, ''has contributed to the stability of State revenues that are essential for providing public services.'' These services include healthcare, police and fire departments, and schools.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the letter from the National Governors Association.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
*Washington, DC, September 22, 2017.*

Re Tax Reform (State and Local Tax Deduction and Municipal Bonds).

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
*Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,*
*Washington, DC.*
Hon. CHUCK SCHUMER,
*Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,*
*Washington, DC.*
Hon. PAUL RYAN,
*Speaker, House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*Minority Leader, House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*
Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
*Chairman, Committee on Finance, U.S. Senate,*
*Washington, DC.*
Hon. RON WYDEN,
*Ranking Member, Committee on Finance, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*
Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman, Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*
Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
*Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, MINORITY LEADER SCHUMER, SPEAKER RYAN, MINORITY LEADER PELOSI, CHAIRMAN HATCH, RANKING MEMBER WYDEN, CHAIRMAN BRADY, AND RANKING MEMBER NEAL: The nation's governors appreciate congressional efforts to reform and improve federal tax policy. Federal and state tax systems are complex and often interconnected. Therefore, as Congress considers reforms, we urge you to maintain the balance between state and federal tax systems by preserving the income exclusion for municipal bond interest and the deductibility for state and local taxes.

The financing engine that drives U.S. infrastructure is the $3.8 trillion municipal bond market. Changes to federal laws and regulations should not increase issuance costs to states for municipal bonds or diminish investor demand for them. If federal changes make issuing municipal bonds cost-prohibitive for states and local governments, then fewer projects could be funded, taxes could rise, fewer jobs created, and economic growth will suffer.

Governors also believe that no federal law or regulation should preempt, limit, or interfere with the sovereign rights of states. A mark of sovereignty includes the ability to develop and operate revenue and tax systems. Deductibility of state and local taxes has contributed to the stability of state revenues that are essential for providing public services. We encourage you to avoid changes to the tax code that would undermine the ability of state and local governments to meet the needs of the citizens whom we all serve.

Eliminating state and local tax deductibility, moreover, exposes a higher share of an itemizing taxpayer's income to federal taxation because it adds back mandatory payments of state and local taxes already paid, as taxable income.

Federal tax reform requires an intergovernmental partnership because decisions at the federal level will affect state and local governments profoundly. We look forward to working with Congress on bipartisan tax reform to maintain balance between our systems and modernize the federal tax system to meet the needs of our citizens.

Sincerely,

GOV. BRIAN SANDOVAL,
*NGA Chair.*
GOV. STEVE BULLOCK,
*NGA Vice Chair.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask Members to vote to defeat the previous question; and if we do, I will offer an amendment proposed by Representative SCHNEIDER that would prohibit any legislation from limiting or repealing the State and local tax deduction.

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.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, to discuss this proposal and to discuss the importance of the State and local tax deduction, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), who has been outspoken on this issue on behalf of States and communities and middle class taxpayers.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, there are some real terrible parts to this budget, but this, to me, is the worst.

This deduction has been part of our tax system before there was an income tax, going back to the Civil War, for the very reasons that my friend from Massachusetts just talked about. It wasn't just picked off the shelf. People count on it. People count on this.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule, the previous question, the budget, the weather, whatever.

We know that this budget resolution paves the way for a tax reform bill done through reconciliation. I am sure that is interesting. Reconciliation on Governor Street in Paterson, New Jersey. I am sure they want to know reconciliation when we are talking about their pocketbooks; a dubious maneuver that blocks us Democrats completely out of the process and allows Republicans to pass a purely partisan, juiced-up bill.

Comprehensive tax reform is a goal we should all share, and lasting tax reform should be bipartisan. My friend from Georgia, I think, believes that, but this ain't it.

While they are cutting deals behind closed doors, what we are pushing is eliminating the State and local tax deduction, and that is in the Senate budget. They wrote it right out, the Capito amendment.

Republicans are so adamant about eliminating this middle class benefit that they added an amendment to that budget before us today, the so-called Capito amendment.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. A vote for this rule is a vote for the budget, is a vote to repeal the State and local deduction.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues representing New Jersey, New York, Illinois, California, Minnesota, and so many other States, including Georgia, including Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, better think long and hard about their vote today.

The American people are watching to see if they vote to raise their taxes. This amendment, the Capito amendment, in the budget falsely claims that the SALT only benefits high-income taxpayers. Let's take a look at that.

The fact is that repealing it would hurt the middle class and working families. At the same time, how do you justify—through the Speaker, how do you justify keeping the deduction still viable for corporations? They can deduct the State and local taxes, but the families of America can't? How can you justify that?

I want to hear your justification of that. That is going to be a good one.

Forty percent of taxpayers with incomes between $50,000 and $75,000, more than 70 percent of those making $100,000 to $200,000, claim the State and local tax deduction.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I will make it short, but I could stay here all afternoon on this because I feel it in my bone marrow.

We are talking about tax cuts. We are increasing the tax burden on the middle class, and you cannot deny it. There is no place in that budget that you can deny it. None whatsoever. You could say: Well, we are going to do this over here and this.

Look, I am tired of that walnut trick. Okay? Have you figured out which it is under?

Groups representing realtors, mayors, teachers, firefighters, sheriffs, et cetera, all support retaining the State and local tax deduction. It is bad policy, plain and simple.

Mr. Speaker, I appeal to you, we have enough ammunition. We don't need this ammunition for next year. Let's think about the budget of the American people in a nonpartisan way.

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

Mr. Speaker, if you have wondered what kind of passion we have on the Budget Committee, I will just once again recognize how much I enjoy serving with my friend from New Jersey on

the Budget Committee. Everything you just heard from him was from the heart. I get to hear it in committee day in and day out, and I will tell you, we end up with a better product as a result of that. It is a legitimate debate to have about the State and local tax deduction. It is perfectly legitimate.

There are those from low-tax jurisdictions that ask: Why would the Federal Government and the Federal taxpayer want to subsidize those States that are higher-tax jurisdictions? There are those jurisdictions that are low-tax jurisdictions.

Because the gentleman's constituency in New Jersey makes so much money, they pay so much more in Federal income taxes. And States like mine in Georgia, States like Alabama, States like Mississippi are the beneficiary of those dollars as the Federal Government distributes them. Undeniably, there is a case to be made on both sides of this issue.

The falsehood, Mr. Speaker, is to suggest that we are deciding that issue today. We are not. We are not.

I don't blame any of my colleagues for fighting for their constituency at the height of their ability, at the highest vocal point of their capability, because issues are, at their core, local and personal to each and every one of us.

We are going to have to have this conversation and we are going to have to sort it out, and I believe it is not going to be a partisan conversation. In fact, I know it is not going to be a partisan conversation.

I know Republicans who share my friend from New Jersey's opinion, and I know Democrats who share SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO's opinion on the Senate side. We know this to be true. We are going to sort this issue out, Mr. Speaker.

What I fear, though, is that emotions are going to run so high that we are going to miss an opportunity to figure these things out. For example, to conflate personal deductions with business deductions is to create confusion where there needn't be any.

Every business in America can deduct the meals that they serve throughout their day as a business expense. I will share with the gentleman that my family cannot deduct our meals from our income taxes.

Every business out there that has rented an apartment somewhere in order to conduct business, they can deduct that rent from their income taxes as a business expense. I will share with my friend, in the great State of Georgia, I am unable to deduct my rent as a business expense from my income tax.

There is just a fundamental difference between families and businesses, and that fundamental difference goes back to what I said at the very beginning, and that is there is only one taxpayer in this country. It is not Walmart, it is not Apple, it is not Microsoft. It is the American consumer. We are the only ones. At the end of the day, the buck stops with each and every American family.

The debate over how to structure a corporate income Tax Code, Mr. Speaker, is perfectly legitimate. To suggest that the fact that the personal code and the business code look different and that is somehow nefarious is to deny what is just now over 100 years of income tax policy in this country.

□ 1300

Mr. PASCRELL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. So, now that you have agreed to the fact the families are going to get shafted but corporations will continue to be able to deduct their local and State taxes, this is pertinent to the budget, my friend, through the Speaker.

Right in the bill, the budget bill we are talking about right now, the rule, previous question, related to changes in Federal tax laws, which may include reducing the Federal deduction such as this—this is right from the budget. Why do you say we are not discussing this?

Mr. WOODALL. Reclaiming my time from my friend, Mr. Speaker, what you hear is absolutely right. I want to make that clear. Everybody is entitled to their own opinion; they are not entitled to their own facts. The words my friend is reading are absolutely accurate. What they are not are absolutely binding. That is what they are not.

What this is is such a personal and important issue to folks on both sides of it that it got its own personal line out of the United States Senate.

I can't even get nominations out of the United States Senate, Mr. Speaker. I am sitting here trying to staff out region four down in the great State of Georgia. Folks are delaying debate. Folks won't let me get my people in place.

This is so important to the United States Senate that it came with its own line.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to diminish the importance of this issue on either side. What I do want to insist upon, though, is that it will not be decided during this hour today; and I want to insist, Mr. Speaker, that it will not be decided on partisan lines.

I would just ask of you, Mr. Speaker, and of my friends here on the floor, we have two things we can do with our voices: we can either sow consensus, or we can sow discontent.

I know that we are passionate about these things in which we believe, but to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we are not going to come together and sort it out and do the very best we can for Americans is to sell this institution short and is to further the misunderstanding, the misimpression, the misinformation that the media sends out about us every day. I know we are better than that, and I am proud to be a voice saying that here on the floor today, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) to respond.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, families in my friend's State, the great State of Georgia, will lose a tax deduction of $9,000, those families, on average. I think you are concerned about that. You cannot fib that you are not.

And the fact of the matter is you used the words—through the Speaker, you used the words that your States are subsidizing the donor States? Well, let me give you an idea of New Jersey.

States like West Virginia, the average SALT deduction claim is $9,463 per household; in Ohio, it is $10,445; in Wisconsin, it is $11,653.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds, and this will probably have to be it because, unfortunately, we have so many speakers over here. I wish I could enjoy the loneliness that my colleague from Georgia enjoys that nobody wants to speak to defend this budget.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, 48th, 49th State, that is where New Jersey is in getting back the money we send down to Washington. Who subsidizes whom?

And Mnuchin, go back and tell the Secretary of the Treasury he doesn't know what he is talking about. He says New Jersey is being subsidized? Not these numbers; the numbers don't show that.

You can't defend this. You can't defend it under any circumstances whatsoever, and you have admitted that we are talking facts here today.

I rest my case.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU).

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the underlying rule that would allow for consideration of the Senate-passed Republican Budget. If passed, this budget would allow Republicans to fast-track their tax plan through Congress without Democratic support.

Now, I stand in support of a tax plan to help the middle class, but that is not the tax plan we are seeing proposed by Republicans. Instead, we see that 80 percent of the benefits will go to the richest 1 percent in this country. The problem? Somebody has to pay for it, and it looks like it could be the middle class.

I have heard from workers worried that cuts of contributions to their 401(k) plans will ruin their retirement. I have heard from seniors worried that losing homeowners' incentives will make it harder for them to stay in their homes. And I have heard from families worried that a repeal of the State and local tax deduction will increase their tax burden.

In fact, we know that one-third of the middle class will see their taxes increase under this plan. And the numbers show that, as our constituents begin to learn more, they are realizing that this plan only cuts taxes for the wealthy and corporate interests and leaves middle class families behind. That is why a Reuters poll released yesterday found that fewer than a third of Americans support the Republican tax plan at all.

This tax plan for the rich will increase the deficit by $2.2 trillion. And who will pay for it? Your children and their grandchildren. They will have to suffer from the cuts made down along the line to education, to Medicaid, to Medicare.

And for what? To make the rich richer? To line the pockets of Washington special interests? That is not right.

Reject this budget. Most importantly, reject this tax plan.

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

We have heard a lot about the distributional analysis of tax reform, and, as I have suggested, it is hard to do. Folks who make a whole lot of money, like my friend from New Jersey's constituency, they pay a whole lot more in taxes. I hope that one day my constituency makes as much money as my friend from New Jersey's constituency, and if we can stimulate the economy the way that I believe that this tax proposal will, we are going to have a shot at getting that done.

But we have to have these conversations about limiting tax deductions for the wealthiest Americans if we are going to solve the issues that my friends have raised. And reading right out of that Senate budget report, the whole purpose of considering the State and local tax deduction and considering modifying it, capping it, eliminating it, whatever you want to insert there, Mr. Speaker, is designed around limiting those tax deductions that only benefit the wealthiest among us—that only benefit the wealthiest among us. That is the conversation that folks are trying to have.

Again, Mr. Speaker, there is so much more that we agree on than that we disagree on in this Chamber. But it appears, time and time again, we come to the House floor and focus, in the most shrill voices, on the 20 percent of those things that divide us instead of the 80 percent of those things that we could come together and deliver on for our constituency.

Tax reform doesn't have to pass with 51 votes in the Senate. We move reconciliation bills through the Senate with 60 votes. We have moved them through the Senate with 70 votes. We have moved them through the Senate with 80 votes.

Growing the American economy, Mr. Speaker, is a commonsense goal that is shared in every single region and in every single political quarter. Let's not make this about us here. Let's make this about our bosses back home. We can, and we should, and I believe that we will.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), the ranking member on the Tax Policy Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, this bill is truly about one thing and one thing only. It is about lavishing tax breaks on Donald Trump personally, his family, and all of his billionaire buddies. It is about lavishing tax breaks and incentives on the very same giant multinational corporations that have shipped away so many American jobs, that have refused to pay their fair share of our national security by hiding their profits in offshore island tax havens.

It is about doing all that and hoping that, at this time of the year, here at Halloween, that they can trick American middle-class families into believing that a little of those tax benefits will trickle down to them. Because if they can do that, if they can pass this bill, they will treat themselves, the billionaires, and the job exporters, to tax benefits of almost astronomical proportions.

To suggest that there is anything bipartisan about this bill or anything bipartisan about the tax proposal that Republicans will unveil next week is truly a farce. There is no bipartisanship here.

They learned nothing from their failed healthcare repeal efforts. No, they plan to use surprise, jack-in-the-box tactics to pop out a bill at the last minute, force it through this House, through our Ways and Means Committee, and foist it off on the American people.

With Halloween coming, there is a simple ''trick or treat'' test that you, as an American family, can use. If you are in the top 1 percent, you get 80 percent of the individual benefits out of this bill.

So just look at your income. If you are not up there in the $700,000 or $900,000 range, don't count on getting much benefit out of this bill. In fact, a number of studies show your taxes may actually go up while others see a significant decline in the revenue the richest few are asked to pay to finance our country.

And what about the idea of growing jobs? After all, growing our economy is what we should all be about and what is claimed for this bill. Well, I turned to that objective source, Goldman Sachs, the home of the Treasury Secretary and top economic advisers. Goldman Sachs, within the last month, has advised its own investors: Don't expect much out of this tax bill because any momentary growth at the beginning will be offset by the trillions of dollars of additional debt from the same people who have been telling us for years we can't afford another dollar for abused children, and we can't afford dollars for children's healthcare because we are so very worried about the national debt.

Well, there is reason to be worried about the national debt and not to explode it by trillions of dollars with this giant unpaid tax bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DOGGETT. A zombie of supply-side economics is returning from the dead. We know it didn't work for President Bush. We know it didn't work in the Reagan era. They are bringing it back again, saying, if you just give a little more to those who have so much already, it will benefit everyone else. The data does not show that.

This is a tax bill that needs to be rejected because it is so unfair and inequitable to the American people. This is much worse than the healthcare repeal because its ramifications in leading to cutting Medicare and Social Security will be far-reaching. There will not be a family in America that goes untouched.

Reject this budget. Reject this awful tax bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to agree with some of what my friend had to say.

There will be absolutely no family that goes untouched. If you would like to go to the Council of Economic Advisers web page, Mr. Speaker, you can see their most recent report, which suggests, on average, $4,000 in additional wages for every wage earner in this country, every family in this country, making a difference for economic growth.

We all know that economic growth matters. More jobs mean more pressure on labor. More pressure on labor means higher wages. Higher wages mean more income for the Federal Government in taxes and more income for families to put into their pocket.

We are hearing about zombies and surprises and tricks. You can tell that Halloween is right around the corner, and scaring folks is kind of the tagline of Halloween, Mr. Speaker; and, sadly, that is what we see going on here today.

I promise you, you have not heard a single bipartisan word about this tax plan from my friends on the other side, so I am going to provide those words for my friends. I will read from yesterday's Wall Street Journal, Mr. Speaker: ''In 2012, President Obama and his advisers proposed lowering the corporate tax rate because it 'creates good jobs and good wages for the middle class folks who work at those businesses.' ''

□ 1315

We can argue about what the tax reform ought to look like. What we can't argue about is the benefit for American families of tax reform.

In 2013, Lawrence Summers, President Clinton's Treasury Secretary and

Chairman of President Obama's Economic Council, argued that the tax on corporate profit creates a burden without commensurate revenues for the government, and that changing it is as close to a free lunch for the American taxpayer as reformers will ever get. That was President Obama's Treasury Secretary.

Again, we can argue about what it looks like. What we can't argue about is what it is intended to do and what leading experts believe it will do. In 2015, Democrat CHUCK SCHUMER and Republican ROB PORTMAN cosponsored a Senate bill to reduce the top corporate tax rate, which is the highest of the 35 countries in the OECD today.

As CHUCK SCHUMER says: ''Our international tax system creates incentives to send jobs and stash profits overseas, rather than creating jobs and economic growth here in the United States.'' We can fix that together, and we will fix that together.

Bill Clinton, in 2016, said he regretted raising the corporate tax rate to its current level for exactly those reasons.

Who is advantaged by trying to persuade the American people that something nefarious is going on here? Who is advantaged by that? I don't know about my friend's constituencies, Mr. Speaker, but my constituency wants to believe we are making things work together. My constituency wants to believe in rolling up our sleeves and sorting things out together. My constituency wants to believe that we are united in making a difference for them together.

We have this opportunity. If we pass this rule and we concur in the underlying Senate amendment, we will move forward on tax reform that will leave no American family behind.

The best government program we have in this country is the program that allows jobs to develop so folks can have one. The best program we have in this country, Mr. Speaker, is one that allows wages to rise so that folks can earn more. My constituency is not looking for anything from the other side of the aisle except cooperation on freeing up the marketplace so that my constituency can go to work, so that folks can go and make their own pathway and future forward. We can do it in ways we haven't done together since 1986, Mr. Speaker.

Who is advantaged by convincing folks that cooperation, consensus, making a different together is dead? I don't believe anyone. In fact, I would tell you that not just the debate but the body politic is damaged by those concerns, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we will join together and refute those. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would just say to the gentleman from Georgia, we don't need lectures on cooperation and bipartisanship. We have offered to work with Republicans on tax reform. We have offered to work with Republicans on improving the Affordable Care Act. Every time the Republicans talk about rolling up their sleeves, we are not there. We are not invited.

So if you want bipartisanship, open up this process. Go back to regular order. Hold hearings. Listen to our ideas. Don't write bills in the back room and rush them to the floor and force the Members up here to vote up or down on them. Yes, we want cooperation. We want bipartisanship, but we don't need any lectures from anybody on the other side of the aisle.

This has been the most closed Congress in history. We don't need any lectures on the importance of cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Massachusetts for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this rule because I rise in opposition to the underlying budget—a budget which is really a budget buster that could be before the full House for consideration tomorrow.

It calls for an additional $1.5 trillion worth of debt accumulated over the next 10 years. They call for that, I fear, in order to clear the path for unpaid-for tax cuts. There is a bipartisan path to move forward on tax reform. It has been 31 years since we have taken a serious run at the Federal code. It is long overdue. It is one that would simplify the code, that would broaden the base and lower the rates and make us more competitive at home, but especially abroad, in light of what the rest of the world has done.

That can also help promote economic growth, but I fear that that is not the direction that the opposing party is taking with their tax reform proposal. I say fear because we haven't seen the details yet. So we can't say with certainty just what exactly will be offered over the next couple of weeks. But if history is any guide, there is a proclivity to pass large tax cuts that are not paid for.

If history is a guide, we have been down this road before, in the 1981 tax cuts, the 2001, the 2003, that promised to bring a boon of economic growth that would offset and pay for the lost revenue. It didn't materialize. Instead, we had huge budget deficits. Unfortunately, today, we don't have the luxury of time to help us recover from a huge fiscal mistake. Because today, 70 million baby boomers are beginning their massive retirement and joining Social Security and Medicare—10,000 a day.

If we go down this route of going with massive tax breaks that aren't paid for, we are going to jeopardize the long-term solvency of Social Security and Medicare at exactly the wrong moment in our Nation's history. The folks back home tell me they would like to see tax reform along the lines that I just described, but they are not telling me that they are more interested in trickle-down economics where the predominant relief goes to the most wealthy, hoping that it somehow benefits everyone else.

Now, they would like to see it a little fairer for working families, for small businesses, for family farmers so that they can share in the economic growth and the prosperity that could be offered if we do this the correct way in a bipartisan fashion.

But instead, I fear that we are going to be witnessing history repeat itself. But unlike the time of the past, we don't have the luxury of time going forward without jeopardizing Social Security and Medicare, and without leaving a legacy of debt once again for our children and grandchildren to inherit.

So let's regroup. Let's do a budget that makes sense for the long-term fiscal solvency of important programs, but especially our children's future. This budget doesn't get us there.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to reject the rule and reject the budget if it comes up tomorrow.

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

I actually want to associate myself to my friend from Wisconsin's comments. I can't disagree with a word he said right up until it got to the end where he said to vote against the budget. Right up until there, we were on the same page.

There is so much that we could do together. My friend spoke out on behalf of small businesses and family farmers. As the Tax Code exists today, when you see my friends put up charts about tax benefits going to the top 1 percent, they are talking about those small business and family farmers. They are talking about that small business in my district that has plowed every single penny back into the business—back into the business for new technology to make their employees more productive, back into the business to open up a new facility, back into the business to add more distribution, because they have got 350 families who depend on them to make that business successful so that those 350 families can put food on their table.

But when the Tax Code is analyzed, Mr. Speaker, when the IRS sends back the statistics, that small business in my district that sends every single penny back into the business, they look rich. They look like they are the wealthiest, and they are not. They are those small family farmers. They are those small family businesses that are trying to make a difference.

I want to say, because my friend from Wisconsin had a very significant concern about blowing holes in deficits, Mr. Speaker, as you know from your experience, one cannot pass tax reform that is permanent through reconciliation if it adds to deficits in the out years. That is what is so wonderful about this process, Mr. Speaker. I support what my friend from Wisconsin said about keeping an eye on deficits. I

support what my friend said about making sure Medicare and Social Security are growing, which they do when people go back to work and when folks earn more money.

I don't want to be in the business of lecturing my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. I want to be in the business of working with my colleagues. But folks have a choice when they show up to work every day. Are we going to make this a day about arguing with one another? Are we going to tear something down today? Are we going to build something up today? I stand for building something today, Mr. Speaker. Unabashedly, let's build something together today.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), the distinguished ranking member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Tax Policy.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, certainly, my constituents in Texas would like to see the same spirit of togetherness that we have just heard about. How has that been handled in our Ways and Means Committee, and why do I call the claims of bipartisanship here a farce?

Well, people in Texas would like to know: What is the effect of being taxed on our payment of property taxes? People in Michigan want to know: What is the effect of putting a cap on how much we can contribute to our retirement savings? Other people were concerned about adding $0.20 and a border adjustment tax to every purchase made from Mexico, or Canada, or elsewhere.

Since May, I have been asking for hearings on these matters. I have been asking for one single Trump administration official to have the courage to come in front of our committee and answer questions about their proposal and the great gap between what President Trump says one day, and what they do the next.

They have refused every day. We have been here all of September. We have been here all of October. They have refused to have a single hearing with a single Trump official because they plan to jam through—while they yell ''kumbaya,'' they plan to jam through a gift to the superrich and the multinationals that keep shipping these jobs offshore. And they don't want any accountability for it.

They don't want any public involvement either. They want the public to know as little about the details of their sham as possible. That is why they will have it introduced next week, passed in committee the following week, forced onto this floor and into the Senate, and the American people have to understand and speak up and say ''no.''

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to say I don't want to sneak anything past anybody. I want to claim full and total credit for what we are about to do together. I don't want anybody to be confused about whose fault it is. It is my fault.

When we get tax reform and get this economy growing again, blame me. When we can see wages rising in this country again, blame me. When we have an opportunity to go from worst to first in the international business community, blame me.

I don't want anybody to believe there is anybody hiding here, Mr. Speaker.

I share with my friend from Massachusetts that I do not have any speakers remaining, and I am prepared to close when he is. Truth needs no defense, I would say to my friend.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, today we are considering a budget that will basically pave the way so we can bring up a massive tax cut for billionaires. Again, the gentleman from Georgia mentioned the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center in his opening remarks, and this chart is based on their analysis. Basically, let me repeat, the top 1 percent get 80 percent of all the benefits.

If you think that that is fair, if you think that that is representing your constituents, then go ahead and vote for this budget, because it is paving the way for a tax cut that will do just this.

I don't think it is fair. I don't think anybody on the Democratic side of the aisle thinks it is fair, and I am hoping that there are some on the Republican side of the aisle who think that that is not fair as well.

The gentleman from Georgia talks about cooperation and about we need to get along. I mean, who disagrees with that? But actions speak louder than words. You can't talk about open, transparent processes and then, as we just heard from the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), have the Ways and Means Committee which is writing this tax bill behind closed doors without any help from the Democrats, but having no hearings—not allowing any administration official to come up and testify.

How is that an open and transparent process? How does that encourage the spirit of cooperation and bipartisanship? I mean, I thought my friends would have learned from their terrible experience with their repeal and replace of the Affordable Care Act what happens when you write bills behind closed doors without bipartisan input, without even the committees of jurisdiction, by the way, in that case, deliberating on what the final product should be.

I thought you would have learned from that process, and you ended up failing at the end of the day. I hope that this effort that my Republican friends are now undertaking for tax cuts for wealthy people in this country, I hope that that fails as well.

A lousy process usually leads to a lousy product. My friends on the other side of the aisle have mastered the art of lousy processes. In the Rules Committee, almost virtually everything is closed. Everything is shut down. Germane amendments routinely deny the ability for Members to offer them on the House floor because the Republicans don't want to deal with them. They are afraid they might lose. They don't want to have the debate.

If you want cooperation, if you want a bipartisan tax reform bill, then you just can't say it; you have to do something. In 1986, the last time Congress did a comprehensive tax reform, we had 30 days of full committee hearings spanning over a year. There were 26 days of markup between September and December. This time, the timelines being reported in the press are maybe just a week, or a little bit more, if that.

□ 1330

Again, if recent history is any indication, we might not even get that. A bill might just miraculously appear one day and be rushed to the floor so that no one has time to read it or analyze it and so that none of our constituents have time to understand what is really happening here.

So I go back to that chart. One percent—1 percent—of the wealthiest interests in this country get 80 percent of the tax breaks.

If you think that that is fair, then vote for this budget, because this budget paves the way for that tax bill to move forward.

If you care about a balanced budget and if you care about deficits and debt, please vote ''no'' on this budget, because this allows us to increase the deficit by $1.5 trillion.

Whatever happened to deficits matter? I guess it is inconvenient because tax cuts for billionaires matter more than deficits and passing on that debt to our kids.

So I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question, to vote ''no'' on the rule, to vote ''no'' on this budget, and to fight like hell against this horrendous tax cut plan that my friends on the Republican side are pushing. This is bad policy. This is bad for our country. This is bad for middle class families. This is bad for not only my constituents, I would argue it is bad for your constituents.

It is about time that the people's House starts enacting legislation that benefits the people of this country, not just a few who are well off and well connected.

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, sometimes I wish I could bring school groups down here onto the House floor just to help the next generation understand why we face some of the challenges that we face. We are down here today confronted with a tax bill that folks are certain is going to give away everything to everybody whom they don't want it to go to, and we are down here confronted with the fact that there is

no tax bill whatsoever to look at and it is going to get sprung on folks with absolutely no notice and no ability to read it.

Now, either one of those things could be true. It happens to be that neither of those things is true. But how in the world do folks listening to this debate think that we are advancing the cause of reform?

Deficits do matter, to my friend's point. They do matter, and the stranglehold that the Obama regulatory economy created here in America on economic growth reduced economic GDP growth by a full one-third—by a full one-third.

For every 0.1 percent of GDP growth, we talk about 200 billion additional dollars coming in to the Treasury over the 10-year window. So a full percentage point that we have lost is $2 trillion coming in to the Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, if we had Bush-era growth instead of Obama-era growth over these last 5 years, the budget would be balanced today. But we are where we are, and the question is: Can we do better tomorrow? We can.

Now, before I talk about that, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize some of the folks who helped to get us here. My friend from Massachusetts and I come down here and carry the debate, but the work goes on behind every single one of these doors and in every single one of these committee rooms.

I serve on the Budget Committee, Mr. Speaker, and our staff director over there, Rick May, has done an amazing job shepherding this process, standing up for the House's work product.

Jenna Spealman, Andy Morton, Tim Flynn, Robert Cogan, Patrick Louis Knudsen, Jim Bates, Mary Popadiuk, Jonathan Romito, and Elise Anderson are all working day and night—and weekends, many times—to get this product to the floor.

Steve Gonzalez, Eric Davis, Robert Yeakel, Ellen Johnson, Emily Goff, Brad Watson, Brittany Madni, and Steve Waskiewicz are folks, Mr. Speaker, who don't come here because they have political passion; they come here because they have policy passion. They want to do those things that matter. They could go anywhere they want to in town and make more money, but they stay here working for the American people because they believe they can make a difference, and they are right.

Mr. Speaker, they are right. They can make a difference. We can make a difference. This rule—this rule—if we pass it today, Mr. Speaker, will allow us to concur in the Senate amendment. Concurring in the Senate amendment does not bind us to the Senate process, but it enables us to move a bill that direction that they can process.

We have seen the holdups in the Senate, Mr. Speaker. I am not happy about that. That is just the way Senate process is. We can do better. Reconciliation allows us to do better, and passing this rule enables us to do better.

Vote ''yes,'' Mr. Speaker. Vote ''yes'' on this rule, and vote ''yes'' on the underlying budget and open yourself up to doing together what has not been done together in 31 years. I don't just believe we can, I believe that we will. I am excited about it, I am proud of it, and I am ready to get to it, Mr. Speaker.

Vote ''yes.''

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Budget Committee, I rise in strong opposition to Rule governing debate on the Senate Amendment to H. Con. Res. 71, the Congressional Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2018, and the underlying resolution.

Let us be very clear and direct: the resolution before us is not intended to reconcile tax and spending priorities to reflect the priorities of the American people or to reduce the deficit and national debt or to put our fiscal house on a sustainable path to economic growth.

Rather the sole purpose of Republicans bringing this job-killing budget to the floor today is to fast-track their ''Billionaires First'' tax plan, which will cause significant harm to working and middle class families, especially to my constituents in the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas.

The McConnell-Ryan tax plan, which this budget resolution is designed to grease the skids for, would raise taxes on about 1.5 million Texas households, or 12.4 percent of households next year.

On average, families earning up to $86,000 annually would see a $794 increase in their tax liability, a significant burden on families struggling to afford child care and balance their checkbook.

An estimated 2.8 million Texas households deduct state and local taxes with an average deduction of $7,823 in 2015.

The McConnell-Ryan plan eliminates this deduction, which would lower home values and put pressure on states and towns to collect revenues they depend on to fund schools, roads, and vital public resources.

The proposed elimination of the personal exemption will harm millions of Texans by taking away the $4,050 deduction for each taxpayer and claimed dependent; in 2015, roughly 9.3 million dependent exemptions were claimed in the Lone Star State.

Equally terrible is that the McConnell-Ryan tax plan drastically reduces the Earned Income Tax Credit, which encourages work for 2.7 million low-income individuals in Texas, helping them make ends meet with an average credit of $2,689.

The EITC and the Child Tax Credit lift about 1.2 million Texans, including 663,000 children, out of poverty each year.

This reckless and irresponsible GOP tax plan is made all the more obscene by the fact that 80 percent of the GOP's tax cuts go to the wealthiest 1 percent.

To achieve this goal of giving more and more to the haves and the ''have mores,'' the GOP budget betrays seniors, children, the most vulnerable, and needy, and working and middle-class families.

For example, the Republican budget steals hundreds of billions of dollars from critical job-creating investments in infrastructure, job training, clean energy and research and development.

It devastates Medicare and Medicaid by cutting $500 billion from Medicare and $1.3 trillion from Medicaid, hurting veterans, seniors with long-term care needs, children and rural communities.

The GOP budget's steep cuts in program investments fall most heavily on low-income families, students struggling to afford college, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

This Republican budget adopts Trumpcare but does even more damage because in addition to depriving more than 20 million Americans of healthcare, denying protection to persons with preexisting conditions, and raising costs for older and low-income adults, cuts more than $1.8 trillion from Medicaid and Medicare.

This Republican budget ends the Medicare guarantee and calls for replacing Medicare's guaranteed benefits with fixed payments for the purchase of health insurance, shifting costs and financial risks onto seniors and disabled workers; this represents a $500 billion cut to Medicare over ten years.

Mr. Speaker, the federal budget is more than a financial document; it is an expression of our values and priorities as a nation.

The values expressed by this Republican budget are not the values of my constituents, the people of Texas, or the American people as a whole.

For these reasons, I oppose the Rule and the underlying budget resolution.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 580 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

Strike all after the resolved clause and insert:

That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027, with the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget or her designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment with the amendment specified in section 2 of this resolution. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question.

SEC. 2. The amendment referred to in section 1 is as follows: At the end of the Senate amendment, add the following new section:

**"SEC. _____. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST ANY TAX BILL THAT RAISES TAXES ON MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES BY ELIMINATING OR LIMITING THE STATE AND LOCAL TAX DEDUCTION.**

(a) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that repeals or limits the State and Local Tax Deduction (26 U.S.C. 164).

(b) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

(c) WAIVER IN THE HOUSE.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives to consider a rule or order that waives the application of subsection (a). As disposition of a point of order under this subsection, the Chair shall put the question of consideration with respect to the rule or order, as applicable. The question of consideration shall be debatable for 10 minutes by the Member initiating the point of order and for 10 minutes by an opponent, but shall otherwise be decided without intervening motion except one that the House adjourn.''

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 agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 229, nays 188, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 582]

YEAS—229

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
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
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
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, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—188

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
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
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)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
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
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei
Bishop (UT)
Bridenstine
Espaillat
Garrett
Gutiérrez
Larson (CT)
Long
Lowenthal
Richmond
Rooney, Francis
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1357

Mr. MESSER 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. WEBER of Texas). The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 233, noes 188, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 583]

AYES—233

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
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
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
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
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 (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—188

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
Gomez
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)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—11

Bridenstine
Larson (CT)
Lawson (FL)
Long
Lowenthal
Richmond
Schrader
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1405

Mr. RUSH changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

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.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

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

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 230, nays 180, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 584]

YEAS—230

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Beatty
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Buchanan
Budd
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Carson (IN)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clay
Cleaver
Cohen
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DelBene
Demings
Dent
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Evans
Ferguson
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gianforte
Gibbs
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hollingsworth
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lawson (FL)
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McHenry
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Messer
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Pascrell
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce (CA)
Russell
Sanford
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thornberry
Tiberi
Titus
Trott
Tsongas
Vela
Wagner
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—180

Aguilar
Amash
Babin
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bishop (MI)
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carter (GA)
Castor (FL)
Cheney
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
DeSantis
Diaz-Balart
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Ellison
Esty (CT)
Faso
Fitzpatrick
Flores
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hartzler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (NY)
Holding
Hoyer
Hudson
Hurd
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger
Knight
LaHood
Lance
Langevin
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Mast
Matsui
McGovern
McKinley
McSally
Mitchell
Moore
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
Pallone
Panetta
Paulsen
Payne
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price (NC)
Raskin
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Rosen
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Rush
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schrader
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smucker
Soto
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tipton
Torres
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Wittman
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Rice (SC)
Tonko

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (GA)
Bridenstine
DeLauro
Farenthold
Frelinghuysen
Gohmert
Grijalva
Larson (CT)
Long
Lowenthal
Meng
Quigley
Richmond
Rooney, Francis
Ros-Lehtinen
Ruppersberger
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1410

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR UNVEILING OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION CHAIR OF HONOR

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 26) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for the unveiling of the American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Chair of Honor, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

S. CON. RES. 26

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),*

**SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR UNVEILING OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION (POW/MIA) CHAIR OF HONOR.**

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used for an event on November 8, 2017, to unveil the American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Chair of Honor.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

The concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC, October 25, 2017.*

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 25, 2017, at 11:47 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 304.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 85.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

## HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

## IRAN BALLISTIC MISSILES AND INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1698) to expand sanctions against Iran with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1698

*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 ''Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act''.

**SEC. 2. SANCTIONS RELATING TO EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGIES.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015)—

(A) calls upon Iran ''not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology''; and

(B) requires member states to ''take the necessary measures to prevent, except as decided otherwise by the UN Security Council in advance on a case-by-case basis, the supply, sale, or transfer of arms or related materiel from Iran''.

(2) The United States maintains bilateral sanctions against Iran for its efforts to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technology, and its acquisition of destabilizing types and amounts of conventional weapons.

(3) According to the 2016 Worldwide Threat Assessment, the United States intelligence community judges ''that Tehran would choose ballistic missiles as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons, if it builds them. Iran's ballistic missiles are inherently capable of delivering [weapons of mass destruction], and Tehran already has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East. Iran's progress on space launch vehicles—along with its desire to deter the United States and its allies—provides Tehran with the means and motivation to develop longer-range missiles, including ICBMs.''.

(4) Since the passage of United Nations Security Council 2231, Iran has conducted numerous tests of ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, and has acquired destabilizing types of conventional weapons.

(5) Iran has pursued the ability to indigenously produce ballistic missile and cruise missile goods, services, and technologies.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to prevent Iran from undertaking any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology.

(c) REPORT ON SUPPLY CHAIN OF IRAN'S BALLISTIC MISSILE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(A) An analysis of the foreign supply chain and domestic supply chain in Iran that directly or indirectly significantly facilitates, supports, or otherwise aids the Government of Iran's ballistic missile program.

(B) A description of the geographic distribution of the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

(C) An assessment of the Government of Iran's ability to indigenously manufacture or otherwise produce the goods, services, or technology necessary to support its ballistic missile program.

(D) An identification of foreign persons that have, based on credible information, directly or indirectly facilitated or supported the development of the Government of Iran's ballistic missile program, including the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

(E) A determination with respect to each foreign person identified under subparagraph (D) as to whether the foreign person meets the criteria for designation under—

(i) paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by this section;

(ii) section 104 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (Public Law 115–44); or

(iii) Executive Order 13382 (2005).

(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(d) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''EXPORTS, TRANSFERS, AND TRANSSHIPMENTS'' and inserting ''WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION; BALLISTIC MISSILES; CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS'';

(2) by striking ''Except as'' and inserting the following:

''(A) WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.—Except as'';

(3) by striking ''(A) on or after the date of the enactment of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012'' and inserting the following:

''(i)(I) on or after the date of the enactment of the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act'';

(4) by striking ''(B) knew'' and inserting the following:

''(II) knew'';

(5) by striking ''(i) the export'' and inserting the following:

''(aa) the export'';

(6) by striking ''would likely'' and inserting ''may'';

(7) by striking ''(ii) the export'' and inserting the following:

''(bb) the export'';

(8) by striking ''(I) acquire'' and inserting the following:

''(AA) acquire'';

(9) by striking ''; or'' at the end of subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(AA) (as so redesignated);

(10) by inserting after subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(AA) (as so redesignated) the following:

''(BB) acquire or develop ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technologies; or'';

(11) by striking ''(II) acquire'' and inserting the following:

''(CC) acquire'';

(12) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(CC) (as so redesignated) and inserting ''; or''; and

(13) by adding at the end of subparagraph (A) the following:

''(ii) knowingly exports or transfers, or permits or otherwise facilitates the transshipment or re-export of, goods, services, technology, or other items to Iran that materially supports Iran's efforts to—

''(I) acquire or develop ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technologies; or

''(II) acquire or develop destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons (as such term is defined in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1608 of the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992).''.

(e) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILES.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsection (e), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(B) ADDITIONAL BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGY.—

''(i) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (8), (10), or (12) of section 6(a), as the case may be, with respect to—

''(I) an agency or instrumentality of the Government of Iran if the President determines that the agency or instrumentality, on or after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, knowingly seeks to develop, procure, or acquire goods, services, or technology that materially supports efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii);

''(II) a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President determines that the person or agency or instrumentality knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, provides significant material support to the Government of Iran that supports efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii); and

''(III) a foreign person that the President determines knowingly engages in a significant transaction or transactions with, or provides significant financial services for, a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in subclause (I) or (II) with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii).

''(ii) DETERMINATION AND REPORT ON BALLISTIC MISSILE TESTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the President determines that the Government of Iran has conducted a test of a ballistic missile that fails to comply with, violates, or is in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that identifies each senior official of the Government of Iran that the President determines is responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing the missile test.

''(II) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required by subclause (I) should include available information on the ballistic missile or the generic class of ballistic missile or space rocket that was launched; the trajectory, duration, range, and altitude of the missile flight; the duration, range, and altitude of the flight of each stage of the missile; the location of the launch point and impact point; the payload; and other technical information that is available.

''(III) FORM.—The report required by subclause (I) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

''(iii) EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGIES DESCRIBED.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subclauses (I), (II), and (III) of clause (i), and except as provided in subclause (II) of this clause, efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies described in this subsection are efforts by the Government of Iran to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer, test or use ballistic missiles or associated goods, services, or technology by the Government of Iran, including efforts by the Government of Iran to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer, purchase—

''(aa) goods, services, or technology listed on the Missile Technology Control Regime Equipment and Technology Annex of October 8, 2015, and subsequent revisions that have been acquired outside of the Procurement Working Group or not otherwise approved by the United Nations Security Council; or

''(bb) goods, services, or technology not described in the matter preceding item (aa) or item (aa) but which nevertheless the President determines would be, if such goods, services, or technology were United States goods, services, or technology, prohibited for export to Iran because of their potential to materially support the development of ballistic missile systems or ballistic missile launch technologies.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—Subclause (I) shall not apply with respect to efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies that have been approved under paragraph 4 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

''(iv) PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP DEFINED.—In clause (iii)(I), the term 'procurement working group' means the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission established under Annex IV of the applicable provisions in Annex A of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

''(v) ADDITIONAL REPORT ON BALLISTIC MISSILE TESTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year, the President should submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report that specifies the number and generic class of ballistic missiles and space rockets launched by Iran during the preceding calendar year and the dates of each missile launch and the type of missile launched on each relevant date. The report should include definitions used for classifying the generic classes of missiles.

''(II) FORM.—The report required by subclause (I) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.''.

(f) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsections (e) and (f), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(C) CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (8) or (12) of section 6(a), as the case may be, with respect to a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President determines that the person or agency or instrumentality knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, imports, exports, or re-exports to, into, or from Iran, whether directly or indirectly, any significant arms or related materiel prohibited under paragraph (5) or (6) of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).''.

(g) EXCEPTION AND DEFINITIONS.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsections (e), (f), and (g), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) EXCEPTION.—The President may not impose sanctions under subparagraph (B) or (C) with respect to a foreign person or a United States person if the President determines that the person has exercised due diligence in establishing and enforcing official policies, procedures, and controls to ensure that the person does not sell, supply, or transfer to or from Iran materials the sale, supply, or transfer of which would subject a person to the imposition of sanctions under subparagraph (B) or (C), as the case may be, or conduct or facilitate a financial transaction for such a sale, supply, or transfer.

''(E) DEFINITIONS.—In subparagraphs (B) and (C) of this paragraph:

''(i) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY.—The term 'agency or instrumentality' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(b) of title 28, United States Code.

''(ii) FOREIGN STATE.—The term 'foreign state' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(a) of title 28, United States Code.

''(iii) GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.—The term 'Government of Iran' has the meaning given such term in section 560.304 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section was in effect on January 1, 2016.

''(iv) SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTION OR TRANSACTIONS; SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL SERVICES.—The terms 'significant transaction or transactions' and 'significant financial services' shall be determined in accordance with section 561.404 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section 561.404 was in effect on January 1, 2016.''.

(h) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—Section 6(a) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (10) and inserting the following:

''(10) INADMISSIBILITY TO UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may direct the Secretary of State to deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security to exclude from the United States and, if the individual has been issued a visa or other documentation, revoke, in accordance with the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) the visa or other documentation of any alien that—

''(i) is designated pursuant to subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 5(b)(1); or

''(ii) the President determines is a corporate officer or principal of, or a shareholder with a controlling interest in, a sanctioned person.

''(B) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.—Sanctions under subparagraph (A) shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (13); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

''(12) EXPORT SANCTION.—In the case of an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, no item on the United States Munitions List or Commerce Munitions List may be exported to that foreign state for a period of two years.''.

(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The sanctions that are required to be imposed under this section and the amendments made by this section are in addition to other similar or related sanctions that are required to be imposed under any other provision of law.

(j) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out any amendments made by this section.

(k) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan to implement—

(1) paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by this section; and

(2) section 104 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (Public Law 115–44).

(l) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall—

(A) take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) apply with respect to an activity described in subsection (b) of section 5 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as amended by this section, that is commenced on or after such date of enactment.

(2) APPLICABILITY TO ONGOING ACTIVITIES RELATING TO CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.—A person that, before the date of the enactment of this Act, commenced an activity described in section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as in effect on the day before such date of enactment, and continues the activity on or after such date of enactment, shall be subject to the provisions of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as amended by this Act.

**SEC. 3. REPORT ON SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period not to exceed three years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following information:

(1) Any credible information regarding Iran's attempts to develop, procure, or acquire goods, services, or technology with respect to which sanctions may be imposed pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 5(b)(1) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as added by section 2 of this Act.

(2) Any credible information regarding Iran's acquisition or attempted acquisition of significant arms and related material in violation of paragraph 5 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(3) Any credible information regarding Iran's export or attempted export of significant arms and related material in violation of paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(4) Any approval granted by the United Nations Security Council for the export of significant arms and related material identified under paragraphs 5 or 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(5) Any credible information regarding violations of travel restrictions described in paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(6) Any approval granted by the United Nations Security Council for exemptions to the travel restrictions described in paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(b) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

**SEC. 4. DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS FOR THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF DESTABILIZING TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.**

(a) NOTIFICATION OF SALES AND TRANSFERS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the President receives credible information that destabilizing numbers and types of conventional weapons have been sold or transferred to Iran, the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the sale or transfer.

(b) DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO SANCTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which the President notifies the appropriate congressional committees of a sale or transfer under subsection (a), the President shall—

(A) determine whether such sale or transfer meets the requirements to impose sanctions under each provision of law specified in subsection (c); and

(B)(i) if the determination is that the sale or transfer is subject to any such sanctions, the President shall—

(I) make a determination whether to impose or waive such sanctions with respect to such sale or transfer; and

(II) submit that determination to the appropriate congressional committees; or

(ii) if the determination is that the sale or transfer is not subject to any such sanctions, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a detailed report on the determination and the specific reasons for the determination.

(2) FORM.—The determination in paragraph (1) shall be provided in an unclassified form, and may contain a classified annex.

(c) PROVISIONS OF LAW SPECIFIED.—The provisions of law specified in this subsection are the following:

(1) Section 5(b)(1) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by section 2 of this Act.

(2) The Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(3) The Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons''—

(1) has the meaning given the terms ''advanced conventional weapons'' and ''cruise missile'' as defined in paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively, of section 1608 of the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note); and

(2) includes the S–300 and S–400 missile defense systems and air superiority fighters.

**SEC. 5. DETERMINATION ON USE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN OF COMMERCIAL PASSENGER AIRCRAFT AND RELATED SERVICES FOR ILLICIT MILITARY OR OTHER ACTIVITIES.**

(a) DETERMINATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for three years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a determination on use by the Government of Iran of commercial passenger aircraft and related services for illicit military or other activities on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ELEMENTS OF DETERMINATION.—The determination required under subsection (a) shall include a description of the extent to which—

(1) commercial passenger aircraft in Iran are being used to transport—

(A) arms or related materiel, including defense articles, defense services, or technical data that are controlled on the United States Munitions List established under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778);

(B) any item that is, or would be, if located in the United States, controlled by Export Control Classification Number 600 series listed on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations;

(C) items used to facilitate the development or production of a chemical or biological weapon or other weapon of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including ballistic missiles and cruise missiles; or

(D) any foreign person that facilitates the transfer of any of the articles described in subparagraphs (A) through (C);

(2) commercial passenger aircraft licensed by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury are being used for activities described in paragraph (1); and

(3) foreign governments and persons have facilitated the activities described in paragraph (1), including allowing the use of airports, services, or other resources.

(c) FORM OF DETERMINATION.—The determination required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMERCIAL PASSENGER AIRCRAFT.—The term ''commercial passenger aircraft'' includes—

(A) an aircraft of United States origin and that is classified under Export Control Classification Number (ECCN) 9A991 on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations; or

(B) an aircraft not of United States origin of which United States-controlled content constitutes 10 percent or more of the total value of the aircraft and that is—

(i) classified under Export Control Classification Number (ECCN) 9A991 on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations; and

(ii) is registered in a jurisdiction other than the United States.

(2) EXPORT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS.—The term ''Export Administration Regulations'' means subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) RELATED SERVICES.—The term ''related services'', with respect to a commercial passenger aircraft, includes—

(A) the export, re-export, sale, lease, or transfer to Iran of spare parts and components; and

(B) warranty, maintenance, and repair services.

**SEC. 6. REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, promulgate regulations as necessary for the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not less than 10 days before the promulgation of regulations under subsection (a), the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the proposed regulations and the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act that the regulations are implementing.

**SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) CREDIBLE INFORMATION.—The term ''credible information'' has the meaning given such term in section 14 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(3) GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.—The term ''Government of Iran'' has the meaning given such term in section 560.304 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section was in effect on January 1, 2016.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

□ 1415

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, due to the technical issues in the Chamber, I ask to withdraw the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the motion is withdrawn.

## RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1431

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PALMER) at 2 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

## IRAN BALLISTIC MISSILES AND INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1698) to expand sanctions against Iran with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1698

*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 ''Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act''.

**SEC. 2. SANCTIONS RELATING TO EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGIES.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015)—

(A) calls upon Iran ''not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology''; and

(B) requires member states to ''take the necessary measures to prevent, except as decided otherwise by the UN Security Council in advance on a case-by-case basis, the supply, sale, or transfer of arms or related materiel from Iran''.

(2) The United States maintains bilateral sanctions against Iran for its efforts to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technology, and its acquisition of destabilizing types and amounts of conventional weapons.

(3) According to the 2016 Worldwide Threat Assessment, the United States intelligence community judges ''that Tehran would choose ballistic missiles as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons, if it builds them. Iran's ballistic missiles are inherently capable of delivering [weapons of mass destruction], and Tehran already has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East. Iran's progress on space launch vehicles—along with its desire to deter the United States and its allies—provides Tehran with the means and motivation to develop longer-range missiles, including ICBMs.''.

(4) Since the passage of United Nations Security Council 2231, Iran has conducted numerous tests of ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, and has acquired destabilizing types of conventional weapons.

(5) Iran has pursued the ability to indigenously produce ballistic missile and cruise missile goods, services, and technologies.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to prevent Iran from undertaking any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology.

(c) REPORT ON SUPPLY CHAIN OF IRAN'S BALLISTIC MISSILE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(A) An analysis of the foreign supply chain and domestic supply chain in Iran that directly or indirectly significantly facilitates, supports, or otherwise aids the Government of Iran's ballistic missile program.

(B) A description of the geographic distribution of the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

(C) An assessment of the Government of Iran's ability to indigenously manufacture or otherwise produce the goods, services, or technology necessary to support its ballistic missile program.

(D) An identification of foreign persons that have, based on credible information, directly or indirectly facilitated or supported the development of the Government of Iran's ballistic missile program, including the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

(E) A determination with respect to each foreign person identified under subparagraph (D) as to whether the foreign person meets the criteria for designation under—

(i) paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by this section;

(ii) section 104 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (Public Law 115–44); or

(iii) Executive Order 13382 (2005).

(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(d) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''EXPORTS, TRANSFERS, AND TRANSSHIPMENTS'' and inserting ''WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION; BALLISTIC MISSILES; CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS'';

(2) by striking ''Except as'' and inserting the following:

''(A) WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.—Except as'';

(3) by striking ''(A) on or after the date of the enactment of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012'' and inserting the following:

''(i)(I) on or after the date of the enactment of the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act'';

(4) by striking ''(B) knew'' and inserting the following:

''(II) knew'';

(5) by striking ''(i) the export'' and inserting the following:

''(aa) the export'';

(6) by striking ''would likely'' and inserting ''may'';

(7) by striking ''(ii) the export'' and inserting the following:

''(bb) the export'';

(8) by striking ''(I) acquire'' and inserting the following:

''(AA) acquire'';

(9) by striking ''; or'' at the end of subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(AA) (as so redesignated);

(10) by inserting after subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(AA) (as so redesignated) the following:

''(BB) acquire or develop ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technologies; or'';

(11) by striking ''(II) acquire'' and inserting the following:

''(CC) acquire'';

(12) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (A)(ii)(II)(bb)(CC) (as so redesignated) and inserting ''; or''; and

(13) by adding at the end of subparagraph (A) the following:

''(ii) knowingly exports or transfers, or permits or otherwise facilitates the transshipment or re-export of, goods, services, technology, or other items to Iran that materially supports Iran's efforts to—

''(I) acquire or develop ballistic missiles or ballistic missile launch technologies; or

''(II) acquire or develop destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons (as such term is defined in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1608 of the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992).''.

(e) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILES.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsection (e), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(B) ADDITIONAL BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGY.—

''(i) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (8), (10), or (12) of section 6(a), as the case may be, with respect to—

''(I) an agency or instrumentality of the Government of Iran if the President determines that the agency or instrumentality, on or after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, knowingly seeks to develop, procure, or acquire goods, services, or technology that materially supports efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii);

''(II) a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President determines that the person or agency or instrumentality knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, provides significant material support to the Government of Iran that supports efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii); and

''(III) a foreign person that the President determines knowingly engages in a significant transaction or transactions with, or provides significant financial services for, a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in subclause (I) or (II) with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies as described in clause (iii).

''(ii) DETERMINATION AND REPORT ON BALLISTIC MISSILE TESTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the President determines that the Government of Iran has conducted a test of a ballistic missile that fails to comply with, violates, or is in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that identifies each senior official of the Government of Iran that the President determines is responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing the missile test.

''(II) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required by subclause (I) should include available information on the ballistic missile or the generic class of ballistic missile or space rocket that was launched; the trajectory, duration, range, and altitude of the missile flight; the duration, range, and altitude of the flight of each stage of the missile; the location of the launch point and impact point; the payload; and other technical information that is available.

''(III) FORM.—The report required by subclause (I) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

''(iii) EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN WITH RESPECT TO BALLISTIC MISSILE-RELATED GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGIES DESCRIBED.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subclauses (I), (II), and (III) of clause (i), and except as provided in subclause (II) of this clause, efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies described in this subsection are efforts by the Government of Iran to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer, test or use ballistic missiles or associated goods, services, or technology by the Government of Iran, including efforts by the Government of Iran to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer, purchase—

''(aa) goods, services, or technology listed on the Missile Technology Control Regime Equipment and Technology Annex of October 8, 2015, and subsequent revisions that have been acquired outside of the Procurement Working Group or not otherwise approved by the United Nations Security Council; or

''(bb) goods, services, or technology not described in the matter preceding item (aa) or item (aa) but which nevertheless the President determines would be, if such goods, services, or technology were United States goods, services, or technology, prohibited for export to Iran because of their potential to materially support the development of ballistic missile systems or ballistic missile launch technologies.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—Subclause (I) shall not apply with respect to efforts by the Government of Iran with respect to ballistic missile-related goods, services, and technologies that have been approved under paragraph 4 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

''(iv) PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP DEFINED.—In clause (iii)(I), the term 'procurement working group' means the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission established under Annex IV of the applicable provisions in Annex A of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

''(v) ADDITIONAL REPORT ON BALLISTIC MISSILE TESTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year, the President should submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report that specifies the number and generic class of ballistic missiles and space rockets launched by Iran during the preceding calendar year and the dates of each missile launch and the type of missile launched on each relevant date. The report should include definitions used for classifying the generic classes of missiles.

''(II) FORM.—The report required by subclause (I) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.''.

(f) SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsections (e) and (f), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(C) CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (8) or (12) of section 6(a), as the case may be, with respect to a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President determines that the person or agency or instrumentality knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, imports, exports, or re-exports to, into, or from Iran, whether directly or indirectly, any significant arms or related materiel prohibited under paragraph (5) or (6) of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).''.

(g) EXCEPTION AND DEFINITIONS.—Paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by subsections (e), (f), and (g), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) EXCEPTION.—The President may not impose sanctions under subparagraph (B) or (C) with respect to a foreign person or a United States person if the President determines that the person has exercised due diligence in establishing and enforcing official policies, procedures, and controls to ensure that the person does not sell, supply, or transfer to or from Iran materials the sale, supply, or transfer of which would subject a person to the imposition of sanctions under subparagraph (B) or (C), as the case may be, or conduct or facilitate a financial transaction for such a sale, supply, or transfer.

''(E) DEFINITIONS.—In subparagraphs (B) and (C) of this paragraph:

''(i) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY.—The term 'agency or instrumentality' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(b) of title 28, United States Code.

''(ii) FOREIGN STATE.—The term 'foreign state' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(a) of title 28, United States Code.

''(iii) GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.—The term 'Government of Iran' has the meaning given such term in section 560.304 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section was in effect on January 1, 2016.

''(iv) SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTION OR TRANSACTIONS; SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL SERVICES.—The terms 'significant transaction or transactions' and 'significant financial services'

shall be determined in accordance with section 561.404 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section 561.404 was in effect on January 1, 2016.''.

(h) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—Section 6(a) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (10) and inserting the following:

''(10) INADMISSIBILITY TO UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may direct the Secretary of State to deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security to exclude from the United States and, if the individual has been issued a visa or other documentation, revoke, in accordance with the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) the visa or other documentation of any alien that—

''(i) is designated pursuant to subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 5(b)(1); or

''(ii) the President determines is a corporate officer or principal of, or a shareholder with a controlling interest in, a sanctioned person.

''(B) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.—Sanctions under subparagraph (A) shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (13); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

''(12) EXPORT SANCTION.—In the case of an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, no item on the United States Munitions List or Commerce Munitions List may be exported to that foreign state for a period of two years.''.

(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The sanctions that are required to be imposed under this section and the amendments made by this section are in addition to other similar or related sanctions that are required to be imposed under any other provision of law.

(j) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out any amendments made by this section.

(k) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan to implement—

(1) paragraph (1) of section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by this section; and

(2) section 104 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (Public Law 115–44).

(l) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall—

(A) take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) apply with respect to an activity described in subsection (b) of section 5 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as amended by this section, that is commenced on or after such date of enactment.

(2) APPLICABILITY TO ONGOING ACTIVITIES RELATING TO CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.—A person that, before the date of the enactment of this Act, commenced an activity described in section 5(b) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as in effect on the day before such date of enactment, and continues the activity on or after such date of enactment, shall be subject to the provisions of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as amended by this Act.

**SEC. 3. REPORT ON SANCTIONABLE ACTIVITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period not to exceed three years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following information:

(1) Any credible information regarding Iran's attempts to develop, procure, or acquire goods, services, or technology with respect to which sanctions may be imposed pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 5(b)(1) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as added by section 2 of this Act.

(2) Any credible information regarding Iran's acquisition or attempted acquisition of significant arms and related material in violation of paragraph 5 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(3) Any credible information regarding Iran's export or attempted export of significant arms and related material in violation of paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(4) Any approval granted by the United Nations Security Council for the export of significant arms and related material identified under paragraphs 5 or 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(5) Any credible information regarding violations of travel restrictions described in paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(6) Any approval granted by the United Nations Security Council for exemptions to the travel restrictions described in paragraph 6 of Annex B of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(b) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

**SEC. 4. DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS FOR THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF DESTABILIZING TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.**

(a) NOTIFICATION OF SALES AND TRANSFERS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the President receives credible information that destabilizing numbers and types of conventional weapons have been sold or transferred to Iran, the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the sale or transfer.

(b) DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO SANCTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which the President notifies the appropriate congressional committees of a sale or transfer under subsection (a), the President shall—

(A) determine whether such sale or transfer meets the requirements to impose sanctions under each provision of law specified in subsection (c); and

(B)(i) if the determination is that the sale or transfer is subject to any such sanctions, the President shall—

(I) make a determination whether to impose or waive such sanctions with respect to such sale or transfer; and

(II) submit that determination to the appropriate congressional committees; or

(ii) if the determination is that the sale or transfer is not subject to any such sanctions, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a detailed report on the determination and the specific reasons for the determination.

(2) FORM.—The determination in paragraph (1) shall be provided in an unclassified form, and may contain a classified annex.

(c) PROVISIONS OF LAW SPECIFIED.—The provisions of law specified in this subsection are the following:

(1) Section 5(b)(1) of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by section 2 of this Act.

(2) The Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(3) The Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons''—

(1) has the meaning given the terms ''advanced conventional weapons'' and ''cruise missile'' as defined in paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively, of section 1608 of the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note); and

(2) includes the S–300 and S–400 missile defense systems and air superiority fighters.

**SEC. 5. DETERMINATION ON USE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN OF COMMERCIAL PASSENGER AIRCRAFT AND RELATED SERVICES FOR ILLICIT MILITARY OR OTHER ACTIVITIES.**

(a) DETERMINATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for three years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a determination on use by the Government of Iran of commercial passenger aircraft and related services for illicit military or other activities on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ELEMENTS OF DETERMINATION.—The determination required under subsection (a) shall include a description of the extent to which—

(1) commercial passenger aircraft in Iran are being used to transport—

(A) arms or related materiel, including defense articles, defense services, or technical data that are controlled on the United States Munitions List established under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778);

(B) any item that is, or would be, if located in the United States, controlled by Export Control Classification Number 600 series listed on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations;

(C) items used to facilitate the development or production of a chemical or biological weapon or other weapon of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including ballistic missiles and cruise missiles; or

(D) any foreign person that facilitates the transfer of any of the articles described in subparagraphs (A) through (C);

(2) commercial passenger aircraft licensed by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury are being used for activities described in paragraph (1); and

(3) foreign governments and persons have facilitated the activities described in paragraph (1), including allowing the use of airports, services, or other resources.

(c) FORM OF DETERMINATION.—The determination required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMERCIAL PASSENGER AIRCRAFT.—The term ''commercial passenger aircraft'' includes—

(A) an aircraft of United States origin and that is classified under Export Control Classification Number (ECCN) 9A99l on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations; or

(B) an aircraft not of United States origin of which United States-controlled content constitutes 10 percent or more of the total value of the aircraft and that is—

(i) classified under Export Control Classification Number (ECCN) 9A991 on the Commerce Control List maintained under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations; and

(ii) is registered in a jurisdiction other than the United States.

(2) EXPORT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS.—The term ''Export Administration Regulations'' means subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) RELATED SERVICES.—The term ''related services'', with respect to a commercial passenger aircraft, includes—

(A) the export, re-export, sale, lease, or transfer to Iran of spare parts and components; and

(B) warranty, maintenance, and repair services.

**SEC. 6. REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, promulgate regulations as necessary for the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not less than 10 days before the promulgation of regulations under subsection (a), the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the proposed regulations and the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act that the regulations are implementing.

**SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) CREDIBLE INFORMATION.—The term ''credible information'' has the meaning given such term in section 14 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(3) GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.—The term ''Government of Iran'' has the meaning given such term in section 560.304 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as such section was in effect on January 1, 2016.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives here considers four measures that we have worked on in a bipartisan way, four measures that are consistent with the President's call for an approach to Iran that addresses the full range of threats that it possesses to not just the United States, but to our allies, to our partners as well.

This legislation, which I have authored along with my colleague, ELIOT ENGEL, I am proud to say we now have 323 cosponsors to this bill. This is the bipartisan Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act.

What this does is respond to the regime's continued pursuit of intercontinental ballistic missiles and to dangerous conventional weapons.

Mr. Speaker, I will begin by thanking my good friend, Mr. ENGEL, for his hard work, his collaboration, along with Mr. STENY HOYER and Mr. MCCARTHY, in bringing this important legislation to this floor.

Iran has already developed an arsenal of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles, and those missiles put our allies, our partners, as well as U.S. forces in range.

Now Iran is working on intercontinental ballistic missiles. I think to get the point across, I would just quote our former Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, because he testified before Congress on this issue. What he conveyed to us is: '' . . . the I in ICBM stands for intercontinental, which means having the capability from flying from Iran to the United States, and we don't want that.''

That was the way he explained this.

One of the reasons that we don't want that is that intercontinental ballistic missiles are inherently capable of carrying nuclear weapons. In fact, as one expert told the Foreign Affairs Committee, ''no country that has not aspired to possess nuclear weapons has ever opted to sustain'' a lengthy and expensive missile program.

I would take issue with that. I do know of one exception to that rule. That exception was South Africa under the apartheid regime, which did develop the atomic weapon. It is an example of how sanctions can be successful, because when we passed sanctions here, the consequence was they made a decision to turn that weapon back over to the IAEA, as well as to allow Nelson Mandela to leave jail, and they held elections. That is the exception I know of.

So whether you supported the nuclear deal or whether you opposed that nuclear deal, this other issue should concern you either way. By developing the delivery system, Iran is keeping its options open.

So from those who worked on the deal, one of the architects, Jake Sullivan of the former administration, made it clear to us—and this was 2 weeks ago—that imposing costs on Iran for its continued pursuit of ballistic missiles and other destabilizing activity is ''not only necessary, but justified.''

That is one of the architects of the agreement itself.

That is what this bill does. It requires a comprehensive investigation to identify and designate the companies, the banks, the individuals inside and outside of Iran which supply the regime's missiles and supply their conventional weapons programs, and it sanctions them. In doing so, it shuts out Iranian and foreign companies involved in Iran's missile program. It also shuts out the banks that back them. It shuts them out from the global financial system.

This bill expands Iran sanctions that we passed and were signed into law in August with H.R. 3364, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

For example, while the bill that passed over the summer specifically sanctions those who materially contribute to Iran's ballistic missile program, the bill before us today goes a step further by sanctioning those that are in the business of financing Iran's efforts.

The conventional weapons prohibition in the bill before us are also stronger, and let me explain why. The August legislation referenced the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which excludes such items as Russia's recent sale of the S–300 air defense system to Iran. The bill before us ensures that there is no such carveout.

Mr. Speaker, Members have different views on how to handle Iran's nuclear program, but when it comes to Iran's ballistic missile and conventional weapons programs, all 323 cosponsors of this bill agree: Iran has no business developing or acquiring intercontinental ballistic missiles. That is why it is so important that we pass this bill and give the administration the tools to respond.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 1698, the ''Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act,'' on which the Committee on Ways and Means was granted an additional referral.

As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 1698 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, I agree to waive formal consideration of this bill so that it may move expeditiously to the floor. The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an

appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 1698.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1698 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
*Washington, DC, October 20, 2017.*

Hon. ED ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing concerning H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, as amended.

As a result of your having consulted with the Committee on Financial Services concerning provisions in the bill that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree to forgo action on the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. The Committee on Financial Services takes this action with our mutual understanding that, by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1698, as amended, at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for any such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1698 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Committee Report and the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

JEB HENSARLING,
*Chairman.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
*Chairman, Committee on Financial Services, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1698 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
*Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1698 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
*Washington, DC, October 24, 2017.*

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 1698, the ''Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act.'' This bill would expand sanctions against Iran with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran and contains provisions within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. As a result of your having consulted with me concerning the provisions of the bill that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree to forgo consideration of the bill so the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1698 at this time we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and we will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. Further, I request your support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform during any House-Senate conference convened on this or related legislation.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the bill report filed by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

TREY GOWDY.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. TREY GOWDY,
*Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOWDY: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1698 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Let me thank our chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, my friend, ED ROYCE from California, for his work moving this bill. I was pleased to join him as the lead Democratic cosponsor when we introduced this bill in March of this year.

I stand by his entire statement that he has just made. We have an absolute meeting of the minds on this bill, and that is why we were able to get 323 cosponsors on both sides of the aisle, because people understand and realize the threat that Iran poses to us, to the world, and to our allies.

The Foreign Affairs Committee has been hard at work this year devising new tools and approaches for dealing with the threat of Iran. There is no doubt that Iran must be one of our major priorities in our foreign policy, the world's most prolific state sponsor of terrorism, a serial abuser of human rights, a lifeline for the murderous

Assad regime in Syria, and the challenge we are dealing with today: Iran's illicit development of ballistic missiles.

The chairman and I share the view that when it comes to the nuclear deal, which we both opposed, the best path forward is to enforce the hell out of it even while we work to hold Iran's feet to the fire on all these other harmful activities.

We passed a tough sanctions bill last summer to crack down on Iran, as well as North Korea and Russia. While the bill before us today basically contains very similar provisions which we dealt with then and, as the chairman explained, we go one step further here, I am always eager to find even more ways to dial up pressure on the regime in Tehran, which is a malevolent regime, which is a regime that sponsors terrorism, which is a regime that is hostile to the United States, hostile to our ally Israel, and hostile to our other allies in the Middle East. But I worry that the administration isn't taking this problem seriously.

So far, the White House hasn't fully implemented the previous bill we sent to the President. The White House's approach to the nuclear deal sends a bad message to allies and adversaries around the world that the United States might not live up to its word. Rather than extracting more concessions with Iran, which I believe may be possible by working hard to build a strong multilateral coalition, the course of this may instead push Iran to leave the deal and resume work on a bomb. We can never allow that to happen.

So I am happy that we keep passing the sanctions bills, but Congress' role can only go so far. It is up to the administration to lay out its goals, devise a strategy, and implement the tough sanctions Congress has passed. It is more than 60 days since we passed the sanctions bill, and the President has not implemented it. According to the bill, which the President signed, it was supposed to be implemented within 60 days, so it sends a mixed message.

Talking tough is not enough. Congress sends a bill to the White House, the President signs it, it really should be implemented. So I want to urge the President and the administration to listen to this Congress in a bipartisan way. We passed this bill. It needs to be implemented, and it needs to be passed and implemented again.

In the meantime, I am happy to support this bill. I think this shows that we need to work together when it comes to Iran in a bipartisan way to show that there is really not a shred of difference, that we will not stand for Iran's aggression, we will not stand for the mullahs threatening us, we will not stand for Iran stomping on its own people.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue. I urge my friends on both sides of the aisle to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security. He is a former Federal prosecutor and a senior member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, let me first commend Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for their strong bipartisan work on this very important legislation that sanctions Iran's ballistic missile program and the Iranian-backed terror group Hezbollah.

Over the last several decades, the tyrannical regime in Iran has been racing to develop a nuclear weapons program that could threaten the United States and our allies and potentially spark an arms race in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the extremely flawed JCPOA kept parts of Iran's nuclear infrastructure in place and strengthened the regime's leader with a windfall of cash. Because this toothless deal failed to address Iran's other malign activities, such as support for terror and their intercontinental ballistic missile program, we must now find other ways to apply new pressure.

Fortunately, the House is taking action today. One of the bills we are considering will require the President to impose additional sanctions on enemies and individuals supporting Iran's development of ballistic missiles. I sincerely hope that we can soon add even more pressure on Iran by designating the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organization, legislation I pursued in the last two Congresses.

Going after state sponsors is an important part of winning this fight, but we must fight also directly individual terror groups to limit the resources to prevent future attacks. That is why I am pleased that we also are considering measures to target Hezbollah.

This package would direct the President to impose new sanctions on financial institutions and foreign governments that support Hezbollah and affiliated organizations, as well as individual members of the terror groups, that they have used civilians as human shields.

□ 1445

I will say it is Hezbollah that killed so many of our marines in Beirut, Lebanon, let us not forget.

The chairman and ranking member and I recently visited Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu, who described the Shia Crescent of Iran going into Iraq, into Syria, into Lebanon. He talked to us about the manufacturing plant in Lebanon manufacturing rockets pointed straight at the State of Israel.

These bills, I believe, will take us steps closer toward ridding the world of this terrible threat posed by Islamic terror.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and ranking member.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the esteemed majority leader of the House.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I want to thank the gentleman for his work as chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I stand on this floor thinking of the world and America's place in it. What I desire most is peace. America has no desire to fight those who do not harm us. I would gladly support any international agreement that I thought would bring us to an honorable and enduring peace.

But peace is not based on hope; it is not based on good intentions; and it is not based on pieces of paper signed at well-planned ceremonies. Peace is based on strength. America and our allies will only be at peace if those who hate us fear us. This is where our credibility matters.

When an American President agrees to a deal that is so obviously unequal and untenable, everyone stops fearing us. They start to think they can push us around.

Let me be clear. They may start to push, but no one can knock us down. America will win any fight. Our enemies should know that. But, frankly, I want our enemies to be so afraid of us they don't even want to fight. That saves everyone a great deal of trouble.

When I look back to our nuclear deal with North Korea and our deal with Iran, they aren't just flawed; they are dangerous. The displays of weakness have consequences beyond nuclear weapons.

Our North Korea deal has failed. The Kim regime will soon have nuclear warheads on intercontinental ballistic missiles. These warheads will be capable of hitting our homeland. In the meantime, they have reportedly fired missiles over our allies South Korea and Japan and, almost daily, threatened war.

The deal with Iran is on a path to failure, designed in such a way that, even if it were followed, a regime that chants ''death to America''—let me say that again, a regime that chants ''death to America''—could have nuclear weapons the day after the deal expires.

Even ignoring the deal, Iran continues to destabilize the region for its own goal, funding terrorism abroad and fueling violence between Shia and Sunni Muslims that is tearing the Middle East apart.

The spread of nuclear weapons is a danger in and of itself. I do not need to explain why enemies of the United States should be stopped from gaining the power to level American cities, but the evil is made worse when our enemies, with any weapons, think they can push America and our allies around.

America will not be weak any longer. Today's sanction on Iran undermines its ballistic missile program and the terrorist warriors of Hezbollah whose pockets are filled with Iranian money,

just as their hands are covered with American blood. This is an important part of our Nation's new Iran strategy.

Yesterday, we passed the most far-reaching sanctions we have ever imposed on North Korea. Those who do business with North Korea support a regime run on slave labor. They support a regime that deprives its citizens of every freedom, even the freedom to think, and they support a regime that tortured and murdered American citizen Otto Warmbier not because he committed a crime or threatened their government in any way, but because he was an American. If you do business with such a regime, there will be severe consequences.

I had the honor of meeting Otto's parents, Cindy and Fred. They told me about Otto's warmth, his joy, his love of life, and the great hopes he had. In everything, he stood as a living example of the good in humanity that the Kim regime seeks to destroy. We renamed that legislation as the Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanctions Act. It won't bring him back, but it will remind North Korea that evil has consequences.

Otto's murder was a crime we cannot accept, but it is a crime, I fear, our enemies would repeat on a much larger scale if we do not start stopping them now. Let's remind them who they are up against. America will not fail.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, and she is the author of multiple laws addressing the Iranian threat.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE for authoring this bill alongside our good friend Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, the dynamic duo of Foreign Affairs. I want to thank them for their leadership and their continued effort in holding Iran accountable.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan bill is called the Iran Ballistic Missile and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, authored by our chairman and ranking member. It is a strong and important bill. It sanctions Iranian and foreign persons and entities that support, that facilitate, that finance Iran's ballistic missile program. It is a necessary measure because, as we know, Iran has felt emboldened to continue advancing its missile program since the P5+1 and Iran concluded the weak nuclear deal.

Tehran has taken advantage of this deal and the U.N. Security Council resolution that endorsed the agreement. Despite language that prohibits Iran's ballistic missile testing in U.N. Resolution 2231, Iran has actually increased its missile activities, violating both the spirit and the letter of the resolution.

With the President having made his determination 2 weeks ago that Iran is not in compliance with its commitments under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, we now have an opportunity to address the weakness in the nuclear deal and also Iran's illicit activity.

We must continue to press forward on a dual track. We must continue to hold Iran accountable for its non-nuclear illicit activity, while also looking to address our concerns with the nuclear deal. They are not mutually exclusive, Mr. Speaker. Both are extremely important for our national security. This is an important step.

I thank the Members for their great leadership. I support passage of Chairman ROYCE and ELIOT ENGEL's measure.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE). He is the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Iran continues to be one of the two greatest threats to the United States' national security and to global security. The other, of course, is North Korea.

It has become very clear that the Iranian deal has not moderated the regime. Regardless of where people are on whether we should have signed it or not signed it, it hasn't stopped the aggressive activity and belief of the regime.

I believe that they are still developing or trying to develop nuclear weapons. No one denies that Iran is actively working toward developing a delivery capability for a nuclear payload. Iran's ballistic missile program is going to be and already is a menace not only to the United States, but to Europe and other parts of the world.

Iran is working with North Korea to develop intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of reaching our shores. These two nations engage in their activity and belief in hate—hate—of freedom to destroy the United States and our some of our allies. We should understand that this is a reality and the threat is now. We should deal with both of those countries accordingly, not in 10 years.

This legislation, Mr. ROYCE's Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, is very crucial.

We must hold the Ayatollah accountable for threatening the global security and our security.

We must hold the Ayatollah and the IRGC and Hezbollah accountable for the people that have been murdered throughout the world because of their response to hate, their hating of all peoples who don't agree with them.

We must target the entire global supply chain of Iran's ballistic missile program. I believe the Ayatollah, Mr. Speaker, when he tells us, on a periodic basis, ''Death to America.'' I believe him when he says that. That is their foreign policy to the United States: ''Death to America.'' Americans should believe this.

Mr. Speaker, we must make sure that he does not have the capability to achieve a delivery system of his nuclear weapons, and I urge voting in favor of H.R. 1698.

Mr. Speaker, I also do want to mention another bill that I think is important that we pass today, Mr. DEUTCH's H.R. 359.

In 2013, the European Union finally came around to designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, but for reasons that make absolutely no sense to me, the Europeans only designated Hezbollah's military wing, not the political wing. By distinguishing between a terrorist group's so-called military and political wings, it seems like we have legitimized this group's deadly behavior.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Hezbollah is a terrorist organization, and wherever you look in the Middle East and you find trouble, you will find the IRGC and Hezbollah working together. These two agencies from Iran are the gestapo actors for the Iranian Ayatollah, and it is time that we hold them accountable for what they are doing. We must pass these pieces of legislation, and this will go a long way in doing that.

And that is just the way it is.

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

Mr. Speaker, as we have shown again and again, and you can tell with all the comments that were made here, there is support on both sides of the aisle for holding Iran accountable for its dangerous behavior.

While today's bill is similar to the bipartisan sanctions Congress passed during the summer, the direction we are moving today with this bill is the right one: going after Iran for something outside the scope of the nuclear deal.

When the nuclear deal was negotiated, we were told very clearly that it would not prevent us, would not stop us from slapping sanctions on Iran for other things, other things like support of terrorism or ballistic missiles, or all the troublemaking activities that they do.

This is what we are doing today. We are slapping sanctions on Iran for its behavior. We are slapping sanctions on Iran because we are not going to stand for their doing whatever they please and helping terrorism, suppressing rights of its people, and being a general threat to the United States.

□ 1500

So I hope that we can get a strong, bipartisan, overwhelming vote for this bill the way we did in the bill that Chairman ROYCE and I introduced 3

months ago, again, which gave the President 60 days to identify sanctions, which was not done beyond the 60 days, and I hope that the administration forthwith does that now.

So I think this is an important measure. I think it is an important measure to have a strong bipartisan vote because we have to show the Iranians that, while we may disagree on certain things, there is no disagreement on the fact that we regard Iran as the largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is true of both sides of the aisle that we regard Iran as threatening; that we regard Iran as dangerous in the Middle East; that we regard Iran, unfortunately, as an adversary of the United States. The comments with the rallies that the Ayatollah holds, death to America, death to Israel, is not something that we can countenance in this country, and so we are going to fight it.

I am very proud of what the House is doing today. I urge a ''yes'' vote. And I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, once again, for his strong leadership on this measure and so many other measures.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to submit any statements or any material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all our members who worked on this bill. Over the last few years, the Foreign Affairs Committee has conducted dedicated oversight of the threats posed by Iran, and we have had dozens of hearings. And whether the topic was the nuclear program, or the missile program, or Iran's support for terrorism, or the regime's human rights abuses, the conclusion was clear. The United States must respond to the full range of threats, and with this bill and the others before us, that is what we are doing here today.

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1698, and am proud to cosponsor the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enhancement Act because we must do everything in our power to curb, and ultimately put an end to Iran's malign behavior in the Middle East region and across the globe.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, which governs implementation of the JCPOA, contains travel restrictions for certain Iranian individuals. One such individual is Commander of the IRGC's Quds Force, General Qasem Soleimani. There are troubling reports that General Soleimani has traveled to Russia, and other countries, in violation of UNSCR 2231, yet, the United States and the United Nations have failed to act.

I am pleased my amendment to require a report on any credible information regarding violations of the UN travel restrictions and any exemptions that have been approved by the Security Council is included in this bill. These travel restrictions were put in place for good reason and we deserve to know whether in fact violations have occurred and what the U.S. and UN plan to do in response.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 1698.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1698, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

## SANCTIONING HIZBALLAH'S ILLICIT USE OF CIVILIANS AS DEFENSELESS SHIELDS ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3342) to impose sanctions on foreign persons that are responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use by Hizballah of civilians as human shields, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3342

*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 ''Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act''.

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

Congress finds the following:

(1) Human shields are civilians, prisoners of war, and other noncombatants whose presence is designed to protect combatants and military objects from attack, and the use of human shields violates international law.

(2) Throughout the 2006 conflict with the State of Israel, Hizballah forces utilized human shields to protect themselves from counterattacks by Israeli forces, including storing weapons inside civilian homes and firing rockets from inside populated civilian areas.

(3) Hizballah has rearmed to include an arsenal of over 150,000 missiles, and other destabilizing weapons provided by the Syrian and Iranian governments, which are concealed in Shiite villages in southern Lebanon, often beneath civilian infrastructure.

(4) Hizballah is legally required to disarm under both United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006) and the Taif Agreement (1989).

(5) Hizballah maintains an armed military force within Lebanon's sovereign territory in direct violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), thus preventing Lebanon from exerting its lawful control over its internationally recognized borders.

**SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

It shall be the policy of the United States to consider the use of human shields by Hizballah as a gross violation of internationally recognized human rights, to officially and publicly condemn the use of innocent civilians as human shields by Hizballah, and to take effective action against those that engage in the grave breach of international law through the use of human shields.

**SEC. 4. UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.**

The President should direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations Security Council to secure support for a resolution that would impose multilateral sanctions against Hizballah for its use of civilians as human shields.

**SEC. 5. IDENTIFICATION OF FOREIGN PERSONS THAT ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR GROSS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS BY REASON OF USE BY HIZBALLAH OF CIVILIANS AS HUMAN SHIELDS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to each person on the list required under subsection (b).

(b) LIST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of the following:

(A) Each foreign person that the President determines, based on credible evidence, is a member of Hizballah, or acting on behalf of Hizballah, that is responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the use of civilians as human shields.

(B) Each foreign person, or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, that the President determines has provided, attempted to provide, or significantly facilitated the provision of, material support to a person described in subparagraph (A).

(2) UPDATES.—The President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees an update of the list required under paragraph (1) as new information becomes available.

(c) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions to be imposed on a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state on the list required under subsection (b) are the following:

(1) BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of the foreign person or of such agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if such property or interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security determines is a foreign person on the list required under subsection (b) is—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Any visa or other documentation issued to an alien who is a foreign person on the list required under subsection (b), regardless of when such visa or other documentation was issued, shall be revoked and such alien shall be denied admission to the United States.

(ii) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under clause (i)—

(I) shall take effect immediately; and

(II) shall automatically cancel any other valid visa or documentation that is in the possession of the alien who is the subject of such revocation.

(3) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that knowingly violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations promulgated to carry out this section to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that knowingly commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act.

(4) REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may exercise all authorities provided to the President under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) for purposes of carrying out this section.

(B) ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall, promulgate regulations as necessary for the implementation of this section and the amendments made by this section.

(C) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than ten days before the promulgation of regulations under subparagraph (B), the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the proposed regulations and the provisions of this section that the regulations are implementing.

(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to limit the authority of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or any other relevant provision of law.

(d) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under this section for periods not to exceed 120 days with respect to a foreign person, or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, if the President reports to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States.

(e) EXEMPTIONS.—Any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

**SEC. 6. REPORT.**

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing a determination on whether each person described in subsection (b) meets the criteria described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 5(b)(1).

(b) PERSONS DESCRIBED.—The persons described in this subsection are the following:

(1) The Secretary General of Hizballah.

(2) Members of the Hizballah Politburo.

(3) Any other senior members of Hizballah or other associated entities that the President determines to be appropriate.

(4) Any person, or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that the President determines provides material support to Hizballah that supports its use of civilians as human shields.

(c) FORM OF REPORT; PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(1) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The unclassified portion of such report shall be made available to the public and posted on the internet website of the Department of State—

(A) in English, Farsi, Arabic, and Azeri; and

(B) in pre-compressed, easily downloadable versions that are made available in all appropriate formats.

**SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN.—The terms ''admitted'' and ''alien'' have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE.—The term ''agency or instrumentality of a foreign state'' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(b) of title 28, United States Code.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(4) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term ''foreign person'' means any citizen or national of a foreign country, or any entity not organized solely under the laws of the United States or existing solely in the United States.

(5) FOREIGN STATE.—The term ''foreign state'' has the meaning given such term in section 1603(a) of title 28, United States Code.

(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States (including foreign branches), or any person in the United States.

(7) HIZBALLAH.—The term ''Hizballah'' means—

(A) the entity known as Hizballah and designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189); or

(B) any person—

(i) the property or interests in property of which are blocked pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(ii) who is identified on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury as an agent, instrumentality, or affiliate of Hizballah.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members might have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am rising in strong support to this Shields Act, as we call it, which sanctions Hezbollah, sanctions them for their use in southern Lebanon of not only families, but entire villages as human shields; and let me explain this.

As we have discussed today, the Iranian-backed terrorist organization, Hezbollah, has constructed an entire military apparatus in the nation that sits just north of Israel's northern border in Lebanon. It is now complete with missile production facilities that are intended to strike at Israel's civilian centers.

I do want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GALLAGHER) for his leadership because he has helped bring this critical attention to us today.

But, in the process, as we talk about Hezbollah, they have placed Israeli and Lebanese civilians directly into the path of the conflict. If you go to that border, as I have done, you can see command post after command post, not manned by the Lebanese Armed Forces. Those flags you see are not Lebanese flags, they are Hezbollah battle flags. And they man those posts, surrounded by antitank and infantry positions, surrounded by underground tunnels and rocket launchers and arms depots. In short, countless Lebanese villages are, in effect, military bases, the ones that are right along that border, financed and equipped by Iran.

No one has the right to sacrifice the lives of innocent women and children, and certainly not those dedicated to the twisted and evil goals of destroying the State of Israel.

When I say I have seen this firsthand, in 2006, I was in Haifa during the war that Hezbollah was conducting with Israel, and Hezbollah forces used human shields extensively in a cowardly effort to protect their rocket launchers from counterattacks by Israeli forces. I watched as those rockets came into civilian populations in Haifa and exploded there, and sent those civilians to the trauma hospital.

In Rambam trauma hospital, as they were bringing people in, I asked for the count that day. There were 600 victims, wounded victims of those attacks, being treated in that hospital—Arab Israelis, Jewish Israelis, Druid Israelis, all of them victims of those Hezbollah attacks.

It seems—and by the way, when you see the devastation, every one of those Iranian-made missiles has 90,000 ball bearings in it, and that is what they are launching on schools, civilian areas. They attempted to hit the hospital itself.

It seems that Hezbollah and its Iranian backers are willing to fight to the

last villager there in their quest to annihilate the people of Israel, yet neither Hezbollah nor Iran has been held to account by responsible nations for these egregious crimes.

While Foreign Minister Zarif of Iran was coddled by the EU, this issue was never raised, not by us, not by the EU. We never raised this with the Iranians as a serious issue. We have to because the willingness to overlook these human rights violations is why we find ourselves in the position that we are in today and why this legislation is critically important.

This bill calls on the U.S. and its partners to hold Hezbollah and Iran accountable through targeted sanctions and appropriate action at the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
*Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3342, Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3342 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 3342, the ''Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act.''

As a result of your having consulted with us on this measure, I agree not to seek a sequential referral on this bill so that it may move expeditiously to the floor. The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 3342.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to forgo a sequential referral request on H.R. 3342, Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3342 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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

I rise in support of this measure. Let me start off by thanking Representatives GALLAGHER of Wisconsin and SUOZZI of New York. Mr. SUOZZI is a very valued, new member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I want to thank both of them for their hard work on this bill. And, as always, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership.

This is the first of three measures that we are considering today to crack down on the terrorist group, Hezbollah. I have been focused on this challenge for a long time. More than a decade ago, I wrote a law to get Syria out of Lebanon and, with it, Syria's support for Hezbollah.

But this is a group made up of extremists, and they will always try to find new ways to gather resources and spread their reach, all in aid of its dangerous and violent agenda, which is undermining Lebanon's political independence; supporting Iran's activities, aggressive activities throughout the region; fueling chaos and war in Syria; and threatening our ally, Israel.

We need to do everything in our power to isolate Hezbollah. We need to crack down on its recruiters and financiers. We need to cut off its supply of weapons, and we need to silence its propaganda machine.

The three measures we will now consider will help us meet this challenge. The first is a new sanctions bill aimed at Hezbollah's use of innocent civilians as human shields. It would ban entry into the United States to anyone who uses human shields on behalf of Hezbollah, and it would freeze whatever assets they have in the United States.

This bill would call upon our Ambassador to the U.N. to push for multilateral sanctions for the same behavior, and it would require the administration to keep Congress apprised about whether certain Hezbollah leaders would be caught up in the web of these sanctions.

It is a good bill and a piece of a broader strategy to cut the legs out from under this odious group.

You know, some our friends in Europe like to say: Well, there are really two parts of Hezbollah. One is the military wing, and one is the humanitarian wing, and the so-called humanitarian wing takes care of people who are in trouble, who need aid, who need help, and that is the way the story goes.

The fact is, a terrorist organization is a terrorist organization. You cannot cut it in half and say one wing is good and the other wing is not. A terrorist organization is not good. A terrorist organization kills innocent people. A terrorist organization doesn't want peace, they want war, they want killing, they want people to continue to suffer. So let us remember, Hezbollah is a terrorist group.

Hezbollah is primarily financed by Iran. Assad was losing the war in Syria on at least two occasions, and, on those times, Syria had an infusion of Hezbollah fighters sent by Iran on the side of the Assad regime to prop up Assad. And after they did it, the Russians came in and propped up Assad.

So let's remember the hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians who have been murdered in Syria in the Syria civil war. That is Hezbollah, a terrorist organization—bombs in Israel against innocent civilians, bombs every place else.

We cannot sit idly by. And so this bill, again, is a piece of a broader strategy to cut the legs out from under this odious group.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support it. I urge everyone to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GALLAGHER). He is a member of the Armed Services and Homeland Security Committees. He is also the author of this bill, along with Mr. TOM SUOZZI of New York.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 3342, the Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their steadfast support of this effort and their broader leadership, not only in the Middle East and as it pertains to rolling back Iran's influence in their terrorist proxies, foremost among them Hezbollah, but also as it pertains to making the case

for American leadership in the world, making the case for why American leadership, buttressed by its strong alliances, is a sound investment in our safety here at home.

I would also like to thank my friend and colleague, TOM SUOZZI, for his tireless work to make this bill a reality. He and his staff have been a pleasure to work with every step along the way, and I think he is a perfect example of someone who is here and unafraid to reach across the aisle when it comes to doing what is right for the country.

Mr. Speaker, this bill comes at an extremely important time, when Iran and its proxies, such as Hezbollah, are making a concerted push on the ground in the Middle East against the United States, our allies, and our interests.

This isn't a new phenomenon, of course. Since its founding in the early 1980s, Hezbollah has been one of the most dangerous and destructive forces throughout the greater Middle East. With the exception of al-Qaida, no foreign terrorist organization has killed more Americans than Hezbollah.

□ 1515

With the support of the Iranian Government and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Hezbollah has engaged in a sustained campaign of terrorism and violence, including against the United States and Israel.

Congress, along with the United Nations, has repeatedly documented Hezbollah's numerous violations of international law, including employing human shields throughout the 2006 conflict; concealing an arsenal that has grown to over 150,000 missiles and other destabilizing weapons provided by the Syrian and Iranian Governments in southern Lebanon, often beneath civilian infrastructure; and maintaining an armed military force within Lebanon's sovereign territory in direct violation of numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions, thus preventing Lebanon from exerting its lawful control over its internationally recognized borders.

The State Department designated Hezbollah as a foreign terrorist organization in 1997, leading to the creation of a sanctions regime against the group. Despite these sanctions, Hezbollah has continued to expand its military capabilities due in large part to extensive Iranian financial support. The State Department has continually expressed alarm at Hezbollah's capabilities and influence, describing the group in 2010 as ''the most technically capable terrorist group in the world.'' In 2013, State Department noted the increasing tempo of Hezbollah's terrorist activities.

Despite its extensive track record of terror, Hezbollah has yet to be specifically sanctioned by the United States for its barbaric practice of using defenseless civilians as human shields. The Shields Act finally changes that and finally punishes Hezbollah for these atrocities.

Just a few of the measures included in the Shields Act include: identifying and sanctioning Hezbollah members and those acting on behalf of Hezbollah who are complicit in or responsible for ordering or directing the use of human shields; identifying and sanctioning foreign persons, agencies, or instrumentalities of foreign states who have provided, attempted to provide, or facilitated provision of material support to identified individuals; and invoking financial penalties blocking real estate transactions, and leveraging powers ascribed by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

In short and in sum, the Shields Act is a vital and bipartisan bill that advances American interest, punishes those who support and enable the barbaric practice of using human shields, and protects our allies in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this critical legislation, and I thank the chairman again for his help and leadership.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI), my colleague on the Foreign Affairs Committee, a fellow New Yorker, and one of the new good members of our committee, and coauthor of this important bill.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their bipartisan leadership and the model that they show all of us on this committee in the work that they do together, and for their mentorship as well.

I would also like to thank and applaud my colleague and friend, MIKE GALLAGHER, for his leadership on this bill, and for working so closely to get this done. We are very grateful to him for his work here.

The Shields Act that I rise in support of right now will sanction Hezbollah members and their supporters for the use of human shields. It also seeks to punish the governments that enable such war crimes, including their primary supporter, Iran.

This summer, I visited Israel and I stood near Lebanon's southern border, not far from where Hezbollah threatens Israel's security. In the over 30 years since Hezbollah in 1983 killed hundreds of Americans when it bombed the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, they have become one of the most dangerous terrorist organizations, not only in Lebanon, but across the entire Middle East.

In 2006, it provoked a war with Israel by killing and kidnapping soldiers in cross-border raids, and then for nearly a month rained rockets down on Israel cities, killing dozens of civilians. Journalists and human rights groups found that it fired many of these rockets from populated areas, even from inside private homes and other civilian buildings.

That war ended more than a decade ago, but Hezbollah remains committed to Israel's destruction. It has spent millions to replenish its arsenal, which now includes up to 150,000 missiles scattered across southern Lebanon, much of it concealed in mosques, hospitals, schools, and homes where civilians are used as human shields.

Hezbollah has continued its provocative actions on the border between Lebanon and Israel. It has killed and wounded Israeli soldiers. It has threatened bombings of gas fields and chemical plants. It has tried to smuggle advanced weapons into Lebanon. It has built an expansive network of tunnels through civilian neighborhoods. The civilians caught in its destructive web of terror would have no safe haven if Hezbollah started a war.

Hezbollah has also expanded its nefarious activities regionally, most notably playing a major role in the Syrian civil war, deploying thousands of its own men to prop up Bashar al-Assad's vicious regime. Hezbollah members are fighting alongside a Syrian army that has killed almost half a million of its own people and driven millions more into exile.

In the process, it has trained for its next war with Israel. The Israeli intelligence official have said that the group has learned frightening skills in urban warfare from its years on the ground in Syria. It did all of this, of course, at the behest of its Iran patrons who continue threatening to rain warheads down into Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

From Iraq to Gaza, from Yemen to Bahrain, Iran's proxies have been at the center of the chaos consuming the Middle East. But Hezbollah remains Iran's oldest and deadliest proxy, and its actions in Syria deserve particular attention.

In town after town, Hezbollah's militants prevented civilians from fleeing the Assad regime artillery. Activists have accused the group of carrying out mass killings and torturing refugees and other civilians. Hezbollah is one of the main reasons Assad's murderous regime continues to stay in power in 2017. Hezbollah is not only a threat to the people beyond Lebanon's border, it is a threat to the Lebanese people. The U.N. has implicated Hezbollah in the assassination of a Lebanese Prime Minister. Its use of civilians as human shields endangers the Lebanese people every moment of every day.

I applaud the leadership and the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee for continuing to find ways to crack down on Hezbollah and Iran.

Today there are four suspension bills on the calendar: H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, which prevents Iran from undertaking any activity related to advancing their ballistic missiles program; H.R. 3329, Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, which restricts Hezbollah's ability to raise money and recruit for their nefarious activities; H. Res. 359, which urges our European allies to drop their false distinction between Hezbollah's political

wing and its military wing, and designate them in their entirety as a terrorist organization; and, finally, my and Mr. GALLAGHER's legislation, H.R. 3342, the Shields Act.

We must pass these four bills to continue to reduce the influence of a group and its primary backer, Iran, that have menaced their neighbors and their own people for far too long. By passing H.R. 3342, the bipartisan Shields Act, we will send a strong message that the United States of America will not stand for the use of innocent civilians as pawns in the destructive chess game of Iran's and Hezbollah's effort to destabilize the region and the West.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud my colleague, Congressman GALLAGHER, for his leadership. I am proud to join him in this effort. I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, you can say that again.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here with Ranking Member ENGEL and Chairman ROYCE. I want to congratulate both of them on the great work that they are doing on especially Middle East issues. Over and over again, they have been on top of the situation and making sure that America's position and the moral position of the world is declared by this Congress. Today we have four bills that are in keeping with that tradition and the great job that they have already been doing.

First of all, let us just note that this human shield legislation, whatever way Hezbollah acts, it is worth us saying: Look how horrible it is. Look at the horrible tactics they are using. It is worth us having a resolution to draw people's attention to it, but let's just be fair.

What this is today is we are calling for peace in the Middle East. We are pleading with those people who have degenerated to the point that they are using innocent people as shields, where their bodies will be cut apart by shrapnel or by enemy fire. This is how far down those people who would destroy Israel have gone. So it is just and right for us today.

Yes, they point out the human shields, but this is part of a bigger problem. That is, that you have the leadership in the Islamic world, in that part of the world anyway, in the Middle East. The Islamic leaders in that part of the world refuse to recognize Israel and its right to exist. Whether they are using their people as human shields and innocent people as human shields to accomplish their mission, whether they are allied with the mullah regime who chants ''death to Israel,'' no; when those people—and whether it is Iran or Hezbollah or their allies throughout the Middle East—recognize that Israel has a right to exist, a major step forward would happen.

Instead, they play games about the right of return. So how would Israel ever be able to accept the fact that their country is going to be inundated with other people and taken over the minute they make some kind of an agreement to let them do so?

What we are calling out for today is—yes, we are pointing our fingers at the immorality of Hezbollah and their association with both the mullahs and the tyrannical Assad regime in Syria. We point that out, but what we are really asking for is not just a condemnation. We are asking for peace. We are asking for these people to take a look at moral arguments. America is standing for these moral arguments. Please, we are pleading with you through these condemnations of immoral activity, we are pleading with you to reach a peace agreement with Israel and to reach a peace agreement with the other peoples of that region.

I am very proud to stand with Mr. ROYCE and Mr. ENGEL, as all of us are, in the bipartisan effort to make sure America stands for truth, justice, and morality.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), a valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the bipartisan leadership of this committee.

Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 34th anniversary of the devastating Marine Corps barracks bombing in Lebanon. As the very proud mother of a U.S. marine, this is deeply personal to me. My son returned safely from his tours of service. Not so blessed were the families of 220 marines and 21 other service personnel who were murdered when Hezbollah struck with truck bombs at a Marine Corps compound in Beirut, Lebanon, on October 23, 1983.

The marines we lost that day were someone's husband, father, brother, or son. Except for al-Qaida, Hezbollah has killed more Americans than any other terrorist group in the world, and it continues to be a menacing threat to all humanity.

Just look at Syria, the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time: hundreds of thousands of civilians murdered; 5 million have fled as refugees; Hezbollah, a tool of Iran, propping up Assad and fueling the violence.

Their actions don't stop there. Israelis live under the constant shadow of Hezbollah's missile arsenal that is pointed directly at them. In just a decade, they have increased their rocket count from 15,000 to 150,000. They hold the Lebanese people hostage by embedding weapons in their mosques, their hospitals, and their schools.

These bipartisan bills before us that I wholeheartedly support will help America go after the full range of Hezbollah's activities, sanctioning them for utilizing civilians as human shields, targeting Iran's financial support to Hezbollah, and urging the European Union to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of these bills.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LETHINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank our dynamic duo once again for this wonderful legislation and for bringing this bill before us this afternoon. I rise in strong support of H.R. 3342, Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act, authored by our friends, Congressmen GALLAGHER and SUOZZI. I thank the gentleman for their leadership.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill, Mr. Speaker, and I applaud our effort here in the House to take up several measures, as you have heard, that address a variety of threats that Iran and its proxies pose to our national security and the security of those in the region.

The use of human shields is unconscionable, morally unacceptable, and a clear violation of human rights. Yet for terrorist groups such as Iran proxies, Hezbollah, and Hamas, the use of human shields is an acceptable tactic. It is a tactic used because they engage in terror activity and asymmetric warfare. They don't have the same beliefs and morals of the United States or Israel.

□ 1530

It is an attempt to cause innocents to be dragged into their conflict and to cause as many casualties as they can with no regard whatsoever for human life.

Iran and Hezbollah know that if they engage in hostilities with Israel, the world will be quick to blame Israel for civilian deaths despite the great precautions Israel takes to not only save human lives, but to only go against belligerents.

Responsible nations must condemn this tactic by Hezbollah and by all of its state sponsors of terrorism. We must take action to hold anyone who engages in such actions accountable.

Iran and Hezbollah will continue to take advantage of our morality—what they perceive to be a weakness on our part—and they will continue to employ the use of human shields during armed conflicts until the world sends a strong and unified message, and that is what this bill does.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and I thank the ranking member.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GARRETT), who is a member of the Foreign Affairs and Homeland Security Committees.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL.

Mr. Speaker, today, I think, represents the culmination of a series of wonderful bipartisan efforts that, while on their face to those who are not initiated may seem to deal with disparate subjects insofar as they stem from Iranian ballistic missiles to Hezbollah's use of humans as shields, are, in effect, dealing with the same subject.

Mr. Speaker, one can't separate Hezbollah from Iran. In fact, Hezbollah was born only a few short years after the Iranian Revolution, which brought such heartache that the loss of life in Iran, adjusted for population, mirrors that of the entire loss of life by the United States in combat during the entire Second World War.

These are innocent Iranians killed by their own government, Mr. Speaker. And we see, also, that the Hezbollah forces in Israel, Lebanon, and, indeed, around the world quite literally have continued to use human shields.

My friend and colleague from California, Congressman ROHRABACHER, said that Hezbollah actions had degenerated to the point where they were using human shields. While I hold Mr. ROHRABACHER in great esteem, I would submit that they haven't degenerated, because that implies at some point that Hezbollah didn't engage in such reprehensible behavior.

So the bipartisan actions led by Ranking Member ENGEL and Chairman ROYCE today bring us to where, indeed, we need to be by virtue of the reality of the world in which we live. Hezbollah does not exist but for the largess of Iran and the monies funneled by the Iranian regime.

The Hezbollah missiles, which Member FRANKEL eloquently spoke of, are, indeed, Iranian missiles, and the ICBMs that Iran is developing that we seek to curtail stem from a failure to include a prohibition on ICBM development in the JCPOA under which this Congress and this administration now labor.

I would note for the RECORD, for the Members, and for those who might be viewing at home that U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929 of 2010, which included signatures from the Russians and the Chinese, said that Iran was forbidden from engaging in missile development. The JCPOA says Iran is asked not to engage in this.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Virginia an additional 1 minute.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, so we then arrive at the point where the good work of Mr. ENGEL and Chairman ROYCE is needed today, and that is what we do. It is with a glad heart that I note the bipartisan nature of these agreements.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time to close the way I always do.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides for their hard work on this bill. I want to remind my colleagues that, just a few years ago when the last war was raging in Gaza, the other terrorist group, Hamas, used civilians as human shields. We had a resolution on the floor of this House condemning it, and I was very, very proud that that resolution passed unanimously.

We need to condemn these terrorist groups no matter what they do, but when they use people as human shields—innocent people—and then try to blame the other side for the death, it is not something that we can countenance or stand for at all. I hope that we rise to the occasion this time, as well, because I can think of nothing more despicable than using innocent civilians as human shields.

These bomb factories are built in mosques, they are built in schools, and they are built in playgrounds. They are built where children are. They are built because they are daring Israel and the United States to go after them when we know that there will be human casualties. It is really a despicable position.

Here you have two terrorists groups, Hezbollah and Hamas. One is Shia; one is Sunni. It doesn't matter. They are both out to kill people. They are both out to terrorize people. They are both out to do the opposite of what we try to do in the United States: lifting people up.

They need to be stopped, and this Congress needs to keep sending strong messages with teeth behind them to the world that we will not sit idly by and allow these terrorist activities to happen.

Using civilians as human shields is really the lowest of the low. The fact that Hezbollah would put innocent men, women, and children in harm's way as human shields tells you everything you need to know about this organization. It is a cowardly practice by a gruesome group, and it cannot and shall not be tolerated.

This measure puts us on record again condemning this terrorist group, and it gives the administration more tools to deal with one of Hezbollah's worst tools, more tools to deal with Hezbollah to stop its terrorist activities. So I urge a bipartisan ''yes'' vote.

I thank Chairman ROYCE again for his collaboration with us on both sides of the aisle. That is one of the great things about the Foreign Affairs Committee because we realize that partisanship stops at the water's edge. When we are talking about terrorist groups and we are talking about antidemocratic groups, they affect us all. It is important that this Congress sends strong bipartisan measures and a strong bipartisan voice to say we will not tolerate these atrocities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote from all my colleagues on both sides, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to say I have had the opportunity to travel extensively with Mr. ENGEL and to observe him and his work here in this House for many years. He has always transcended partisanship in my view, but, more importantly, from my standpoint, he has been a servant of the national interests here and the core values of the United States of America and our attempt to represent those core values around the world.

I want to take this moment, especially given his eloquent statement here about these values as he spoke about Hezbollah. These are values that I think all of us should share.

The Geneva Convention, itself, establishes standards for international law, and it does so for the protection of civilians in a war zone. They specifically prohibit, under that Geneva Convention, of course, the use of civilians as human shields. It is article 58 of the Convention's additional protocols that require parties of any conflict to avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas.

So, to date, Hezbollah's arsenal is well over 100,000. As I shared with you, all of them are manufactured today by Iran. Those rockets and missiles of various ranges today include precision-guided missiles.

I spoke earlier of 2006, the second Lebanon War. That actually should be called the Hezbollah war. At that time, as I talked about the 600 victims that were in the trauma hospital, they were down to an inventory of 10,000 missiles. Today, they have, in the hands of Hezbollah—again, because of Iran—over 100,000 such rockets and missiles.

So I think, yes, Hezbollah has blatantly violated the well-established laws of armed conflict. It has targeted civilians for more than two decades in both Lebanon and Israel. As a result, both peoples are victims of Hezbollah's—and, frankly, of Iran's—brutality, and it is high time we hold them accountable. This we try to do in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, Mr. ENGEL, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3342, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## HIZBALLAH INTERNATIONAL FINANCING PREVENTION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3329) to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3329

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

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—PREVENTION OF ACCESS BY HIZBALLAH TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Sec. 101. Mandatory sanctions with respect to fundraising and recruitment activities for Hizballah.

Sec. 102. Modification of report with respect to financial institutions that engage in certain transactions.

Sec. 103. Sanctions against foreign states that support Hizballah.

Sec. 104. Prohibitions and conditions with respect to certain accounts held by foreign financial institutions.

Sec. 105. United States strategy to prevent hostile activities by Iran and disrupt and degrade Hizballah's illicit networks in the Western Hemisphere.

TITLE II—NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH

Sec. 201. Blocking of property of affiliated networks of Hizballah.

Sec. 202. Report on racketeering activities engaged in by Hizballah.

Sec. 203. Modification of report on activities of foreign governments to disrupt global logistics networks and fundraising, financing, and money laundering activities of Hizballah.

Sec. 204. Report on combating the illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah and other foreign terrorist organizations.

TITLE III—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 301. Regulatory authority.

Sec. 302. Implementation; penalties; judicial review; exemptions.

## TITLE I—PREVENTION OF ACCESS BY HIZBALLAH TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

**SEC. 101. MANDATORY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FUNDRAISING AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOR HIZBALLAH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

**''SEC. 101. MANDATORY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FUNDRAISING AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOR HIZBALLAH.**

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, on or after the date of the enactment of this section, impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to any foreign person that the President determines knowingly assists, sponsors, or, provides significant financial, material, or technological support for—

''(1) Bayt al-Mal, Jihad al-Bina, the Islamic Resistance Support Association, the Foreign Relations Department of Hizballah, the External Security Organization of Hizballah, or any successor or affiliate thereof;

''(2) al-Manar TV, al Nour Radio, or the Lebanese Media Group, or any successor or affiliate thereof;

''(3) a foreign person determined by the President to be engaged in fundraising or recruitment activities for Hizballah; or

''(4) a foreign person owned or controlled by a foreign person described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3).

''(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

''(A) ASSET BLOCKING.—The exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (except that the requirements of section 202 of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1701) shall not apply) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a foreign person determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(B) ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

''(i) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or designee of one of such Secretaries) determines is subject to subsection (a) is—

''(I) inadmissible to the United States;

''(II) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

''(III) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

''(ii) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revoke any visa or other entry documentation issued to an alien who the President determines is subject to subsection (a), regardless of when issued.

''(II) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under subclause (I) shall take effect immediately and shall automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the possession of the alien.

''(2) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed under paragraph (1)(A) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

''(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

''(d) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, for periods not to exceed 180 days, waive the imposition of sanctions under this section with respect to a foreign person or foreign persons if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interests of the United States.

''(2) CONSULTATION.—

''(A) BEFORE WAIVER EXERCISED.—Before a waiver under paragraph (1) takes effect with respect to a foreign person, the President shall notify and brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the foreign person in activities described in subsection (a).

''(B) AFTER WAIVER EXERCISED.—Not later than 90 days after the issuance of a waiver under paragraph (1) with respect to a foreign person, and every 120 days thereafter while the waiver remains in effect, the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the foreign person in activities described in subsection (a).

''(e) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and every 180 days thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate a report that lists the foreign persons that the President has credible evidence knowingly assists, sponsors, or provides significant financial, material, or technological support for the foreign persons described in paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of subsection (a).

''(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN.—The terms 'admitted' and 'alien' have meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

''(3) ENTITY.—The term 'entity'—

''(A) means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group, or subgroup; and

''(B) includes a governmental entity

''(4) FUNDRAISING OR RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES.—The term 'fundraising or recruitment activities' includes online fundraising and other online commercial activities, or other means of such fundraising, recruitment, and retention, as determined by the President.

''(5) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given such term in section 102(f).

''(6) PERSON.—The term 'person' means an individual or entity.

''(7) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term 'United States person' means a United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States (including foreign branches), or a person in the United States.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by striking the item relating to section 101 and inserting the following new item:

''Sec. 101. Mandatory sanctions with respect to fundraising and recruitment activities for Hizballah.''.

**SEC. 102. MODIFICATION OF REPORT WITH RESPECT TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS THAT ENGAGE IN CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 102 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

''(d) REPORT ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ORGANIZED UNDER THE LAWS OF STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and annually thereafter for a period not to exceed three years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a report that—

''(A) identifies each foreign financial institution described in paragraph (2) that the President determines engages in one or more activities described in subsection (a)(2);

''(B) provides a detailed description of each such activity; and

''(C) contains a determination with respect to each such foreign financial institution that is identified under subparagraph (A) as engaging in one or more activities described in subsection (a)(2) as to whether or not such foreign financial institution is in violation of Executive Order 13224 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property and prohibiting transactions with persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism) or section 2339B of title 18, United States Code, by reason of engaging in one or more such activities.

''(2) FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION DESCRIBED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A foreign financial institution described in this paragraph is a foreign financial institution—

''(i) that, wherever located, is—

''(I) organized under the laws of a state sponsor of terrorism or any jurisdiction within a state sponsor of terrorism;

''(II) owned or controlled by the government of a state sponsor of terrorism;

''(III) located in the territory of a state sponsor of terrorism; or

''(IV) owned or controlled by a foreign financial institution described in subclause (I), (II), or (III); and

''(ii) the capitalization of which exceeds $10,000,000.

''(B) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—In this paragraph, the term 'state sponsor of terrorism' means a country the government of which the Secretary of State has determined is a government that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism for purposes of—

''(i) section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.));

''(ii) section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371);

''(iii) section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780); or

''(iv) any other provision of law.''.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) all countries should designate the entirety of Hizballah as a terrorist organization; and

(2) the notion of separate Hizballah political and military ''wings'' is an artificial construct that attempts to legitimize Hizballah members of parliament and Hizballah cabinet officials who are complicit in Hizballah's use of violence and coercion against its political opponents.

(c) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF HIZBALLAH.—Clause (ii) of section 102(f)(1)(E) of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(I)'' and inserting ''(I)(aa)'';

(2) by striking ''(II)'' and inserting ''(bb)'';

(3) by striking ''of Hizballah.'' and inserting ''of Hizballah; or''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) who the President determines is an agent or affiliate of, or is owned or controlled by Hizballah.''.

(d) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains a description of any sanctions described in section 102 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) apply with respect to a foreign financial institution by reason of engaging in an activity described in subsection (a)(2) of such section with a member of the Lebanese parliament or any cabinet official of the Lebanese Republic who is a member of Hizballah or identifies as such.

(2) FORM.—The report required by this subsection shall be transmitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

**SEC. 103. SANCTIONS AGAINST FOREIGN STATES THAT SUPPORT HIZBALLAH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**''SEC. 103. SANCTIONS AGAINST FOREIGN STATES THAT SUPPORT HIZBALLAH.**

''(a) SANCTIONS AGAINST CERTAIN AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF FOREIGN STATES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and as appropriate thereafter, the President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (3) with respect to any agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in paragraph (2).

''(2) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY DESCRIBED.—An agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in this paragraph is an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that the President determines has, on or after the date of the enactment of this section, knowingly—

''(A) directly or indirectly conducted combat operations with, or supported combat operations of, Hizballah or an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah; or

''(B) directly or indirectly provided significant financial or material support for, or significant arms or related material to, Hizballah or an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah.

''(3) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this paragraph are the exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (except that the requirements of section 202 of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1701) shall not apply) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(b) SANCTIONS AGAINST STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that engages in the activities described in subsection (a) that is an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in paragraph (3), the President shall, pursuant to section 6 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)), require a license under the Export Administration Regulations to export or re-export to that foreign state any item designated by the Secretary of Commerce as 'EAR 99', other than food, medicine, medical devices, or similarly licensed items.

''(2) AUDITING REQUIREMENTS.—In the case of an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that engages in the activities described in subsection (a) that is an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in paragraph (3), or the Government of the Russian Federation if the President determines such Government is engaged in the activities described in subsection (a), the President shall—

''(A) ensure that United States persons, and foreign persons subject to United States jurisdiction, exercise enhanced due diligence in the jurisdiction of that foreign state to ensure such persons do not directly or indirectly finance Hizballah or engage in transactions with foreign persons that directly or indirectly finance Hizballah;

''(B) ensure that United States persons, and foreign persons subject to United States jurisdiction, maintain—

''(i) internal controls to prevent such persons from engaging in a transaction or transactions with Hizballah; and

''(ii) full compliance with relevant laws and regulations;

''(C) ensure that United States persons, and foreign persons subject to United States jurisdiction, engage an auditor to perform due diligence to ascertain whether—

''(i) the internal controls of such person are effective; and

''(ii) any transactions of such person are directly or indirectly financing Hizballah; and

''(D) ensure the accuracy of the independent private sector audits and other due diligence processes by providing recommendations for the processes used to carry out such audits, including to—

''(i) improve the accuracy of such audits; and

''(ii) establish standards of best practices.

''(3) FOREIGN STATE DESCRIBED.—A foreign state described in this paragraph is a foreign state that—

''(A) the President determines has, on or after the date of the enactment of this section, knowingly provided significant financial or material support for, or arms or related material to—

''(i) Hizballah; or

''(ii) an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah; and

''(B) is a state sponsor of terrorism.

''(c) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, for periods not to exceed 180 days, waive the imposition of sanctions under this section with respect to a foreign state or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States.

''(2) CONSULTATION.—

''(A) BEFORE WAIVER EXERCISED.—Before a waiver under paragraph (1) takes effect with respect to a foreign state or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, the President shall notify and brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the foreign state in activities described in subsection (b)(3) or involvement of the agency or instrumentality of a foreign state in activities described in subsection (a)(2), as the case may be.

''(B) AFTER WAIVER EXERCISED.—Not later than 90 days after the issuance of a waiver under paragraph (1) with respect to a foreign state or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, and every 120 days thereafter

while the waiver remains in effect, the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the foreign state in activities described in subsection (b)(3) or involvement of the agency or instrumentality of a foreign state in activities described in subsection (a)(2), as the case may be.

''(d) REPORT ON SUPPLY CHAIN OF HIZBALLAH'S MISSILE PRODUCTION FACILITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate on a report that contains the following:

''(A) An analysis of the foreign and domestic supply chain that significantly facilitates, supports, or otherwise aids Hizballah's acquisition or development of missile production facilities.

''(B) A description of the geographic distribution of the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

''(C) An assessment of the provision of goods, services, or technology transferred to Hizballah by the Government of Iran or its affiliates to indigenously manufacture or otherwise produce missiles.

''(D) An identification of foreign persons that have, on or after the date of the enactment of this subsection, and based on credible evidence—

''(i) knowingly provided significant financial or material support for, or significant arms or related material to, Hizballah or an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah; or

''(ii) knowingly facilitated the transfer of significant arms or related materiel to Hizballah utilizing commercial aircraft or air carriers.

''(E) A description of the steps that the President is taking to disrupt the foreign and domestic supply chain described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE; FOREIGN STATE.—The terms 'agency or instrumentality of a foreign state' and 'foreign state' have the meanings given those terms in section 1603 of title 28, United States Code.

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

''(3) ARMS OR RELATED MATERIAL.—The term 'arms or related material' means—

''(A) nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological weapons or materials or components of such weapons;

''(B) ballistic or cruise missile weapons or materials or components of such weapons;

''(C) destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons;

''(D) defense articles or defense services, as those terms are defined in paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively, of section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794); or

''(E) defense information, as that term is defined in section 644 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2403).

''(4) EXPORT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS.—The term 'Export Administration Regulations' means subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act).

''(5) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given that term in section 102(f).

''(6) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—In this paragraph, the term 'state sponsor of terrorism' means a country the government of which the Secretary of State has determined is a government that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism for purposes of—

''(A) section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.));

''(B) section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371);

''(C) section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780); or

''(D) any other provision of law.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 102 the following new item:

''Sec. 103. Sanctions against foreign states that support Hizballah.''.

(c) REPORT ON SIGNIFICANT MATERIAL SUPPORT AND ARMS OR RELATED MATERIEL PROVIDED BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO HIZBALLAH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(A) A description of significant material support and arms or related material that the Government of the Russian Federation has, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, knowingly, directly or indirectly, provided to Hizballah or an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah.

(B) An analysis of the extent to which Russian strategic weapons deployed in Syria, including air defense systems, have provided protection for Hizballah fighters in Syria.

(C) An assessment of whether Russian counter-proliferation safeguards can ensure that any arms or related materiel described in subparagraph (A) will not be used against Israel in the future.

(2) FORM.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' has the meaning given such term in section 103 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015, as added by this section.

(B) ARMS OR RELATED MATERIAL.—The term ''arms or related material'' has the meaning given such term in section 103 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015, as added by this section.

**SEC. 104. PROHIBITIONS AND CONDITIONS WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN ACCOUNTS HELD BY FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.**

Section 104(c)(2)(A)(ii) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8513(c)(2)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting before ''or support for acts of international terrorism'' the following '', including Hizballah (as defined in section 102(f)(1)(E) of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note)), and any affiliates or successors thereof,''.

**SEC. 105. UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PREVENT HOSTILE ACTIVITIES BY IRAN AND DISRUPT AND DEGRADE HIZBALLAH'S ILLICIT NETWORKS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to prevent hostile activities by Iran and disrupt and degrade Hizballah's illicit networks in the Western Hemisphere that—

(1) identifies Department of State priorities, in coordination with other executive branch agencies, for defining United States policy to protect United States interests from Iranian and Hizballah threats in the Western Hemisphere;

(2) coordinates with other executive branch agencies to ensure that information-sharing, interdictions, arrests, investigations, indictments, sanctions, and designations related to Hizballah individuals or networks in the Western Hemisphere are integrated, coordinated, and publicly communicated by the United States in a manner that supports United States interests;

(3) describes Iranian and Hizballah activities in the Western Hemisphere, their relationships with transnational criminal organizations in the region, their use of the region's commodities trade to engage in illicit activities, and their use of Latin American and Caribbean visas, including through Citizenship by Investment Programs to seek admittance into the United States, as well as a plan to address any security vulnerabilities to the United States;

(4) includes a review of all relevant United States sanctions that relate to Hizballah's activities in Latin America and the Caribbean and an assessment of their use, effectiveness, and any capability gaps;

(5) includes a review of the use of the Department of State's rewards program under section 36 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act (22 U.S.C. 2708) to obtain information related to Latin America-based Hizballah operatives and illicit networks and an assessment of the effectiveness of this program for targeting Hizballah in the Western Hemisphere;

(6) includes a review of all relevant United States sanctions on financial institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean that engage in activities outlined by section 102 of Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) and an assessment of the use of the authorities outlined, their effectiveness, and recommendations for improvement;

(7) describes Hizballah criminal support networks, including country facilitation, in the Western Hemisphere and outlines a United States approach to partners in the region to address those illicit networks and build country capacity to combat the transnational criminal activities of Hizballah; and

(8) includes a review of the actions of governments in the Western Hemisphere to identify, investigate, and prosecute Latin America-based Hizballah operatives, and enforce sanctions either personally or to their business interests of Latin America-based Hizballah operatives as well as recommendations for United States action towards governments who refuse to impose sanctions or who willingly facilitate Latin America-based Hizballah illicit activities.

(b) FORM.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form to the greatest extent possible but may include a classified annex.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(d) DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 129 Stat. 2206; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by section 103 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**''SEC. 104. DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES.**

''Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the President shall instruct—

''(1) the Secretary of State to increase cooperation with countries in the Western Hemisphere to assist in strengthening the capacity of governments to prevent hostile activity by Iran and disrupt and degrade Hizballah's illicit networks operating in the region, including diplomatic engagement that involves—

''(A) efforts to target and expose illicit networks, arrest perpetrators, freeze assets, and attack Iran and Hizballah's use of illicit networks using international trade and banking systems;

''(B) efforts to revoke or deny visas from those implicated in Hizballah's activity in the region, including lawyers, accountants, business partners, service providers, and politicians who knowingly facilitate or fail to take measures to counter Hizballah's illicit finance in their own jurisdictions;

''(C) efforts to assist willing nations with the development of counter-organized crime legislation, the strengthening of financial investigative capacity, and a fully-vetted counter-organized crime judicial model in places plagued with corruption; and

''(D) efforts to persuade governments in the region to list Hizballah as a terrorist organization;

''(2) the United States Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States to work to secure support at the Organization of American States for a resolution that would declare Hizballah as a terrorist organization and address Hizballah's illicit networks operating in the region;

''(3) the United States Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to work to secure a report on compliance by participating states with OSCE Decision Number 1063, the 'Consolidated Framework for the Fight Against Terrorism', in regard to Hizballah, with particular focus on the mandate to 'suppress the financing of terrorism, including its links with money-laundering and illegal economic activities', especially as it relates transatlantic relations, including with Latin America and the Caribbean; and

''(4) United States diplomats to work with international forums, including the Financial Action Task Force, to identify government entities within Latin America and the Caribbean that provide support, facilitation, or assistance to individuals affiliated with Hizballah in the Western Hemisphere.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by inserting after the item related to section 103 the following new item:

''Sec. 104. Diplomatic initiatives.''.

**TITLE II—NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH**

**SEC. 201. BLOCKING OF PROPERTY OF AFFILIATED NETWORKS OF HIZBALLAH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 201 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

**''SEC. 201. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO AFFILIATED NETWORKS OF HIZBALLAH.**

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and as appropriate thereafter, the President shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to affiliated networks of Hizballah, including by reason of significant transnational criminal activities of such networks.

''(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this subsection are sanctions applied with respect to a foreign person pursuant to Executive Order 13581 (75 Fed. Reg. 44,757) (as such Executive order was in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this section).

''(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given such term in section 102(f).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to title II and inserting the following:

''TITLE II—IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO AFFLIATED NETWORKS OF HIZBALLAH AND REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH'';

and

(2) by striking the item relating to section 201 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 201. Imposition of sanctions with respect to affiliated networks of Hizballah.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 202. REPORT ON RACKETEERING ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY HIZBALLAH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 202 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

**''SEC. 202. REPORT ON RACKETEERING ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY HIZBALLAH.**

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the heads of other applicable Federal agencies, shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the following:

''(1) Activities that Hizballah, and agents and affiliates of Hizballah, have engaged in that are racketeering activities.

''(2) The extent to which Hizballah, and agents and affiliates of Hizballah, engage in a pattern of such racketeering activities.

''(b) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in an unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

''(2) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given that term in section 102(f).

''(3) RACKETEERING ACTIVITY.—The term 'racketeering activity' has the meaning given that term in section 1961(1) of title 18, United States Code.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by striking the item relating to section 202 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 202. Report on racketeering activities engaged in by Hizballah.''.

**SEC. 203. MODIFICATION OF REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO DISRUPT GLOBAL LOGISTICS NETWORKS AND FUNDRAISING, FINANCING, AND MONEY LAUNDERING ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 204(a)(1) of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''this Act'' and inserting ''the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years'';

(2) in subparagraph (D)(ii)(II), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''and free-trade zones.'' and inserting ''free-trade zones, business partnerships and joint ventures, and other investments in small and medium-sized enterprises;''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) a list of provinces, municipalities, and local governments outside of Lebanon that expressly consent to, or with knowledge allow, tolerate, or disregard the use of their territory by Hizballah to carry out terrorist activities, including training, financing, and recruitment;

''(G) a description of the total aggregate revenues and remittances that Hizballah receives from the global logistics networks of Hizballah, including—

''(i) a list of Hizballah's sources of revenue, including sources of revenue based on illicit activity, revenues from Iran, charities, and other business activities; and

''(ii) a list of Hizballah's expenditures, including expenditures for ongoing military operations, social networks, and external operations;

''(H) a survey of national and transnational legal measures available to target Hizballah's financial networks;

''(I) an assessment of Hizballah's financial operations in areas under its operational or political control in Lebanon and Syria and available measures to target Hizballah's financial operations in those areas;

''(J) a review of Hizballah's international operational capabilities, including in the United States; and

''(K) a review of—

''(i) the total number and value of Hizballah-related assets seized and forfeited; and

''(ii) the total number of indictments, prosecutions, and extraditions of Hizballah members or affiliates.''.

(b) REPORT ON ESTIMATED NET WORTH OF AND DETERMINATION WITH RESPECT TO SENIOR HIZBALLAH MEMBERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than annually thereafter for the following 2 years, the President

shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains—

(A) the estimated total net worth of each individual described in paragraph (2);

(B) a description of how funds of each individual described in paragraph (2) were acquired, and how such funds have been used or employed; and

(C) a determination of whether each individual described in paragraph (2) meets the criteria described in paragraph (3) or (4) of section 1263(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note).

(2) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—The individuals described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) The Secretary General of Hizballah.

(B) Members of the Hizballah Politburo.

(C) Any other individual that the President determines is a senior foreign political figure of Hizballah, is associated with Hizballah, or otherwise provides significant support to Hizballah.

(3) FORM OF REPORT; PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(A) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The unclassified portion of the report required under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public and posted on the website of the Department of State and all United States Embassy websites.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(i) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(B) FUNDS.—The term ''funds'' means—

(i) cash;

(ii) equity;

(iii) any other intangible asset the value of which is derived from a contractual claim, including bank deposits, bonds, stocks, a security (as defined in section 2(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77b(a))), or a security or an equity security (as those terms are defined in section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a))); and

(iv) anything else of value that the President determines to be appropriate.

(C) SENIOR FOREIGN POLITICAL FIGURE.—The term ''senior foreign political figure'' has the meaning given that term in section 1010.605 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

**SEC. 204. REPORT ON COMBATING THE ILLICIT TOBACCO TRAFFICKING NETWORKS USED BY HIZBALLAH AND OTHER FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on combating the illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah and other foreign terrorist organizations to finance their operations, as described in the report submitted to Congress in December 2015 by the Department of State, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Health and Human Services entitled, ''The Global Illicit Trade in Tobacco: A Threat to National Security.''.

(b) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the steps to be taken by Federal agencies to combat the illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah, other foreign terrorist organizations, and other illicit actors.

(2) A description of the steps to be taken to engage State and local law enforcement authorities in efforts to combat illicit tobacco trafficking networks operating within the United States.

(3) A description of the steps to be taken to engage foreign government law enforcement and intelligence authorities in efforts to combat illicit tobacco trafficking networks operating outside the United States.

(4) Recommendations for legislative or administrative action needed to address the threat of illicit tobacco trafficking networks.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

**TITLE III—GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SEC. 301. REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, prescribe regulations as necessary for the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) BRIEFING TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10 days before the prescription of regulations under subsection (a), the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees of the proposed regulations and the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act that the regulations are implementing.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Finance of the Senate.

**SEC. 302. IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES; JUDICIAL REVIEW; EXEMPTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note), as amended by sections 103 and 105 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**''SEC. 105. IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES; JUDICIAL REVIEW; EXEMPTIONS; RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

''(a) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out sections 101 and 103.

''(b) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed to carry out section 101 or 103 to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

''(c) PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If a finding, or a prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding, is based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)) and a court reviews the finding or the imposition of the prohibition, condition, or penalty, the President may submit such information to the court ex parte and in camera.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial review of any finding under section 101 or 103 or any prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding.

''(d) EXEMPTIONS.—The following activities shall be exempt from sections 101 and 103:

''(1) Any authorized intelligence, law enforcement, or national security activities of the United States.

''(2) Any transaction necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United States, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or any other United States international agreement.

''(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in section 101 or 103 shall be construed to limit the authority of the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or under any other provision of law.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104, as added by section 105(c) of this Act, the following new item:

''Sec. 105. Implementation; penalties; judicial review; exemptions; rule of construction.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend any remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we will consider legislation targeting Hezbollah, Iran's leading terrorist proxy, with tough, new sanctions.

It was 34 years ago this Monday that a truck bomb filled with explosives

detonated outside the United States Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 241 of our servicemen. Between 1982 and 1984, we had 272 marines, soldiers, and sailors from 39 States and Puerto Rico lose their lives while serving as peacekeepers in Beirut. Hezbollah was behind those attacks.

Since that fateful day, Hezbollah has collaborated with Iran to expand terror throughout the region, taking hundreds of thousands of lives if we count the lives of human beings lost in Syria, in Yemen, in Iraq, and in Gaza.

Today, as a leading Iranian proxy, Hezbollah continues to be Iran's front line against Israel. Since its 2006 war with Israel, Hezbollah has dramatically grown its supply of rockets and missiles, allowing it to strike throughout Israel with great precision and force.

It is by putting that military power to very effective use that it has gleaned through what it has learned on the ground in Syria. In Syria, its fighters are key to Tehran and its efforts to prop up the Assad regime, working with the Revolutionary Guard and also working with Russian troops there.

So now Hezbollah and Iran are reportedly working to introduce game-changing weapons into Lebanon and Syria, and that is what brings about this particular bill. What they are trying to do is produce facilities for sophisticated rockets and missiles there on the ground, on the border in Syria, on the border, also, in Lebanon, and that could lead to another war.

It is not a cheap effort to do this. That is why the committee is focused on dismantling Hezbollah's financial networks. In 2015, we led the way to enact the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act to target those that facilitate financial transactions for Hezbollah.

Now this bill builds on that effort to further ramp up pressure on the Iranian proxy, Hezbollah. It sanctions regimes, including Iran and Syria, that provide weapons to Hezbollah—in other words, an attempt to stop the transfer of these weapons. It targets Hezbollah's innovative fundraising and recruiting efforts, including its attempts to crowdsource small donations to support its fighters, which is the latest evolution of Hezbollah's efforts.

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Hezbollah launched an online crowdsourcing campaign entitled: ''Equip a Mujahid,'' which calls for donations, large or small, payable in installments or in one sum, to equip suicide bombers and Hezbollah fighters.

This bill recognizes that Hezbollah is no longer only a terrorist group, but is also a global criminal organization, which has developed a global criminal network that profits from drug trafficking, money laundering, counterfeiting, and cigarette smuggling, and it gives the administration the tools to respond accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, for years, this body has led the way in calling for the need to respond to the full range of threats from Iran. Hezbollah, the regime's leading terrorist proxy, ranks among the top of those threats, in terms of what is being encountered right now.

So I urge my colleagues to support this effort to ensure that the United States has the tools to respond.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
*Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3329 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
*Washington, DC, October 20, 2017.*

Hon. ED ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing concerning H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, as amended.

As a result of your having consulted with the Committee on Financial Services concerning provisions in the bill that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree to forgo action on the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. The Committee on Financial Services takes this action with our mutual understanding that, by foregoing consideration of H.R. 3329, as amended, at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for any such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3329 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Committee Report and the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

JEB HENSARLING,
*Chairman.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
*Chairman, Committee on Financial Services, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3329 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 3329, the ''Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017.''

As a result of your having consulted with us on this measure, I agree not to seek a sequential referral on this bill so that it may move expeditiously to the floor. The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 3329.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC, October 23, 2017.*

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to forgo a sequential referral request on H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3329 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
*Chairman.*

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Let me again thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership and for his hard work on this bill. I am glad to be the lead Democratic cosponsor of this legislation, which builds on a law that ED ROYCE and I wrote in 2015.

One of the best ways to stop Hezbollah's dangerous activity is to cut off its financing, which is what we tried to do 2 years ago. We went after Hezbollah's financial patrons, including Iran. But again, this is a group that, if you block one path forward, they will do what it takes to find another way around.

So with this measure, we are broadening existing law by going after a bigger universe of Hezbollah supporters and enablers. This bill would impose mandatory sanctions on any third parties or governments providing money, equipment, or weapons to Hezbollah.

We know that Iran will again get caught up in this dragnet, and this bill doesn't run afoul of our obligations under the nuclear deal or any other deal. After all, Iran's support for Hezbollah is outside the scope of the JCPOA.

But it is not just Iran. In recent years, we have seen Moscow step up its support of Hezbollah, particularly on the battlefields of Syria, where Russia has supplied Hezbollah with weapons. It is really outrageous. Russia claims to be fighting so-called terrorists as they bomb schools, hospitals, and marketplaces. Yet Russian weapons are ending up in Hezbollah hands.

Let me be clear: Hezbollah is a terrorist group. It is as simple as that. Chairman ROYCE and I have said this many times. The Russia-Hezbollah relationship threatens to undermine global antiterrorism efforts.

This bill sends a message that any government in cahoots with Hezbollah, anyone who wants to do business with this terrorist group or support its violent aims, is going to face the consequences.

This is a timely bill. Iran is building weapons factories in southern Lebanon that would be buried far underground, out of Israel's reach. The missiles that will come off that assembly line are more precise and have a longer range, putting virtually the whole of Israel in their sights.

Iran's and Hezbollah's presence in Syria, particularly in the south, right on Israel's borders, is a very serious concern. I worry about the deescalation zones the United States helped to establish in southern Syria. We don't want those zones to become hotbeds of Hezbollah.

Several weeks ago, I was in Israel, and we trekked up to the border between Israel and Lebanon. At the border, as far as the eye can see, when you are in Israel and you are looking down at Lebanon, you see a number of flags. Are they the Lebanese flag? No. It is the Hezbollah flag.

Hezbollah has virtually taken over large parts of Lebanon, strangling the Lebanese people as well. The Lebanese people are suffering under a brutal terrorist group that is embedded in a society that disallows them to act as a free and open society.

My heart really goes out to the Lebanese people, who have a terrorist group virtually sitting in their lap, refusing to move, and putting them in all kinds of danger.

These areas have the potential to create a safe haven for Hezbollah and Iranian actors. They will stoke existing tensions and could create a corridor from Tehran to the Mediterranean through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. This would present a major shift in the regional balance of power, and it would present threats to Israel that it could not ignore.

If these deescalation zones end up empowering Iran and Hezbollah, then we will have betrayed our ally, Israel, at the most critical moment. That is why we are passing this bill.

I, again, thank Chairman ROYCE for his continued strong leadership on this issue. I strongly support this measure.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, in view of the National Defense Authorization conference, and in view of the fact that, from the House side, Mr. ENGEL and I both serve on that conference, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I ask unanimous consent that she may control that time on this legislation.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, since I, too, will go over to the Senate side, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control the time on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of our committee, Mr. ROYCE from California, and the ranking member, Mr. ENGEL from New York, once again for their leadership. They are the dynamic duo of the Foreign Affairs Committee on this issue. This is a very important day, in terms of sanctioning evildoers in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to cosponsor the bill promoted by Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act. This is yet another strong, bipartisan bill that they have authored and brought to the floor, aimed at holding Iran and its proxy, Hezbollah, accountable for their illicit activity.

I was pleased that my amendment to this bill was included to ensure that we identify those Hezbollah parliamentarians and cabinet officials who are subject to the sanctions in this bill and the underlying bill that it amends.

This is important, Mr. Speaker, because Hezbollah members have prominent positions in Lebanon's Government, and we want to ensure that they cannot use government funds to divert to Hezbollah's terror activity, and, if they do, those institutions that help facilitate such activity are held to account.

I was also pleased to see other provisions approved that would allow us to identify and track individuals and entities that are being used by Iran to supply Hezbollah with arms or support for its missile production facilities in Syria.

We know that Iran uses commercial civilian aircraft to fly weapons, arms, and fighters to Syria in support of Hezbollah. We cannot allow Iran to use these civilian aircraft for such activity. This is the first step toward making sure that, once these aircraft are identified, responsible nations will think twice about allowing these Iranian planes to land in their countries.

This bill also addresses Iran's and Hezbollah's ability to finance their illicit activities, which is so important, Mr. Speaker. We must go after those individuals and those institutions that provide financial safe havens to these terror groups, and we have got to disrupt their financial networks.

That is why this bill is so important, and I urge my colleagues to support Chairman ROYCE's and Ranking Member ENGEL's measure before us today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is good to be on the floor with my friend and colleague from Florida to speak in support of H.R. 3329, an important bipartisan effort brought forward by Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, an important measure to further combat Hezbollah's terrorist activity.

We made great strides 2 years ago when we passed the Hezbollah International Financing Act, which has already begun to sever the terror group

from its funding sources. However, it is clear that more needs to be done.

The new bill will further restrict Hezbollah's ability to recruit and fundraise by targeting foreign state sponsors, including Iran, while also increasing pressure on banks and other international financial institutions that serve Hezbollah.

It is important to remember why it is in America's interest to combat Hezbollah terrorism. Not that anyone here or at home needs a reminder, we all remember, or we have all learned about, the 1983 attacks in Beirut on our Embassy and the Marine Corps barracks that killed hundreds of Americans; the attacks in Argentina on the Israeli Embassy in 1992, and the AMIA Jewish center in 1994 that, in total, killed over 100 more; the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia; and more recent attacks in Europe, including the 2012 bus bombing of Israeli tourists in Bulgaria.

But it has been Hezbollah's support for the horrific Assad regime in Syria that has led even Arab governments in the region to acknowledge Hezbollah's dangerous role as an Iranian terror proxy. Last year, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League took the dynamic step of designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

Yet, even while Hezbollah is focused on the war in Syria, its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, continues to vow Israel's destruction, a threat Israel's leaders don't take lightly, given two previous wars and intelligence suggesting Hezbollah now has over 150,000 missiles and rockets in Lebanon aimed at every corner of Israel's map.

In a future war, Israeli defense officials fear that Hezbollah will launch over a thousand rockets a day with the capacity to hit civilians in Israel's north, across Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and even in the southernmost city, Eilat.

This is made all the more troubling by reports that Iran, in addition to transferring advanced precision-guided missiles to Hezbollah, is now helping the terror group set up indigenous missile development facilities in both Syria and Lebanon.

These are unacceptable developments. They underscore the importance of today's legislation: cut off Hezbollah's most critical sources of funding and support, including from its primary sponsor, Iran.

I am proud to support this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it as well.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida for her tireless leadership in standing up for all those pushing back against Iran's influence in the region, Iran's support for Hezbollah, and specifically here, cutting off sources of funding for Hezbollah.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

For 30 years, Hezbollah has remained Iran's proxy and Iran remains Hezbollah's primary source of financial support—a cozy relationship.

In April 2015, its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, boasted that, even under sanctions, Iran still funds Hezbollah's terror. He anticipated that ''a rich and powerful Iran, which will be open to the world'' will be able to do even more.

The Iran nuclear agreement has made it possible for Iran to provide Hezbollah with a windfall. But Tehran is not Hezbollah's only source of income. Since its inception, Hezbollah has developed a broad criminal network involved in a range of illicit activities, from drug trafficking to cigarette smuggling, to money laundering to counterfeiting.

These global terrorists double as global criminals. This is why we must employ a combination of law enforcement, financial, criminal, civil, and regulatory tools to deter, disrupt, and publicly illuminate the global illicit Hezbollah network.

□ 1600

I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for closely collaborating and developing this critical legislation, as well as Senator RUBIO and Senator SHAHEEN in the Senate that have taken the lead on this effort in the Senate. I look forward to continuing to work with them to get this critical legislation signed into law.

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act. This important legislation builds on the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. I was pleased to have originally introduced this bill in 2014 with my colleague MARK MEADOWS.

Hizballah at the behest and assistance of Iran is active in Syria and has helped Assad maintain regime control. Hizballah fighters are returning to Lebanon more battle-tested and more capable than ever before.

In Lebanon, again with assistance from Iran, Hizballah has been able to amass more than 150,000 rockets—a ten-fold increase compared to 15,000 in 2006.

Iran uses several means to transfer weapons to Hizballah, including by land, sea, and air and is now reportedly building missile production facilities in Lebanon to enable an indigenous rocket-producing capability for Hizballah.

Hizballah is not only a grave threat to our ally Israel, they are a threat to regional security and America's national security interests. Hizballah will be far more dangerous than ever before with an indigenous rocket-producing capability.

That is why I am pleased that an amendment I offered during the full committee markup of H.R. 3329 was included in the bill to ensure the U.S. Government is focused on this urgent threat. My amendment would require the President to report to Congress on the foreign and domestic supply chain that advances Hizballah's domestic missile capabilities. This includes how Iran is able to transfer goods and technology, a list of those who facilitate missile transfers, and the steps being taken to disrupt the supply chain that advances Hizballah's missile capabilities.

The United States cannot stand by while Israel faces such a grave threat on its northern border. We must decisively act and we deserve to know what exactly the U.S. Government is doing to combat this threat.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3329.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3329, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## URGING EUROPEAN UNION TO DESIGNATE HIZBALLAH AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 359) urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on it and its members, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 359

Whereas in July 2012 a Hizballah terror attack in Bulgaria killed five Israeli tourists and one Bulgarian;

Whereas in March 2013 a Hizballah operative in Cyprus was convicted of planning terror attacks after admitting he was a member of Hizballah, was trained in the use of weapons, and used a dual Swedish-Lebanese passport to travel around Europe on missions as a courier and scout for Hizballah;

Whereas though such Hizballah operative was convicted on criminal-related charges, authorities had to drop terrorism charges against him because Hizballah was not listed as a terrorist organization;

Whereas the European Union (EU) in July 2013 designated Hizballah's so-called ''military wing''—but not the organization as a whole—as a terrorist organization;

Whereas despite restrictions put on Hizballah since the designation of its military wing, the group continues to conduct illicit narco-trafficking, money laundering, and weapons trafficking throughout Europe;

Whereas EU designation of Hizballah's military wing has enabled substantial and important cooperation between United States and European authorities aimed at uncovering and thwarting Hizballah's international criminal activities, such as drug trafficking and money laundering, the proceeds of which are used to purchase weapons and advance Hizballah's terrorist aims;

Whereas in December 2015 the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102) was signed into law

in the United States, broadening financial sector sanctions against Hizballah to compel foreign financial institutions to refrain from supporting the terrorist group;

Whereas in February 2016 the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Customs and Border Protection partnered with counterparts in France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium to arrest top leaders of the European cell of Hizballah's External Security Organization Business Affairs Component—a cell that engages in international money laundering and drug trafficking to support Hizballah's terror activities;

Whereas for many years, the Governments of Iran and Syria have been the prime sponsors of Hizballah, harboring, financing, training, and arming the group;

Whereas Department of Defense officials estimate that Iran provides as much as $200,000,000 per year to Hizballah in the form of financial and logistical support, weapons, and training;

Whereas Hizballah now has an arsenal of approximately 150,000 missiles and rockets, many of which can reach deep into Israel, at a time when Hizballah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah is threatening to attack and invade Israel;

Whereas Hizballah fighters have been supporting the Assad regime in Syria, often leading operations in the conflict which has left more than 465,000 dead;

Whereas Russia has established fusion centers in Syria to coordinate with Iran, the Assad regime, and Hizballah, and Russian air cover has given Hizballah an advantage on the battlefield against Syria rebels;

Whereas Hizballah's destabilizing actions in the conflict in Syria has fueled a migrant crisis that has brought nearly 400,000 migrants and refugees to Europe in 2016 and 2017 alone;

Whereas Lebanon continues to be plagued by instability and violence;

Whereas due to Hizballah's actions in Syria, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant has carried out retaliatory terrorist attacks in Beirut;

Whereas the Lebanese Armed Forces, the legitimate security establishment of the country as set forth in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006), are struggling to control the flow of weapons and Hizballah fighters at its borders;

Whereas Hizballah trains and provides weapons for Shiite militias in Iraq and Yemen, further destabilizing the region and perpetuating violence in those countries;

Whereas in October 2012 Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem stated that ''[Hizballah does not] have a military wing and a political one . . . Every element of Hizballah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, are in the service of the resistance'';

Whereas the United States, Canada, Israel, and the Netherlands have designated Hizballah in its entirety as a terror organization, while Australia and New Zealand have applied the designation to the organization's so-called military wing;

Whereas in March 2016 the Gulf Cooperation Council, the bloc of six Gulf Arab nations, formally branded Hizballah, in its entirety, a terrorist organization, and the League of Arab States shortly thereafter adopted the same designation;

Whereas in April 2016 the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, denounced Hizballah's ''terrorist acts'' in the Middle East;

Whereas Hizballah Secretary General Nasrallah said in May 2017 that the conflict in Syria had entered a ''new and critical phase'' in which Damascus, Moscow, Tehran, and Hezbollah were ''in more harmony politically and militarily than at any time'';

Whereas the United States has designated Hizballah's Foreign Relations Department, which has representatives around the world, as a Specially Designated National, subject to United States primary and secondary sanctions;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury has diligently added persons and entities to the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists who have provided material support to the Hizballah terrorist organization, thereby hampering its financing and logistical capabilities; and

Whereas in May 2017 the United States and Saudi Arabia sanctioned Hashem Saffiedine, a member of Hizballah's executive council which oversees the organization's political, organizational, social and educational activities, for his involvement in terrorist activity: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses appreciation to the European Union (EU) for the progress made in countering Hizballah since the EU designated Hizballah's military wing as a terrorist organization;

(2) applauds and expresses support for the continued, increased cooperation between the United States and the EU in thwarting Hizballah's criminal and terrorist activities;

(3) supports transcontinental efforts within Europe to share intelligence information among police and security services to facilitate greater cooperation in tracking, apprehending, and prosecuting terrorists, foreign fighters, and potential offenders;

(4) encourages the EU to, whenever possible and applicable with due process standards, implement sanctions against Hizballah-affiliated terrorists in tandem with the United States; and

(5) urges the EU to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on the group, including through—

(A) facilitating better cross-border cooperation between EU members in combating Hizballah;

(B) issuing arrest warrants against members and active supporters of Hizballah;

(C) freezing Hizballah's assets in Europe, including those masquerading as charities; and

(D) prohibiting fundraising activities in support of Hizballah.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Speaker and Chairman ROYCE, as well as Congressman ENGEL, the ranking member, for their help in bringing this important resolution to the floor.

I also want to say how proud our committee is of the great work of Ranking Member TED DEUTCH of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, and our Florida colleague, GUS BILIRAKIS, who are the authors of H. Res. 359, urging the European Union to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization. I thank Mr. DEUTCH for his leadership on this.

This notion, Mr. Speaker, that there can be separate wings of a terrorist organization is as absurd as the notion that Iran can be a responsible member of the international community. There is no distinction between Hezbollah members. Anyone who pledges allegiance to this terror group must be labeled accordingly.

One needn't look further than Hezbollah's activities in Syria or its terror attacks against Israel or even the statements coming out of Iran, its patron, and Hezbollah itself to know that if you are Hezbollah, you support terror activities. Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism, and Hezbollah is its proxy.

There is simply no justification at all for our European friends to try to differentiate between a military wing and a political wing of a terrorist organization. They may justify it by saying it will upset the delicate balance in Lebanon and they worry about the fallout, but the sad reality is that it comes down to money.

They will not take any action against Iran, as we have seen since the JCPOA, because members of the EU have signed lucrative business deals with Iran, and they don't want to damage their economic opportunities. It is as simple as that, because even our Gulf allies have labeled Hezbollah, in its entirety, as a terrorist organization.

The European Union needs to wake up, and we must urge it and its member states to designate the whole of Hezbollah as the terrorists that they are, and it must realize that doing so would be in their best interest and in the best interest of Israel, a nation that shares their values and their ideals, unlike Iran, a regime that benefits by the lack of a full designation of Hezbollah.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 359.

I would first like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership on the committee in bringing this resolution forward. I would like to thank my friend from Florida, Congressman BILIRAKIS, for working with me on this resolution. I thank as well Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN for her leadership on the subcommittee and ensuring that we have the opportunity to move forward together.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013, almost exactly 1 year after a Hezbollah suicide bomber blew up a bus in Bulgaria, killing mostly Israeli tourists, the European Union took action to finally designate

Hezbollah a terrorist organization. However, they only designated what they called Hezbollah's military wing as a terror group and not its political wing.

The United States has been clear that this was a false distinction then and it remains a false distinction today. Hezbollah is one unified terrorist organization, and it is led by the terrorist, Hassan Nasrallah. It is one unified Hezbollah that is responsible for the horrific acts of terror against Europeans, Americans, Israelis, and others across the Middle East and around the globe.

It is one unified Hezbollah that has helped prop up the Assad regime, and it is complicit in the death of half a million Syrians and the dissolving of a once thriving nation. So this one unified Hezbollah should be designated as a terrorist organization so we can increase international cooperation to isolate and dismantle this group.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee held a hearing on next steps for our Iran policy. There, I noted that 2 days ago we marked a solemn anniversary, because 34 years ago, on October 23, two Hezbollah suicide bombers blew themselves up at the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, killing over 300 U.S. and French servicemembers, peacekeepers, and civilians. That attack, like so many of Hezbollah's deadly terrorist activities over the past several decades, was sponsored and directed by Iran.

While our Nation built a memorial honoring the victims of that attack, Tehran built a monument honoring the perpetrators of that attack. A full EU designation of Hezbollah now would help demonstrate Europe's commitment to cracking down on Iran's use of proxy terror groups, destabilizing the region, and attacking Western interests.

Now, I understand that the EU has legal concerns about this designation since Hezbollah has infiltrated Lebanon's political system. However, I would just offer this observation. The terrorist organization Hamas operates as a political party in Gaza, yet the EU still rightly lists the entirety of Hamas as a terror organization. That has not impacted their ability to support Gaza reconstruction, just as designating Hezbollah would not prevent them from supporting Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Last year, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League both designated Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. They made no distinction between the military and political wing, despite Lebanon being a member of the Arab League. I hope the EU took note of that.

I thank the Speaker for bringing this resolution to the floor so that my colleagues can join me in sending an important message to our European friends and allies. More can be done to counter the Iranian proxy Hezbollah, and that begins with calling them what they are, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel and undermining the values and interests of the United States.

Our EU friends must acknowledge as well the values and interests of Europe. The world knows that Hezbollah is a terrorist group. It is time for the European Union to end its false distinction and join us in designating all of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to send them that message.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, so I will wait for Mr. DEUTCH to close on his time. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL, Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN, Congressman BILIRAKIS, and to my colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee and other Members for their work on the three measures today aimed at curbing the terrorist group Hezbollah.

The measures that we are advancing today represent smart and tough approaches that will respond to Hezbollah and its enablers, and will build stronger international support for this important effort. This measure and the others that we have considered today are a great example of the way that we can work across the aisle to help keep our country safe. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Florida, Ranking Member DEUTCH, for authoring this resolution and bringing it to the floor today.

Hezbollah has a single leadership, fungible finances, and a single hostile mission. All branches and operations serve its terrorist activities, and it is a deadly mistake to attempt to distinguish among its arms.

I again want to thank Mr. DEUTCH, Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL for their work on this important resolution, which calls for our European allies to designate all branches of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. This is a critical step that our partners across the Atlantic must take to protect our citizens and allies from a highly organized, capable, and increasingly battle-trained terror group that operates networks in countries around the world.

We must work together to deprive this organization of its support. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution. I thank the gentleman from Florida for his authorship.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), the chairman of the House Committee on Small Business and a senior member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Chairman ROYCE, and all the other folks that have worked on a number of bills here today.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 359; H.R. 3329; H.R. 3342; and H.R. 1698, that one, in particular, aims to prevent Iran from acquiring ballistic missiles because they have the capability or soon will have the capability not just to target the Middle East and Europe, but also target us here on our soil right here in the United States if we don't do something about this, with ultimately a nuclear device.

Iran is determined to be the dominant power in the Middle East. The Iranian regime hopes to achieve this by exporting terrorism, destabilizing its neighbors, and promising death to America and to our allies.

Bearing this in mind, Iran's nuclear ambitions and ballistic missiles program are not only a direct threat to the United States and our allies, but they are a direct threat to the peace and stability of the entire world.

When the Iran deal was signed, I said back then and believed back then that this was a bad deal, it would ultimately lead to nuclear weapons, and that they weren't going to meet their commitments. And we are seeing here today the backsliding by Iran to these commitments.

Ten years ago, Russia agreed to sell a number of S–300 surface-to-air missile systems to Iran. The Russians suspended the deal in 2010, but renewed it after the Iran deal, the JCPOA was agreed to. Now Moscow has delivered multiple S–300 systems.

While the S–300 missile platforms strengthens Iran's conventional capabilities, it also fundamentally complicates the United States' strategy for eliminating a potential nuclear threat against us or against our allies. Iran displayed this surface-to-air missile system to the public late last month, so we know it is there and it is dangerous.

That is exactly why H.R. 1698 is so important. It will help combat Iran's ongoing nuclear ambitions by requiring the President to report on the Iranian ballistic missiles program and to oppose targeted sanctions on Iranian Government entities and foreign actors that aid Iran in its nuclear development.

I also want to speak briefly relative to the threat that Hezbollah poses to the Middle East and the entire world. I, again, want to thank Congressman ROYCE and Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member ENGEL and many others for their hard work on this.

Hezbollah's mission is to destroy Israel. It is backed by Iran. It poses a constant threat to the Middle East peace. We have designated it as a terrorist organization due to its routine attacks, especially rocket attacks on

Israel that have led to war, and its brutal tactics.

□ 1615

For years, Hezbollah has continued to accumulate larger rocket stockpiles, grow their presence, and develop even more unimaginable barbaric strategies.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for these, and I urge my colleagues to support these.

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

Because the gentlewoman from Florida did not close as expected, the gentleman from Florida will, without objection, be allowed to reclaim his time.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, that is very kind, but I am happy to yield to my friend from Florida, so I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida is now recognized to close debate.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, with that, I also yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Let me thank my good friend and colleague from Florida, Representative DEUTCH, the Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Middle East Subcommittee, for bringing forward this measure.

This measure represents another part of a good congressional strategy for combatting Hezbollah, and that's rallying support among friends and partners . . . making sure that around the world everyone sees Hezbollah for what it is: a terrorist group.

This has been a bit of a stumbling block with our friends in the European Union. Make no mistake: Hezbollah has waged its campaign of violence in Europe over the years, such as 2012, when a Hezbollah terrorist killed five Israelis in Bulgaria.

Yet in 2013, the EU announced it would consider only the "military wing" of Hezbollah to be a terrorist organization, drawing a distinction with the so-called political wing.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a distinction without a difference. Hezbollah is a terrorist organization, and that's all there is to it. The more shades of grey clouding this issue, the harder it's going to be to work with our EU allies to stop Hezbollah's violent activities.

So this measure lays out the facts about Hezbollah's presence in Europe and the other groups that have labeled Hezbollah a terrorist organization. It commends the work we're already doing with our EU allies to push back against Hezbollah. And it says that it's time for the EU to stop the hairsplitting. It calls on the EU to designate all of Hezbollah for what it is: a terrorist organization.

I'm glad to support this measure. It sends such an important signal to our friends across the Atlantic.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 359, which I am proud to co-lead and cosponsor with my colleagues. This important resolution urges the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

There is no distinction between the military and political wings of Hizballah. They are part and parcel of the same entity, that is a terrorist organization that threatens the United States and our allies, and contributes to instability and violence in the Middle East.

The EU designated Hizballah's military wing as a terrorist organization in 2013, and has made notable progress in countering Hizballah activities, but more must be done. This resolution urges the EU to take practical and tangible steps to reduce the terrorist threat posed to the United States, Europe, Israel, and our other allies in the Middle East by Hizballah. For example, increasing cross-border intelligence sharing, freezing Hizballah assets, prohibiting Hizballah fundraising activities, and issuing arrest warrants for Hizballah members and supporters in Europe would not only send a strong message, but would have a concrete impact inhibiting the ability of Hizballah to operate with impunity.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 359.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 359, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## SUNSHINE FOR REGULATIONS AND REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS ACT OF 2017

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 469.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 577 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. 469.

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

□ 1621

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. 469) to impose certain limitations on consent decrees and settlement agreements by agencies that require the agencies to take regulatory action in accordance with the terms thereof, and for other purposes, with Mr. DUNCAN from Tennessee 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 Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to be here on H.R. 469. We have had the opportunity, through rule debate yesterday, to discuss this.

What we are coming forward with today is a bill that I have introduced that basically breaks down to what we know is a sue and settlement ban on this part of my bill. There are other parts that we are going to get to as we go forward in this.

But I think I want to start off this debate today by simply stating some of the foundational issues—things that we come here and talk about many times on the floor of the House have to do with bills and discussions. But one of the things I think that has been very disturbing for me—and I know many of our colleagues as we have come up here—is the disturbing trend of moving away from Congress relieving its powers and taking ownership of its Article I authority, and doing the oversight, doing the planning, doing the budgeting, and then sort of moving that more toward the executive branch or letting the judicial system take responsibility.

And I think one of the things that we are starting out with today in these bills, that we have taken up over the past 2 days, is a general discussion to move back toward Article I authority, which Congress is doing the legislating and the oversight that it is supposed to be, and the executive branch is following through in their role of actually executing the laws that are made, judicial, of course, being the interpretive branch.

What we are seeing in this bill—and one of the reasons for our sue and settlement legislation, which is my part of this bill, and I want to start here, and we will continue as we go through this through the other parts as we go—is really a fairness issue. And this is not specific to one party in the executive branch. I stated this yesterday. Sometimes it gets mixed up. But hear me clearly: I don't care the party of the resident at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I do not care who they may be in the sense of what they do in that job. What I want to know is: Are they fulfilling the executive branch role and not overstepping Congress' role?

What we have seen over previous administrations, including the last one and the previous administration, especially under this area of sue and settlement that increased greatly during the last administration, was this idea of taking a law that we have passed, having the regulatory agency's job to execute that law; but, at the same point in time, being sued by a friendly party, or another party, on a deadline of the bill, or something that they want to, they go into, say, with EPA or another agency, and they discuss this lawsuit. They come to an agreement, and they

file the suit. Many times the suit and the consent were filed on the same day.

The consent decree—now, look, consent decrees are good judicial tools. They have been used, and will continue to be used, even under this bill. But what we don't want to have happen is when the consent decree basically comes at the time of the suit, or just shortly thereafter, where the party that wants to see a specific agenda pushed, along with a willing agency, goes to a judge, is able to get that consent decree, and then turn around and give it to somebody else and say: You now have to live under this without any emphasis or any input from the other party.

So we are simply saying: Let's make this a little fair. You are going to have to publicize notice, you are going to have to actually include others who may have a problem with this consent decree, and you are going to have to do it a little more transparently.

So we are going to start here today, Mr. Chairman. We are going to talk about these issues and coming forward. We can talk about many other things as the day progresses, but, at the end of the day, it is about Congress itself taking control of its Article I authority and saying, ''We are going to be the legislative branch that we are called to be,'' and the executive taking their role and judiciary taking theirs.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 469, an unwarranted and costly intrusion into Congress' powers under Article I of the Constitution that will undermine the enforcement of statutory deadlines.

When passing laws, Congress routinely establishes mandatory deadlines for agency action. These statutory deadlines serve several purposes. They establish congressional priorities, attempt to reduce undue delay in an agency's compliance with the law, and communicate the importance of a legal requirement to the public. But because agency resources are limited, there is widespread noncompliance with statutory deadlines, as the Administrative Conference of the United States has long observed.

Accordingly, a plaintiff with standing may file a lawsuit to complete a schedule for an agency to complete an action required by Congress, often referred to as a ''deadline suit.'' As the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office, the GAO, reported earlier this year, ''Most deadline suits are resolved through a negotiated settlement agreement because, in the majority of them, it is undisputed that a statutory deadline was missed,'' and there was no legal defense to the lawsuit.

But proponents of H.R. 469 assert that these settlements undercut applicable administrative law and short-circuit review of new regulations. This premise is based on a report by the Chamber of Commerce that the so-called sue and settle process is increasingly being used as a technique to shape agencies' regulatory agendas. This concern, however, is unsupported by any independent evidence and has been debunked by the GAO.

In two reports on deadline suits, the GAO has found that, ''the settlement agreements did not affect the substantive basis or procedural rulemaking requirements,'' of the agencies it studied.

In its December 2014 report on deadline lawsuits involving the Environmental Protection Agency, the GAO determined that none of the settlements finalized under the Obama administration ''included terms that finalized the substantive outcome of a rule.'' The GAO underscored this point in the title of its report: ''Impact of Deadline Suits on EPA's Rulemaking is Limited.''

In its February 2017 report on deadline suits involving the Endangered Species Act, the GAO found that ''the settlement agreements did not affect the substantive basis or procedural rulemaking requirements the agencies were to follow in completing the actions, such as providing opportunities for public notice and comment on proposed listing rules.''

Leading experts have also debunked the Chamber's sue and settle narrative. John Cruden, a senior career official at the Justice Department for more than two decades during two Republican and two Democratic administrations, testified on a substantially identical bill that he was ''not aware of any instance of a settlement that could remotely be described as collusive, but that the Justice Department vigorously represented the Federal agency, defending the agency's legal position, and obtaining in any settlement the best possible terms that were consistent with the controlling law.''

Other administrative law experts, such as Robert Weissman, the president of Public Citizen, have similarly testified that sue and settlement allegations are patently false.

This bill is also unnecessary because current law and agency practice already restrict the use of settlement policy to shape regulatory priorities. During its exhaustive review of deadline litigation, the GAO found that the Justice Department is guided by the Meese memo of 1986, when litigating deadline suits. This policy, as the GAO noted earlier this year, limits the settlement of a deadline suit to ''only include a commitment to perform a mandatory action by an agreed upon schedule and would not otherwise predetermine or prescribe a specific substantive outcome for the actions to be completed by the agencies.''

The Meese memo was codified in 1991, in the Code of Federal Regulations, and applies to settlement policy today. The Meese policy primarily restricts agencies from using settlement policy to contravene the law or congressional intent.

□ 1630

As the majority noted in its report on a substantially identical version of the bill considered last Congress, this policy is grounded in separation of powers concerns. There is no evidence that agencies do not follow this policy, and the majority's witnesses in prior hearings on this proposal have been unable to provide examples of settlements that violate the Meese policies.

H.R. 469 is also wasteful and undermines Congress' powers under Article I of the Constitution. Congress, not agencies, establish regulatory priorities through statutes. Agencies do not have discretion to pick and choose regulatory priorities where Congress has expressly instructed that certain actions be undertaken by a specific date. By imposing a series of onerous procedures that will constrain the use of settlements to resolve a Federal agency's noncompliance with the law, H.R. 469 erodes the constitutional function of the legislative branch.

Finally, the bill is also costly. The Congressional Budget Office notes that this bill greatly lengthens the settlement process, costing millions of dollars and straining the Treasury's Judgment Fund through increased attorney's fees.

In closing, I strongly oppose this measure.

I now yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), our ranking member, to control.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Chairman, our system of government is a tripartite one, with each branch having certain defined functions delegated to it. The Congress is charged with writing the laws, the President with executing the laws, and the judiciary with interpreting them.

The Constitution divides powers between the branches in this manner in order to guard against the abuse of power by any one branch. The separation of powers is at the core of the fundamental premise of our constitutional design that a limited government, divided into three branches exercising enumerated powers, is necessary to protect individual liberty and the rule of law.

Unfortunately, over the last several decades, Congress has allowed its powers to gradually be chipped away at by the other branches. By allowing its powers to be diminished, Congress, especially this House, effectively is permitting the people to be deprived of their most responsive voice in the Federal Government. Through the legislation before us today and other legislation that the House has actively pursued in recent years, we can begin to

reestablish and enforce the limits on the authority of the other two branches.

Although no package of bills by itself can rebuild Congress' institutional strength and restore the Constitution's integrity, it is absolutely necessary that Congress begin reasserting the powers that it has ceded to the other branches. This package of bills promotes the restoration of Congress' Article I powers.

The first bill in the package addresses executive branch negotiated regulatory decrees and settlements. Over the past several decades, consent decrees and settlement agreements increasingly have been used in Federal litigation to allow the executive branch to write new law in ways that give short shrift to the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, Regulatory Flexibility Act, and other laws by which Congress has prescribed how agencies must conduct rulemaking.

While the executive does have some regulatory authority, these settlements and consent decrees have been used to aggrandize that authority and shift regulatory priorities under the cloak of judicial authority. This subverts the boundaries both the Constitution and Congress have placed on administrative authority.

The Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act limits the ability of the executive branch to collude with plaintiffs to abuse consent decrees and settlement agreements in a manner that allows the executive to thwart laws written by Congress and increases the power of the judiciary beyond its constitutional limits.

The second bill in the package, the Judgment Fund Transparency Act, increases transparency over Federal spending by requiring the Treasury Department to publish data on settlements and court-offered judgments entered against the Federal Government.

One of Congress' core powers is the authority to authorize and appropriate money from the Treasury. In order to properly exercise this power, Congress needs to know how the bill it has appropriated is being spent.

This bill will allow Congress to better scrutinize and understand where Federal taxpayer dollars are going. Only through the transparency this bill provides can Congress make the executive and the judiciary more accountable for the money that comes out of the Judgment Fund.

The final bill in the package, the Article I Amicus and Intervention Act, makes clear Congress' ability to defend and assert its institutional interests in litigation that puts the powers and responsibilities of Congress into question.

Currently, when the executive branch declines to pursue litigation in defense of an act of Congress, it is not required to give Congress notice sufficient to allow the House or Senate to defend the lawsuit before court filing deadlines have expired. In addition, the House of Representatives, unlike the Senate, does not have a statutory right to intervene or file amicus briefs in cases questioning congressional authority. This legislation ensures that both Houses of Congress have adequate time and a right to intervene in litigation that questions congressional authority.

We cannot continue to abdicate our powers and responsibilities to the other branches of government, weakening the separation of powers enshrined in our Constitution and threatening the very liberty divided powers were designed to protect.

Mr. Chair, I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to be here to support—well, I don't think it is going to be support. It is really more in opposition to this so-called Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act.

Well, why? Well, because it is anticonsumer.

Well, why? Because it is antienvironment.

Well, why? Because it is antiprivacy.

Not surprisingly, a broad consortium of more than 150 organizations strenuously oppose this bill, including some of our best nonprofits: the National Resources Defense Council, for example; the Sierra Club, for another example; Public Citizen; and a lot of labor organizations and other groups.

Title I of this bill, for example, has one goal: it is to discourage the use of settlement agreements and consent decrees that compel agencies to follow the law.

When enacting new statutes, Congress routinely establishes deadlines for agency action, particularly when it involves urgent public health and safety concerns. When agencies fail to meet these deadlines, a party with standing may file a lawsuit under section 7 of the Administrative Procedure Act to ensure that the agency performs this mandatory, nondiscretionary duty. By delaying the enforcement of statutory deadlines, the bill, however, jeopardizes public health and safety, which explains why the previous Obama administration issued a veto threat to similar legislation considered only last Congress.

Title I imposes nearly impossible hurdles for agencies seeking to resolve the deadline lawsuits and gives opponents of regulation multiple opportunities to stifle agency regulatory actions.

With respect to consent decrees concerning a rulemaking, an agency would be forced to go through two public comment periods—one for the consent decree, and one for the rulemaking that results from the consent decree—doubling the agency's effort. In addition, it would allow any affected party to intervene in opposition to a proposed settlement agreement or consent decree.

Contrary to the claims of those who support this measure, the Government Accountability Office has found no evidence that these deadline lawsuits are collusive. As the Justice Department, which represents most Federal agencies, acknowledged earlier this year, these agencies are left with few defenses, if any, to these lawsuits.

I am also concerned that H.R. 469 will inevitably generate more litigation that will result in millions of dollars of additional transactional costs, all of which will be borne by you know who—the American taxpayer.

For example, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, in its analysis of the bill's predecessor from the last Congress, concluded:

> The measure would impose millions of dollars in additional costs, most of which would be incurred because the litigation involving consent decrees and settlement agreements would probably take longer under the bill, and agencies would face additional administrative requirements.

That is a quotation. In other words, Title I of this bill is a costly solution, again, in search of a problem.

Now, Title II of the bill isn't much better. For instance, Title II overrides the Privacy Act to require publication of sensitive personal information of victims of government abuse or unlawful conduct, which raises serious privacy concerns.

Although proponents of this measure argue it will increase government transparency, its real effect will be to force the Treasury Department to publish, on the Internet, the names of individual victims of government misconduct compensated for their claims by the Judgment Fund, including victims of race and sex discrimination, and so, in effect, revictimizing victims harmed by the Federal Government.

Finally, Title III would facilitate the ability of the House majority to intervene in pending cases where the Justice Department has already determined that it will not defend the constitutionality of a Federal law.

Not only do these provisions raise possible separation of powers concerns, it is unclear why they are even needed.

This measure has not ever been the subject of a single hearing or markup by the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives. As a result, there has not been any opportunity to consider these critical issues and to analyze the ramifications presented by Title III.

For all of these reasons, I must, accordingly, urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 469.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comments, especially of my friend from Rhode Island. I would agree in principle with the Meese amendment as well. The problem is that, through the Clinton administration and through preceding administrations, it has been watered

down. I would actually go back to that. The problem is lack of transparency and the lack of a coherent voice here as we go further, but I do appreciate the comments.

Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN).

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in overwhelming and adamant support of H.R. 469, the Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act, which will strengthen Article I powers for Congress.

Let me begin by briefly quoting Article I, Section 8 of our Constitution, the Necessary and Proper Clause: ''The Congress shall have the power . . . to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . . in the government,'' meaning, Congress must continue to respect and reinforce the idea of the separation of powers in our government, but, at the same time, Congress can ultimately decide when, whether, and how to legislate the powers and authority of another branch of government.

□ 1645

Mr. Chairman, this piece of legislation will go a long way in fortifying the balance of powers and reestablishing Congress' authority set forth by James Madison and our Founding Fathers and Article I of the United States Constitution.

Furthermore, we must be sure to use our constitutional authority to effectively guarantee and ensure that government is more efficient, transparent, and accountable to all American citizens of our great Nation, and this bill will do just that.

It is time for Congress to establish procedures for honest regulations, transparency within the Treasury Department, and judicial intervention in unconstitutional court cases.

Mr. Chairman, again, I rise in full support of H.R. 469, and I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Chambers to make sure this is a government not only of the people, but for the people.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 469, the newly renamed Congressional Article I Power Strengthening Act.

This bill stitches together three unrelated bills, each one problematic in its own way.

Title III of the bill, the Article I Amicus and Intervention Act, would permit as a right the House to intervene as a party where an amicus in a lawsuit with the Department of Justice declines to defend the constitutionality of a law or regulation.

While this proposal may have some merit, it was introduced only last week. It was the subject of no hearing. It has had no markup. We simply do not know the full implications of the measure. If it is a worthy proposal, we should take the time to consider it in committee before moving forward.

Title II of the legislation, the Judgment Fund Transparency Act, would require additional reporting about the funds paid out of the Treasury Department's Judgment Fund by the United States Government to resolve legal claims against it. This legislation raises significant privacy concerns. It would require publishing sensitive, personally identifying information about individual claimants who are the victims of government misconduct, such as medical malpractice, racial discrimination, or sexual harassment.

Our laws should carefully balance the need for public disclosure of government spending with the need to protect the personal privacy of individual citizens. This bill upsets that balance.

By far, the most concerning aspect of this legislation is Title I, the Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act.

This provision also poses as a transparency measure, but its real aim is to disrupt and delay the process for issuing rules that protect public health and safety.

Congress frequently sets a statutory deadline for an agency to complete a rulemaking, but the agency sometimes misses that deadline. Under current law, private parties can sue the agency to meet its statutory obligations. Since there is little dispute that the agency has failed to do its duty, these lawsuits often end up settling, with the agency agreeing to a new schedule in which to complete the required rulemaking. That is perfectly reasonable.

However, the Republican majority and the businesses that are the subject of such regulation believe these lawsuits have some nefarious purpose. They have concocted an imagined vast conspiracy by which private parties collude with the government to file a lawsuit, and the government happily either settles or enters into a consent decree, supposedly allowing it to impose obligations or rules beyond what it could otherwise do.

Unfortunately for supporters of this bill, there is no evidence of such a conspiracy and no evidence, in fact, of any problem. To solve this nonexistent problem, this bill adds numerous procedural requirements before a settlement or consent degree can be entered into.

The effect of these requirements would be to make any settlements or consent decrees more difficult and more time-consuming to enter into, with the predictable result that agencies will not even bother to enter into them at all.

Most troubling, the bill would create a special and more permissive rule for virtually any party to involve itself in the case as an intervener. These interveners would do their best to ruin, block, or delay any settlement, including during what should be private negotiations.

That, of course, is the true purpose of this bill. They seek to tie government agencies up in years of litigation so that they are unable to issue rules protecting public health and safety. The real conspiracy here is the Republican plot to destroy the regulatory state. With one hand, we defund the agencies; and with the other hand, we build all sorts of hurdles in the regulatory process so that the agencies have no ability to complete their work.

It is a shameful effort that may save big businesses some money and regulatory compliance, but it will cost our citizens their health, their safety, and possibly their lives.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this terrible legislation.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I don't believe, as was just stated, that there is a nefarious plot here. It is to get government doing the regulation it should with transparency—and that is what needs to be done—and have Congress do what it should be doing, and that is writing laws and having the regulatory process start from here. That is simply what we are looking at. If that is too much, I understand.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Mr. COLLINS and Chairman GOODLATTE for their work.

Mr. Chairman, I have to say, in listening to this debate, I can't imagine why anyone would oppose this legislation that is entirely designed to create transparency. This is good work that Chairman GOODLATTE and Mr. COLLINS have worked on.

Last week we heard a number of shocking stories about government malfeasance, such as Chairman GOODLATTE's investigation that the government had settled and revealed that the Obama Justice Department had funneled money to politically allied groups. We are grateful for that.

Today we are taking up H.R. 469, and I am thrilled that this legislation includes the text of my bill, the Judgment Fund Transparency Act.

As I said, the purpose of this act is really very simple. Actually, contrary to what has been said, it is to bring simplicity, it is to bring transparency. This bill would go a long way to providing our constituents and taxpayers a better idea of how their tax dollars are spent.

Heaven knows, and for heaven's sake, those of us here certainly know that sometimes the Federal Government makes mistakes. It is not perfect. It is prone to errors and it can cause harm to individuals. And when that happens, especially when these errors are particularly egregious, the government is sued and damages can be awarded.

Early on, in fact, this Congress spent a lot of its time doing nothing but that, sorting through claims and making appropriations to pay those claims. In fact, not even 100 years ago, much of this body's work was consumed only by

this topic. It wasn't until 1956 that Congress established the Judgment Fund and gave authority to the Treasury Department to resolve these claims in ''a permanent and indefinite appropriation.'' That has simply been abused.

In keeping with the law, the Treasury Department files a yearly report with Congress and maintains a web page that supposedly can be searched. That sounds good, but it doesn't work that way. It is cryptic and has otherwise limited information related to each payout that has made the data almost entirely worthless. There is no information on what the government did. There is no information on the claimant. We are all familiar with, for example, when the previous administration took $1.3 billion out of the fund and converted it to cash and delivered it to Iran.

Four years ago, The New York Times reported what was likely an illegal billion-dollar payout to farmers who had never even sued the government. This isn't just unacceptable, it is crazy. It is horrible government. It is what leads people to distrust the Federal Government.

It would require the Treasury to make payment out of this fund public, and it would include very simple things that common sense would simply demand.

This bill would name the agency. It would name the name of the plaintiff and the amount that they were paid, then a brief description of the facts around that claim.

Mr. Chairman, I will conclude by just saying the Judgment Fund Transparency Act may not prevent bad decisions by all government employees, but it will shine a light on decisions to the American people. It is about helping to increase trust between the American people and government, a government that we have given them reason not to trust. Let's bring in accountability and transparency to that.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and the language found within this bill.

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

I just want to again remind folks that, during the course of this argument, we have heard this narrative about the problems with the sue and settle, as Mr. NADLER described it, an imagined, concocted vast conspiracy, but without any evidence that it actually exists, a solution in search of a problem.

Just to remind folks, there were two reports done by the GAO—I have them in my hand; they are thick—that, in fact, undermine the suggestion that there is any such problem.

In response to requests from the Republican committee chairs, the Government Accountability Office has twice concluded that agencies cannot and do not circumvent the rulemaking system through settlements relating to statutory deadlines.

Finally, we received testimony earlier this year from Attorney General Jeff Sessions' Justice Department that current agency policy, which was codified in 1991, prohibits circumventing the rulemaking process through deadline lawsuits. We have heard similar testimony from career Justice Department officials in prior administrations.

I ask the question: How is H.R. 469 necessary in light of this complete lack of support for this so-called sue and settle phenomenon and the presence of controls against this from happening in the first instance?

Mr. Chair, again, there is just no evidence to support the necessity for this. I think it has been articulated very well by my colleagues what the dangers are of moving forward with this legislation.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 469, the Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act.

This is an important piece of legislation because, as has been noted here, it seeks to increase accountability on the regulatory process by providing greater scrutiny of sue and settle cases. Yes, they do exist.

It requires the Department of Justice to release details of payments made through the Judgment Fund, and it strengthens Congress' ability to intervene on litigation regarding the constitutionality of congressional statutes.

This legislation also includes H.R. 1096, the Judgment Fund Transparency Act, which I am proud to cosponsor. That piece of legislation includes an amendment I offered, which would require the Secretary of the Treasury to clearly display the total expenditures, including the attorney's fees, interest, and all other payments made from the Judgment Fund on an annual basis.

Hardworking taxpayers deserve to know where their tax dollars are being spent, and Congress must ensure that programs like the Judgment Fund are following the law. The American people must be allowed every available tool to keep their government accountable, and this will be an important tool.

Also, it would ensure a terrorist organization is prohibited from receiving any taxpayer funds from the Judgment Fund by prohibiting any foreign terrorist organization, as defined in section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

That statute clearly classifies a terrorist organization as those who ''engage in terrorist activity or terrorism, and the organization threatens the security of the United States nationals or the national security of the United States.''

These terrorist organizations only seek to commit serious harm or potential targets, of course, including Americans, and I believe this prohibition is warranted to be included in this important legislation.

Let me be clear. We should all agree that not a cent of taxpayer dollars should ever go to a state sponsor of terrorism or foreign terrorist organizations. A recent illustration of the need for this ban on funding to state sponsors of terrorism is what we now know about the previous administration. They paid $1.3 billion from the Judgment Fund to the nation of Iran in a settlement dating back over 30 years. Although all the information surrounding this payment was never made clear to the public, Iran still remains a state sponsor of terrorism, the most notorious one.

Mr. Chair, again, I strongly support H.R. 469. We must never allow taxpayer dollars to be given to violent rogue nations that support terrorists or, obviously, terrorist organizations, and this will ensure a constitutional check on the Judgment Fund. This is about Article I, the authority of this body. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, I strongly support it, and I encourage our colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say I am baffled by the gentleman from Louisiana's assertion that this legislation improves accountability. It is very hard to imagine how undermining the enforcement of duly enacted legislation by Congress of the United States improves accountability.

This is like the upsidedown world. How does that improve accountability, making it more difficult to enforce the laws passed by Congress of the United States?

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say in closing that it is very important to note that my opposition to H.R. 469 is joined by a very broad spectrum of organizations, including the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, or AFL–CIO; the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Public Citizen; Consumer Federation of America; the National Consumer Law Center; the Natural Resources Defense Council; the Sierra Club; Earthjustice; and People for the American Way; among many others.

Mr. Chairman, I think that is company, which should suggest to my colleagues that this legislation does not benefit the American people, it will undermine the actions of Congress.

Mr. Chairman, I urge everyone to vote ''no,'' and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1700

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I just want to say that this is not just something that has

been dreamed up, as far as from a bill perspective. And they can point to studies that say this may or may not be a part, but even the outside organization, the Environmental Council of the States, sent a letter and basically did a resolution that said there is a need to reform State participation in EPA consent decrees which settled through citizen lawsuits. I mean, this is an issue because there is not the transparency that is needed. That is why these bills are here.

I would just like to remind everyone why we are considering this bill today, going back to where we first started, and why the House passed the Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act and the Congressional Subpoena Compliance and Enforcement Act earlier this week: to help restore and reinforce the powers the people gave Congress in Article I of the Constitution.

Restoring and reinforcing these powers is not some academic issue; this is something that we practice every day. It goes back to as early as our elementary school days dealing with our simple civics, saying this is the way our government is set up.

I have said this before, Mr. Chairman, from this podium, and I will say it again. If the people in agencies down the street would like to make law, then I encourage them to leave their job, run for Congress, and come up here and make law. This is not their job to do it from a cubicle down the street through a lawsuit. We need to do it up here, as it should be properly done.

So, for far too long, Congress has been giving away its power. We want to see that change. We are going to see that. That is why this bill is here. And although this bill alone is certainly not a silver bullet for restoring the power the Congress has ceded, just as powers are gradually lost over time, they will be regained by Congress gradually reasserting itself.

I ask my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation to reassert congressional authority and to ensure that individual liberty protected by the powers of separation of powers between the branches is maintained.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong opposition to H.R. 469 the "Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act" of 2017.

H.R. 469 is yet another attempt to undermine the ability of Federal regulators to protect the health and safety of Americans.

This ill-conceived bill imposes numerous new procedural burdens on agencies and courts intended to dissuade them from using consent decrees and settlement agreements to resolve enforcement actions filed to address agency noncompliance with the law.

H.R. 469 targets consent decrees and settlement agreements involving congressionally mandated federal agency actions.

These agency actions in many instances have the purpose of protecting civil rights, health, safety, and the environment.

H.R. 469 prescribes a host of burdensome—and, in some cases, ambiguous—steps for courts and parties relating to such consent decrees and settlements that would favor continued litigation over settlement.

H.R. 469 establishes a prolonged process of publication, intervention, and court-supervised mediation for these types of settlements.

This prolonged process would waste judicial, individuals, and local governments' resources, while wealthy corporations are empowered to perpetuate violations of federal rules.

Such hurdles to settlements conflict directly with the expressly stated and longstanding policy of the federal judiciary system to favor compromise and the settlement of disputes in order to make the best use of limited resources.

Proponents of this legislation argue that agencies and interest groups collude to "sue and settle" to avoid compliance with the procedures set forth in the Administrative Procedure Act.

These allegations are unfounded in fact.

The consent decrees and settlement agreements at issue do not determine the substance of agency rules.

Rather, such agreements simply seek to enforce mandatory statutory and procedural duties (such as deadlines enacted by Congress).

In fact, a December 2014 Government Accountability Office report surveyed settlements over deadlines for major U.S. Environmental Protection Act rulemakings and found that the settlements did not influence the substantive results.

Furthermore, all public notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act and the individual laws at issue still apply when an agency undertakes the substantive action for which a deadline was missed.

Parties and non-parties alike are provided with numerous opportunities to provide input in advance of the rules being finalized.

H.R. 469 undermines protections for the American people, masqueraded as a measure to prevent undocumented and unfounded allegations of "sue and settle" collusion between public interest plaintiffs and sympathetic federal agencies entering into consent decrees and settlements.

In fact, H.R. 469 favors industry interests at taxpayer expense and promotes regulatory uncertainty by making it virtually impossible to actually enter into consent decrees and settlements that avoid the costly and time consuming alternative of litigation.

But its most serious flaw is that H.R. 469 is really a back door way to derail the rulemaking process and undermine federal law, shifting limited agency resources away from the implementation of health and safety protections for the very people that we are supposed to be representing.

What this bill truly targets are the legal rights of citizens to hold government accountable by enforcing laws designed to protect health, safety, and the environment, obligations that the supporters of this bill would prefer to remain unenforced.

A broad coalition of more than 150 civil rights, environmental, consumer protection and other public interest groups opposed the bill in the last Congress.

On Monday, October 23, 2017, I received a letter signed by 86 environmental protection and civil rights groups urging me to oppose this bill.

A bill that attempts to give third parties the power to obstruct and delay the enforcement of federal law; which will harm plaintiff corporations, state and local governments, nonprofit groups, and individuals alike, when their interests have been harmed by illegal federal agency actions or inactions.

Consent decrees and settlement agreements are simple, streamlined ways to hold federal agencies accountable when they ignore Congress by failing to commit congressionally mandated actions by a date established in statute.

H.R. 469 is a sad attempt to eliminate vital and broadly supported protections that have improved and saved millions of American lives.

By providing opportunities for industry to subvert or delay the process of redressing injured groups, H.R. 469 effectively makes it more expensive for agencies to do what Congress has mandated, that is to protect the American people and redress any harm to their livelihood.

Some of the unwholesomeness of this bill could have been mitigated had the Jackson Lee amendment to H.R. 469 been made in order.

The Jackson Lee amendment would have excepted consent decrees or settlement agreements that pertain to a reduction in illness or death from exposure to toxic substances in communities that are protected by Executive Order 12898.

Executive Order 12898 directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of agency action on minority and low-income populations.

It is impossible to understand why even conservative Republicans would back legislation that hinders enforcement of the law, requires agencies to waste money in court on cases they believe they cannot win, and would stymie industry and state settlements along with all others.

I urge all members to vote against H.R. 469 and reject this harmful legislation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MITCHELL). All time for general debate has expired.

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

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–34. 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. 469

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

***SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.***

*(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Congressional Article I Powers Strengthening Act".*

*(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:*

*Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.*

*TITLE I—SUNSHINE FOR REGULATIONS AND REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS*

*Sec. 101. Short title.*
*Sec. 102. Definitions.*
*Sec. 103. Consent decree and settlement reform.*
*Sec. 104. Motions to modify consent decrees.*
*Sec. 105. Effective date.*

*TITLE II—JUDGMENT FUND TRANSPARENCY*

*Sec. 201. Short title.*
*Sec. 202. Judgment fund transparency.*

*TITLE III—ARTICLE I AMICUS AND INTERVENTION*

*Sec. 301. Short title.*
*Sec. 302. Congressional intervention as of right.*
*Sec. 303. Intervention and amicus authority for house of representatives.*

## *TITLE I—SUNSHINE FOR REGULATIONS AND REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS*

### *SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.*

*This title may be cited as the ''Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2017''.*

### *SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.*

*In this title—*

*(1) the terms ''agency'' and ''agency action'' have the meanings given those terms under section 551 of title 5, United States Code;*

*(2) the term ''covered civil action'' means a civil action—*

*(A) seeking to compel agency action;*

*(B) alleging that the agency is unlawfully withholding or unreasonably delaying an agency action relating to a regulatory action that would affect the rights of—*

*(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or*

*(ii) a State, local, or tribal government; and*

*(C) brought under—*

*(i) chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code; or*

*(ii) any other statute authorizing such an action;*

*(3) the term ''covered consent decree'' means—*

*(A) a consent decree entered into in a covered civil action; and*

*(B) any other consent decree that requires agency action relating to a regulatory action that affects the rights of—*

*(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or*

*(ii) a State, local, or tribal government;*

*(4) the term ''covered consent decree or settlement agreement'' means a covered consent decree and a covered settlement agreement; and*

*(5) the term ''covered settlement agreement'' means—*

*(A) a settlement agreement entered into in a covered civil action; and*

*(B) any other settlement agreement that requires agency action relating to a regulatory action that affects the rights of—*

*(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or*

*(ii) a State, local, or tribal government.*

### *SEC. 103. CONSENT DECREE AND SETTLEMENT REFORM.*

*(a) PLEADINGS AND PRELIMINARY MATTERS.—*

*(1) IN GENERAL.—In any covered civil action, the agency against which the covered civil action is brought shall publish the notice of intent to sue and the complaint in a readily accessible manner, including by making the notice of intent to sue and the complaint available online not later than 15 days after receiving service of the notice of intent to sue or complaint, respectively.*

*(2) ENTRY OF A COVERED CONSENT DECREE OR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.—A party may not make a motion for entry of a covered consent decree or to dismiss a civil action pursuant to a covered settlement agreement until after the end of proceedings in accordance with paragraph (1) and subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) of subsection (d) or subsection (d)(3)(A), whichever is later.*

*(b) INTERVENTION.—*

*(1) REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION.—In considering a motion to intervene in a covered civil action or a civil action in which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement has been proposed that is filed by a person who alleges that the agency action in dispute would affect the person, the court shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that the interests of the person would not be represented adequately by the existing parties to the action.*

*(2) STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—In considering a motion to intervene in a covered civil action or a civil action in which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement has been proposed that is filed by a State, local, or tribal government, the court shall take due account of whether the movant—*

*(A) administers jointly with an agency that is a defendant in the action the statutory provisions that give rise to the regulatory action to which the action relates; or*

*(B) administers an authority under State, local, or tribal law that would be preempted by the regulatory action to which the action relates.*

*(c) SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS.—Efforts to settle a covered civil action or otherwise reach an agreement on a covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall—*

*(1) be conducted pursuant to the mediation or alternative dispute resolution program of the court or by a district judge other than the presiding judge, magistrate judge, or special master, as determined appropriate by the presiding judge; and*

*(2) include any party that intervenes in the action.*

*(d) PUBLICATION OF AND COMMENT ON COVERED CONSENT DECREES OR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS.—*

*(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days before the date on which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement is filed with a court, the agency seeking to enter the covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall publish in the Federal Register and online—*

*(A) the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement; and*

*(B) a statement providing—*

*(i) the statutory basis for the covered consent decree or settlement agreement; and*

*(ii) a description of the terms of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, including whether it provides for the award of attorneys' fees or costs and, if so, the basis for including the award.*

*(2) PUBLIC COMMENT.—*

*(A) IN GENERAL.—An agency seeking to enter a covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall accept public comment during the period described in paragraph (1) on any issue relating to the matters alleged in the complaint in the applicable civil action or addressed or affected by the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement.*

*(B) RESPONSE TO COMMENTS.—An agency shall respond to any comment received under subparagraph (A).*

*(C) SUBMISSIONS TO COURT.—When moving that the court enter a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement or for dismissal pursuant to a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement, an agency shall—*

*(i) inform the court of the statutory basis for the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement and its terms;*

*(ii) submit to the court a summary of the comments received under subparagraph (A) and the response of the agency to the comments;*

*(iii) submit to the court a certified index of the administrative record of the notice and comment proceeding; and*

*(iv) make the administrative record described in clause (iii) fully accessible to the court.*

*(D) INCLUSION IN RECORD.—The court shall include in the court record for a civil action the certified index of the administrative record submitted by an agency under subparagraph (C)(iii) and any documents listed in the index which any party or amicus curiae appearing before the court in the action submits to the court.*

*(3) PUBLIC HEARINGS PERMITTED.—*

*(A) IN GENERAL.—After providing notice in the Federal Register and online, an agency may hold a public hearing regarding whether to enter into a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement.*

*(B) RECORD.—If an agency holds a public hearing under subparagraph (A)—*

*(i) the agency shall—*

*(I) submit to the court a summary of the proceedings;*

*(II) submit to the court a certified index of the hearing record; and*

*(III) provide access to the hearing record to the court; and*

*(ii) the full hearing record shall be included in the court record.*

*(4) MANDATORY DEADLINES.—If a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement requires an agency action by a date certain, the agency shall, when moving for entry of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement or dismissal based on the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, inform the court of—*

*(A) any required regulatory action the agency has not taken that the covered consent decree or settlement agreement does not address;*

*(B) how the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, if approved, would affect the discharge of the duties described in subparagraph (A); and*

*(C) why the effects of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement on the manner in which the agency discharges its duties is in the public interest.*

*(e) SUBMISSION BY THE GOVERNMENT.—*

*(1) IN GENERAL.—For any proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement that contains a term described in paragraph (2), the Attorney General or, if the matter is being litigated independently by an agency, the head of the agency shall submit to the court a certification that the Attorney General or head of the agency approves the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement. The Attorney General or head of the agency shall personally sign any certification submitted under this paragraph.*

*(2) TERMS.—A term described in this paragraph is—*

*(A) in the case of a covered consent decree, a term that—*

*(i) converts into a nondiscretionary duty a discretionary authority of an agency to propose, promulgate, revise, or amend regulations;*

*(ii) commits an agency to expend funds that have not been appropriated and that have not been budgeted for the regulatory action in question;*

*(iii) commits an agency to seek a particular appropriation or budget authorization;*

*(iv) divests an agency of discretion committed to the agency by statute or the Constitution of the United States, without regard to whether the discretion was granted to respond to changing circumstances, to make policy or managerial choices, or to protect the rights of third parties; or*

*(v) otherwise affords relief that the court could not enter under its own authority upon a final judgment in the civil action; or*

*(B) in the case of a covered settlement agreement, a term—*

*(i) that provides a remedy for a failure by the agency to comply with the terms of the covered settlement agreement other than the revival of the civil action resolved by the covered settlement agreement; and*

*(ii) that—*

*(I) interferes with the authority of an agency to revise, amend, or issue rules under the procedures set forth in chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, or any other statute or Executive order prescribing rulemaking procedures for a rulemaking that is the subject of the covered settlement agreement;*

*(II) commits the agency to expend funds that have not been appropriated and that have not been budgeted for the regulatory action in question; or*

*(III) for such a covered settlement agreement that commits the agency to exercise in a particular way discretion which was committed to*

*the agency by statute or the Constitution of the United States to respond to changing circumstances, to make policy or managerial choices, or to protect the rights of third parties.*

*(f) REVIEW BY COURT.—*

*(1) AMICUS.—A court considering a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that it is proper to allow amicus participation relating to the covered consent decree or settlement agreement by any person who filed public comments or participated in a public hearing on the covered consent decree or settlement agreement under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (d).*

*(2) REVIEW OF DEADLINES.—*

*(A) PROPOSED COVERED CONSENT DECREES.—For a proposed covered consent decree, a court shall not approve the covered consent decree unless the proposed covered consent decree allows sufficient time and incorporates adequate procedures for the agency to comply with chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, and other applicable statutes that govern rulemaking and, unless contrary to the public interest, the provisions of any Executive order that governs rulemaking.*

*(B) PROPOSED COVERED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS.—For a proposed covered settlement agreement, a court shall ensure that the covered settlement agreement allows sufficient time and incorporates adequate procedures for the agency to comply with chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, and other applicable statutes that govern rulemaking and, unless contrary to the public interest, the provisions of any Executive order that governs rulemaking.*

*(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Each agency shall submit to Congress an annual report that, for the year covered by the report, includes—*

*(1) the number, identity, and content of covered civil actions brought against and covered consent decrees or settlement agreements entered against or into by the agency; and*

*(2) a description of the statutory basis for—*

*(A) each covered consent decree or settlement agreement entered against or into by the agency; and*

*(B) any award of attorneys fees or costs in a civil action resolved by a covered consent decree or settlement agreement entered against or into by the agency.*

***SEC. 104. MOTIONS TO MODIFY CONSENT DECREES.***

*If an agency moves a court to modify a covered consent decree or settlement agreement and the basis of the motion is that the terms of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement are no longer fully in the public interest due to the obligations of the agency to fulfill other duties or due to changed facts and circumstances, the court shall review the motion and the covered consent decree or settlement agreement de novo.*

***SEC. 105. EFFECTIVE DATE.***

*This title shall apply to—*

*(1) any covered civil action filed on or after the date of enactment of this title; and*

*(2) any covered consent decree or settlement agreement proposed to a court on or after the date of enactment of this title.*

## *TITLE II—JUDGMENT FUND TRANSPARENCY*

***SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.***

*This title may be cited as the ''Judgment Fund Transparency Act of 2017''.*

***SEC. 202. JUDGMENT FUND TRANSPARENCY.***

*(a) TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENT.—Section 1304 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(d)(1) Unless the disclosure of such information is otherwise prohibited by law or court order, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the public on a website, as soon as practicable, but not later than 30 days after the date on which a payment under this section is tendered on or after January 1, 2016, the following information with regard to that payment:*

*''(A) The name of the specific agency or entity whose actions gave rise to the claim or judgment.*

*''(B) The name of the plaintiff or claimant.*

*''(C) The name of counsel for the plaintiff or claimant.*

*''(D) The amount paid representing principal liability, and any amounts paid representing any ancillary liability, including attorney fees, costs, and interest.*

*''(E) A brief description of the facts that gave rise to the claim.*

*''(F) The name of the agency that submitted the claim.*

*''(G) Any information available on reports generated by the Judgment Fund Payment Search administered by the Treasury Department.*

*''(2) In addition to the information described in paragraph (1), if a payment under this section is made to a foreign state on or after January 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the public in accordance with paragraph (1), the following information with regard to that payment:*

*''(A) A description of the method of payment.*

*''(B) A description of the currency denominations used for the payment.*

*''(C) The name and location of each financial institution owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by a foreign state or an agent of a foreign state through which the payment passed or from which the payment was withdrawn, including any financial institution owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by a foreign state or an agent of a foreign state that is holding the payment as of the date on which the information is made available.*

*''(3) Not later than January 1, 2018, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the public on the website described in paragraph (1)—*

*''(A) the total amount paid under this section during the year preceding the date of the report; and*

*''(B) the amount paid under this section during the year preceding the date of the report—*

*''(i) for attorney fees;*

*''(ii) for interest; and*

*''(iii) for all other payments.*

*''(4) In this subsection, the term 'foreign state' has the meaning given the term in section 1603 of title 28.*

*''(e) Except with regard to children under eighteen, the disclosure of information required in this section shall not be considered a 'clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy' for purposes of title 5, United States Code.*

*''(f) No payment may be made under this section to a state sponsor of terrorism, as defined in section 1605A(h) of title 28, or to an organization that has been designated as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189).''.*

*(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall carry out the amendment made by this section by not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this title.*

## *TITLE III—ARTICLE I AMICUS AND INTERVENTION*

***SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.***

*This title may be cited as the ''Article I Amicus and Intervention Act of 2017''.*

***SEC. 302. CONGRESSIONAL INTERVENTION AS OF RIGHT.***

*(a) DEADLINE FOR REPORT ON LIMITATION ON ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS.—Paragraph (2) of section 530D(b) of title 28, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:*

*''(2) under subsection (a)(1)(B), within such time as will reasonably enable the House of Representatives and the Senate to take action, separately or jointly, to intervene in a timely fashion in the proceeding, but in no event—*

*''(A) later than 30 days after the making of each determination; and*

*''(B) later than 21 days before any applicable deadline for filing any pleading necessary—*

*''(i) to defend or assert the constitutionality of the provision at issue; or*

*''(ii) to request review of any judicial, administrative, or other determination adversely affecting the constitutionality of such provision;''.*

*(b) INTERVENTION AS OF RIGHT.—Section 530D of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(f) INTERVENTION AS OF RIGHT.—The Senate or House of Representatives may intervene as of right in any proceeding referenced in subsection (a)(1)(B) in order to defend or assert the constitutionality of any provision of any Federal statute, rule, regulation, program, policy, or other law, or to appeal or request review of any judicial, administrative, or other determination adversely affecting the constitutionality of any such provision. Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable time limits or other provisions of law to the contrary, if such intervention is filed not later than 21 days after receipt of the notice required by this section the intervention shall be deemed timely and shall preserve the right of the Senate or House of Representatives to advance any applicable legal arguments in favor of the constitutionality of any such provision.''.*

***SEC. 303. INTERVENTION AND AMICUS AUTHORITY FOR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.***

*Section 101 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2000 (2 U.S.C. 5571), is amended—*

*(1) by striking subsection (d); and*

*(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following (and redesignating succeeding subsections accordingly):*

*''(c) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES INTERVENTION AND AMICUS AUTHORITY.—*

*''(1) ACTIONS OR PROCEEDINGS.—When directed to do so in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives, the General Counsel of the House of Representatives shall intervene or appear as amicus curiae in the name of the House, or in the name of an officer, committee, subcommittee, or chair of a committee or subcommittee of the House, or other entity of the House, in any legal action or proceeding pending in any court of the United States or of a State or political subdivision thereof.*

*''(2) INTERVENTION OR APPEARANCE AS OF RIGHT.—Intervention as a party or appearance as amicus curiae shall be of right and may be denied by a court only upon an express finding that such intervention or appearance is untimely and would significantly delay the pending action or, in the case of intervention, that standing to intervene is required and has not been established under section 2 of article III of the Constitution of the United States.*

*''(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to confer standing on any party seeking to bring, or jurisdiction on any court with respect to, any civil or criminal action against Congress, either House of Congress, a Member of Congress, a committee or subcommittee of a House of Congress, any office or agency of Congress, or any officer or employee of a House of Congress or any office or agency of Congress.''.*

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 115–363 and the amendment designated in the order of the House of October 24, 2017. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. COLLINS OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 115–363.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise as the designee of Chairman GOODLATTE, and I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 16, line 2, insert after ''otherwise prohibited by law'' the following: ''(other than section 552a of title 5, United States Code)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 577, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Treasury's interpretation of current law prohibits it from making public the names of plaintiffs. My amendment clarifies that these names, which this bill requires to be disclosed, will, in fact, be disclosed.

In January 2016, it was reported that the United States agreed to pay $1.7 billion to Iran in a settlement arising from an agreement to sell military equipment to Iran prior to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. At the time, it was known that $400 million in cash had been transferred to Iran, but it was unclear, even after public inquiry, how the remaining $1.3 billion had been paid.

On August 22, 2016, the New York Sun reported that, while conducting an ongoing but fruitless search of ''Iran'' as a claimant in the Treasury database, it found 13 payments totaling 13 cents less than $1.3 billion, as well as an additional payment of just over $10 million. Without further context, however, the New York Sun could not confirm whether these payments were, in fact, part of the settlement.

It was only after months of increased public scrutiny, long after the money had been disbursed, that the previous administration acknowledges that these payments were indeed part of the Iran settlement.

My amendment will ensure that the public knows about the conduct of its government and the laws that are being faithfully executed and that justice is being served. The information that this bill requires to be disclosed, which, in many cases is already publicly available in court documents, informs Congress and the public in new ways, particularly with regard to systemic government abuse.

Furthermore, any concerns about the disclosure of the plaintiffs' names are mitigated by the fact that this amendment does not foreclose a court's ability to protect private information. Indeed, the information required to be made public in title II will not be disclosed if such disclosure is prohibited by a court order. Moreover, Federal judges have ample discretion to allow a plaintiff to proceed under the pseudonym as a ''Doe plaintiff'' or to seal and redact intimate records.

My amendment is necessary to prevent future government abuse by increasing the overall transparency of the Judgment Fund and, in turn, increasing government accountability.

I urge my colleagues to support this important clarification, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I seek time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I think it is very important to say at the outset this is not about clarifying anything. This is about a major change in policy.

This amendment will permit the publication of a victim's sensitive information, such as the individual's name and case history, on the internet. This overrides the Privacy Act.

So let's be clear about what this is. This is not a clarification. This is a major change in policy.

This amendment will make a bad bill even worse. It specifies that the Privacy Act does not prohibit the publication of a victim's sensitive information, such as his or her name and case history.

Under current law, the Treasury Department cannot, for the purposes of the Judgment Fund, publish the sensitive information of individuals who are victims of government abuse or misconduct, such as a name or case history. This is because the Privacy Act requires an individual's consent prior to publishing their name or other sensitive information.

Although proponents of this amendment may claim that this information is, in some instances, already publicly available, the Supreme Court has recognized that a person's privacy interests and their personal information collected in government records does not automatically dissolve because such information may be available to the public already in some other format. Individuals have the right to control the dissemination of their own personal information. This amendment makes it clear that the bill will infringe on an individual's personal privacy if he or she is compensated from the Judgment Fund.

Moreover, this amendment does not further the public interest in government transparency. Publishing an individual person's name on the internet sheds no significant light on the inner workings of government and has no value; and so, to the contrary, it will result in potentially grave harassment or even intimidation.

Revealing this information is an unwarranted intrusion on personal privacy of individuals harmed by government misconduct, which could include victims of medical malpractice as well as racial and sexual discrimination. In effect, it revictimizes the victims of government misconduct or abuse—a terrible result.

So, therefore, I oppose this amendment which does not do anything to improve the bill and, in fact, makes it considerably worse.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this amendment. And if you vote for it, recognize that you will have to go home and tell your constituents that you have agreed to a serious invasion of their personal privacy and that it will allow individuals who are victims of government misconduct to have that personal information put on the internet and shared with millions of people all over the world.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, you can also go home and tell them, if they filed a suit, that it is already currently in the PACER system, probably with more information than just that, or they could have filed it under a pseudonym or had their lawyers have this suppressed. This is an issue that is already out there; and as we look at this, this is moving forward. So I would just ask that this amendment be reported favorably.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 made in order by the order of the House of October 24, 2017.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT OFFERED IN LIEU OF AMENDMENT NO. 2 PRINTED IN PART A OF HOUSE REPORT NO. 115–363 OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS OF MICHIGAN

Page 3, line 17, strike ''; and'' and insert '', other than an excepted consent decree or settlement agreement;''.

Page 4, line 4, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, insert after line 4 the following:

(6) the term ''excepted consent decree or settlement agreement'' means a covered consent decree or covered settlement agreement that prevents or is intended to prevent discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, or any other protected category.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 577, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would exempt from H.R. 469 settlement agreements and consent decrees intended to prevent discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, or other protected category.

Given the often systemic nature of discriminatory conduct, settlement

agreements and consent decrees provide an invaluable means to provide for general relief for non-identifiable victims and to prevent future discriminatory acts.

In particular, they are instrumental in enforcing critical civil rights protections in a wide variety of cases, including voting rights violations and predatory lending practices based on race. Other examples include the use of consent decrees by the Justice Department to address unconstitutional police pattern or practice activities.

For example, in 2003, the City of Detroit entered into a consent decree with the Justice Department concerning the inappropriate use of force and arrest practices by the city's police department. As a result of this decree, the police department implemented vastly improved practices that have substantially reduced the incidence of fatalities caused by law enforcement activities, a goal that the Judiciary Committee Chairman GOODLATTE and I very much endorse.

According to the department's civil rights division, these decrees facilitate institutional reforms, such as improving systems for supervising officers and holding them accountable for misconduct, as well as ensuring officers have the policy guidance, training, equipment, and other resources necessary for constitutional and effective policing.

Unfortunately, H.R. 469 would make the use of such remedies exceedingly difficult by subjecting them to numerous procedural and potentially meritless court challenges.

A particularly concerning provision of this bill is its broad and ill-defined authorization allowing virtually anyone to intervene with respect to a proposed settlement agreement or consent decree.

For example, imagine a proposed settlement agreement intended to restrict a city's school district from discriminating against Muslims. Under the bill, any anti-Muslim or neo-Nazi organization could petition the court to intervene for the purpose of opposing such agreement on the ground that it ''would affect'' such person.

This is just one of the many fundamental problems presented by this thoroughly flawed and, I think, harmful measure, and, so, accordingly, I ask my colleagues here to join me in opposing H.R. 469.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, with much respect for my ranking member on my committee—we have served together; we have worked on a lot of issues together, namely, the Police Working Group, and other things, and his work has been very helpful in that regard—I do have to oppose this amendment because, really, what this amendment does is seek less transparency, public participation, and judicial review for consent decrees and settlement agreements for regulations that allegedly will help to protect civil rights.

With all due respect, I believe this has matters backwards. More transparency, public input, and judicial scrutiny will only help to produce regulations that better protect civil rights.

Further, since the bill promotes the participation of regulated entities and State, local, and Tribal entities that may be affected by or help to enforce the regulations, it will promote buy-in from these groups. That will help the regulation to be better and more promptly implemented and not held for years in litigation challenging the rules.

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

□ 1715

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, although H.R. 469 has many flaws, I am particularly concerned that the bill's broad and ill-defined requirements would effectively delay and possibly deter civil enforcement agencies from providing general relief in discrimination cases, discourage courts from enforcing these settlements, and also invite costly and needless litigation.

In response to this problem, my amendment would simply exclude from the bill's burdensome requirements settlement agreements and consent decrees intended to remediate generalized harms in civil rights cases.

Mr. Chairman, this is a commonsense amendment, and I urge my colleagues here to support it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 115–363.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 17, strike ''; and'' and insert '', other than an excepted consent decree or settlement agreement;''.

Page 4, line 4, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, insert after line 4 the following:

(6) the term ''excepted consent decree or settlement agreement'' means a covered consent decree or covered settlement agreement pertaining to a deadline established by Congress through the enactment of a Federal statute to—

(A) significantly improve access to affordable, high-speed broadband internet in under-served markets, such as low-income and rural communities; and

(B) facilitate economic development in locations without sufficient access to such service.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 577, 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. Speaker, I rise to support my amendment to H.R. 469, and to advocate for rural Georgians and Americans across the country who don't have dependable access to broadband internet services.

We are here today debating H.R. 469, a bill that would require burdensome and unnecessary processes that would delay the enforcement of Federal regulations. H.R. 469 undermines the ability of government agencies to protect public health and safety by prohibiting them from using consent decrees and settlements to enforce the law that we pass by allowing private industry to intervene in opposition to regulations that they deem unfavorable to them. It requires the publishing of the personal data of those who bring complaints against the government, thus deterring complaints.

My amendment would ensure that future actions taken by Congress to increase broadband access in rural areas are not stymied by these excessive regulatory burdens. My amendment would exempt any future legislation, or any future rules that may be enacted to bring this technology to underserved areas from the requirements put in place by H.R. 469.

It shouldn't be groundbreaking news that, in many of our districts, a gap exists between urban and rural communities insofar as broadband connectivity is concerned. The Fourth District of Georgia has some rural pockets that are facing this challenge today.

According to a study done by the Pew Research Center in 2016, rural Americans are still 10 percentage points less likely than average citizens to have broadband access at home. Although we have seen improvements since the 16-point gap in 2007, we have much work to do to ensure that all families have access to what is now a modern necessity.

My home State of Georgia ranks 21st in the Nation in terms of access to 25 megabit per second broadband, according to a report put together by the Georgia House and Senate Study Committee on High Speed Broadband Communications Access for all Georgians. In rural counties where this problem persists, we have seen local development stall without access to telehealth services, educational materials, and other digital resources.

Broadband connectivity brings with it countless learning opportunities and exchanges of information that are not possible in isolated communities without broadband. The issue of broadband access is inextricably linked to the vitality of these rural areas, and it is in our best interest as a Congress to give rural communities all of the modern tools they need to succeed.

The FCC's 2016 Broadband Progress Report identified 24 million rural Americans throughout the country who don't have a broadband connection—24 million Americans whose access would be delayed even further by the implementation of H.R. 469's elimination of consent decrees.

I hope Congress can agree on the importance of achieving full broadband access, and I hope that this amendment will begin removing this hurdle that is being put in place by my friends on the other side of the aisle who support business as opposed to people.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I was just sitting here, Mr. Chairman, and I am excited and welcome my friend from Georgia to the fight for broadband. I have been leading on this fight now for several years, especially in my district, which is rural, which has a company called Windstream that does not provide for its citizens. I am excited to have the acknowledgment that rural broadband is something that we need to be fighting for.

My district has areas in which Windstream was supposed to use its Connect America funds to widen its footprint on rural broadband. Instead, they have shrunk it, only to compete in areas where they are competing against other companies, and only widening it in areas where they already had technology which they could have widened years before.

I think it is really interesting, and I am so glad about this because it also gives me the opportunity to talk about the GO Act, the Gigabyte Opportunity Act, which actually will provide real solutions into these districts for broadband opportunity.

I would encourage my friends from Georgia and from Michigan, and anybody else, to sign on to this bill. It is a good bill that has support across the way in the Senate, and also working with the administration to provide the way for States to actually look at their own States and provide gigabyte opportunity zones so that they can actually make ways and get these companies that are monopolizing the areas and not serving their constituents.

By the way, Mr. Chairman, it is sad because, in some of my districts right now, it has been over really about 6 weeks or so since Irma came through northeast Georgia and knocked out power and delayed broadband, and I still have customers in my district who do not have phone service or broadband this long after that fact.

This is just unacceptable, so I appreciate the concern here. The only problem is, this amendment doesn't help. This amendment is not one that does—again, it just is another amendment, unfortunately, like the last amendment, that seeks less transparency and public participation. It does not do anything to discourage people from working to find rural broadband solutions.

What this actually does, it just, again, tries to seek less transparency instead of more. But I think there is a positive here. I choose to look at the positive. I disagree with this amendment and would ask that it be voted ''no.'' But I look at the positive to say, as someone from Georgia, we have got a fight we can connect on, and that is rural broadband, because there is no longer a digital divide. There is a hope and dream divide. It is not a digital divide. It is a hope and dream for those students, and those moms, and those dads, and those families in those areas who cannot access the internet.

For me, it was a radio and a book. It took me all over the world. Nowadays, it is the internet and a phone where our students can actually get what they want. Unfortunately, this amendment doesn't do it. I have to oppose this amendment, but I am glad to welcome to the fight another friend against the evils of not being able to expand broadband.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I just enjoyed the contrast between our different styles. The Congressman, my friend from Georgia, is very upbeat and passionate. I am more laid back and kind of reserved. But we both agree on the fact that we want more broadband to be accessible to rural customers. We both agree on that.

We just simply disagree on whether or not we should allow a process whereby a third-party corporation can come in and gum up the regulatory scheme that has been laid out in the rulings that have been made and, thus, delay the availability of broadband to rural customers.

Mr. Chair, I would ask respectfully that my colleagues support my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana) assumed the chair.

## ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly an enrolled bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2266. An act making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

## SUNSHINE FOR REGULATIONS AND REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS ACT OF 2017

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MCEACHIN

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MITCHELL). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 115–363.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 17, strike ''; and'' and insert '', other than an excepted consent decree or settlement agreement;''.

Page 4, line 4, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, insert after line 4 the following:

(6) the term ''excepted consent decree or settlement agreement'' means a covered consent decree or covered settlement agreement pertaining to the improvement or maintenance of air or water quality.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 577, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment which seeks to reduce H.R. 469's adverse effects on public health and environmental quality. More specifically, my amendment would exempt from the terms of this bill consent decrees and settlement agreements pertaining to the maintenance or improvement of air and water quality.

Mr. Chairman, litigation empowers our constituents to hold Federal agencies accountable when they fail to take required actions by congressionally mandated deadlines. In many of these cases, agencies' failures are not in serious dispute. A missed deadline is a missed deadline. Litigants' goals are simply to ensure that the law is followed quickly and in full.

In such cases, it is not unusual, and certainly not unreasonable, for lawsuits to conclude with consent decrees or settlement agreements. As reported, this bill would introduction duplicative requirements and unnecessary barriers into the process by which the consent decrees and settlement agreements are reached. As a result, both tools would be used less often and less effectively.

Across the board, that change would be a mistake, but would generally be disastrous with respect to pollution. Air and water quality are matters of public health. When they fail to meet

certain levels, people get sick and potentially die. The World Health Organization says that unhealthy environments kill more than 12 million people annually. In the United States, multiple studies have shown that tens of thousands of deaths every year are attributable to air pollution alone. These figures, of course, do not begin to contemplate nonlethal effects of health and quality of life.

We all know that justice delayed is justice denied—and that is especially true when lives are at stake. When regulators fail to take mandated actions to maintain or improve air or water quality, that is an injustice. When they sincerely intend to take those actions, but fail to do so in a timely way, that is also an injustice.

If we make it harder for citizens to hold regulators accountable, if we take away tools that empower Americans to make their voices heard, and hold agencies to account, we are compounding those injuries.

Let me be clear: consent decrees and settlement agreements do make a real difference in people's lives. They do this not by changing the substance of the agencies' actions as a formal rulemaking would do, but by ensuring that the planned or required actions are actually taken.

I invite my colleagues to look at the Chesapeake Bay and the settlement agreement in Fowler v. EPA. Back in 2010, the EPA was under both congressional and executive mandates to improve water quality in the bay, but the agency was not on track to implement necessary standards within the required timeframe.

Citizens and public interest groups filed suit, and the case concluded in a settlement agreement that established a concrete deadline for actions that the agency was already working towards—notably, the imposition of the total maximum daily load, a binding limit on pollution in the watershed.

The result has been a small but very promising improvement in the health of the bay. Were it not for the agreement, we might still be waiting on the EPA to take the actions necessary.

□ 1730

We would have lost a significant amount of time, and, instead of improving conditions, conditions might have worsened, and the problem we faced would have grown correspondingly greater.

So, again, Mr. Chairman, justice delayed is justice denied; and, again, consent decrees and settlement agreements prevent avoidable, unnecessary delay.

Contrary to what my friends on the other side of the aisle have said, consent decrees and settlements do not and cannot take the place of formal rulemaking. Existing Federal regulations prevent agencies from using either tool to make commitments in excess of what relevant statutes provide.

The GAO has explored whether deadline litigation affects the substance of agencies' actions; overwhelmingly, they concluded it does not.

So the only function of this bill would be to stymie citizens'—our constituents'—efforts to ensure that our laws are faithfully executed to protect our air and our water, and, therefore, our health, in court.

My amendment would fix that problem in at least one area, and I urge its adoption.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman bringing it forward. Again, we have never said that consent decrees can't be used. The issue here is how they are used in transparency. Justice delayed, as has been said, is not one that is denied, but also transparency not used is also things that are done in the dark and away from the public view which also can have issues that we go forward. Very few of these cases are actually brought by Joe Private Citizen. They are brought by groups with interest.

Even in the Chesapeake Bay, which has an $18 billion compliance tag, the rushed timeframe did not allow others' input and buy-in from other localities.

So, again, nowhere has abuse of sue and settle tactics been seen so much as in the environmental regulation. In fact, the Judiciary Committee's report on this bill highlights 10 environmental sue and settle regulations from the Obama administration that equaled up to $125 billion of cost.

Even the Environmental Council, as I stated earlier, in 2013, adopted a resolution calling upon the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to adopt reforms like the ones in this bill.

This amendment would deny reform to precisely the area of regulation that needs it most and, thereby, substantially gut the bill. We can have good environmental regulations without shady, backroom dealing of sue and settle litigation skewing the results and excessively heightening the burden.

I appreciate the gentleman bringing the amendment, but I would oppose it, and I would ask my colleagues to oppose the amendment as well.

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

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's concerns, but actually having been a trial lawyer and actually having practiced law in the courts of the Commonwealth of Virginia and elsewhere, there is no more transparent process than the litigation process.

I would submit that the notion that somehow these actions are brought by someone other than our constituents, someone other than citizens of the United States, is not well taken.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would conclude by simply asking that my colleagues support this amendment, that we move forward in that regard, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN).

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

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

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

The Chair understands that amendment No. 5 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part A of House Report 115–363.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 17, strike ''; and'' and insert '', other than an excepted consent decree or settlement agreement;''.

Page 4, line 4, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, insert after line 4 the following:

(6) the term ''excepted consent decree or settlement agreement'' means a covered consent decree or covered settlement agreement entered into pursuant to sections 0.160 through 0.163 of title 28, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly referred to as the ''Meese Policy'').

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 577, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment that would create an exception in the legislation for consent decrees or settlement agreements entered into pursuant to the Meese policy.

For those unfamiliar, the Meese policy prohibits the Department of Justice from undertaking a regulatory action through a settlement. More specifically, the Meese policy directs departments and agencies not to enter into a consent decree if it would act as a so-called end run, around the regular rulemaking process or constrain an agency head from exercising its discretionary authority in the future.

Any departure from these rules must be approved by the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, or the Associate Attorney General beforehand.

Edwin Meese, the former Attorney General for the Reagan administration, wrote a memo articulating this policy in 1986, out of a concern for the abuse of settlements by agencies. Now, the Department of Justice later codified it in 1991, in the Code of Federal Regulations.

Simply put, there is a law already on the books that prevents the Department of Justice or other agencies from abusing consent decrees and settlement agreements used by Federal agencies, and it is working.

In February of this year, the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, determined that Department officials negotiating settlement terms are covered by the Meese policy. The GAO's report noted that any settlement would only include a commitment to perform an action already mandated by law.

So if you are scoring along at home, what I am saying is this: there is a needless overlap between this bill that we are considering, H.R. 469, and the Meese policy in regard to the scope of settlements. There is also redundancy with existing laws in terms of protecting the interests of third parties.

If I may be so bold, I would like to say that persons with only a nodding acquaintance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure already know that Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 24 allows affected parties to intervene in litigation if they feel their interests are not properly represented in the case.

Moreover, even if a rule was promulgated by a settlement agreement, the Administrative Procedure Act would still mandate notice-and-comment procedures for the rule. Simply put, this is a bill that is a solution in search of a problem, and my amendment underscores that fact.

If I may be so bold, I would like to say that here in America we have actual real problems that merit our attention here in this House, such as why we haven't had an infrastructure bill leading to high-paying American jobs. We need actual solutions to actual problems, not theoretical ones like in this bill. That is why I have offered this amendment.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the gentleman bringing in the Meese memo. We discussed this earlier that if we actually went back to the actual intent of the Meese memo which said the Attorney General would be the part, we could probably agree on that. But let's get some things straight. There has been nothing codified. This is a regulation. It has not been codified. Codification would have to come from actual legislation passed by this body, and it is not.

The amendment would seek to carve out of the bill consent decrees and settlements entered into under Department of Justice regulations ostensibly written to implement this Meese memo.

The Meese memo was a Reagan-era Department policy, issued by Attorney General Meese, that prohibited the Department from entering into specified categories of decrees or settlements—particularly those that allowed the judiciary, through judicial orders, from invading the constitutionally exclusive authority of the executive branch.

Current regulations, however, require less scrutiny by, and less accountability for, such consent decrees on the part of the Attorney General.

What we need is not less Department of Justice accountability for backroom deals that trespass constitutional lines of authority, but more accountability. The bill would restore full accountability consistent with the letter and the spirit of the Meese memo itself.

Further, the amendment would carve out any and all decrees and settlements entered by the approval of officials as low as the Assistant Attorneys General—meaning most of the relevant decrees and settlements entered into by the Department. As a result, the amendment would gut the bill's consent decree and settlement reforms.

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, to conclude, H.R. 469's proponents offer no evidence that there actually is a sue and settle problem or that agencies are not currently complying with the Meese memo. The GAO has already said they are. My amendment simply makes clear that this bill is unnecessary, and, as such, I urge a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

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

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 115–363 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

Amendment No. 4 by Mr. MCEACHIN of Virginia.

Amendment No. 6 by Mr. CARTWRIGHT of Pennsylvania.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 231, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 585]

AYES—185

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
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
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
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
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)
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOES—231

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
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Jones
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
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
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
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—16

Bridenstine
Denham
Fortenberry
Hudson
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Lowenthal
Lynch
Richmond
Rooney, Thomas J.
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1805

Messrs. BACON, KELLY of Pennsylvania, and ALLEN changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Ms. SPEIER, Messrs. KIHUEN, and DOGGETT changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MCEACHIN

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 226, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 586]

AYES—187

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
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
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
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
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
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
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
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
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOES—226

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
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
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
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—19

Blumenauer
Bridenstine
Castro (TX)
Denham
Fortenberry
Hudson
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
Lowenthal
Lynch
Pascrell
Richmond
Rooney, Thomas J.
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)
Yoho

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1809

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Chair, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''nay'' on rollcall No. 586.

PERONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chair, I was inadvertently delayed on rollcall numbers 585 and 586. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall No. 585 and ''yes'' on rollcall No. 586.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the

gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 186, noes 232, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 587]

AYES—186

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
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOES—232

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
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
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)
Jones
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
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
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
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—14

Bridenstine
Fortenberry
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
Kuster (NH)
Lowenthal
Richmond
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ryan (OH)
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1814

Mr. MARSHALL changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. BUTTERFIELD changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Mr. MITCHELL, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 469) to impose certain limitations on consent decrees and settlement agreements by agencies that require the agencies to take regulatory action in accordance with the terms thereof, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 577, 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 the 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.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. 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 234, noes 187, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 588]

AYES—234

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
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
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
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
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)
Jones
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
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—187

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
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
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
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
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
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
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
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—11

Bridenstine
Fortenberry
Jeffries
Johnson, Sam
Lowenthal
Richmond
Rooney, Thomas J.
Smith (NE)
Thompson (CA)
Webster (FL)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1827

So 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 NAMES OF MEMBERS AS COSPONSORS OF H.R. 3941

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following names be removed as cosponsors of the bill, H.R. 3941:

Mr. CARBAJAL of California
Mr. PRICE of North Carolina
Ms. FUDGE of Ohio
Mr. HUFFMAN of California
Mr. VEASEY of Texas
Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD of California
Mr. CÁRDENAS of California
Mr. LOEBSACK of Iowa

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FASO). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maine?

There was no objection.

□ 1830

## PAYING TRIBUTE TO MONTANA EDUCATOR, CRAIG WILSON

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an educator who touched the lives of thousands of Montanans with his love for our State as well as his knowledge and passion for Montana politics. As one of Montana's foremost political scientists, Dr. Craig Wilson was well known across the State and across both sides of the aisle.

For 34 years, Professor Wilson spent his days in front of students in a classroom at Montana State University Billings, helping them understand the world in which they lived.

He conducted reliable and respected surveys that engaged Montanans on issues that mattered most to them. His method was honest and straightforward, a welcome approach in today's politics.

Craig was a loving husband to Kristianne, a proud father of Collin and Evan, and a doting grandfather to Blair and Jett.

Dr. Wilson was an educator in and out of the classroom. He was dearly loved and will be missed.

## NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is National Cyber Security Awareness Month, and we have a lot of work to do to better secure our Nation's cyberspace, and we cannot underestimate these challenges.

During our district work period last week, I took the opportunity to go on a cybersecurity tour to understand better what Rhode Island's initiatives are. During that time, I visited some of the Ocean State's growing cybersecurity companies, stopping by SecureWorks' Providence campus and speaking on a panel at Carousel Industries' AlwaysOn Technology summit.

I learned about efforts to stem cybercrimes from the Rhode Island State Police, and I joined Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea at an election security workshop for local officials.

At the Rhode Island Society of CPAs, I encouraged our accountants to advise their clients about cybersecurity risk, and I joined State Senator Lou DiPalma to promote cyber hygiene practices.

Most importantly, I spoke to PTECH students and participants in CyberPatriot about their importance as the next generation of cybersecurity leaders.

Mr. Speaker, cybersecurity may be the national and economic security challenge of the 21st century, but with the talent that we have in Rhode Island, I am confident that we can take it on.

## REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF SAM COKER

(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 life of Dr. Sam Coker, who passed away on October 12, 2017, at 87 years of age.

Dr. Coker was an active member of his community, serving as a church leader and board of trustee for 31 years at Young Harris College in Young Harris, Georgia.

First and foremost, he was a Methodist minister, where he served at multiple churches across Georgia. Dr. Coker's dedication is exemplified by his multiple trips to Jerusalem, where he baptized friends and colleagues in the Jordan River.

In 2015, he was awarded the Young Harris College Artemas Lester Award for a lifetime of dedication to Christian service.

Because of his love for education and others, he created the Gene Allison Coker scholarship in honor of his late wife. This scholarship enabled many

students to achieve higher education and attend Young Harris College.

Dr. Coker was a generous man, and he will be greatly missed.

## TAX REFORM

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, day after day, the President and congressional Republicans have sought to frame their tax proposal as a tax cut for hardworking middle class families and not a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans, even going so far as to say it will not add to the deficit. Quite simply, they are trying to sell the American people a dream that will not become a reality.

In New Jersey alone, 25 percent of the residents will see their taxes increase by $2,400, annually. That means one in four New Jerseyans are affected by this failed strategy of trickle-down economics.

These aren't the very rich. I am talking about New Jersey's regular working families. These New Jerseyans are a part of the 47 million Americans that will see a tax increase.

This horrific tax reform plan and the rhetoric my Republican colleagues are using to garner support is simply fake news. It is a tax break for the wealthiest Americans.

I refuse to participate in the crippling of the middle class and the working class and the halting of continued growth of the American economy by rubberstamping this billionaires-first tax scheme.

## TAX REFORM LISTENING TOUR

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, last week in Minnesota, I conducted a tax reform listening tour, visiting small businesses in our community about why tax reform is so important. Throughout the tour, it was evident that these small businesses were enthusiastic that tax reform means more jobs, higher wages, and a stronger economy.

Diversified Plastics in Brooklyn Park, an employee-owned company that manufactures and assembles plastic injection products, said that being able to immediately expense new equipment will allow them to invest more in their company and hire more people.

Northstar Balloons in Plymouth, which manufactures and distributes foil party balloons, said that a Tax Code that provides stability and predictability will allow them to invest in their company with confidence.

Mr. Speaker, the message was clear: fixing a broken Tax Code will help small businesses hire more people, give their employees a raise, and create a growing and a more competitive economy.

## FILVETS

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, our country is forever grateful for the service and sacrifice of the over 200,000 Filipino and Filipino-American soldiers who bravely served our country during World War II, heroes like Sixto Tabay, the last living Filipino World War II veteran on the Island of Kauai, whom I had the good fortune to meet with recently, people like him who fought bravely and sacrificed greatly.

So many made the ultimate sacrifice alongside our American troops in that war, yet their service for decades has gone unrecognized by our country.

Because of legislation that we passed, today, a very special day, these warriors were finally receiving the recognition that they earned and deserve, joining the heroic ranks of the likes of the Tuskegee Airmen and Hawaii's own 442nd 100th Infantry Battalion, as we honored them in the U.S. Capitol with the Congressional Gold Medal, our Nation's highest civilian honor.

To Major General Antonio Taguba, the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project, and all of our World War II Filipino veterans and their families who worked so hard and were so patient in making today a reality, ''thank you very much to all of you,'' ''maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.''

## GERMAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

(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, October is German-American Heritage Month. I am co-chair of the Congressional German-American Caucus with Congressman BILL KEATING, and our caucus highlights German contributions to our country.

It is estimated that 50 million Americans have German ancestry, and according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Germans are the largest single ethnic group in the United States.

The caucus works to emphasize the friendship and alliance between the United States and Germany. We do so through an Oktoberfest networking event and through our support for programs like the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange internship program. The caucus also discusses timely topics such as trade, security, and foreign affairs and how they relate to our German counterparts.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we have a proud German heritage. Frederick Muhlenberg, a German immigrant and Lutheran pastor from Pennsylvania, whose family also founded Muhlenberg College, was the first Speaker of the House following the signing of the new Constitution.

The caucus has more than 100 members, and I urge all those who are interested in joining to do so today during German-American Heritage Month.

## DENOUNCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was joined by many of our colleagues to echo the pleas of over 100 women who came dressed as brides here to D.C. to put a face on the brutal murder of Gladys Ricart, a victim of domestic violence who was killed in 1999. Yesterday I said that I was Gladys Ricart and that we were all Gladys Ricart.

While this was happening, Mr. Speaker, I am distressed to inform you that a woman in my district in Inwood was fatally stabbed to death and beaten with a dumbbell by her long-time boyfriend. Police officers found Claudina Cruz dead, with multiple stab wounds to the torso and head trauma.

She is also Gladys Ricart. We are all Gladys Ricart.

I ask my colleagues to join me in denouncing domestic violence for Gladys, Claudina, and every victim of domestic violence across the country. Congress must reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act when it comes before us next year.

## CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MALCOM RANDALL VA MEDICAL CENTER

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center in Gainesville, Florida.

Named after its first director, who ran the hospital for 30 years, the Malcom Randall VA Center first opened its doors to our Nation's veterans on October 22, 1967. Since then, it has grown from its original staff of 500 to be the centerpiece of our Nation's largest veterans health delivery system.

Today, the Malcom Randall VA Center serves over 140,000 veterans a year, consists of 14 hospitals and clinics, and acts as a teaching hospital in conjunction with the University of Florida medical school and other affiliates.

The services Malcom Randall VA provides to our veterans cannot be overstated, and I am proud to know that this institution is in my hometown.

Once again, congratulations to them for reaching this milestone.

## FEMA DENIALS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I have often said that, even though the sun is shining after hurricanes and storms, the people are still hurting. Houston is resilient—and I might just say, ''Go Astros''—but I think it is important to talk about those who are impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

I rise to help FEMA, because there is a large percentage of denials in my district. I believe that there should be a large promotion, if you will, informational provision to indicate to people the process for appealing FEMA denials.

FEMA, itself, admits that many times the denials are based upon technical issues, that they should go to disaster recovery centers; but no one knows that if there is not a massive effort of information, number one.

Number two, there are still in the thousands of homes in and around my district and in Texas that are waiting for FEMA inspectors.

I have offered suggestions. Those suggestions should be taken up: college students, using resources of finding temporary employees, people who are already working but may have the skills to spend some hours as a FEMA inspector.

In my phone are so many pictures of homes with garbage outside, people's belongings. It is now garbage. It is their belongings. It is their life out on the front steps of their home. They are waiting for an inspector. The New York Times article says they are waiting for an inspector.

FEMA, let's work together. People are hurting. That should be part of our recovery and our appropriation coming up.

## NORTH KOREA HAS WON THE TITLE: A STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the saber-rattling rogue regime of North Korea should be back on the state sponsors of terrorism list, and here is why:

This year, the North Korean regime kidnapped, tortured, and killed American citizen Otto Warmbier.

In 2014, North Korea launched a cyber terrorist attack against Sony Pictures. A U.S. court also found, in 2014, that North Korea materially supported terrorist attacks by Hezbollah in Israel.

In 2010, another court found that North Korea provided support for the terrorist organization the Japanese Red Army for their 1972 attack at an Israeli airport.

In 2009 alone, there were three weapons shipments from North Korea to terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas.

U.S. officials have said North Korea aided Assad the Butcher by setting up a nuclear reactor that was destroyed by Israel in 2007.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear, North Korea is a state sponsor of terrorism, so let's let them officially wear the title along with their buddy, Iran.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1845

## MIDDLE CLASS AMERICANS ARE SICK AND TIRED

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, middle class Americans are sick and tired; sick and tired of footing the bill so that rich-folk millionaires and billionaires can get another tax break.

The Republicans' proposed tax reform plan is nothing but a tax cut for rich folks. It translates to increasing taxes for the poor and middle class families in our country. That means that families already struggling to make ends meet will have a tougher time making that car note, that mortgage, and gaining nothing in return.

As a country, the GOP billionaire tax cut plan steals hundreds of billions of dollars from the U.S. Treasury. That means that we can't make crucial investments in infrastructure, job training, or research and development that would help give people a good-paying job.

Reducing our tax base also translates into cuts to popular programs like Medicare. You know how much everybody likes that.

The American people want tax reform, but not a plan that would literally jeopardize families' livelihoods. We must put middle class families first in this country, and the GOP tax plan fails to do that. We can and must do better for the American people.

## LIFE IS WASHABLE PROVIDES FRIENDLY ACCESS SENSORY SAFETY KITS

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Life Is Washable, an organization that provides comfort and support to individuals suffering from sensory processing disorders.

Locally, through their partnership with the Jim and Juli Boeheim Foundation, Life Is Washable provides friendly access sensory safety kits at sporting events and concerts across the region.

Often, guests suffering from a sensory disorder or a medical condition that impacts the senses, including autism or dementia, find it difficult to enjoy loud, brightly lit events.

The tools in these kits range from earmuffs to antiglare glasses, and help ensure that those with sensory needs can enjoy a sporting event or concert comfortably without the usual burdens they experience. This innovative approach has helped improve the quality of these events for those with sensory disorders across the country.

So far, several major venues in New York have begun using these kits, including the Veterans Memorial Arena in Binghamton and the Carrier Dome in Syracuse.

We are grateful to Life Is Washable for the important steps their staff has taken locally to reduce the burdens on those suffering from a sensory processing disorder.

## WE NEED TO BAN BUMP STOCKS

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

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 1 month since the mass shooting in Las Vegas occurred; 58 dead, more than 500 injured, many from California—the deadliest shooting in our history.

And here we are, 1 month later, and I am ashamed to say that this Congress has not taken a single action to prevent the next shooting.

After the shooting, 64 Republicans signed a letter to ATF, asking ATF to regulate bump stocks. ATF just notified us that it could not act. It could not act. The ball is back in our court.

Will those Members act now? Representative CICILLINE has introduced a commonsense bill to ban bump stocks. If you signed the letter, you should cosponsor the bill. It is that simple. What are you waiting for?

Mr. Speaker, there are some problems that we cannot solve, but this one is not one of those.

## A FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE A SAFE HAVEN FOR COMPANION ANIMALS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to shed light on domestic violence during this month of October, I would like to highlight a bill, H.R. 909, the Pet and Women Safety Act.

This necessary bipartisan legislation introduced by my friend Representative KATHERINE CLARK and I will establish a Federal grant program to provide a safe haven for the companion animals of domestic violence victims.

Studies show that almost half of domestic violence survivors do not leave their abusive relationships out of fear of what would happen to their beloved pets. When less than 5 percent of domestic violence shelters are able to house pets, it is no wonder why so many victims choose to stay in these relationships for as long as they do.

Our bill empowers these victims and gives them the necessary resources to help them step out of the shadow of fear and uncertainty.

Mr. Speaker, the Pet and Women Safety Act now enjoys the bipartisan support of 237 of our colleagues. I encourage every Member of Congress to add their name to this legislation, and I ask our leadership to bring H.R. 909 for a vote.

## THE DEBT BETRAYAL

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

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, in 2010, Tea Party Republicans were swept into office on a passionate plea to eliminate the deficit, to reduce the national debt, and to not pass on a great fiscal burden to our children.

Upon election, they boldly formed the Freedom Caucus, the fiscal watchdogs of the House. At the time, the national debt, in 2010, was $13 trillion, and many were deeply concerned about our Nation's fiscal situation, and they made a promise to do everything in their power to rein in wasteful spending and to get government's fiscal House in order.

Now here we are in 2017, after nearly 7 years of a Republican-controlled Congress, and the debt is over $20 trillion. That is 7 years of a Republican-controlled Congress and $7 trillion in additional debt.

Now we have a tax giveaway of an additional $2.5 trillion to pass on to our children. I ask all the so-called fiscal conservatives in this Chamber, all the so-called Freedom Caucus members, where is your big talk about the debt now? Is your desire to claim a victory worth betraying your deepest principles forever?

## THE GREATEST ANTIPOVERTY PROGRAM IN ALL OF HUMAN HISTORY

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the greatest antipoverty program in all of human history: the free enterprise system. Maybe the most remarkable achievement in human history is the fact that, over the last 40 years, about 80 percent of the world's worst poverty has been eliminated.

We know the right combination of smart investments in things like research, education, infrastructure, and defense; fewer burdensome regulations; and simpler and fairer taxes creates the perfect environment for growth and innovation.

So far this year, we have secured investments in things like boosting programs for early childhood education and Head Start, and medical research at the NIH. We have done away with job-killing regulations, saving hardworking Americans billions in compliance costs and millions of hours in paperwork.

Now we have the opportunity to reform our Tax Code to help millions of Americans keep more of their hard-earned money, help small businesses create millions of new jobs, and help millions rise out of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to act. Let's get tax reform done and get tax relief to those who need it the most.

## BRING UP THE DREAM ACT

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, there are so many different issues. We are talking about tax reform, but I want to go back to an issue we have talked about for several months now, and that is the DREAMers.

I rise today to call on the House leadership to bring up the Dream Act. The DREAMers who came to this country as children were brought by their parents for a chance to pursue the American Dream.

These young Americans go to our colleges and universities. They are our teachers and doctors and serve in the military, and we cannot afford to upend the lives and dreams of these 800,000 DACA recipients—people like Andres, a DREAMer who lives in my district. He came to this country as a child, and America is the only home he knows. He attends school here, earned his associate's degree, and became a building engineer. He built his personal relationships in our country and contributes every day to our society. His work, his friends and family are all in the United States. It would be a cruel mistake to force him to give all that up and send him back to a country he doesn't know.

Nearly 9 out of 10 Americans support the DACA program. It is our responsibility to the American people and to the hundreds of thousands of young DREAMers in this country to pass the Dream Act now.

Mr. Speaker, we should do so as soon as we can.

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORRECT AND NECESSARY DECERTIFICATION OF THE JCPOA

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, President Trump decertified the Iran nuclear deal. Tonight, during this hour, several Members of Congress will be speaking here on the House floor about the President's correct and necessary decertification, and discussing the urgent need to address Iran's problematic nuclear and nonnuclear activities.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA, otherwise known as the Iran nuclear deal, is deeply flawed and very one-sided for what is in it, and it is fatally flawed and deeply one-sided for what is not in it.

The so-called deal props up the wrong regime in Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terror, with a jackpot of $150 billion of sanctions relief.

The United States made a slew of permanent concessions in exchange for temporary concessions on the part of the Iranians—a point that comes into greater focus as the sunset provisions are analyzed.

This deal is not a pathway for how to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, it is a blueprint for exactly how Iran can acquire a nuclear weapon.

We can and must do better. President Obama said this agreement was not built on trust, it was built on verification. I am still waiting for an answer on how you can support a deal based on verification without knowing what the verification regime is.

The verification agreement between the IAEA and Iran still hasn't been submitted to Congress, and Secretary Kerry has admitted that he never read it.

We have learned, though, that Iran collects some of their own soil samples and inspects some of their own nuclear sites. No U.S. inspectors are permitted to participate in any of these inspections at all.

The verification regime must become adequate and transparent, and Americans should know what the verification agreement is.

Since the JCPOA was entered into, Iranian aggression in the Middle East, Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere has only increased. These bad activities have only gotten worse since all of the leverage that brought the Iranians to the table was negotiated away in the JCPOA.

Iran has continued to illegally test fire intercontinental ballistic missiles and finance terror. They even seized one of our naval vessels, subsequently holding hostage and publicly embarrassing 10 American sailors.

Iran has committed to wiping Israel off the map, and they chant, ''Death to America,'' in their streets on their holidays, all while unjustly imprisoning American citizens. They call Israel ''the little Satan'' and America ''the great Satan.'' These are, unfortunately, just a few of Iran's bad activities.

It is so important to note that Iran has not only violated the spirit of the nuclear deal with its nonnuclear bad activities, it has also violated the letter of the deal. For example, Iran spins

more IR6 centrifuges than they are allowed to under the JCPOA. They have assembled more IR8 rotor assemblies than they are allowed to. They have attempted to acquire carbon fiber that they agreed that they wouldn't. They stockpiled more heavy water than they were supposed to under the JCPOA. Iran is also not allowing any inspections at all at any of their military sites. Iran is not only violating the spirit of the deal, but they are also violating the letter of the deal.

President Trump was absolutely correct to decertify the JCPOA. If Iran is serious about helping turn the JCPOA into a truly reasonable agreement, then they should make those intentions clear, both in private conversations with the United States and the other countries of the P5+1, but also in their public rhetoric. Many of Iran's other bad activities will need to cease.

If Iran does not want to save the JCPOA, then the sanctions should immediately ramp up.

Throughout this next hour, we will discuss the President's correct decision to decertify, as well as the urgent need to eliminate Iran's problematic nuclear and nonnuclear activities.

□ 1900

Joining me tonight are Members of Congress from all across our great country who are deeply passionate about America's best interests and supportive of the President's decision to decertify the Iran nuclear deal.

At this time, it is my great pleasure to welcome the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. JOE WILSON, a leader on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and throughout all of Congress, who oftentimes has been to the Middle East, who is a grandson of a veteran, a son of a veteran, and a proud father of four veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for his leadership. We sincerely appreciate his leadership for American families, particularly based on his service in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, on October 23, 1983, an otherwise peaceful Sunday morning in Beirut, Lebanon, there was, tragically, a disruption of a suicide truck bomb that crashed into the Marine Corps barracks, killing 241 courageous U.S. Marines. This was the deadliest attack, 21,000 pounds of TNT, since the U.S. Marines were in the Battle of Iwo Jima. Investigators determined that Hezbollah, an Iran-backed terrorist organization that has targeted America and our allies for decades, was responsible for the attack.

The 34th anniversary of the Beirut attack serves as a solemn reminder that we have a responsibility to defeat Hezbollah and radical Islamic terrorists across the globe, many of whom are financed by Iran, all the way from Niger to the Philippines. It is important that we defeat the terrorists overseas to protect American families at home.

President Donald Trump's decision to decertify the Iranian deal was correct. President Trump is protecting American families. The deal was reckless and dangerous from the start; it never served the interests of American families; and it threatened the safety and security of America and our allies in the region, from Israel to southeastern Europe, Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania.

I am grateful to join Members of the House, especially my colleagues on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in promoting the fight against global terrorism. This includes tougher sanctions like those being considered by the House that target Hezbollah and its financiers in Tehran, and it includes working together with President Trump's administration that is committed to peace through strength.

I am grateful to thank Congressman LEE ZELDIN from New York, an appreciated Iraq veteran, for his leadership and for being firm with the Iranian regime, which subjugates its extraordinary people.

As the father of four sons who have served our country overseas, I want to say once again: God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WILSON for his continued leadership.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my privilege to bring up a freshman from Tennessee's Eighth Congressional district, DAVID KUSTOFF. Last Congress, I had the privilege of being both the lowest-ranking Jewish Republican in Congress and the highest-ranking Jewish Republican in Congress. But now that we have DAVID KUSTOFF from Tennessee here, we voted for each other to chair the Jewish Republican Caucus of two, and 1 day we may have a minion. These are our dreams that someday may come true.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. KUSTOFF).

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for his leadership on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the President's decision to decertify the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or what is known as the Iran deal.

This deeply-flawed Iran deal has failed to prevent the Iranian regime from ballistic missile testing and overall hostility that threatens American national security interests. Quite frankly, this was a bad idea from day one.

Most recently, on September 23, 2017, Iran test-fired a new long-range missile that could carry multiple warheads, and is the country's third test of a missile with a range of approximately 1,240 miles.

An Iranian news agency further stated how this missile ''adds to Israel's misery and will be their nightmare.''

As we have seen, Iran continues to be the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, and the IRGC has known connections to Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza.

Over these past few years, we have seen these terrorist proxy groups carry out attacks on American troops and innocent Israeli civilians. In addition, Iran has gained access to over $100 billion in previously frozen assets, enabling the money to be funneled to various terrorist organizations.

From the frequent ballistic missile tests to supporting terrorism and funding proxies, such as Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, Iran has escalated its aggressive behavior since the deal was signed just 2 years ago.

Ultimately, this deal temporarily pushes back Iran's ability to build up its nuclear infrastructure and does not cease the Iranian regime's ambition to become nuclear after 15 years. The bad deal, therefore, ushers Iran into a nuclear club, where it can continue to test uranium pathways and pursue illicit nuclear materials, unbeknownst to the IAEA.

President Obama entered that poorly crafted agreement using unilateral executive authority, quite frankly, circumventing the consent of Congress and disregarding the will of the American people. As we have seen, this was clearly a bad deal from day one. It does not stop Iran's path to obtaining a nuclear weapon, but, rather, paves it.

As we work in Congress to implement further sanctions against the Iranian regime, we must work toward a strategy that protects our allies in the Middle East and effectively prevents Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. We must remain vigilant against those who wish to inflict harm on America, and stand united with our allies around the world.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for his leadership.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KUSTOFF for his important, insightful words.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure at this time to introduce the gentleman from Florida's Third Congressional District. He is an important voice on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, very learned on these issues related to Iran and the Middle Eastern region especially, and a great Member here in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of Mr. ZELDIN and I appreciate him using that word ''learned.'' It feels good.

You know, this is an interesting thing, because I was there during the time that John Kerry and the President were negotiating this deal.

Keep in mind, this is a deal that John Kerry and the President agreed to, but nobody signed. We didn't sign it, our Senate never voted on it, and Iran didn't sign it. So this is a deal in paper only that nobody has signed. If you

were to do any business transaction in the real world, this piece of paper would be worthless.

I want to mention words of one of our previous Presidents. It has been about 60 years after President Dwight Eisenhower announced that Atoms for Peace Program, and one lesson is clear: ''Civilian nuclear programs flourish only through cooperation and openness. Secrecy and isolation typically are signs of a nuclear weapons program.''

So here we are. I have in front of me the Institute for Science and International Security, August 31, 2017, and in the introduction, it says: ''One of the most serious compliance issues concerns the IAEA's access to military sites and credible verification of Section T, which prohibits key nuclear weapons development activities and controls dual-use equipment potentially usable in such activities. In this report, the issue of verifying Section T is discussed. The absence of credible implementation and verification of Section T undermines the effectiveness of the JCPOA.''

My colleague, Mr. ZELDIN, brought up that we know they are using IR–6 and IR–8 centrifuges. We know they have the carbon fibers that they are not supposed to have. We also know that they have overproduced heavy water more than two times. The first time, we bought it at the American taxpayers' expense. The other two times, it has gone to Russia. The only reason you would have an excess of heavy water is if you are producing nuclear fissile material.

In addition to that, the heavy water—the inspections that we are supposed to do anytime, anywhere,—John Kerry said this over and over—anytime, anywhere, that we can go, and if they are noncompliant, the sanctions will snap back. They must have used an overstretched rubber band because nothing has ever snapped back.

With the IAEA supposedly being able to inspect anywhere, there are so many places that are off limits. It is only those areas that Iran says that we can go in and inspect. Parchin military site is a place that we know they detonated a nuclear trigger. We have not been able to go in there and check the soil, Yet we have to accept their word that they are checking the soil.

I brought this up in the committee, and I am going to repeat it here. It would be like having a drug addict testing his own urine sample and taking it to the lab. It is just not the way to do business in the 21st century on something that is so important.

During that time, when we negotiated or when the deal was being negotiated, there was an intelligence report—I don't know if you were in the Congress then, but there was an intelligence report that had always had Iran as a state sponsor of terror. The year this deal was done, state sponsor of terror was taken off. And when we questioned about it, they said it was an oversight. This deal just stinks from the beginning.

John Kerry said: No deal is better than a bad deal.

This is a bad deal. The President should decertify it. It does not take us out of the deal, but it allows us to put the pressure back on Iran so that they are fully compliant with the letter of the law.

If we don't hold up people to the letter of the law as we move forward in future negotiations, i.e., North Korea, why should they follow the letter of the law?

So this is high time that we do this. I appreciate it, and I thank the gentleman for doing this.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, Congressman YOHO brings up some very important points. The Iran nuclear deal was an unsigned political commitment. Those were the words that were given to us by the administration, and to think that we wouldn't have even asked for a signature on something so important was foolish.

The next speaker tonight in this important Special Order in support of President Trump's decision to decertify the Iran nuclear deal and the need to address Iran's other problematic nuclear and non-nuclear activities is a freshman from my home State of New York, someone I served with in the New York State Legislature, and we are really excited to have her here serving with us in the Halls of Congress. She has hit the ground running and is very passionate about our military, our veterans, and also especially why we are here tonight, the path forward with regards to Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York's 22nd Congressional District (Ms. TENNEY).

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to Congressman ZELDIN. Obviously, we, from New York, all are so proud for his service as an Iraq veteran, and also for his leadership in serving both in the State Senate and also representing our great State in the House of Representatives on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, on October 13, President Trump made the informed decision to decertify the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the JCPOA—or I am going to refer to it as the Iran nuclear deal—and to develop, for the first time, a holistic strategy to address the Iranian menace. I applaud this sound choice, which prioritizes the safety and security of our citizens and the American homeland.

Predictably, the flawed deal with Iran has done nothing to stem that rogue nation's aggression and misbehavior domestically, in the Middle East, and throughout the globe. Quite to the contrary, by front-loading the benefits to Iran, the Iran nuclear deal is funding these destabilizing and dangerous activities.

Human rights abuses continue against the Iranian people as citizens who dare to speak out against the oppressive regime face imprisonment or abuse. Supporters of the Iran nuclear deal told the American people that this deal would lead to a more open Iran, with a renewed acceptance of diverse voices and opinions from within.

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Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, there have been already over 450 executions in Iran this year alone. Obviously, the so-called moderates within the regime with whom we negotiated the Iran nuclear deal either aren't as moderate as we thought or are simply irrelevant in this regime.

The American people were told further that the Iran nuclear deal would bring Iran into the fold and make the nation a more productive, contributing member of the international community.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, Iran's transgressions in the region continue to be appalling. The Iranian regime is expanding its malicious network of control through increased financial and military support for terrorist organizations, including Hezbollah and Hamas.

In Syria, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps has provided fighters and expertise to the brutal Assad regime that gases and brutalizes its own citizens. Iran has shown no signs that it is interested in pursuing peace or even curbing its malevolent behaviors. Chants of ''death to America and ''death to Israel'' continue as Iran rapidly develops its missile program and engages in proxy conflicts with the U.S. and our allies.

I thank the President and my colleagues, as I indicated, especially Congressman LEE ZELDIN from New York, for continuing to shine the light on this important national security issue.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman TENNEY for being here, for her remarks this evening, and for her leadership on this important deal.

It is my pleasure at this time to yield to Congressman ANDY BARR, who is a leader on the House Financial Services Committee. He has been very active in the efforts as it relates to sanctions. It is also important to note that it was sanctions that brought the Iranians to the table, and applied an incredible amount of economic pressure.

The Iranian regime that is in charge desperately needed relief in order to get through their next election, and now the Iranians have had an opportunity to experience life with that sanctions regime and life without it. Chairman BARR is a very important voice here in the Halls of Congress for ensuring the right leverage is on the table to deal with Iran's nuclear and non-nuclear activities.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for his leadership on this issue; his voice in criticism of this flawed nuclear deal with Iran; and, of course, for his valiant service to the United States in the military.

I rise tonight in strong support of the President's decision to decertify this

deeply flawed JCPOA, the Iran nuclear deal under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. I agree with the President's finding that Iran is not transparently, not verifiably, and not fully implementing the agreement. I agree with the President's finding that continued sanctions relief is not in the vital security interest of the United States.

That is because the Obama administration's nuclear deal with Iran was a dangerous and historic mistake. The deal provided the mullahs in Tehran with roughly $100 billion in upfront sanctions relief in exchange for Iran's promise, future promise, to temporarily pause its enrichment program.

Unfortunately, the agreement contained fatally deficient verification protocols and the International Atomic Energy Agency now concedes that it has no capacity to verify that Tehran is engaged in activities which could contribute to the development of a nuclear explosive device. That is because under the terms of the agreement, the very terms of the JCPOA, international inspectors are barred from accessing Iran's military sites where elicit nuclear activities are most likely taking place.

President Obama's promise that there would be ''anytime, anywhere inspections,'' but that promise was replaced with ''managed access'' to suspect nuclear sites in which international inspectors must appeal to Iran, Russia, and China in a bureaucratic process that would take days during which Iran could remove anything covert and in violation of the agreement.

As Congressman ZELDIN correctly pointed out, we don't even know what the verification protocols actually are because we haven't been able to access the secret agreement between international inspectors, non-U.S. inspectors, and the leadership in Tehran.

But the most serious concern is not that Iran would cheat. It is that even if Iran is fully complying with this agreement, bad outcomes are guaranteed. First, Iran will be allowed an arsenal of nuclear weapons in as little as 10 years. Under the very terms of this agreement, Iran was not denied a nuclear weapon. The path was paved for Iran to have an arsenal of nuclear weapons with international sanction.

Iran was not required to dismantle key bomb-making technology. It was permitted to retain vast enrichment capacity, and it was allowed to continue research and development on advanced centrifuges, and it will be allowed to continue to acquire intercontinental ballistic missiles. Intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Why do you need intercontinental ballistic missiles if you have peaceful designs for your nuclear program?

Those of you who are listening at home across America, remember this: an intercontinental ballistic missile is not a missile designed for Tel Aviv. An intercontinental ballistic missile is designed for New York City; for Washington, D.C.; for Atlanta, Georgia; for Los Angeles, California; and for Seattle, Washington; and for Chicago.

Our homeland security has been jeopardized because of this fatally flawed agreement. Iran will receive a sanctions relief jackpot. They have already received upwards of $100 billion so far. In my capacity as the chairman of the subcommittee that oversees sanctions, oversees the Treasury Department's implementation of sanctions, I can say that we have heard it. We have heard the reporting that, as a result of this agreement, Iran has not become pacified. Iran has actually accelerated its support for terrorist proxies in Lebanon, Gaza, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Nigeria. Because Iran's neighbors know that this deal reverses a decades-long bipartisan policy blocking Iran's nuclear program, this agreement continues to risk a nuclear arms race in the broader Middle East.

They are apologists. There are defenders of the Iran nuclear deal, and they say it is working. They say there is evidence of dismantling of the nuclear program, but we have the benefit of almost 2 years of implementation of the deal. We have the benefit of hindsight to see if this deal is actually working.

Here are the facts. The facts are that since the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was implemented in January of 2016, Iran has continued to sponsor Hezbollah and other radical terrorist militias in the region. Its support for the Assad regime alone, including the use of planes to airlift military supplies, has helped claim an estimated 400 lives. Last April, even President Obama suggested that the Iranians were violating the spirit of the deal by engaging in these activities.

Rather than being deterred, in October, Iran sentenced three Americans to long prison terms on bogus charges. In January of this year, the country tested a ballistic missile in violation of U.N. Security Council resolution 2231. In April, just as a commercial airline manufacturer was announcing new sales to Iran as a result of the sanctions relief under the JCPOA, we learned that dozens of Syrian civilians, including at least 11 children, were gassed in an Iranian-supported chemical weapons attack.

Additionally, Iran has stated that it will no longer permit inspections of its military bases. It continues to attempt to intimidate our allies, and is facilitating the imports and exports of arms.

As of February 2017, Iran has fired as many as 14 ballistic missiles, and the leaders of Iran continue to chant ''death to America,'' and pledge to wipe Israel off the face of the planet.

So where do we go from here?

As the chairman of the subcommittee that oversees enforcement of sanctions, we have been working on additional measures that can be taken, including non-nuclear sanctions consistent with the JCPOA to hold Iran accountable for its malign activities.

On April 4, we held a hearing on the effectiveness of non-nuclear sanctions against Iran, where we determined that Iran Air, a state-owned commercial airline, has used its aircraft to transport fighters and weapons throughout the Middle East on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp. As a result of these findings, I wrote a letter to Treasury Secretary Mnuchin urging him to ban the sale of commercial aircraft to Iran Air.

Similarly, I supported two appropriations amendments that would prevent the sale of aircraft to Iran and prohibit U.S. firms from financing such a sale.

Finally, I recently drafted a letter to the Treasury Department urging it to identify all entities it believes to have transacted business with the IRGC, a precursor to possible additional secondary sanctions.

These actions are all important and relevant in the aftermath of the President's correct decision to decertify the deal because it invites Congress to step in and offer constructive recommendations on how to address the flaws, the fatal flaws, in the JCPOA. These are some of those recommendations to the administration, and we hope the Treasury Department will respond accordingly.

Going forward, we must do the following to stem Iran's nuclear ambitions: We must designate the IRGC as a foreign terrorist organization. We must make permanent the sunset clauses on Iran's nuclear program and testing. This cannot be temporary prohibition of the Iran nuclear program. This must be a permanent ban on Iran ever having nuclear weapons capability and the capability of delivering those weapons.

Finally, we need to do a better job strengthening the agreement, revising the agreement, scrapping the old agreement, and actually getting to anytime, anywhere inspections. That means we have got to work with the P5+1 and our European allies to revise the JCPOA so that we mandate anytime, anywhere inspections of nuclear facilities, and so that we are guaranteed that the IAEA, that international and U.S. inspectors have access to all suspected sites within the territorial boundaries of Iran.

In conclusion, I want to thank Congressman ZELDIN for the Special Order. I want to thank President Trump and his administration for their leadership on stopping Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, and for the important national security imperative of revisiting this flawed Iran nuclear deal so that we can actually achieve peace in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we thank Congressman ZELDIN for his leadership in pursuing this very important objective.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks. Certainly in the days, the weeks, the months that are ahead, many throughout our country will be leaning on his leadership as we discuss the path forward as far as sanctions and the right way to reestablish the leverage that

brought the Iranians to the table in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman ROKITA is a strong voice in ensuring that America has a strong but effective foreign policy, one that makes sure that our military is always set up for success, our veterans are taken care of when they come home. As I mentioned earlier, as I was introducing Congresswoman TENNEY, part of that effort, certainly is ensuring the right path forward as it relates to Iran.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), from Indiana's Fourth Congressional District.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding and for hosting this Special Order. In my humble opinion, the people of New York are lucky to have a gentleman like him representing them; and I know it is the highest honor of his life as well.

I also want to associate with my good friend, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR), for the remarks he made. I think he has made an excellent record of not only the premise of the deal, but the effect of the deal so far.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman from New York that Mr. BARR is going to be critical in leading the effort forward in sanctions, whether they are part of the JCPOA or not. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for his words tonight as well.

Earlier this month, President Trump set a new direction for the United States, a direction of leadership. He made clear that we would no longer allow the Iranian Government to continue to pursue nuclear weapons, continue funding terrorism, or threaten the very existence of our great friend, Israel, the strongest ally we have in the region.

President Trump made clear that, unlike the previous administration, we will not reward Iran for chanting ''death to America,'' and we will not allow this terrorist regime to dictate our Nation's foreign policy.

Getting the Iran deal done was the only thing the previous administration cared about. Think about that, just getting the deal done. I think we all remember that sentiment around here: getting the deal done no matter how terrible was the only thing the previous administration cared about. We had to get the deal done. We had to get the deal done, as bad as it was.

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It is unlike our current President who has demanded action to hold Iran accountable, guarantee our national security, and protect Israel and our allies across the world night and day. I appreciate the President's leadership on this and other matters.

The United States never should have signed onto the deal in the first place, Mr. Speaker, because it was a bad deal. It gave Iran immediate access to $150 billion, it allowed the Iranians to continue their ballistic missile research, and it contains a sunset provision that will allow the Iranians to return immediately to enriching uranium without consequence.

Now, even then-Secretary of State John Kerry said: ''Some of the $150 billion will end up in the hands of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or other entities, some of which are labeled terrorists.''

That was our Secretary of State's direct quote admitting that some of this $150 billion was going to get to terrorists.

There is no situation in which the United States should allow money to get to terrorists. Hoosiers that I represent see this quite clearly. Surely, the Americans that the rest of us represent see the same thing. But then-President Obama and Secretary Kerry allowed this to happen and were cheered on, in fact, by many in this very Chamber and many in the Senate.

This year alone, Iran has tested their ballistic missiles at least three times, and they tested a rocket space launch vehicle. Now, in their most recent test in September, they used a ballistic missile with the potential range to hit Israel, the only stable democracy in the region.

As Mr. BARR pointed out, Mr. Speaker, intercontinental ballistic missiles aren't even meant for Israel. They are meant to come here. They are meant to go to our other allies—a bad deal indeed.

The threats Iran poses are truly extreme: terrorists, a nuclear arms race, and continued threats to America and its neighbors. Unfortunately, we cannot go back in time and stop then-President Obama from signing this disastrous Iran nuclear deal—and, by the way, it is signing in the theoretical sense because Mr. YOHO is also right, Mr. Speaker, when he said that this was a set of papers that truly had no signatories. It was an executive action by then-President Obama for sure. But, all in all, no matter what the semantics, it was a bad deal.

But we can—we can—move forward by creating tough sanctions like, Mr. Speaker, Mr. BARR was pointing out and making sure Iran is held accountable. That starts tonight with the work that LEE ZELDIN and other Members of Congress are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York again for yielding to me, and I thank him for his leadership. Mr. Speaker, let's get it right this time. Let's make sure Iran doesn't become the threat that the previous administration has allowed it to become.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ROKITA for being here and for his important words as well and for all of the Members who have spoken.

I recognize House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE, Congressman PETE ROSKAM, and former Congressman, now CIA Director, Mike Pompeo. These are some of the voices during the course of these last few years on this very important issue on the need to hold Iran accountable and to fight for the best possible agreement for the United States.

Over the course of tonight, we discussed what was in the JCPOA, and we discussed the JCPOA as far as what wasn't in it and some of the challenges that we have faced since the JCPOA has first been entered into.

We all want to deal with Iran's bad activities. We have to ask ourselves: How are we going to do that? What is the leverage that brought the Iranians to the table to negotiate the Iran nuclear deal? How do we get that leverage back?

Now, some people out there are saying that Iran is abiding by their word and that the United States would somehow be going back on our word by the President decertifying the Iran nuclear deal. We can have a discussion about what violates the spirit of the Iran nuclear deal.

We talked about Iran's other bad activities: their financing of terror, their overthrowing of foreign governments, illegally test-firing intercontinental ballistic missiles, holding Americans hostage, and publicly embarrassing American Navy sailors. We had to pay a ransom to get hostages back in January of 2016. They call Israel the Little Satan, America the Great Satan. They pledge to wipe Israel off the map. They chant ''death to America.'' They are supporting Assad in Syria and Hezbollah.

What do we do to deal with Iran's nonnuclear bad activities? Right now we don't have the leverage to deal with that. We really needed to bring that to the table when we were sitting down with Iran last time because, when you negotiate away the leverage that brings them to the table, what is left to deal with all of those activities that we would say violate the spirit of the JCPOA?

But people say that if the President decertifies the Iran nuclear deal, then that would mean that we are going back on our word and that Iran has been abiding by the deal. We cannot forget about all of the ways that Iran is violating the letter of the JCPOA.

Why is there no accountability in debate, as we know, that Iran spins more IR–6 centrifuges than they are permitted to under the JCPOA? Why aren't we talking about that?

Why aren't we saying that Iran is not following their word when they assemble more IR–8 rotor assemblies than they are allowed to under the JCPOA?

Why aren't we saying that Iran is not following through with their word as they attempt to purchase carbon fiber that they are not allowed to try to purchase under the JCPOA?

Why are we giving Iran a free pass?

Does the President's opposition despise him so much that they are willing to literally take Iran's side when Iran says that we will never be able to inspect any of their military sites?

Before, during, and after this deal, they said that we will never be able to

inspect all their military sites. The Obama administration said we will inspect their military sites. So you have a material disagreement on this JCPOA, this Iran nuclear deal.

We said that sanctions were going to be phased in over time based on compliance. The Iranian regime said sanctions relief was going to be immediate, no suspension. But why are we not holding Iran to their word on the ways that they are violating the letter of the JCPOA?

Why is it that before implementation day when inspectors, the last time they got to Parchin and they found particles in the soil that are consistent with nuclear capability, and then after we discover those particles the Iranians say, ''That is it. No more access to Parchin,'' why are we not saying that Iran is not following their commitments under the JCPOA? This is the letter of the JCPOA.

Now, it would be great if we can have a discussion here about what the verification regime is. I would love to read the deal between the IAEA and Iran. When I was at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing with then-Secretary of State John Kerry and I wanted to engage with him, have a conversation about what the verification agreement was, I was shocked that even he said that he hadn't read the verification regime between the IAEA and Iran. It really makes you scratch your head.

I asked the question here on the House floor last Congress while we were debating the JCPOA. President Obama says that we are entering into the JCPOA not based on trust, but based on verification. So the question that I posed then, and I still haven't gotten an answer today, is: How do you support a deal based on verification without knowing what the verification is?

We are propping up the wrong regime. In 2009, during the Green Revolution, an undemocratic election, millions of Iranians went to the streets. These are people who go to the streets that right now there are people—millions of Iranians today—who would love a free, stable, democratic Iran. After an undemocratic election, they went to the streets. We said that it was none of our business.

Fast-forward years later, we are paying ransom of $400 million that was disputed for good reason for decades, claims going both ways. There is a reason why that money wasn't paid out. There was a dispute, multiple claims, U.S. to Iran and Iran to the United States, and $1.3 billion of interest. They said that it wasn't a ransom. $1.7 billion in cold, hard cash in pallets that had to get delivered at the exact same moment of the American hostages—by the way, not all of them—at the exact same moment of the American hostages being released, and we are saying that that is not ransom.

That was a coincidence that we are signing documents in the middle of January on the same exact day within 24 hours of each other.

Now, after we provided a jackpot of sanctions relief in exchange for this very one-sided deal, there was an election. After that election in Iran, members of the American media and around the world said that this was evidence of progress in Iran that the most moderate candidates were elected.

But do you know what that completely ignores? The 12,000 most moderate candidates not being allowed access to the ballot. We are propping up the wrong regime.

After our American sailors were detained, held hostage, and embarrassed in videos and photography all around the world, we said, ''Thank you.'' That was our response, ''Thank you.''

After all the concessions that were made as part of the JCPOA, our Secretary of State became president for the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, and here we are. Fast-forward to today, and everyone who wants to see this President fail will stand with Iran before they would stand with the United States. They will ignore Iran's violating the spirit of the JCPOA. They will turn a blind eye with their head in the sand over Iran's violating the letter of the JCPOA.

Mr. Speaker, we gathered here this evening to talk about the President's correct decision to decertify the JCPOA, the Iran nuclear agreement, and to talk about the need to eliminate Iran's very problematic nuclear and nonnuclear activities. We heard from a half dozen other Members of Congress: Congressman JOE WILSON of South Carolina's 2nd Congressional District, DAVID KUSTOFF of Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, Congressman TED YOHO of Florida's 3rd Congressional District, Congresswoman CLAUDIA TENNEY of New York's 22nd Congressional District, Congressman ANDY BARR of Kentucky's 6th Congressional District, and Congressman TODD ROKITA of Indiana's 4th Congressional District. I thank them, and I thank all of my colleagues for their leadership on this issue.

There is important work ahead. There really should be more Members on both sides of the aisle working together on behalf of the American people putting country first on this issue.

People since the election pledged to entirely oppose and obstruct this President on everything and anything. While the President's hand was on the Bible, the streets of the parade route were lined up with people holding up signs that said ''impeach him now''—while his hand was on the Bible.

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Last November, Americans all around this country elected a President whose hand was on the Bible, yet people are calling for his impeachment just for the fact he got elected. Every day we are here, we have Members who come to the floor doing whatever they can in any way that day, that minute, to try to tear the President down.

I had disagreements with President Obama, but he was my President. We disagreed on the Iran nuclear deal. That is okay. We can disagree. We should disagree with President Trump, President Obama, President Bush before that, when we have strong philosophical differences on policy. That is what we are elected to do. We are not elected to all just come here and agree with each other.

But for those who are so set politically on trying to bring this President down, so much so that they will take Iran's side in this over the United States' side, I encourage you to rethink that and put country over party, because we need to work together as colleagues representing the greatest country in the world on a better path forward.

It is a privilege for all of us to be able to serve here in the United States Capitol in the United States Congress, because there is so much history on this floor. There is going to be much debate ahead on what challenges lie ahead for us with regard to Iran.

With servicemembers in harm's way, we understand and we reflect that that is what is most important. We should never send our troops into harm's way unless they are sent to win. We send our troops to win, or we do not send them at all. When they come home, they are treated with the love, dignity, and respect that they deserve on behalf of a very grateful nation; and with a strong, consistent foreign policy and taking care of our vets and setting up our military for success. It is having the right foreign policy with challenges that are in front of us in the Middle East and elsewhere.

That is why we are here for this Special Order hour in support of the President's decision to decertify the Iran nuclear deal. Mr. President, you made the right decision. We stand with you. We stand with the United States. We want to hold Iran accountable. We want the best path forward for our great country.

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

## PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: AMERICAN IDEALS

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have this opportunity to speak. I want to start by saying that my colleague from North Carolina is here, and I know there is going to be a group of Members from North Carolina who are coming to address their constituents. So if you are a North Carolinian looking in on this, you have come to the right place, but you are going to have to hear me first. I am speaking on behalf of the Progressive Caucus.

I don't know if Representative ZELDIN is still in the room. I couldn't quite resist the opportunity to respond to his provacative remarks where he said that it appears there are people in Congress who are so determined to take the President down.

I couldn't really figure out who he was talking about. Then I realized he is probably referring to Republican Senator JOHN MCCAIN from Arizona, or maybe Republican Senator JEFF FLAKE from Arizona, or maybe Republican Senator BOB CORKER from Tennessee, all of whom have blown the whistle this week on the egregious violations of the basic norms of the Presidency by this President, who continues to demonize and vilify U.S. citizens and engage in the pettiest and most juvenile of exchanges with people and generally demonstrate what most Americans now regard as his unfitness for the Presidency.

So it seems like there was an attempt to make it a partisan issue. I think if he has got a partisan problem with what someone is saying about the President, he needs to talk to members of his own party who are the ones who are screaming the loudest about the outrageous excesses and abuses coming from the White House today.

That is not what I came here to talk about, Mr. Speaker. I just thought it was a little bit beyond my humanity to endure that lecture, especially about impeachment, when the Representative comes from a party that impeached President Clinton over one lie—one lie about sex—and we get a profusion of dozens of lies every single day from the White House, from this President, about matters of public policy, crucial matters of national security, and so on.

That is not even to get into the question of admitted obstruction of justice, bragging about the fact that he had fired the FBI Director because he was involved in the Russia investigation; not even talking about the rampant abuse of power that we see as recent as this week with apparently corrupt dealings in terms of the Puerto Rican rescue, when 80 percent of the island is still without power, and it looks like there are all sorts of sweetheart contracts that are afoot there.

It is not even to go to the question of the domestic Emoluments Clause and the foreign Emoluments Clause, which are defied every single day with the money that is pouring forth from foreign governments directly to the Trump Hotel and Trump Tower and the Trump golf courses all over the world.

I am not going to get into any of that stuff because I want to talk about something hopeful and uplifting tonight. I want to talk about America's responsibilities in the world, something that we used to take really seriously.

I want to talk about what America is and who we are and what debt of responsibility we owe to the rest of the world and how well we are doing today, given what is taking place around the world.

Now, in America, unlike most countries in the world—or at least a lot of countries in the world—we are not defined by virtue of being one race or one ethnicity or one religion or one political party or one system of belief. We are unified just by virtue of the fact that we have one Constitution and one Bill of Rights. We all agree to adhere to it and live under it and struggle for a more perfect union under that umbrella.

Mr. Speaker, every day we get to come to work, and we see the busts and the statues and the portraits of great Americans. We see Frederick Douglass, we see Thomas Jefferson, we see John Adams, we see George Washington.

Mr. Speaker, America was the first Nation on Earth conceived in revolutionary insurgency against a monarchy, an arbitrary political leadership, and the fusion of church and State.

Our forebearers rebelled against centuries of religious warfare between the Catholics and the Protestants every bit as vicious and bloody as what we see in the Muslim world today between the Sunni and the Shia. They rebelled against the idea that, as Tom Payne put it, the king is law. He said that in the democracies, law would be king.

That was the idea behind America. We would govern ourselves. As Jefferson put in the Declaration of Independence, all men are created equal, all of us are endowed with inalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—and government is legitimately erected only on the basis of the consent of the governed.

Now I hasten to say that all of those beautiful ideals were not realized at the start of our Nation. Let's not make-believe. Let's not pretend.

We didn't start, in the words of that great Republican President, Abraham Lincoln, as a nation of the people, by the people, and for the people. We started as a slave Republic of White male property owners over the age of 21, where the vast majority of people could not vote and could not participate: indentured servants, slaves, women, and so on.

But still, the idea was there, and those beautiful, tantalizing ideals were inserted by Thomas Jefferson, whose memory was defended recently by a group of hardy and defiant University of Virginia students who surrounded the statue of Thomas Jefferson to defend it against the rampaging mob of racist skinheads and Klansmen who had come to desecrate the memory of Jefferson and everything that he believed in with his ideals and the words that he put in the Declaration of Independence.

Those were the founding ideals of the country, and through successive waves of political and social struggle and constitutional change, we have opened America up. Through the Civil War and the Reconstruction amendments, we opened America up:

The 14th Amendment gave us equal protection and due process. The 13th Amendment abolished slavery. The 15th Amendment said no discrimination on the basis of race in voting. The 17th Amendment shifted the mode of election from the State legislatures to the people. The 19th Amendment gave us woman suffrage. The 23rd Amendment said people here in the District of Columbia could participate in Presidential elections. The 24th Amendment abolished poll taxes. The 26th Amendment lowered the age of voting to 18 all across the whole country.

The whole trajectory of our constitutional development has been towards greater equality and freedom for the American people. That is who we are. We are a nation that united with other nations around the world to defeat fascism, Nazism, Stalinism, communism, and totalitarianism in the last century. We did that.

We stood with Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations in proclaiming the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrined the rights of freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press, taking all those rights and freedoms that we fought for in America that are in our Constitution and trying to make them a global ideal so that all of the people of the world could enjoy the fruits and the experience of liberal democracy.

When we stood at our best as a country, we have been on the side of freedom movements. We have been on the side of human rights. We have been on the side of victims of government authoritarianism and persecution. That is who we are as a country.

It is all being forgotten and frittered away with the chaos that has descended not just upon the White House—that is too easy, I would say to my dear friend Mr. ZELDIN—on this institution, on lots of institutions in Washington, D.C. We are forgetting who we are.

Tom Payne said America was a nation conceived as a haven of refuge for people fleeing from religious and political persecution from all over the world. That is why our great symbol has been the Statue of Liberty and not a 14th century wall and barbed wire. That is not the real symbol of America.

Now, we are living in a time of rising authoritarianism and tyranny all over the world, from Russia to Saudi Arabia to Hungary to the Philippines to Venezuela. You name it. Authoritarian states everywhere are cracking down on free speech and free press, jailing enemies of the states and journalists, persecuting citizens for their religious beliefs and denying the essential human rights that are encoded in our national DNA, in our Constitution, and in the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

While the White House and this administration have abandoned U.S. leadership for human rights, the governments of the world are stepping up their authoritarianism. In Burma, in

Myanmar, the government is waging brutal ethnic and religious violence against Rohingya Muslims, thousands of whom have been killed and more than 100,000 of whom have fled the country, in terror.

Now, this savage campaign of ethnic cleansing in Burma by the Buddhist-led government is being turned on all Muslims in that country. And what is our government doing? Nothing.

In Turkey, which I will have a little bit more to say about in a moment, there is a vicious crackdown on free speech and free press, and the jailing of journalists and citizens without due process. In Russia, there continues to be outrageous human rights abuses against the personal political enemies of Vladimir Putin; against the LGBT community, which continues to be reviled and demonized by the government. In Chechnya, there are campaigns against journalists, and so on. In the Philippines, President Duterte has overseen the killing of thousands of people in a brutal war on drugs, with no due process at all, where the police can simply declare that you look like a drug user, you look like a drug dealer, and then they can have you killed.

It is also in Venezuela, where Maduro has consolidated his power and is denying the rule of law at every turn; in Saudi Arabia; in Iran, which was mentioned before, with brutal campaigns against ethnic minorities—one of the leading administrators of capital punishment on Earth, fomenting terror abroad.

□ 2000

Saudi Arabia, which Freedom House calls among the worst of the worst, where torture is present, where women are victims of almost pervasive sex discrimination—I think just a couple of months ago they won a limited right to drive in 2017—and on and on.

And across the world, governments have passed laws against blasphemy, against heresy, against apostasy, against witchcraft, against sorcery, against all kinds of imaginary religious offenses which were wiped off of the books of our State laws centuries ago under the First Amendment, and yet there are people rotting in jail today because they belong to the wrong religious group and they are accused of blasphemy or apostasy in Iran or in Saudi Arabia or Bangladesh, or any other number of countries which use the tools of the state to oppress people because of their religious faith and their religious worship.

What does President Trump do? Well, he personally praised Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines and invited him to come to America. His first state visit was to Saudi Arabia, where he publicly said that he was not going to take issue with anything that they were doing in terms of human rights, didn't speak about any of the people rotting in jail in Saudi Arabia in a way that completely violates the human rights understandings and norms of the world.

He has praised Erdogan in Turkey. And, of course, we know of his infamous and somewhat inscrutable relationship with Vladimir Putin, certainly has nothing to say about human rights violations taking place against Russians, tens of thousands of whom have summoned up the courage since the President took office to march in the streets against political corruption and for human rights. And our government does nothing to support the people in civil society in Russia who are trying to stand up for the idea of human rights in their country.

Trump says, when he goes to Saudi Arabia: We are not here to lecture. We must seek partners, not perfection.

And he has found those partners all over the world: Duterte in the Philippines, Putin in Russia, Orban in Hungary. On and on down the list, you find a despot, you find a tyrant, you find a kleptocrat and a bully, you have found a newfound buddy of the United States of America.

Now, over the summer, media outlets reported that the State Department wanted to drop the promotion of democracy and human rights from the Department's mission. The State Department has since eliminated the www.humanrights.gov website and moved its content to an alternative and more obscure web address.

In May of 2017, Secretary of State Tillerson reversed decades of bipartisan consensus that human rights and democracy are not only essential components of U.S. foreign policy and national security, but universal values that the U.S. has adopted as a guiding principle of international legitimacy. And, of course, everyone knows of President Trump's attempts to withdraw from treaties and agreements all over the world, including, of course, the Paris accord on climate change.

Now, all of these actions, all of these statements are a betrayal of who we are as a country. We are not defined by race. We are not defined by ideology, unlike other countries around the world. We are not defined by religion. We are defined by an idea of liberal democracy committed to equality and freedom for all. If we give that up and we surrender that, we surrender what is most precious and defining about the United States of America, Mr. Speaker.

And guess what. We have got human rights problems right here at home that we need to be dealing with.

Do you know we have millions of Americans who can't vote and are not represented in Congress? This anomaly was brought home to us in a very sharp way over the last several weeks with the crisis in Puerto Rico, where people still lack access to medicines that they need, where people—a majority of the population still lacks access to clean water, and power is out for four-fifths of the population. Those are our people. Those are our citizens. Those are Americans in Puerto Rico.

But why were they treated differently? Why was there this notorious negligence and lethargy in responding to the plight of people in Puerto Rico? Well, they have no voting representatives in this Chamber or in the United States Senate, so we have got millions of people unrepresented.

Right here in the Nation's Capital, in the District of Columbia, we see the exact same democratic deficit, the exact same discrepancy and discord between our values and our ideals and what the reality of daily practice is. We are the only democratic nation left on Earth where the people of the capital city are disenfranchised in their national legislature. We are the only one.

I have only been in this body for 10 months, Mr. Speaker, but I have noted how frequently and how joyfully this body will rise to trample the local legislation adopted by people in the District of Columbia who can't fight back because they don't have voting representation in Congress, and so we are very happy to kick them around if they have got a different point of view on death with dignity. Of course, death with dignity in the District of Columbia should be of no concern to us. What should be of concern is life with democracy in the District of Columbia if we are going to be faithful to our ideals.

They get to decide, not us. But as long as they are excluded from representation in the national legislature, they are going to continue to be kicked around on questions of gay rights and whether or not poor women can be given full access to reproductive healthcare in the District of Columbia, another issue where the majority in this body decided to squash the political self-determination of more than 650,000 American citizens who live right here in the Nation's Capital.

We have got millions of people who are disenfranchised. That is a human rights problem. So we have got to deal with that. Maybe if America begins to stand up again for human rights around the world, we will begin to stand up again for human rights in our own country.

So this is not a partisan issue. Of course, one of our great leaders in the advancement of human rights in America was President Abraham Lincoln, a great Republican, and his friend Frederick Douglass, a great Republican. I take pride in that. I take pride in the Republicans who fought for freedom and democracy in America. They are as much a part of my legacy as great Democrats like Franklin D. Roosevelt or President Barack Obama, the people who fought for civil rights and civil liberties in my party. So we should cherish everybody in our history who moved forward the engines of freedom and democratic change in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say these are tough times in America. There is a lot of chaos that has descended upon our country, and, Mr. Speaker, we need all Americans to know, but especially young Americans to know, what we really stand for.

We have a claim, a very strong claim to being the greatest nation on Earth, and it has got nothing to do with the military, and it has got nothing to do with our GDP. It has got to do with the way we were created, what our founding ideals were, and then the commitment of the people always to try to realize those ideals and engender a more perfect Union as we go along.

Let's keep America moving in that direction so we will continue to be a beacon of light to oppressed people all over the world.

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

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

## RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GENERAL BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina on the occasion of its 150th anniversary. The story of this great Baptist convention is a testament to its founders, Reverends William Warrick, Edward Eagles, C. Johnson, L.W. Boone, B.B. Spicer, H. Grimes, John Washington, Charles Bryant, Sutton Davis, and R.H. Harper, the visionary men who founded the convention on October 18, 1867.

Since its founding, Mr. Speaker, great men and great women have maintained the convention's strength and viability. The General Baptist State Convention is the oldest convention of African-American Baptists in the United States of America. The General Baptist State Convention consists of more that 500,000 Baptist believers belonging to more than 1,400 churches, including my home church, the Jackson Chapel First Missionary Baptist Church of Wilson.

The convention is subdivided into 58 associations, each presided over by a moderator. Over the last 150 years, the convention has been led by well-trained and spirit-led theologians. The current president and executive board chair is my friend Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II, of Salisbury, North Carolina. He is the 32nd president of the convention.

Mr. Speaker, the current officers of the convention are: First Vice President At Large, Dr. Leonzo Lynch; First Vice President, Dr. Ricky Banks; Second Vice President, Dr. J. Vincent Terry, Sr.; Third Vice President, Reverend O.D. Sykes; Fourth Vice President, Reverend Prince R. Rivers; Recording Secretary, Reverend Curtis O. Donald; Assistant Recording Secretary, Reverend Matthew Rouse, III; Statistician, Dr. Nathan Scovens; Parliamentarian, Reverend Reginald Wells. The Historian is Dr. Harry L. White, and the hardworking Executive Secretary-Treasurer is Dr. Haywood T. Gray.

Mr. Speaker, the Black church in North Carolina did not begin at the end of slavery. It became more pronounced and more transparent at slavery's end, but it existed for many years. It existed for many years prior to the end of slavery.

In 1831, the North Carolina General Assembly passed a law making it a crime for any free person of color or slave to preach or exhort in public, or in any manner officiate as a preacher or a teacher in any prayer meeting or other association for worship where slaves of different families were collected together.

Can you imagine?

The punishment for preaching the gospel—beginning in 1831, it was a crime. The punishment for violation was a whipping of up to 39 lashes on the bare back.

Notwithstanding this prohibition against preaching, the Black church existed as a secret association of slaves who worshipped privately. As the antebellum period proceeded, a few of the White churches, at the urging of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, finally allowed people of color to hold church meetings under the supervision of a White person; and, at times, a member of the White race would conduct the service.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Emancipation Proclamation was signed on January 1, 1863, and the 13th Amendment ratified on December 6, 1865, there were 4 million slaves who obtained their freedom; 300,000 of those lived in North Carolina. The former slaves, with assistance from White northerners and the Freedmen's Bureau, began the struggle toward freedom and equality. It was the Black church that led the way. This movement consisted of Black Baptist leaders and Black Methodist leaders and other religious leaders, both Black and White, who understood the importance of the former slaves having the ability to worship and serve their God without fear.

□ 2015

At the end of the Civil War, the former slaves built churches throughout North Carolina. Many were of the Baptist denomination, and they were erected with lightning speed.

In 1867, they came together, Mr. Speaker, at First African Baptist Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina. And I have a picture of it on display. They came together at the First African Baptist Church in Goldsboro to form the General Association of Colored Baptists of North Carolina, which was the original name for the convention. And I might say, Mr. Speaker, that my grandfather, Reverend Fred Davis, would, in 1916, become the fourth pastor of this church.

Not only did Black Baptists build churches, but one of their greatest achievements was the establishment and maintenance of historic Shaw University in Raleigh, which will be discussed by my colleagues, Congressman DAVID PRICE and Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS, in just a moment. Shaw University's contribution to African-American empowerment must be known and understood by all North Carolinians.

Those pioneers, who were trained at Shaw University, went into communities and established institutions and engaged in professions that empowered future generations. They went to all corners of our State. They went to eastern North Carolina; Piedmont, North Carolina; Triad; and the Federal area, which is where our esteemed sergeant at arms grew up in, Ms. Hamlett. Ms. Joyce Hamlett grew up in the Federal area. There were many other areas that were covered by graduates from Shaw University.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to include in the RECORD a list of names of African-American physicians, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, ministers, and teachers who were also trained at Shaw University.

PRESIDENTS OF THE GENERAL BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA (1867–2018)

William Warrick 1867–1869
A. B. Williams 1869–1872
E. Eagles 1872–1874
L. W. Boon 1874–1875
Joseph Baysmore 1875–1876
Caesar Johnson 1876–1882
Joshua Perry 1882–1884
Caesar Johnson 1884–1885
N. F. Roberts 1885–1889
A. W. Pegues 1889–1895
C. S. Brown 1895–1897
Augustus Shepard 1897–1911
B. D. Griffin 1911–1918
O. S. Bullock 1918–1924
J. S. Brown 1924–1928
R. R. Cartwright 1928–1932
J. T. Hairston 1932–1940
P. A. Bishop 1940–1958
W. H. Davidson 1958–1959
R. M. Pitts 1959–1964
John W. White 1964–1970
Chancy R. Edwards 1970–1974
Joy J. Johnson 1974–1978
John R. Manley 1978–1982
E. Burns Turner 1982–1986
J. B. Humphrey 1986–1990
Willie B. Lewis 1990–1994
Clifford A. Jones, Sr. 1994–1998
John D. Fuller, Sr. 1998–2002
Charles T. Bullock 2002–2006
Gregory K. Moss, Sr. 2006–2010
Howard W. Parker, Jr. 2010–2014
Nilous M. Avery, II 2014–2018

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS), a former Bennett College professor.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 150th anniversary of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and join my colleagues, Congressman BUTTERFIELD and Congressman PRICE, in congratulating them on their achievements and the appointment of their 32nd president, Dr. Avery.

In North Carolina, the convention partners with Shaw University, the

oldest Historically Black University in the South and one of the oldest in the Nation.

As a retired professor, as you heard, of 40 years from Bennett College in Greensboro, founder of the Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus, and a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee here in the Congress, it gives me great pride to reflect on the general support that the convention gives to Shaw and its students.

I feel a special attachment to Shaw, since that is what became my alma mater. North Carolina A&T State University was located on Shaw's campus during its first year. Its history of leadership, activism, and service is well-documented. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, founded on Shaw's campus in 1960, and the Center for Alternative Programs in Education—CAPE—had its beginnings there in 1980.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman ADAMS for those enlightening remarks and for her extraordinary leadership not only here in Congress, but for 40 years that she spent in the classroom at Bennett College. She has been a trailblazer for sure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), who also is a former college professor, who represents the Fourth Congressional District. I thank him for joining us tonight.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding, and I commend him for taking up this Special Order and giving Representative ADAMS and myself the opportunity to participate and to pay tribute to the General Baptist State Convention.

The mention of Shaw University brings me to my feet because I, too, want to reflect on this significant Baptist institution, which is in the Fourth Congressional District, in downtown Raleigh.

Shaw has also recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, a history that parallels that of the General Baptist State Convention.

I was there last week in historic Estey Hall. I have to say—yes, point out the historic building there on the campus—when I first came to the Congress in the 1980s, my first appropriations earmark was for Estey Hall. Believe me, that was just a little bit of seed money. But Shaw has restored that building in a beautiful way. The acting President of Shaw, Dr. Paulette Dillard, is doing a wonderful job of leading that university.

But the occasion last week was an inaugural lecture. The Adam Clayton Powell-Ella Baker lecture is going to be an annual occasion at Shaw. I was honored to give that lecture to a very lively group of students and faculty. Then we had a luncheon in Estey Hall afterwards and a great discussion, just liberal arts education at its best. I appreciated being part of that occasion, and I certainly, over the years, have come to appreciate what Shaw means: a Baptist institution. It is tied very, very closely. Shaw University Divinity School is affiliated—an institution that this convention has nurtured and that, in turn, has served thousands of people, and enriched the life of North Carolina.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman PRICE very much for those words, I thank him for his leadership and his relationship with Shaw University, and I especially thank him for mentioning Estey Hall.

For many of us, who have grown up in North Carolina, we know the relevance and the importance of Shaw University. We know how Shaw University trained many hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals, who came into communities all across North Carolina and made a difference. They came into the classroom, and they taught at elementary schools and high schools all across our State. They went onto college campuses and became college professors. Many of them became lawyers because Shaw University had a law school during those days. Some became physicians and dentists. Some became pharmacists.

Shaw University was a real educational engine not just in North Carolina, but throughout the country, during those very difficult days. And I say all that to say that it was the General Baptist State Convention and its predecessor that helped enable Shaw University to be born. Shaw University has done so much for so many.

I recall, as a child, my parents would tell me that they, too, attended Shaw University. My dad went to Shaw University from 1919 to 1923. My mother attended Shaw University for high school. During those days, African Americans did not have the benefit in most communities of a high school education and so many of the young teens would go to Shaw for high school. It was there at Shaw University that my parents met. My dad was in undergraduate school, my mother was in the high school, and they met right on the porch of Estey Hall back in 1919.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. Price and Dr. Adams for raising up Shaw University and just telling the world what the General Baptist State Convention did by creating the environment where Shaw University could thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I thank both of them for coming to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) for any concluding remarks.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BUTTERFIELD for yielding.

I just wanted to add that he was almost a Shaw Bear with his parents attending there. Just last year, I had the opportunity to address Founder's Day to all of the students there.

Many firsts Shaw boasts: the first college in the Nation to offer a 4-year medical program, the first Historically Black College in the Nation to open its doors to women, and the first Historically Black College in North Carolina to be granted an ''A'' rating by the State Department of Public Instruction.

Over the years, as Mr. BUTTERFIELD has said, many scholarships have been provided to those students. They have encouraged the students to not only attend their divinity school, but we find that many of them have become college presidents: the founder of North Carolina Central, the first President of Elizabeth City State, and North Carolina A&T State University were all Shaw Bears, and we are delighted. So the lives that the General Baptist State Convention has touched throughout its existence is beyond admirable and almost beyond comprehension.

I want to close by saying that W.E.B. Du Bois reminded us that of all the civil rights of which the world has fought for for 500 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental.

So I praise the General Baptist State Convention and its commitment to education, and Shaw University, as well, for their charitable giving and for their dedication to educating young people through these 150 years, a century and five decades.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Very well said, Congresswoman ADAMS.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) for any concluding remarks.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for this opportunity.

I would like to conclude by reflecting on some of the outstanding pastors who have led this convention and led the congregations that comprise this convention. I hesitate to name any because there are so many who have served so faithfully and so well.

But I want to share some memories, and I think our listeners in North Carolina will remember these as well. They exemplify what this convention has been all about and the leadership it has offered.

Dr. Charles Ward, for example, longterm pastor of the First Baptist Church in Raleigh, a civil rights leader, a mentor to so many people over the years, and a revered pastor. I remember him so well as I first began to think about running for Congress and sought his counsel. He unfailingly gave wise counsel and encouragement. He, of course, was a leader in the General Baptist State Convention.

Reverend Lorenzo Lynch, from Durham, North Carolina, another former leader of the convention. His son, Leonzo, is now the vice president of the convention. Leonzo Lynch is a powerful prophetic preacher. He had a huge impact on the city of Durham. The Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People recently honored his lifetime achievements. And his daughter, former Attorney General Loretta Lynch, returned to Durham to be part of that recognition.

I think of C.R. Edwards, former president of the convention, pastor for so many years at the First Baptist Church of Fayetteville, a long-term leader of the North Carolina General Assembly, and special assistant to North Carolina's Governors. Again, a mentor, a wise man, someone who was a good man and who knew how to bring out the best in others.

I think of W.B. Lewis, who recently passed away, another former president of the convention. He was pastor for a long time of the—I say a long time—decades upon decades of the First Cosmopolitan Baptist Church in Raleigh. He was a pioneer in figuring out how to work with the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to form a nonprofit corporation to build affordable housing, which, to this day, stands in Raleigh—rental housing for the elderly.

Finally, I think of John R. Manley, 60-plus years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Chapel Hill, a dear friend of mine. Another former president of the convention, by the way. This was a pattern for these leading pastors to offer that kind of State leadership, as they were offering local leadership. John Manley also was a champion of housing. Manley Estates stands right there in that community. I know how hard John Manley worked on that because we worked together. We have this housing in the community because of his vision.

I can go on and on. But this is such an impressive honor roll of leaders—pastors—who have not only led their flocks, but they have led the State and, in many cases, national religious organizations.

The General Baptist State Convention has enabled millions of people over these years to deepen their faith and to express that faith in ministering to those whom Jesus called, ''the least of these,'' and to advance the struggle for justice in this country.

So I am proud to join my colleagues in this tribute tonight. And I say to the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina that many faithful members of the congregations, the leaders, may you go from strength to strength, and may you continue to approach the gospel powerfully and be a force for good and justice and right in our community.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Carolina has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to Congressman PRICE a moment ago recite the names of those great men who have led the General Baptist State Convention, I could not help but to think that I, too, remember all of them. And then I glanced down at the list of presidents that I am going to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in just a few moments from now, and there have been 32 men who have served as presidents of this great convention, and I have had the privilege of knowing 12 of them.

□ 2030

I did not realize that until I actually pulled out the list and started counting: C.R. Edwards, who Mr. PRICE recognized a moment ago; Joy Johnson; John Manley; E.B. Turner; J.B. Humphrey; W.B. Lewis; Clifford A. Jones, Sr.; John D. Fuller, Sr.; Charles T. Bullock; Gregory K. Moss, Sr.; Howard W. Parker, Jr.; and the current president, Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that of these names that I just mentioned, three of those passed away in this calendar year.

They have been great Baptists and they have been great North Carolinians and great Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues and I want to thank the General Baptist State Convention for 150 years of incredible work in North Carolina, and I thank the men and women of both clergy and laity who keep this convention alive and well.

Mr. Speaker, if I can close by simply using my dear, departed uncle as but one example of a Black preacher who gave his entire life to his ministry.

Reverend F.L. Bullock of Enfield, born 1896, pastored four churches that were one-Sunday-per-month churches. Married to my mother's sister who was a teacher, he was paid very little. Every day of his life, Reverend Bullock would visit the sick and minister to the needs of his community.

After serving as pastor for 64 long years, he was diagnosed with cancer. No health insurance, no life insurance, no pension from any of his churches, he died at age 84, several days after preaching his last sermon.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of pastors have devoted their entire life to the ministry. Many are remembered, but so many of them are not.

Today, the three of us pay tribute to all of them from the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

May God bless the memory of each of them for making our communities a better place to live, and may God continue to bless the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and its current leaders as they continue to serve God and his people of all races, creeds, and stations in life.

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

## SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1766. An act to reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

## ENROLLED BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

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

H.R. 2266. An act making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 111. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to ''Arbitration Agreements''.

## SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 504. An act to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.

## ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 26, 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:

2928. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a report entitled ''Live Fire Test and Evaluation Management Plan for the T-AO 205 Fleet Replenishment Oiler Program PRE-MDAP-ACAT IC Milestone B/C'', pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2366(c)(1); Public Law 99-500, Sec. 101(c) (as amended by Public Law 99-591, Sec. 101(c)); (100 Stat. 3341-144); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2929. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's interim final temporary rule — Regulation Crowdfunding and Regulation A Relief and Assistance for Victims of Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria [Release No.: 33-10416] received October 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2930. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rules — Wool Products Labeling; Fur Products Labeling; Textile Fiber Products Identification (RIN: 3084-AB29, 3084-AB27, 3084-AB30) received October 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2931. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report covering the period from June 9, 2017 to August 8, 2017 on the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1541 note; Public Law 107-243, Sec. 4(a); (116 Stat. 1501) and 50 U.S.C. 1541 note; Public Law 102-1, Sec. 3 (as amended by Public Law 106-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 1501A-422); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2932. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report to

Congress on the status of the Government of Cuba's compliance with the United States-Cuba September 1994 ''Joint Communique'', the treatment by the Government of Cuba of persons returned to Cuba in accordance with the United States-Cuba May 1995 ''Joint Statement'', and the United States-Cuba January 2017 ''Joint Statement'', together known as the Migration Accords, March 2017 to September 2017, pursuant to Public Law 105-277, Sec. 2245; (112 Stat. 2681-824); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2933. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No.: 02-17, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Sec. 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2934. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period of April 1, 2017 — May 31, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with Sec. 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2935. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a notification of nomination and action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2936. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0555; Product Identifier 2016-NM-183-AD; Amendment 39-19037; AD 2017-19-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2937. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0623; Product Identifier 2017-NM-024-AD; Amendment 39-19038; AD 2017-19-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2938. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0561; Product Identifier 2016-NM-141-AD; Amendment 39-19043; AD 2017-19-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2939. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0452; Product Identifier 2017-NE-14-AD; Amendment 39-19050; AD 2017-19-20] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2940. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Louisiana Towns; Leesville, LA; and Patterson, LA [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0183; Airspace Docket No.: 17-ASW-4] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2941. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace Regional Aircraft Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0639; Product Identifier 2017-CE-016-AD; Amendment 39-19052; AD 2017-19-22] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2942. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Siemens S.A.S. Smoke Detectors [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0099; Product Identifier 2017-NE-02-AD; Amendment 39-19035; AD 2017-19-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2943. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Midland, TX and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Odessa, TX and Midland, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9481; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ASW-18] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2944. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd and Co KG Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0140; Product Identifier 2017-NE-05-AD; Amendment 39-19048; AD 2017-19-18] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2945. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Restricted Area R-2306F; Yuma Proving Ground, AZ [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7055; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AWP-11] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2946. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0767; Product Identifier 2017-NE-26-AD; Amendment 39-19049; AD 2017-19-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2947. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Wayne, NE [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0287; Airspace Docket No.: 17-ACE-6] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2948. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mineral Point, WI [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0181; Airspace Docket No.: 17-AGL-7] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2949. 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; Cheyenne, WY [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9473; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ANM-7] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2950. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Restricted Areas R-3004A and R-3004B and Establishment of R-3004C; Fort Gordon, GA [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0886; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ASO-11] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2951. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Lemoore NAS, CA [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0219; Airspace Docket No.: 17-AWP-5] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2952. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Brainerd, MN [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0188; Airspace Docket No.: 17-AGL-8] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2953. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace, Soldotna, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9588; Airspace Docket No.: 16-AAL-5] received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2954. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9143; Product Identifier 2013-SW-037-AD; Amendment 39-19051; AD 2017-19-21] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 18, 2018, 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.

2955. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's direct final rule — Record Disclosure and Privacy (RIN: 3245-AG52) received October 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Small Business.

2956. A letter from the Deputy Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Administration's certification that the level of screening services

and protection provided at Atlantic City International Airport in New Jersey, under this contract will be equal to or greater than the level that would be provided at the airport by TSA Transportation Security Officers and that the screening company is owned and controlled by a citizen of the United States, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 44920(d)(1); Public Law 107-71, Sec. 108(a); (115 Stat. 613); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

2957. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Office of Strategic Operations and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA); Fecal Occult Blood (FOB) Testing [CMS-3271-F] (RIN: 0938-AS04) received October 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

## 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. CONAWAY: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 2936. A bill to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–370, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2936. A bill to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–370, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Education and the Workforce. H.R. 2823. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–371, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2936 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

## TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII, the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 2823. Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means extended for a period ending not later than January 10, 2018.

## PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. FERGUSON):

H.R. 4115. A bill to promote registered apprenticeships and other work-based learning programs for small and medium-sized businesses within in-demand industry sectors, through the establishment and support of industry or sector partnerships; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. RASKIN):

H.R. 4116. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require reporting by drug manufacturers to increase transparency in drug pricing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POCAN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. RASKIN, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 4117. A bill to prohibit brand name drug companies from compensating generic drug companies to delay the entry of a generic drug into the market, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 4118. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the publicly traded partnership ownership structure to energy power generation projects and transportation fuels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MESSER (for himself, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GARRETT, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, and Ms. STEFANIK):

H.R. 4119. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to direct the Secretary of Education to develop a plain language disclosure form for borrowers of Federal student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BERA (for himself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. ROSEN):

H.R. 4120. A bill to provide for a comprehensive interdisciplinary research and development initiative to strengthen the capacity of the electricity sector to neutralize cyber attacks; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Homeland Security, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 4121. A bill to establish in the United States Agency for International Development an entity to be known as the United States Global Development Lab, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 4122. A bill to require breast density reporting to physicians and patients by facilities that perform mammograms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself and Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 4123. A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence, in coordination with the Secretary of State, to submit a report to Congress with respect to North Korea's procurement of engines and technologies from a foreign source, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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. LOFGREN (for herself, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. AMASH, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4124. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to protect privacy rights and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Intelligence (Permanent Select), Oversight and Government Reform, and Homeland Security, 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. LOVE (for herself and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 4125. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for comprehensive student achievement information; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, and Ms. TSONGAS):

H.R. 4126. A bill to provide for the accurate reporting of fossil fuel production and emissions from public lands, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 4127. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow refunds of Federal motor fuel excise taxes on fuels used in mobile mammography vehicles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 4128. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to allow States with Exchanges with low-insurer participation to offer a Medicaid buy-in plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms.

FUDGE, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. WALZ, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 4129. A bill to establish a State public option through Medicaid to provide Americans with the choice of a high-quality, low-cost health insurance plan; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 4130. A bill to amend title 9, United States Code, with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PITTENGER (for himself, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JONES, Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, Mr. DUNN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BRAT, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. FLORES, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. BOST):

H.R. 4131. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose federal taxes on bonds used to provide facilities owned by abortion providers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD (for himself, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. DUNN):

H.R. 4132. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 4133. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare payment option for patients and eligible professionals to freely contract, without penalty, for Medicare fee-for-service items and services, while allowing Medicare beneficiaries to use their Medicare benefits; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4134. A bill to redesignate the White Clouds Wilderness in the Sawtooth and Challis National Forests in the State of Idaho as the Cecil D. Andrus-White Clouds Wilderness in honor of former Idaho Governor and Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4135. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the exclusion for educational assistance programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. BERA):

H.R. 4136. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to strengthen intensive cardiac rehabilitation programs under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. STEFANIK:

H.R. 4137. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the credit for electricity produced from certain renewable resources and the investment credit for certain qualified investment credit facilities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida (for herself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. BASS, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H. Con. Res. 86. Concurrent resolution condemning the racist and hate-based attacks on our college campuses and reaffirming our support for inclusion and safety in our institutions of higher learning; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida (for herself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. EVANS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H. Con. Res. 87. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that temporary protected status for Haitian nationals should be extended until that country has demonstrably recovered from the 2010 earthquake, the cholera epidemic, Hurricane Matthew, and other disasters; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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. ADAMS (for herself, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CRIST, Ms. BASS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina):

H. Res. 586. A resolution recognizing the growth and importance of minority women-owned businesses; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. ESTY of Connecticut (for herself, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. HIMES):

H. Res. 587. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the deduction for State and local taxes is beneficial and should remain intact; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. BACON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. COMER, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H. Res. 588. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Veterans Small Business Week; to the Committee on Small Business.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 4115.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 4116.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 4117.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3 and 18 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4118.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 4119.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 and Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. BERA:

H.R. 4120.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:
H.R. 4121.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 18)
THE U.S. CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS
CLAUSE 18
The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Ms. DELAURO:
H.R. 4122.
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. GOTTHEIMER:
H.R. 4123.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. LOFGREN:
H.R. 4124.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1; Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mrs. LOVE:
H.R. 4125.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:
H.R. 4126.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 and Article IV, Section 3

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4127.
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 to pay the debts and provide for the common Defense and general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. Thus, Congress has the authority not only to increase taxes, but also, to reduce taxes to promote the general welfare of the United States of America and her citizens. Additionally, Congress has the Constitutional authority to regulate commerce among the States and with Indian Tribes, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:
H.R. 4128.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:
H.R. 4129.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following :
Article I, Section 8

By Mr. O'ROURKE:
H.R. 4130.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 18

By Mr. PITTENGER:
H.R. 4131.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill is based on Congress's power under Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution, which grants Congress power over taxation.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD:
H.R. 4132.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SESSIONS:
H.R. 4133.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Medicare is a health care program under current law that is operated by the federal government. This bill would improve the efficiency, accessibility and fairness of the operations of this federal program, especially the purchase of services and freedom to contract between doctors and Medicare recipients. This bill directly affects interstate commerce, which Congress has the power to regulate under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. SIMPSON:
H.R. 4134.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:
H.R. 4135.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I , Section 8, clause 1 provides Congress with the power to ''lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises'' in order to ''provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:
H.R. 4136.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. STEFANIK:
H.R. 4137.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States

## ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 173: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Mr. KINZINGER.
H.R. 176: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 233: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 296: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 299: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 392: Ms. DEGETTE and Ms. BARRAGÁN.
H.R. 398: Mr. CRIST.
H.R. 444: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 495: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. GAETZ.
H.R. 525: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. ARRINGTON.
H.R. 535: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 545: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 620: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 721: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
H.R. 747: Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 754: Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 785: Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee and Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 792: Mr. HUIZENGA.
H.R. 801: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 820: Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 821: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 846: Mr. POCAN and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 919: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 927: Mr. HECK.
H.R. 991: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 997: Mr. ROKITA and Mr. MITCHELL.
H.R. 1038: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 1108: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1133: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1148: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1150: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 1158: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana.
H.R. 1160: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 1164: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 1175: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 1205: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. MESSER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. ZELDIN.
H.R. 1253: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 1276: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1298: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 1344: Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 1377: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1384: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1406: Mr. GOMEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1421: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1478: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI.
H.R. 1496: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COOK, and Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 1552: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 1606: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 1609: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 1636: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 1659: Mr. MOOLENAAR.
H.R. 1733: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1865: Mr. LUCAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 1880: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1953: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1955: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 2044: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 2077: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 2091: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 2152: Mr. WESTERMAN and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 2202: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 2234: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 2259: Mr. GARRETT.
H.R. 2319: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 2320: Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 2322: Mr. CORREA and Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 2339: Mr. GAETZ.
H.R. 2405: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 2429: Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. EVANS, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. SOTO.
H.R. 2431: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BIGGS, and Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.
H.R. 2436: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 2492: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 2498: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2584: Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. CORREA.
H.R. 2601: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 2625: Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 2628: Mr. POCAN and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 2633: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 2712: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 2717: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 2723: Mr. LATTA, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 2790: Mr. GOMEZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 2881: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 2901: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 2943: Mr. CAPUANO and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 2999: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 3117: Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. BARTON.
H.R. 3136: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 3179: Mr. MESSER and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3200: Mr. GARRETT.
H.R. 3222: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 3248: Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3275: Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 3301: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 3331: Mr. ESTES of Kansas.
H.R. 3349: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3350: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3378: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 3415: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 3441: Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 3529: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 3544: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3545: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3548: Mr. GAETZ.
H.R. 3566: Mr. SOTO and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 3596: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3606: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3632: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Ms. MENG, Mr. COOK, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3641: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. WALKER, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CLAY, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3666: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 3684: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3692: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 3695: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 3699: Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 3708: Mr. BUDD.
H.R. 3738: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3748: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 3759: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 3760: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 3761: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BERGMAN, and Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 3767: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3770: Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3784: Ms. PINGREE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. GOHMERT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. HARRIS, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3792: Mr. PASCRELL and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 3798: Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 3811: Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 3814: Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3826: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3839: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3881: Mr. POLIS, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. SIRES, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 3887: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 3897: Mr. KIND, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 3918: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 3940: Mr. KNIGHT and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 3956: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 3966: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. DAVIDSON, and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3970: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 3976: Mr. MOULTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 3979: Mr. WESTERMAN and Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
H.R. 3988: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 4006: Mr. KENNEDY and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 4007: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.R. 4020: Mr. SOTO and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 4035: Mr. PALMER.
H.R. 4051: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4052: Mr. SOTO.
H.R. 4062: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 4073: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 4079: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 4082: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. KENNEDY, Miss RICE of New York, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4097: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4098: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4099: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.
H.R. 4105: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4112: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 4114: Ms. LEE.
H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. KINZINGER.
H. Con. Res. 43: Ms. MOORE, Mr. KHANNA, and Ms. NORTON.
H. Res. 30: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H. Res. 199: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H. Res. 220: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Ms. DEGETTE.
H. Res. 244: Mr. GOMEZ.
H. Res. 257: Mr. CRIST.
H. Res. 283: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 401: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. LAWSON of Florida.
H. Res. 563: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H. Res. 571: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. KHANNA.
H. Res. 584: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

## 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. 3941: Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr CÁRDENAS, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

United States of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2017 No. 172

# Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the foundation of true wisdom, You extend Your powerful dominion over the universe. Stand by our lawmakers, and protect them with Your might. Lord, refresh them with Your wisdom as You prepare them not only for time but eternity. Lord, we praise You for ethically congruent lawmakers, who, in their inmost beings, are true and honest. Give us more Senators who are as true to duty as the needle to the pole. Give us more legislators who are not afraid to call sin by its right name. Lord, provide us with more patriots who will stand for right regardless of the consequences.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

## APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
*Washington, DC, October 25, 2017.*

*To the Senate:*

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
*President pro tempore.*

Mr. PAUL thereupon assumed the CHAIR as Acting President pro tempore.

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

## CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Palk nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 10:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

TAX REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Senate Republicans had a productive discussion with President Trump yesterday about our shared agenda. We were particularly focused on how to bring tax relief, economic growth, and jobs to the middle class through tax reform.

It is clear we share a lot of the same goals. It is clear we are united in an effort to take more money out of Washington's pockets and put more in middle-class pockets. It is also clear we are all excited about this once-in-a-generation opportunity to get America going again and growing again.

So we are watching our friends in the House with anticipation as they consider the comprehensive, responsible budget that cleared the Senate last week. We anticipate they will pass it by the end of the week. Once they do, we will have important legislative tools to move tax reform forward. That is something everyone can look forward to. More importantly, that is something the American people deserve, especially after so many years of an economy that failed to reach its potential—an economy that, so often, failed them.

Tax reform represents the single most important thing we can do today to get the economy reaching for its full potential. We are looking forward to taking the next steps very soon to get it done.

Mr. President, on another matter, I would like to again commend President Trump for the outstanding judicial nominees he has sent us this year. So far, every nominee we have brought to the floor has been confirmed by a majority vote in the Senate. In some cases, those majority votes have been bipartisan and massive, like 95 to 1, like 97 to 0. Yet almost every time a judicial nominee is brought to the floor—even nominees with votes like these, nominees whom both parties support—Democrats throw up partisan procedural roadblocks. For what reason? Certainly, it is not to change the outcome. No. Like I said, in many cases, Democrats actually support the nominees. They are just wasting more of the Senate's time because they can. They are doing it again now. Let's take the two judicial nominees who are currently before the Senate.

First, there is Scott Palk. After nearly two decades as a State and Federal

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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prosecutor, Mr. Palk has the legal skill and community support to excel as a U.S. district judge for the Western District of Oklahoma. The Senate Judiciary Committee approved his nomination by a large, bipartisan vote of 17 to 3.

Then there is Trevor McFadden. Mr. McFadden's sterling record of public service makes him an ideal candidate for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Not a single Member—not one—of either party opposed him.

These nominees should have sailed to confirmation yesterday. Instead, Democrats are forcing us to waste time so we can again arrive at the exact same conclusion, but simply later this week.

This really has to stop.

In President Obama's first year in office, Republicans forced this procedural hurdle for a single judicial nominee, and it was a controversial one.

Let me say that again. In President Obama's first year in office, Republicans forced the procedural hurdle we have had to endure many times for one nominee, and that nominee was controversial.

In President Trump's first year in office, Democrats have forced this procedural hurdle for every single judicial nominee except one, even if they actually supported him or her in the end. This is just the kind of partisan game that Americans are so sick of.

President Trump should be commended for his strong judicial picks. The Senate is going to keep working hard to confirm them, and we are going to succeed. The only question is whether the Democrats are going to keep wasting more of the Senate's time getting there. I hope they won't. I hope they will end these pointless games so that the Senate can keep its time and focus where it belongs.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, good morning.

COMMENDING SENATORS FLAKE AND CORKER

Yesterday we all learned that our colleague Senator FLAKE will be retiring at the end of his term. After Senator CORKER's announcement a few weeks ago, this was another blow to this body. Senators FLAKE and CORKER are both men of principle, decency, and conscience.

In his address here on the floor shortly after his announcement, Senator FLAKE alluded to the great figures of history who toiled at these desks to remind us that our time here is only temporary. He is certainly right. It should comfort him, however, that history will judge Senator FLAKE and Senator CORKER as two men of the greatest conscience to have graced this Chamber on either side of the aisle in a long time. This Senate will be much poorer for their departures.

THE BUDGET AND REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

Mr. President, last week the Senate passed one of the worst budgets in our Nation's history. It excuses one of the most massive expansions of the national debt ever—$1.5 trillion. It directs the committees to take a sledgehammer to Medicaid and Medicare, again to the tune of $1.5 trillion, and it sets up the same awful, partisan process that Republicans used to try to jam healthcare through for tax cuts.

The budget is now before the House. I hope every House Member is taking a close look at it, and Republican Members who come from States such as New York, New Jersey, Washington, California, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Illinois, and Minnesota should pay particular attention to the issue of State and local deductibility. There is no doubt the elimination of State and local affects States and congressional districts over the entire country.

For instance, one of the States that pays the highest rates and gets the highest tax break from State and local is Utah. Thirty-five percent of Utahns take it because it is such a large percentage tithe, and they don't use the standard deduction. It affects middle-class families in every State. In the State it has the lowest effect on, West Virginia, it will still affect 17 percent of families. I don't have the numbers in front of me, but my guess is that Kentucky, the home State of our Acting President pro tempore, is probably in the twenties. But in many States, the State and local deduction is claimed by over one-third of taxpayers and amounts to tens of thousands of dollars a year in deductions.

In California, 34 percent of taxpayers take the deduction for an average of $18,400. In New Jersey, 41 percent of taxpayers claim State and local with an average deduction of $17,850. Faced with this, some of our colleagues are looking for a compromise. They say: Well, let's just take away the deduction for the people who earn above $200,000, $300,000, or even $400,000. Or they say: You can choose between taking the State and local deduction or the mortgage deduction. That is like saying: Taxpayer, we will chop off your left hand or your right hand, but we will give you the choice.

Even without the mortgage trade, a compromise doesn't work. It doesn't work for a few reasons. No. 1, it is double taxation. You are being taxed on paying tax. No. 2, for States like New York, particularly my upstate colleagues, it chases away businesses. Companies don't want to locate in a place where their top executives are going to pay a lot more, because they can't deduct their taxes. No. 3, it lowers State income so that whether or not you use the State and local deduction, your school board, your road building, your police, and your fire departments will be hurt as they will be creating a huge deficit.

So a compromise doesn't work here. I have named some of my Republican colleagues in New York. One of them got very mad yesterday. All I say is this: In 1986 there was a Democratic tax reform bill led by Senator Bradley and Congressman Gephardt. I had the same conviction and with the same strength and velocity opposed their taking away State and local, even though they were of my own party. We worked hard and we succeeded. Tax reform passed in 1986 with Ronald Reagan's blessing. I supported it. It was real tax reform. We closed loopholes and lowered rates. We did not just give massive tax breaks and let the deficit go up. But State and local was removed, and the bill still passed.

So I would simply ask my Republican colleagues to oppose their party leadership when it hurts their States and constituencies, as I did back in 1986 when I was a fourth-term Member of Congress.

Now a few Members of the New York and New Jersey delegation—a whole bunch in New York—have come out against the elimination of State and local deductibility. I salute them. They have done what they should do. In the eyes of the Founding Fathers, they have represented their States and their constituents. They have not represented these hard-right, corporate, wealthy interests that just want their taxes reduced. Are the remaining Members of the Republican delegation from New York and New Jersey, as well as Members from Washington State, California, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Minnesota, Illinois, and all the other States going to stand up now because they know this hurts middle-class constituents? This is not a tax break for the rich. The rich have lots of other big tax breaks, and the property taxes that they pay are not that much in terms of their income. I hope they will stand up as some of my courageous colleagues have in New York State and in New Jersey.

Here is another reason we don't want to eliminate the State and local deduction. A recent study by PricewaterhouseCoopers found that under the Republican tax plan, any homeowner with an income of between $50,000 and $200,000 would see an annual average increase of $815.

Here is the amazing part of their study. They say that home prices would fall 10.2 percent in the short term. That makes sense. If you are a new homeowner or buying another home, you calculate: How much is my mortgage? How much are my property taxes? What deductions will I get? If you don't get the deduction, you have less money to pay the mortgage because you are paying higher taxes. So the demand for homes goes down, the

price new home buyers are willing to pay is less, and home prices go down.

So my Republican colleagues, particularly those in the House who have to vote on this bill tomorrow, are going to hit their middle-class and upper middle class constituents with a double whammy if they vote for this bill. They will pay more taxes, their home values will go down, and home values are the rock of the middle class. That is what people work for their whole lives. The happiness someone 45 or 50 years old has when they pay off their mortgage and their home is theirs is great. Why delay that? Why impede that? Why impugn that?

Are our Republican colleagues willing to go home and explain to their middle-class constituents why their taxes are going up and their home values are going down? Because if they are not willing to confront that, they shouldn't vote for this bill.

The budget is a betrayal of the middle-class men and women who sent House Members to Congress, who sent all of us to the Senate and the House. For many in the middle class, as I said, it raises taxes and erodes property values. And why? To lavish tax breaks on big corporations and the superrich. Its main focus is to give a tax cut to corporations and the top 1 percent.

I would say to the average American: Is your No. 1 goal reducing taxes on big corporations and the richest people in America? Well, that is the Republican Party's No. 1 goal. They say they must have tax reform. It is their No. 1 priority. And this bill, the core of it, the raison d'ĕtre for it, is to cut taxes on big corporations and the wealthiest people.

Again, to the American people: Is your No. 1 goal the same as the Republican Party's here in the Senate and in the House—to cut taxes on the richest corporations, to cut taxes on the wealthiest individuals? I don't think so. Do you, Mr. and Mrs. American, think that is what Congress should be gearing up to do when it has done so little? I don't think so. The Republican Party is making a huge mistake.

It is not that there shouldn't be tax reform. There should be—but real reform. Big corporations pay a real rate of 16 percent. If we were to lower those rates and close loopholes, we would be doing the economy a favor. As I said, I helped pass that in 1986 once they abandoned State and local deductibility. If it is simply to give a huge tax cut to the wealthiest people and biggest corporations, the recent polling data has shown that the vast majority of Americans are against it. A majority of Americans say: If it means a small tax break for me and a big tax break for the wealthiest, I am not for it.

So I am going to challenge my Republican colleagues: Go out there and speak plainly and honestly about your plan. Don't hide behind fake talking points and fake math. It is a massive tax cut for corporations and the wealthy. Defend it, why you think it is a good idea. I know some of you truly believe—the Senator from Pennsylvania, a Republican, has spent his lifetime, when he was at the Club for Growth, advocating that cutting taxes on the biggest corporations and wealthiest individuals fuels the economy. Talk directly about it.

I hear the words ''middle class'' coming out of our Republican colleagues' mouths but not ''wealthy'' or ''big corporations.'' And let me just say it doesn't prove to be true.

The corporate tax rate was much lower than the official tax rate. According to Goldman Sachs, our big corporations have more money than they have ever had and are paying a lower tax rate than they ever have, and they are not creating jobs. Give me one reason why giving them a tax break will now have them starting to create jobs when they are already flush with cash.

How about the example of Kansas, and I say this particularly to my two friends. Both are my friends. When I see them both in the gym—I used to play basketball with one. I would say to my two friends, the Senators from Kansas, look at what happened to your own State, the home of Charles Koch. Big tax breaks, huge tax breaks will make Kansas the growth center of America. What happened? They gave huge tax breaks. They predicted that income would go up in the Kansas State treasury by $300 million. It went down by $700 million. They had to actually consider schools going from 5 to 4 days. And job growth, this great engine of job growth—Kansas grew last year by 0.2 percent. The American economy grew by 1.6 percent. It was a total flop. Kansas not only rejected the proposal by raising taxes after they had cut them so deeply, they also threw out a lot of the more conservative Republicans, and there was a rebellion within the Republican Party itself.

Trading middle-class deductions for a tax cut for the rich is not a fair trade. Raising taxes on so many middle-class people so you can pay for tax cuts for the rich makes no sense, and it makes no sense particularly now that the scales are tipped more in favor of the wealthy and powerful than ever before.

That is why the American people, now that they realize we are getting close here, despite all the distracting issues the President tweets about—by the way, I hear that in the Republican caucus, he talked about no details on the tax plan; he just said get it done. No details. I know why—they are afraid to talk about it. The President may not know the details, but our Republican colleagues do, and they are afraid to talk about the details in public.

The bottom line is that the American people are learning what this plan is about, and they don't like what they see. In a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll, fewer than one-third of all Americans supported it. And just like healthcare, I believe that the more Americans learn about the plan, the less they will like it. The number—low enough as it is—in support of the Trump tax plan will get lower.

Listen to this: In the same poll, nearly two-thirds of Republicans said that deficit reduction was more important than tax cuts for corporations. Two-thirds of Republicans said that deficit reduction was more important than tax cuts for corporations. That is not what the bill says. The poll also showed that three-quarters of Republicans said that deficit reduction was more important than tax cuts for the wealthy. Again, the bill does the opposite.

The Republican plan balloons the deficit by $1.5 trillion to do those two things—tax cuts for the wealthiest corporations and tax cuts for the rich. The more Republicans find out about the plan, the less they will like it.

In conclusion, as the House debates the Senate budget this week, I urge them to consider first and foremost what the plan would mean for their constituents. I would tell them, should they vote down this budget, there are a large number of Democrats, including the minority leader, who want to sit down with Republicans and come up with a nice, mainstream plan, not a plan to please the thousand wealthiest families in America who have so much say over the Republican Party and shouldn't. But we want to work with you on a real, bipartisan plan. Defeat this plan, and we will, just as we promised on healthcare, and we have.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague and the Democratic leader, Senator SCHUMER, for his statement on this Trump tax plan. I think he really has summarized in his statement the concerns many of us have.

We are concerned that the Trump tax plan will do several things. It will cut funds for education in America at a time when we need it now more than ever to prepare our people for the jobs of the future. It endangers Medicare, a program that for almost 50 million Americans is critical for the healthcare they receive. At the same time, it is going to dramatically increase the deficit. For so long, we have heard from the Republicans that their No. 1 issue was cutting the deficit, and now they come up with a tax plan that will increase the size of our deficit. Finally, of course, all of this is being done to create tax breaks for the wealthy and the biggest corporations in America.

Here are the simple facts: As a percentage of our gross domestic product, corporate profits in America have never been higher. Corporate profits have never been higher. As a percentage of the gross domestic product, corporate Federal taxes paid have never been lower. Profits never higher, taxes never lower, and the Trump tax plan says: Let's cut corporate taxes even more, and then let's cut taxes on the

wealthiest people even more. That is not a fair tax plan. It is not a fair tax reform.

The Trump tax plan sadly rewards the biggest corporations and the wealthiest individuals at the cost of cutting education, endangering Medicare, and unfortunately increasing the deficit, to be paid for by our children. The tax break for the wealthiest people in the Trump tax plan doesn't go to the rich. It doesn't even go to the very rich. It goes to the superrich—the superrich. Who am I talking about? The one-tenth of 1 percent. The highest incomes in America—way beyond the rich. It is not a person who drives a big limousine; it is a person who is never going to drive the rest of their lives and owns a big yacht. Those folks—the one-tenth of 1 percent—get 40 percent of all the tax breaks in the Trump tax plan. That may be good news for the President and his colleagues and friends and even his family; it is not good news for working Americans. To think that we would cut education, endanger Medicare, and increase the deficit to give that level of income, the wealthiest people in our country, such a tax break is hard to imagine.

Sadly, one of the provisions in the Trump tax plan creates an incentive for companies to move jobs overseas, because they will have a lower tax rate if they do. Think about that. A President who has told us over and over again that we want to ''make America great again'' creates a tax program to incentivize businesses to locate overseas and make their profits overseas. That makes no sense whatsoever, but that is the Trump tax plan. I am glad Senator SCHUMER brought that up.

DACA

Mr. President, let me address the issue of the Dreamers. It is one that I have spoken to many times before, and I would like to address it at this point.

On September 5, about 7 weeks ago today, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the Trump administration's repeal of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, better known as DACA.

DACA provided temporary legal status to immigrant students if they registered with the government, paid a fee, went through a criminal background check and a national security check, and did that on a renewable basis every 2 years.

The young people protected by that Executive order are known as Dreamers. They came to the United States as children, brought here by their parents. They grew up in our schools, singing our ''Star-Spangled Banner,'' pledging allegiance to the only flag they have ever known. Seven years ago, I asked President Obama, in a letter that I sent with then-Republican-Senator Dick Lugar, to create a program to protect these young people and give them a chance to earn their way into legal status. The President responded to our request, and almost 800,000 have signed up.

Now, with President Trump's announcement that he is going to eliminate this program, the clock is ticking. By March 5, 2018, every workday for the following 2 years, approximately 1,400 of these Dreamers protected by DACA will lose their work permits and will be subject to deportation. Mr. President, 1,400 a day who signed up for this program, as of March 5 next year, will hear the clock ticking. Teachers will be forced to leave their students, nurses to leave their patients, first responders to leave their posts, and soldiers who are willing to fight for their country will be forced to leave the Army if this happens. It is an outcome that none of us want to see, I hope.

It isn't just a looming humanitarian crisis; it is economic too. The nonpartisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy says that DACA-eligible individuals contribute about $2 billion a year to our economy. They are working. They are going to school. These are productive people who against the odds have succeeded in life and want to do more.

The Cato Institute—no liberal think tank—estimates that ending DACA and deporting DACA recipients would cost $60 billion and result in a $280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next 10 years.

Poll after poll shows overwhelming bipartisan support for the Dreamers. Even FOX News—no liberal media outlet—recently found that 79 percent of Americans support a path to citizenship for Dreamers—79 percent. What percentage of Republicans support it? According to the FOX poll, 63 percent of Donald Trump voters believe that Dreamers should be given a chance at citizenship.

The answer is clear: We need to pass the DREAM Act, and we need to do it before we leave Washington in the next few weeks. It was 16 years ago that I first introduced it. We have had our ups and downs. We have passed it at some time on the floor of the Senate and then again in the House of Representatives but never quite at the same moment so that it became the law of the land.

Over the years, I have told over 100 stories about the Dreamers. This is another one I want to share with you. This is a story about William Medeiros. William was 6 years old when his family moved to the United States from Brazil. He grew up in Boston and then moved to Florida. In high school, he was an honor student. He graduated with a 3.8 GPA. He was an athlete, playing high school soccer and football. He is now a student at the University of Central Florida. He has a 3.5 GPA. He will graduate in the spring of 2019 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

He is working full time to support himself. Because he is a DACA recipient, he isn't eligible for any Federal financial assistance to go to college. He has to work his way through school, and he is doing it. His dream is that he wants to be part of America's military. Then, after serving his country, he wants to be an officer with his local police department. Thanks to DACA, he is on his way.

Last year, he enlisted in the Army through the MAVNI Program. In this photo, he is shown with his recruiter from his enlistment ceremony. The MAVNI Program allows immigrants like him, who are vital to the national interest, to enlist in the Armed Forces. More than 800 DACA recipients with these critical skills have had their dream come true. They have volunteered to serve America in our military.

Some Trump administration officials have claimed that DACA recipients are taking jobs away from Americans. But William and hundreds more like him have vital skills that our military desperately needs, and they want him to serve our country. William, along with many Dreamers, is now waiting to ship to basic training. He continues his undergraduate studies and is working full time while waiting for his first chance to serve.

He wrote me a letter, and here is what he said: ''My desire to serve this nation and help people, to pay back my dues for everything I have received from this great country, and to lead by example by showing my fellow DACA members that anything is possible with hard work, perseverance, and dedication.''

Is there any doubt in anyone's mind that this young man, William, desperate to serve our country and to be a law enforcement officer, will be an asset to the United States, a source of pride for all of us? Of course not. If DACA goes away and is not replaced, if this young man loses that opportunity, America will lose an important part of its future.

I was at the Phoenix Military Academy, one of six military academies within the Chicago public schools, just last week. I am proud to say that our Chicago public school system hosts the largest ROTC Program in America, with 10,000 cadets from school to school. It turns out that many of them are DACA Dreamers. They want to serve our country just like William. I was joined by COL Daniel Baggio, who runs the Junior ROTC Program. His grandfather was an immigrant who served in the U.S. Army during World War I. Colonel Baggio certainly understands the important role immigrants play in our Armed Forces.

William Medeiros and other Dreamers have so much to give America, but without the Dream Act, William and hundreds of other immigrants with skills that are vital to the national interest will literally be kicked out of the Army. Thousands of Junior ROTC cadets in Chicago will never realize their dream of volunteering to enlist in America's military. They want to serve. They are willing to risk their lives for our country. How can we let them down?

When we introduced the Dream Act, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, Republican of South Carolina, said: ''The moment of reckoning is coming.'' It is coming in a manner of days and weeks. I implore my colleagues and both sides of the aisle: Don't let that young man down. Don't let down the hundreds of thousands who just want a chance to prove themselves and earn their way into legal status. We can do this.

Many people are skeptical as to whether Congress can get anything done on a bipartisan basis. I am not skeptical. I believe it can. I believe that we can work together. I have sat down with a lot of conservative Republican Senators in my office—Senators I never dreamed I would be sitting with, discussing this issue, and now we want to make sure we get this job done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 2266

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, as in legislative session, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 85, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 85) providing for a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 2266.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. KENNEDY. 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. 85) was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

TAX REFORM

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, as the Senate irons out the details of our comprehensive tax reform plan to get the American economy back on track, I want to draw attention today to what I believe is one of the greatest obstacles in our path as we pursue 3-percent annual growth. That obstacle I am referring to is our aging national infrastructure: our roads, our bridges, our airports, our water systems, our sewage systems, and our waterways that desperately need dredging, especially in my State.

If our tax plan is going to be pro-growth, then we need to take advantage of this once-in-a-generation chance to use Federal revenues to invest meaningfully in our economy. Allow me to explain what I mean by that. Federal investment in our roads, our bridges, our railways, and our waterways would be a shot in the arm for the American economy. It would pay dividends for decades. Companies need good roads and bridges and shipping channels to transport their products and to ensure that they aren't sitting in traffic for hours—sometimes it seems like days—which eats away at profits and raises costs for our people. But for too long, Washington's spending priorities have been to grow the Federal bureaucracy instead of growing our capacity for economic expansion and development through infrastructure upgrades. We know the result. Our Department of Transportation now estimates that we have a backlog of construction and repairs that would cost $926 billion to clear. It would cost nearly a trillion dollars, and that is just the backlog.

I have a simple solution that I would respectfully suggest to get us back on track. According to the Congressional Research Service, $2.6 trillion in corporate profits made by American companies are parked overseas, and some outside estimates say $4 or $5 trillion. This money is overseas, and it will not be brought back to America as long as our antiquated corporate tax system is going to charge those American companies 35 percent in tax just to bring them back.

Congress is already discussing repatriation as a part of the move to a territorial tax system, which would use a competitive tax rate to encourage companies to bring their dollars back to the United States and keep them here and invest them here in American products and American businesses and American employees.

When tax reform passes—and it will—and we get a one-time surge in tax revenue as a result of this $3 to $5 trillion being brought back to the United States, we are going to get only one chance to spend that money wisely. Instead of blowing those repatriated dollars on an already bloated Federal bureaucracy, we ought to invest that money solely and exclusively in desperately needed infrastructure upgrades. Even a one-time target investment in clearing the industrial backlog will create jobs and stimulate the economy for decades.

Let's face it, too many of American roads today are axle-breaking insults to the 21st century. They are holding our economy back.

Let me be clear. We are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars flowing into infrastructure if we just make good use of those repatriated dollars. For example, just in my State of Louisiana, this could mean building a new bridge through Lake Charles. It could mean widening the interstate in Baton Rouge. It could mean closing the gaps in I–49 between Lafayette and Shreveport and New Orleans. We have neglected our highways and bridges for far too long, and this is our chance to use tax reform to catch up, to boost our international competitiveness, to lower costs for consumers, and to put our economy back on track to 3 percent-plus growth, which the American people expect and deserve.

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. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Marco Rubio, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 79, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Ex.]

YEAS—79

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Alexander | Crapo | Johnson |
| Baldwin | Cruz | Kaine |
| Barrasso | Daines | Kennedy |
| Bennet | Donnelly | King |
| Blunt | Durbin | Klobuchar |
| Boozman | Enzi | Lankford |
| Brown | Ernst | Lee |
| Burr | Fischer | Manchin |
| Cantwell | Flake | McCain |
| Capito | Franken | McCaskill |
| Cardin | Gardner | McConnell |
| Carper | Graham | Moran |
| Casey | Grassley | Murkowski |
| Cassidy | Hassan | Murray |
| Cochran | Hatch | Nelson |
| Collins | Heitkamp | Paul |
| Coons | Heller | Perdue |
| Corker | Hoeven | Peters |
| Cornyn | Inhofe | Portman |
| Cotton | Isakson | Reed |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Risch | Shaheen | Toomey |
| Roberts | Shelby | Udall |
| Rounds | Strange | Warner |
| Rubio | Sullivan | Wicker |
| Sasse | Tester | Young |
| Schumer | Thune | |
| Scott | Tillis | |

NAYS—18

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Blumenthal | Harris | Schatz |
| Booker | Hirono | Stabenow |
| Cortez Masto | Markey | Van Hollen |
| Duckworth | Merkley | Warren |
| Feinstein | Murphy | Whitehouse |
| Gillibrand | Sanders | Wyden |

NOT VOTING—3

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Heinrich | Leahy | Menendez |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 79, the nays are 18.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I rise to speak to the Senate about the nominee that is currently in front of this body and on whom we should vote in the next few hours. We just finished a cloture vote to actually start 30 hours of debate. In the past, we wouldn't have had 30 hours of debate for a district court nominee, especially a district court nominee like this. This would have been something that would have been done by consent. We would have had a vote on this individual, rather than burning up 30 hours of time in debate on a single individual who just passed a cloture vote 79 to 18. This is not a controversial nominee.

Let me introduce you to Scott Palk. Scott Palk was actually reported out of the Judiciary Committee on June 15 of this year. He was nominated by President Trump on May 8. He has been pending since June 15 to get a vote on this floor because of the ongoing delays for each nominee as we go through the process.

Why do I say Scott Palk is not a controversial nominee? It is not just the fact that he passed the cloture vote 79 to 18. Scott Palk, if you remember his name in this body, was also a nominee of President Obama for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. He is now a nominee of President Trump for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.

There may be five things total that President Obama and President Trump agree on. Scott Palk is one of those five. This is not a controversial nominee, and he will be a great judge for us. He will also be a great judge in Western Oklahoma.

He currently serves as the assistant dean for students and the assistant general counsel at the University of Oklahoma College of Law in Norman, OK, a position he has held since 2011. He has the strong support of the president of the University of Oklahoma, who happens to be former Senator David Boren, a Democratic Senator from this body, who is now leading the University of Oklahoma and has done that with great excellence for the past two decades. He is also strongly behind this nominee as well.

Scott Palk joined the University of Oklahoma College of Law after 19 years of public service as a State and Federal prosecutor. He graduated in 1992 from the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where he began his legal career as a legal intern for the district attorney's office of district 21, serving in Cleveland, Garvin, and McClain Counties.

After graduating and passing the bar, he became an assistant district attorney for Cleveland County, where he prosecuted a variety of crimes and death penalty cases. In 1994, he became the multicounty drug task force coordinator, initiating and directing the district's first wire-interception drug investigation and coordinating Federal and local resources, culminating in the successful prosecution of a significant multicounty methamphetamine distribution organization.

The Association of Oklahoma Narcotics Enforcers awarded him the Prosecutor of the Year award in 1993. In 1992, he became the first assistant district attorney for district 21 and served in a dual prosecutorial and administrative role.

In 2002, he joined the U.S. attorney's office in the Western District of Oklahoma, where we are pushing him to be a judge now, as an assistant U.S. attorney, prosecuting violent crimes, gangs, and domestic terrorism.

In 2004, he became the deputy criminal chief of the U.S. attorney's office and served in the additional roles of violent crime, national security coordinator, anti-terrorism, advisory council coordinator, and crisis management coordinator.

That same year, in 2004, the Oklahoma Gang Investigators Association awarded him the Prosecutor of the Year award. The Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys awarded him the Director's Award for Superior Performance.

In 2005, the Drug Enforcement Administration awarded him the Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Contribution in the Field of Drug Law Enforcement.

In his most recent role at the U.S. attorney's office, he supervised administrative staff and assistant U.S. attorneys, handling a criminal caseload primarily consisting of national security and organized crimes and coordinating efforts with the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI foreign counterintelligence squad, and the National Security Division of the Department of Justice.

His work in national security matters included both traditional criminal investigations, as well as investigations utilizing provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

In 2011, the FBI awarded him the Director's Certificate of Appreciation for Assistance to the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

Scott Palk is eminently qualified for this task. He shouldn't be a controversial nominee, and he should already be a judge. We are missing three judges in the Western District of Oklahoma. President Trump nominated him on May 8, and it is now the end of October when we can finally get him to the floor to be able to move him.

This delay tactic, this stalling tactic that is out there, this resist movement to try to prevent the President of the United States from getting his staff in every agency and to prevent judges from being able to actually go on the bench is delaying good people who are not controversial to be able do the job that is needed in each district. He is an individual who passed 79 to 18 on a cloture vote, and I am confident we will not consume the next 30 hours of debate about him. The hours will now expire as we sit in silence on the Senate floor, waiting for us to be able to have a final vote—just delays.

I have made a proposal to my colleagues. It is not a radical proposal. Quite frankly, it was a proposal in 2013, first proposed by a Senator named Harry Reid: to be able to move the nominations time period from 30 hours of just wasted time on the Senate floor to 2 hours—2 hours for district court, 2 hours for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of whatever agency it may be, having 2 hours of debate. These are for individuals who have already gone through committee, already gone through extensive vetting, already moved to the floor, and who most certainly will pass because it is a simple majority to be able to move these individuals based on the change of rules that at that time Senator Reid led.

Let's also do the same rule on time. Instead of 30 hours of wasted time on the floor when we could do other things for the American people, let's go back to the 2-hour agreement that we had in the past. It was a simple rule of 2 hours for individuals like for district courts and other individuals and agencies, 8 hours for higher tier individuals, who may be for a circuit court and such, and 30 hours for Cabinet officials.

I don't think that is an unreasonable request to make. It is a rule that we have done in the past, and it is a rule that we need to go back to. The American people are frustrated with the block in timing on moving people, especially people with wide bipartisan support. No one understands why someone who President Obama nominated and President Trump nominated has to take up 30 hours of time on the floor on debate when no one will really debate him and it is certain what the outcome of these people will be.

The American people are expecting us to debate and to engage on issues. I recommend again to this body: Let's go back to the Harry Reid rule—2 hours of debate for individuals like this in district courts, 8 hours of debate for higher tiered courts, and 30 hours of debate for Cabinet officials and the Supreme Court. We can do that again. We have done that in the past, and I recommend that we move back to that, not just for a single congressional body but as a change in the rules of the Senate, so that, permanently, we are able to be more functional again. A body that is

dysfunctional can be fixed by its own Members, moving us to a functional set of rules. That is what I hope we would achieve in the days ahead.

I look forward to voting for Scott Palk, whenever we finish with a 30-hour clock of time—of wasted time—to be able to move on a nominee and to see wide bipartisan support again for a good nominee. Scott is going to do a great job on the bench. We need him there to be able to get started.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTHCARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about what my bipartisan healthcare bill with Chairman ALEXANDER means for the people we are all here to serve, what it means for patients and families in my home State of Washington and across the country who are worried about being able to afford the healthcare they need, and what it means for States and communities and hospitals that are administering and providing care.

Negotiations of this magnitude are always tough. There are some things you agree on, and sometimes there is common ground that emerges early, but there is no question that you also find areas of strong disagreement. You have to work your way to each answer step by step.

One issue that Chairman ALEXANDER and I agreed on from the very start of our negotiations, where we worked our hardest, and what we had the most discussions on was the goal of putting patients and families first and that it would be families who would benefit as much as possible from our efforts to restore stability to our markets. That was the crux of our debate. It was our guiding star.

I am very proud to say that our bipartisan bill does just that. Here is what is at stake. Here is what we know. Patients and families across the country are looking ahead to next year. They are rightly worried about their healthcare—premiums, benefits, and coverage—and they are realizing that they are about to pay the price for the uncertainty and partisanship we have seen on healthcare over the last 9 months.

Like all of my colleagues, I have listened and I have talked with many of these families in my home State, at hospitals, schools, roundtables, and in meetings with patients, doctors, providers, and veterans. They have all made it very clear that enough is enough with playing politics with people's healthcare.

Here is how our bipartisan bill would protect those families and restore certainty to the markets. I will not go into all of the details, of course, but I do want to focus on some really important points.

First of all, this bill would restore the out-of-pocket cost reduction payments that President Trump has announced he will be ending for this year as well as for 2018 and 2019. This means that some serious sabotage—something that experts say would raise premiums by double digits for millions of families—would be off the table.

Second, this bill would make significant investments when it comes to healthcare outreach and enrollment to make sure that families know about their insurance options.

Third, this bill makes some changes to give our States more flexibility when it comes to developing plans and offering options while maintaining essential health benefits, like maternity care and protecting people with preexisting conditions or protecting the elderly—and all of this while making sure that costs go down for families and preventing insurers from doubledipping and padding their profits with both cost reduction payments and higher premiums.

Put simply, this bill is an important step in the right direction of preventing premium increases, stabilizing healthcare, and pushing back against President Trump's recent actions.

This bill reflects the input of patients, Governors, State commissioners, experts, and advocates, and it has strong support from a majority here in the Senate. So far, 24 Senators—12 Democrats and 12 Republicans—have cosponsored this bill. I know there are a lot of others who agree that we need to act and that we must do so in our working together under regular order, as with our bill, rather than doubling down on partisanship and dysfunction.

I am focused on moving our bill forward as quickly as possible, and I certainly hope that the majority leader will listen to the Members on both sides of the aisle who also want this bill to be brought up for a vote without delay.

Let me be clear. As this bill moves forward, I am certainly open to changes that expand access to quality care, put families ahead of insurers, and maintain those core patient protections that I have been clear all along have to be protected. I am certainly not interested in changing our bipartisan agreement to move healthcare in the wrong direction.

Chairman ALEXANDER and I have a record of seeing tough legislation through to the end together, whether that is K–12 education, FDA user fees, mental health reform, or opioid use disorders, which is why I am confident that we can do the same with this stabilization bill.

We have negotiated a strong agreement that has the support of 60 Senators, and the support is growing. The President has also expressed his support for our effort, so I see no reason why we should not move this bill through the Senate, get it signed into law, and then continue the bipartisan discussion on healthcare in the country.

I will also take some time to talk about another pressing healthcare challenge, and that is the immediate need to extend Federal funding for the historically bipartisan, expired primary care cliff programs, like the Community Health Center Fund, the National Health Service Corps, and, of course, the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP.

It has now been almost 25 days since the Federal funding of these primary care cliff programs and CHIP were allowed to expire by the Republican majority, and in that time, I have heard from thousands of people in my State and nationwide who are urging Congress to act. Each day that passes is a day that we are failing to meet our commitment to these families and putting the health and well-being of nearly 9 million children, including more than 60,000 children in my home State of Washington and the 25 million patients who, at great harm and great risk, get care from the community health centers.

In Washington State, as in so many other States, notices to families about gaps in their children's healthcare are about to go out as soon as December 1, and in my State, we will run out of Federal funds for CHIP in November.

Let me be clear. Parents in my home State and across the country should not be up at night, worrying about their children's healthcare because Congress cannot get the job done. That is so unacceptable.

There is a bipartisan deal in the Senate right now that was negotiated between the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee that would provide certainty for this vital program. I understand that extreme House Republicans have chosen, instead, to take an irresponsible path in their trying to ram through a partisan bill that will jeopardize the efforts in the Senate and in the House to come to an agreement as soon as possible.

To be clear, this delay has not been without serious consequences, but we can still act. It is up to Republican leaders now to reverse course, come to the table, and join with Democrats to get this done. It should not have to be said, but there should not be any place for partisanship or politics when it comes to protecting the children and families we represent. I hope that we get this done and get it done quickly, and I hope that all of our Members will move forward on this.

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. 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 see the Senator from New Hampshire on the floor. I ask through the Presiding Officer if she is about to speak or if I may speak after her. What I would like to do is to give a brief report on the Congressional Budget Office's report of the Alexander-Murray proposal, of which the Senator from New Hampshire is a cosponsor. I would like to do that either before or after she speaks. Either way would be fine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, my understanding is that Senator CORNYN was about to come to the floor, but I would be happy to have the Senator give the CBO report on this legislation, which I very enthusiastically support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in respecting Senator CORNYN's prerogative, I will stop when he comes to the floor.

I believe that Senator MURRAY has come to the floor and has reported that the Congressional Budget Office has just finished an evaluation of the Alexander-Murray proposal to the U.S. Senate that would be for the purpose of reducing premiums and avoiding chaos in the individual insurance markets during the years 2018 and 2019.

The Senator from New Hampshire is a strong sponsor of that legislation. It is unusual, in fact, that it has 12 Republican Senators and 12 Democratic Senators. Not many pieces of legislation come to the floor with that support. The reason we accelerated work on it was that President Trump called me and asked me to work with Senator MURRAY to try to develop such a proposal. So now it is being considered by the President, by the House of Representatives, and by other Members of this body.

An important piece of information, as Senator MURRAY has said, is what the Congressional Budget Office writes about the impact of our proposal on the Federal taxpayers and on the consumers across the country.

President Trump has been very clear on one thing he wants, which is that we do not bail out insurance companies if, in 2018, we pay cost-sharing payment reductions, which are payments to pay for deductibles and copays for low-income Americans.

I 100 percent agree with President Trump on that, and Senator MURRAY 100 percent agrees with President Trump on that. We have language in our proposal to make sure that benefits go to consumers and to taxpayers and not to insurance companies. We asked the Congressional Budget Office to review that, and this is what it wrote: ''On net, CBO and the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimate that implementing the legislation would reduce the deficit by $3.8 billion over the 2018–2027 period relative to CBO's baseline.''

In other words, the Alexander-Murray proposal would reduce Federal spending by $3.8 billion. Not only does it not cost anything, but it saves the taxpayers money.

They then wrote a second thing, and this is quoting the Congressional Budget Office: ''CBO and JCT expect that insurers in almost all areas of the country would be required to issue some form of rebate to individuals and the federal government.''

Let me say that again. This is the CBO talking, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, with respect to the Alexander-Murray proposal that has been cosponsored by a total of 24 Senators—12 Republicans, 12 Democrats: ''CBO and JCT expect that insurers in almost all areas of the country would be required to issue some form of rebate to individuals and the federal government.''

The Congressional Budget Office has found that our proposal benefits taxpayers and consumers, not insurance companies. The specific benefit to the taxpayers is $3.8 billion. The exact benefit to consumers has not been determined yet because that will be done State by State. Under our proposal, every State would come up with a plan to say, in 2018, because of the cost-sharing payments, premium rates need to be lower than they are already set. Then, in that State, they would be, and as a result, there would be rebates to individuals.

The CBO also found that there is a provision in the law for a catastrophic plan. That is a new insurance plan for people over the age of 29 that would have lower premiums and higher deductibles, but it would allow people to afford an insurance policy so that a medical catastrophe would not turn into a financial catastrophe.

''CBO estimates that making catastrophic plans part of the single risk pool would slightly lower premiums for other nongroup plans, because the people who enroll in catastrophic plans tend to be healthier, on average, than other nongroup market enrollees.''

A major objective, I think, of all of us is to attract more young, healthy people into the pool as a way of lowering rates for everybody.

''As a result of the slightly lower estimated premiums, CBO and JCT expect that federal costs for subsidies for insurance purchased through a marketplace established under the ACA would decline by about $1.1 billion over the 2019–2027 period.''

We have already said what the Congressional Budget Office has reported earlier; that if we don't pass something like the Alexander-Murray proposal, this is what happens: If the cost-sharing payments are not paid, premiums in 2018 will go up an average 20 percent. They are already up. Our proposal will take them down. The Federal debt will increase by $194 billion over 10 years, if we don't pass our proposal, due to the extra cost of subsidies to pay higher premiums, and up to 16 million Americans may live in counties where they are not able to buy any insurance in individual markets. The 350,000 Tennesseans in individual markets in Tennessee would be terrified by the prospect of not being able to buy any insurance or by the skyrocketing premiums.

I thank Senator CORNYN and the Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN, for allowing me to interrupt and make a brief statement.

Let me go to the bottom line once more. The President has said repeatedly, Senator MURRAY has said repeatedly, and I have said repeatedly that the Alexander-Murray amendment, the short-term bipartisan plan to reduce premiums and avoid chaos, must not bail out insurance companies. We have written language to make sure it does not, and now the Congressional Budget Office says it does not. It does not bail out insurance companies. It does benefit consumers. It does benefit taxpayers to the tune of $3.8 billion. That is very important information.

I am encouraged by the President's comment yesterday. He thanked me at the luncheon for working in a bipartisan way on this. I am encouraged that Senator HATCH and KEVIN BRADY have introduced a bill recognizing the importance of continuous cost sharing. The ball is in the hands of the White House right now. They have our recommendations. They made some suggestions. That is the normal legislative process.

I am hopeful that something that has this kind of analysis; that it doesn't bail out insurance companies, that avoids a big increase to the Federal debt, that makes certain that people will be able to buy insurance for the next couple of years, that begins to lower premiums, that almost all Democrats want and that Republicans in the House have all voted for once this year when they voted for their repeal-and-replace bill—something like that sounds like something that might become law before the end of the year, and I believe the sooner the better.

I thank the Presiding Officer, Senators CORNYN and SHAHEEN.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am delighted to follow Senator ALEXANDER and was very pleased to hear the news from the CBO that this Alexander-Murray proposal not only doesn't bail out insurance companies, as we all agree we should not do—we want to make sure savings go to consumers—but it also will save taxpayers $3.8 billion.

This is a bipartisan agreement. I applaud the work of Senator ALEXANDER and Senator PATTY MURRAY to craft this bipartisan agreement to address the challenges we have in the short term with healthcare. Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have given us a template for bipartisan negotiations not just on healthcare but on other critical matters that are going to come before this Senate—tax reform, reauthorizing community health centers and the Children's Health Insurance

Program, reaching an agreement on the 2018 budget. These are all major issues facing this country and issues we should be working on in a bipartisan way. The Senate is at its best when we observe regular order and we follow the committee process, when we work across the aisle and make principled compromises to get things done for the American people. I believe that is exactly what this health insurance bill does.

In a Senate that is nearly equally divided between Republicans and Democrats, this is the only productive way forward for us to address the challenges that face this country. Too often we have seen people use bipartisan negotiations as a last resort, but bipartisanship should be the Senate's first resort, not the last resort. It should be the foundation of our work in this body. This is how the great majority of Americans want us to conduct the Senate's business.

When I travel around New Hampshire, this is the consistent comment I hear everywhere I go: Why can't you all work together to get things done for this country? This is especially true on matters like healthcare and tax reform, which affect families throughout the country.

I am encouraged that the Alexander-Murray bill has earned strong bipartisan support and, as Senator ALEXANDER said, has 24 original cosponsors. That number is equally divided between Republicans and Democrats. This is a balanced agreement that has been negotiated by both parties over many months, and I think it is our best bet for stabilizing marketplaces in the short run so we can continue to work on long-term issues around healthcare.

I am especially pleased this agreement provides for the continuation of cost-sharing reduction payments for 2 years. These payments are necessary to keep premiums, deductibles, and copayments affordable for working people. Without these payments, the cost of coverage will skyrocket, insurers will leave the marketplaces, and millions of people will lose their healthcare coverage. I have been working on this issue of cost-saving reduction payments since earlier this year, when I introduced a bill that would permanently appropriate funds for the CSRs.

As the CBO said, the language in the Alexander-Murray bill ensures that these CSRs are not a bailout to insurance companies, but they are a way to help people with the cost of insurance. They are orderly payments that are built into the law that will go directly to keeping premiums, copays, and deductibles affordable for lower income Americans. Both Democrats and Republicans recognize that these payments are an orderly, necessary subsidy that keeps down the cost of health coverage for everyday Americans. As Senator ALEXANDER said, we saw that these payments were in the bill the House voted for around healthcare, and they were also in the Senate bill earlier this year.

In recent months, I have heard from hundreds of people across New Hampshire about the enormous difference healthcare reform has made in their lives. We are a small State; we have just about 1.3 million people. Nearly 94,000 Granite Staters have gotten individual healthcare coverage through the marketplaces. Nearly 50,000 have gotten coverage thanks to the Medicaid expansion program in New Hampshire. That has been a bipartisan effort, with a Republican legislature and a Democratic Governor, to get that program in place, and it continues to enjoy the support of the Republican legislature and the Republican Governor.

Because of the Affordable Care Act's increased access to care, we also have 11,000 Granite Staters who have substance use disorders and who have been able to get treatment for the first time. New Hampshire has the second highest rate of overdose deaths from the heroin and opioid epidemic. Having treatment available through the expanded Medicaid Program has made a difference for thousands of people in New Hampshire and their families. Hundreds of thousands of Granite Staters with preexisting conditions no longer face discrimination resulting in denial or sky-high premiums. These are important achievements, and this legislation will allow us to continue down that road to make sure people have healthcare coverage they can afford.

For people across New Hampshire and across this country, healthcare coverage is often a matter of life or death. It is about being able to take a sick family member to a doctor. It is about knowing that a serious illness will not leave a mountain of debt.

I am very pleased to be able to join in the bipartisan efforts led by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY to strengthen the parts of the healthcare law that are working and to fix what is not working. The other provisions in this legislation will allow States more flexibility through the 1332 waiver process. The Alexander-Murray agreement expedites waiver approval so States can implement smart fixes to stabilize their marketplaces, for instance, by establishing a State-based reinsurance program. The agreement also includes a restoration of funding for open enrollment outreach in educational activities, and it protects four protections related to insurance affordability, coverage, and plan comprehensiveness. All of these changes are positive steps forward, steps that I hope will set us on a bipartisan path, strengthening elements of the Affordable Care Act that are working well and fixing elements that need to be changed.

I am hopeful the Alexander-Murray agreement can gain the bipartisan support it needs to pass in Congress, that it can gain the President's signature, and I am encouraged by Senator ALEXANDER's comments about the President's comments yesterday because we need to restore certainty and stability to the marketplaces. Instead of partisan efforts to undermine the law and take health insurance away from people, we should embrace the spirit of the Alexander-Murray agreement. Let's work together in a good-faith, bipartisan effort to build a healthcare system that leaves no American behind.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

SAFER ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know people watching and perhaps reading the newspaper, watching cable TV, and listening to talk radio think nothing ever happens here in Washington, DC, and they would be wrong. Certainly, we can always do better, and I am disappointed we haven't been more successful, but there are some measures we can make in the right direction in important pieces of legislation that make a very profound difference in people's lives.

Today I want to talk about a problem that, thanks to a bill passed by the Senate on Monday, we are helping to solve. This has to do with the untested rape kit backlog in our country.

Years ago, thanks to a courageous woman named Debbie Smith, I became a lot better informed about the nature of this problem: rape kits, the forensic evidence that is taken in sexual assault cases but which remained in evidence lockers in police stations untested or was sent to laboratories and never processed. At one point, it was estimated that there were as many as 400,000 untested rape kits in our country.

As the Presiding Officer knows, this is powerful evidence because of DNA testing. We can literally almost say with certainty whether there is a match between the DNA of a suspect and that in a rape kit. This forensic evidence is collected following a sexual assault. Similarly, we can decide and determine whether there is no match whatsoever and, frankly, exclude somebody who is a potential suspect from being the guilty party by using this same powerful forensic evidence.

It is also important not just to solve the crime at hand but also to get sexual predators off the streets because we know this type of offender is likely to strike time and time and time again. The experts tell us that when opportunities don't provide themselves for sexual offenders to go after adults, frequently they will even go after children. So this is very important evidence.

As we know, there is typically a statute of limitations that after a period of time a case cannot be prosecuted, but it is really important, as I mentioned, to continue to test as many rape kits as we possibly can to get serial offenders off the streets and to determine whether somebody has been charged or suspected of a crime and is in fact innocent.

Thanks to courageous people like Debbie Smith, for whom we have named the Debbie Smith Act, as well as great bipartisan cooperation in the Senate, we have provided funding for the testing of rape kits at the State and local level, which has been supplemented by the Texas Legislature and other State legislatures.

In Houston a few years ago, our mayor felt so strongly about this that they took this on as a citywide project, with incredible results. They found a number of hits of previously unsolved crimes, and they were able to bring peace of mind to a lot of people who had been living under a cloud of unsolved crime when they processed these unprocessed rape kits.

Nationally, the problem is still big, with as many as 175,000 rape kits that still haven't been analyzed, and this is something we need to continue to attack. It is down from 400,000 at one point, was the estimate, down to 175,000, but that is still unacceptable.

Victims of sexual assault, scarred by painful memories and physical trauma, can't afford to wait for funding that is easier to come by. They need their stories to be heard, the evidence to be tested, and the results expedited. Federal, State, and local officials owe them those things. If we dawdle, those cases go cold, and they are the ones who bear the scars and the pain of these unresolved crimes.

That is why the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act, called the SAFER Act, is so important. That is the bill I mentioned a moment ago that we passed in the Senate on Monday. It reauthorizes a program created in 2013 that has helped law enforcement reduce the national rape kit backlog. I thank my friend and colleague, Representative TED POE over in the House, for sponsoring the House version.

The original legislation increased the amount of funds spent on untested kits by 35 percent and allowed 5 to 7 percent of them to be used on audits of existing law enforcement programs. These audits, in turn, uncovered tens of thousands of untested kits across the country, each with evidence that could be used to bring an offender to justice. The new bill passed by the Senate this week goes further. It ensures that pediatric forensic nurses are available for training so that, once they complete it, they are better equipped to respond promptly and appropriately to children suffering from abuse.

Finally, the bill extends the sunset provision of the SAFER Program, which will ensure the longevity of a program with a proven history of success.

I am grateful to have a wide range of bipartisan support, including the senior Senator from Minnesota, as well as the senior Senators from Nevada and Colorado, who are original cosponsors. This is a good example of legislation that is bipartisan and that makes progress toward solving a very real problem in our country. But, as so often we find the case, there is not much reporting on it, much attention paid, but it is worth noting here on the Senate floor that bipartisan progress on important legislation that helps people's lives become better is being done here in the Senate.

CORRECTIONS ACT

Mr. President, I also want to bring up another important piece of legislation I reintroduced this last week, the Corrections Oversight, Recidivism Reduction, and Eliminating Cost to Taxpayers in Our National System Act. Let me call it the CORRECTIONS Act for short because that is a mouthful. I am grateful to my Democratic cosponsor, the junior Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, for joining me on what is, like the SAFER Act, significant bipartisan legislation.

My home State of Texas has a well-deserved reputation for being tough on crime, but we have also learned over time that it is important to be smart on crime too. We successfully implemented statewide criminal justice reforms that help low-risk offenders become productive members of society once they reenter civil society from prison, and the State is focused on the important role rehabilitation can play.

I am not naive enough to think that every person who is imprisoned behind bars, having been convicted of a criminal offense, is going to take advantage of the opportunity to right their path and to get on with their life, but some will, and given the proper assessments and incentives, we have found that this sort of approach works.

The CORRECTIONS Act that Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have introduced builds off of the State models that have worked in Rhode Island, Georgia, Texas, Louisiana, and elsewhere, and it requires the Bureau of Prisons to provide programs that partner with faith-based and community-based organizations to better prepare these men and women to become law-abiding and active members of society. I hope the Senate can follow Texas's lead and implement these commonsense, bipartisan reforms.

This bill achieves a number of objectives, which I will mention briefly.

First, it requires the Department of Justice to develop risk-assessment tools to evaluate the recidivism potential of all eligible offenders.

Second, it refocuses resources on those offenders most likely to commit future crimes and allows lower risk inmates to serve their sentences under less restrictive conditions, thus reducing prison costs, so the taxpayer wins too.

Third, the bill expands programming—such as substance abuse treatment and vocational training—that has been proven to reduce recidivism.

Fourth, it requires the Bureau of Prisons to foster partnerships with faith-based and nonprofit and community-based organizations in order to deliver a broad spectrum of programming to prisoners.

Next, it allows inmates who successfully complete recidivism-reduction programs to earn credit toward time in prerelease custody, while eliminating eligibility for inmates convicted of serious crimes.

Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Justice to implement inmate reentry pilot projects across the country and to study their effects so that we can gain a better understanding of what works and what doesn't work when it comes to offenders' reintegration into society.

Finally, the CORRECTIONS Act creates a national commission to review every aspect of our criminal justice system. The last review of this type was done in 1965. And while I think Congress—certainly this is within our wheelhouse, but we probably don't have the bandwidth to do this, which is why this national commission is so important to be able to report back to Congress and make recommendations to us.

We know one thing for sure: that when people serve their sentence and they are released from prison, they are going to reenter society. Why wouldn't we want to make sure those who are willing to deal with their addiction, to learn a skill, to get a GED, and to otherwise improve their lives—why wouldn't we want to make sure they are better prepared when they reenter civil society? Otherwise, they are left with this turnstile of crime where they go from prison, to the community, to committing another crime, to another conviction, and back to prison again.

Our focus should be on helping individuals find a productive path as contributing members of society, and that involves making sure returning to prison doesn't happen because there is no alternative. By implementing job training, drug rehabilitation, and mental health treatment, we can focus and save taxpayer dollars, lower crime and incarceration rates, decrease recidivism, and most importantly, we can help people change their own lives for the better.

Joining State and local officials at the forefront of this are groups like Prison Fellowship and the Texas Public Policy Foundation, which create programs for inmates, such as the Prison Entrepreneurship Program—or PEP for short—which teaches prisoners how to start and manage their own businesses when they begin life on the outside. You would be amazed by individuals who started their own businesses through the PEP program and turned their lives around in the process through the mentorship and fellowship that these programs provide.

I hope we can learn from the laboratories of democracy, known as the States, where we implemented successful criminal justice reform programs—this time, in our prison system—where we will all benefit. Taxpayers benefit because we will have to incarcerate fewer people because they won't continue this cycle of release, offend, and

reincarceration—at least a certain percentage of them won't. We can help people whose lives are in a tailspin because of drug or alcohol addiction or who feel as though they are on a dead-end street because they simply don't have the job skills or the education in order to compete in the economy.

I hope we can follow the lead of successful experiments in our States, such as Texas, and implement these commonsense, bipartisan reforms in our Federal prison system.

Mr. President, let me say in conclusion that I know the administration is very interested in engaging on criminal justice reform. Last year, we worked on a sentencing and prison reform bill that unfortunately seems to not be going anywhere. While the prison reform component of it seems to have a consensus of support here in the Congress and I think could pass and be signed into law, the sentencing reform piece is a little more controversial and I know divides even the Republican conference, and I am not sure what it does with the Democratic conference. But I believe we ought to start on a step-by-step basis, get what we can get done, and get it to the President for his signature, while providing these tools to inmates who are incarcerated through the Bureau of Prisons, and then keep working on the other parts on which we perhaps have not yet been able to build consensus.

I hope our colleagues will work with us on this important piece of legislation as we work to reform our criminal justice system in ways that make sense and that save taxpayer dollars.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

TAX REFORM

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, yesterday in the middle of the day, the Presiding Officer and I and the Senator from Texas and others had a chance to meet with the President and talk about tax relief. It seemed to me very clear that the President and those of us who are advocating tax cuts right now are on the same wavelength, which is, let's have tax cuts for hard-working families, and let's do the other things we need to do in the Tax Code to ensure that those very same families have better jobs.

As I said on the floor of the Senate last week, there are two ways to increase take-home pay. One is to start taking less out of the paychecks people are getting now, and another one is to give them an even better paycheck in the future. We need to look at both of those ways to increase the opportunity for working families and working individuals.

We are now into the eighth year of almost no economic growth. If there is no economic growth, there is very little incentive for your job to be a better paying job than it was the previous year no matter what has happened to your other costs, and we clearly see that happening.

We are into the first year of this new administration. We are looking at 3 percent annual growth after 8 years in which growth didn't exceed 2 percent. Anytime you begin to talk like an economist, people begin to wonder: Well, what does that have to do with me? Let me just say that for taxpayers generally, for working families generally, the more growth you have, one, the more revenue that comes in that takes care of problems like the deficit. The way you take care of those problems—the best way—is to grow the economy. Two, people are much more focused on keeping the workforce they have, getting the best of the workforce that is coming on board as their workforce moves on for retirement or relocates or does other things.

Three percent economic growth is not good enough. The post-World War II average—that is more than seven decades now of average—is, I think, almost 3½ percent. There are very few economic problems in our country that wouldn't be made substantially better, including our own Federal deficit, if we see growth exceed or even get to the 70-year average. There is no reason to believe that can't happen.

Yesterday, the President was talking about the two ways to immediately relieve pressures on families. One is more take-home pay, and two is a better job that also increases take-home pay. But the first step we can achieve immediately by the kind of tax relief we need.

There have been 8 years of stagnant wages. Half of the families in the country are living paycheck to paycheck. Very few families can face an emergency that is even $500 without having to restructure what they are doing and how they are doing it. We can do a better job at this. We need more jobs. We need higher wages. And the two principal goals of this tax bill should be to do exactly that—create more wages now, more take-home pay now, and create an environment in which we are going to be more competitive. Simplifying the Tax Code is one way to meet that first impact, having a tax code that people understand better, that they think is fairer.

A tax code where people think they are being treated fairly is much more likely to be complied with than a tax code where people see that somebody else who makes the same amount of money as they make is paying a lot less taxes than they are paying. The American tax system is probably the greatest voluntary compliance. Sure, there are laws that require people to comply, but most people are never impacted by those laws. They know they could be, but the American people have shown a willingness to pay their fair share if they know that their fair share is, in fact, their fair share. A simpler tax system, a more easily understood tax system, a system that has fewer than the seven different tax brackets that people pay today are things we can and should achieve.

Doubling the standard deduction helps a lot when people look at the $12,000 deduction they have now. For a couple, as they look at that deduction and realize that deduction, that standard deduction, has doubled, suddenly, if you are a couple filing jointly, you are not paying any taxes on the first $24,000 you earn. If you are a single individual, you are not paying any taxes on the first $12,000 you earn. Keeping enough of the family-benefiting exemptions helps make the family do what the family would like to do. What if they would like to give to their church and charity? There is no discussion saying we wouldn't keep the standard charitable deduction as a deduction. There is no discussion that we wouldn't keep home mortgage as a deduction so we are encouraging homeownership or looking at how to make the child tax credit bigger rather than smaller.

Many of the early analyses of what this Tax Code would do say that for a family of four, they would pay more than they are paying now up to certain income level. Generally, that will turn out not to be the case—certainly, at the middle-income levels and below if you factor in the child tax credit, which hasn't been determined yet.

Our tax-writing committee will be looking at that child tax credit as an important addition to the individual exemptions because it costs money to raise kids. The Congress surely should understand that, appreciate that, and factor that into the deductions. Just like we are doubling the deduction for individual earners, we also have to look at what that child tax credit should look like.

Tax policies that benefit homeownership, tax policies that encourage contributing to charities and community activities and church and synagogue and mosque—your religious activities—all would continue to be a part of this Tax Code.

Also, when talking about sending kids to school, one way to not have student debt is to encourage families to have ways to better prepare for what they, in most cases, would hope would be a goal or an expenditure their family would make. We can do things like expanding the Pell grants for poor families, but for families who don't qualify for that, we can do things that allow the deduction early on for putting money in a fund that prepares people to go to school.

Keeping well-paying jobs at home and encouraging more jobs to come here is also an important part of the goal. You can't have the highest corporate rate in the world and expect that you are going to be as competitive as you would be with other countries. A corporate rate of 35 percent, in 1986, was fairly near the middle when that rate was arrived at with President Reagan and others working on it the last time we did a tax rewrite, and right in the middle is about where we should be. However, now the situation is we see that right in the middle is no

longer 35 percent; it is about 20 percent. Ireland just revised its 15 percent rate to 8 percent. Great Britain is reducing their rate to a little less than 20 percent. They have been, I think, a little more than 20 percent. We need to be sure the products we make here and the jobs that are created here—that there is a competitive ability to sell that same product anywhere in the world, with the advantage, obviously, of being made by our great workforce but also an advantage where our tax system doesn't work us out of the marketplace, doesn't make us less competitive.

A territorial tax system will be one of the things we are going to hear talked about a lot. For most of us, that doesn't seem to have any impact. We earn our money here, we pay our taxes here, but we also want to be sure that if American companies sell products somewhere else and earn money there, that they can, should, and would bring that money back to the United States to reinvest it in the kinds of things that create jobs here.

I think this doesn't have to be all that complicated. We need to understand what the core principles are. We need to get to those core principles. We need to get this done this year so people are planning, in the first months of next year, on how to take advantage of a new, simpler, fairer, and more competitive Tax Code. This needs to be job one of this Congress for the next few weeks. We need to get that done so job one for the country, beginning at the end of this debate, is what we can do to create more and better jobs and create more take-home pay for hard-working families.

I am joined by some of my colleagues who are going to talk about this same topic, I hope, and others. We need to be focused. I can tell, with the President's comments yesterday, he is focused on this. We are focused on this. This is a job we need to get done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I wanted to reinforce and underscore some of the comments made by my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD, on what is happening in the Senate right now. It is actually really important for the American people to understand what is going on. Maybe we would finally get the press, who sit up there above your chair, Madam President, to write about this topic.

Right now, we are debating a very well-qualified district court judge nominee—a Federal district court judge nominee from Oklahoma. Senator LANKFORD was down here, and he obviously knows the nominee, Scott Palk. He is so qualified that the vote for cloture to move forward on this nominee—who, by the way, was nominated by President Trump for a Federal district court position but was previously nominated by President Obama with fairly bipartisan support—was 79 to 18. That is really strong bipartisan support. It just happened about an hour ago on the Senate floor.

So what are we doing? Well, we are still going to be debating for 30 hours. We are not really debating the nominee because he is well qualified. That is what we are doing in the Senate, supposedly. Anyone watching, you know we are not debating him because he is very well qualified, but we are still going to burn 30 hours. Why is this? Well, this raises a much broader issue of the tactics that are happening on the Senate floor right now. The minority leader and his colleagues will not come down and explain what they are up to.

I gave a speech on this a couple of weeks ago, and I just asked: Come on down. Let the American people understand why we are spending all this time on nominees who are very well qualified and have enormous bipartisan support. Why are we being required to go an additional 30 hours? Those are the rules, but normally there would be unanimous consent to move forward. What is happening now hasn't been explained, but it definitely hurts the American people, whether you are a Democrat or Republican. What is happening now is, every single nominee from the Trump administration, whether Federal judge or Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services, is being delayed. Here are the numbers. Eight years ago, President Obama had about 66 percent of his nominees confirmed at this period in the fall of his first term. People were working through them. If you didn't like the nominee, you would just vote against them, but you wouldn't say we are going to burn half the week of the Senate to debate somebody who is not even controversial. This judge, when we finally get through the 30 hours, is going to pass with 80 Senate votes, but we are burning through it anyway. President Obama, 8 years ago, had 66 percent confirmed. The number for President Trump 8 years later is 33 percent. Imagine our friends in the media—the New York Times—if Republicans were doing this to President Obama during his first few months in office. There would be front-page stories every day. The Republican Party is trying to undermine the new President—delaying, delaying, delaying. You don't hear a peep from our national press. They don't write about it.

It is a problem because we have work to do in this country. I have asked the minority leader to just come down and tell the American people why you are doing this. We have had numerous judges, very noncontroversial, very bipartisan, where we essentially spent the whole week ''debating'' them. We are not debating this judge, but we are going to spend 30 hours on him.

Why are they doing that? And why are my colleagues on the other side of the aisle agreeing to it? I asked them to come on down and explain it to the American people, the people watching on TV or in the Gallery. Why are you doing this? Does it help the country? Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, it doesn't help the country. That is the whole point, but nobody wants to come down and explain their delay tactics. The press will not write about it because some of them like it, I think.

Here is the truth. When we are spending all this time all week on this judge who will get voted on—and he will pass because he is very well qualified. Senator LANKFORD laid out his resume. He was previously nominated by President Obama. We are going to vote for him after this 30-hour period, and he will pass with a strong bipartisan vote. What is the challenge? What happens to the other issues we need to address in this country—in this body? We can't get to them, if we wanted to turn to other issues to start moving them.

My colleague from New Hampshire was just on the floor. She talked about all the things we have to do. I agree with her 100 percent: tax reform, healthcare, budget—we never do the budget here anymore—National Defense Authorization Act, growing the economy, as my friend from Missouri talked about, infrastructure, immigration, and the Dreamer issue. We have so much to do, let alone getting Trump administration officials confirmed and judges confirmed. That is a big list, but because we are spending 30 hours on a debate, which really isn't a debate on the judge, and we can't get consent from the other side to actually work on these other issues, this is what we are doing. We are just burning time.

The minority leader will not come down and explain it. I don't know if he can explain it, but that is what we are doing. Again, if the shoe were on the other foot, the press would be going crazy. Right now, they just let it happen. My view is, it would be great if one of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle would come down and say: Here is why we are wasting all of this time. Just let us know.

As Senator LANKFORD mentioned, this judge was nominated by the President in May. Now we are going to spend most of the week ''debating'' him, when that is not what is going on. It is just a delay tactic. My view is, we should just say: OK. You want to play ball like that? We will stay here 24/7 and keep the Senate open 7 days a week. Let's get to work. Let's stay here until Christmas. See if the minority leader and his team keep doing that, keep delaying. I think we should call their bluff.

Right now, the delay tactics—which nobody on the other side wants to explain—in my view, are not defensible, and they are not helping the country. Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, you want to seat the government. You want to get good people working for the American people. Right now, that is not happening.

I just wish the other side would either explain it or stop doing it. Let's get to work for this Nation.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I fully associate myself with the comments just made by the Senator from the great State of Alaska. We have to get to work here.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, I am here to talk about one of the most pressing issues we have to deal with. Yesterday, we had lunch where the President spoke about why tax reform was so critical for healing the economy and really having our Nation rise to its full capabilities in terms of economic performance and global competitiveness. You read the headlines. The headlines read like: Republicans are for the big guy, for the corporations, not for the little guy.

You will hear them talk about policies that will have us drowning in red ink. You will hear them talk about unsustainable economic policies. I saw all of those headlines before, about 6 years ago, in the North Carolina statehouse when we inherited a disaster for an economy. It was after the 2008 crisis. We had a State that was drowning in red ink, with a $2.5 billion structural deficit. We had a tax code that was absolutely out of sync with our competition, and we set about to fix it.

This is what we ended up doing. All of the headlines looked exactly the way the headlines looked today, but we had members on both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, who recognized that North Carolina should be one of the fastest growing, most competitive States in the Nation. So we went about trying to figure out how to make that happen. We determined, for one thing, that there was an undue burden on individuals and working families. So we had to simplify the tax code, and we had to reduce the tax burden on the individuals. We also recognized that our corporate tax rate was preventing us from getting the job expansion opportunities. The States like South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Virginia were winning time after time after time.

By the time I came in as the speaker of the house, there had been a long time before we had any major economic development opportunity in North Carolina. So we were able to put together a corporate tax cut, an individual income tax cut, and, in our case, even a sales tax cut, which all of the pundits said was going to be a disaster. It ended up engineering and serving as the basis for one of the most significant economic turnarounds of any State for over the past 30 or 40 years. It went from a zero rainy day fund to a $2 billion rainy day fund, putting more money into education, putting more money into Medicaid, and creating the resources that would allow us to do the other things we wanted to do.

When I was speaker, I had to go look to see what Texas was doing—I see the Senator from Texas is here—and say: What could we do to be more competitive with Texas? We looked at Iowa. What could we do as a matter of tax policy that would make us more competitive with Iowa on, let's say, agriculture? Those were our peer competitors. As a State leader, I am looking at my peer competitors in their States.

For our corporate tax policy, we look at China, at Russia, at Europe, and we look at our competitors and make it very clear that we are out of step. As Senator BLUNT said, years ago we weren't out of step, but we are today. We are not competitive with people with whom we should be cleaning their clock in terms of economic expansion. You only get that done if you lower the corporate tax rate. If you actually get people who will invest that capital and hire more people, provide more opportunities for working families, and create more demand for jobs so that wages go up, that is how you ultimately get this economy moving to a point where we create the resources to also ultimately pay down the debt. I still consider that to be the single greatest threat to our national security.

Along the way, the reason I know our tax policy was about right where it needed to be was that virtually every lobbyist in Raleigh was mad at me—and I mean all of them.

If you look at 1986, the last time we did meaningful tax reform, virtually every lobbyist on Capitol Hill was mad at the folks who voted for the bill, and that was on a bipartisan basis. So we have to have Members who are willing to go big, who are willing to actually reduce the corporate tax rate, to work on the tax burden for working families, and to recognize that it is on us.

We are in a historic opportunity to turn this economy around and to take advantage of the fact that other countries are not heeding the call. They are heaping more regulations on their businesses. They are adding more taxes in some cases. This is a historic opportunity for us to just blow past the competition and ultimately create the resources to retire our debt and provide the critical resources we need for so many other things that we need to get here, like strengthening our international defense, making sure our homeland is safe, and securing the border. All of these kinds of things can be done, but they can only be done if we have the courage to move forward with tax cuts and tax reform.

I hope that all of my Members, before Thanksgiving, are in this Chamber and have an opportunity to vote for a bold reform package but, more importantly, for the fulfillment of a promise that we made to the American people if we had majorities in the Senate, in the House, and in the White House. We have it, and it is time for us to act.

I don't care what the headlines read because I have seen those headlines before. I don't care what the special interests want in terms of exemptions and exceptions because I have had those meetings in my office before. At the end of the day, every single one of those folks who wanted to pick apart one exception or an exemption have come back into my office and said: You know what; you have protected us from ourselves, because if you had listened to us, you would have done far less than you were capable of doing.

There is nobody who follows State politics that would question what was done in North Carolina. It has been an extraordinary turnaround. Now it is time to do the same thing for this great Nation.

I hope that all of my colleagues would set aside the distractions, mute the voices of the special interests that will want their special exemption or exception and fulfill the promise that we made to the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today at a time of extraordinary opportunity. The American people have entrusted us with something that, historically, is quite rare: a Republican President, Republican control of every executive agency, and Republican majorities in both Houses of Congress. Now it is incumbent on us to stand up and lead, to deliver on the promises we made to do what we told the American people we would do.

We have before us right now an opportunity for historic tax cuts. Just last week, this body voted out a budget resolution that is the vehicle for adopting tax cuts. I urge every Member of this body to come together in support of a strong, bold tax plan that cuts taxes on every working man and women and that brings back jobs and economic growth.

Growth is really fundamental to every other challenge we have in this country. If you look historically, since World War II, our economy has grown on average about 3.3 percent a year. Yet, from 2008 to today, we have grown only 1.2 percent a year—about a third of the historic rate of growth.

If we don't turn that around, none of our other problems are solvable. If you care about the national debt, if you care about the deficit, if you care about rebuilding and strengthening our military, if you care about strengthening and improving Social Security and Medicare so that they are there for the next generations, we have to have growth. With economic growth, every one of those is possible. Without growth—if we stay mired in the stagnant Obama 1- and 2-percent GDP growth, none of those problems are solvable.

Growth is foundational. I would like to lay out three principles and then seven key elements that I think should guide this body in tax reform. No. 1 is growth. When we are adopting tax cuts, we should focus directly on jobs and economic growth and focus on the reforms that produce jobs, that expand

economic growth, that grow our economy, that create more opportunity, and that raise wages.

Working men and women in this country are hurting. We need wages going up. We need more jobs. We need young people coming out of school with two, three, four, or five job opportunities. That is what tax cuts are all about. No. 1, we start with growth.

I will point out that we can do this. From 2008 to 2012, the economy grew 0.9 percent a year—less than 1 percent a year on average. If you look back in history to the previous 4-year period when growth averaged less than 1 percent a year, it was 1978 to 1982. It was coming out of the Jimmy Carter administration. It was the same failed economic policies—high taxes, high regulation, high spending, and high debt.

In 1981 Ronald Reagan came into the White House. The Reagan Presidency focused front and center on tax cuts, with major tax cuts in 1981, and then following it up in 1986 with major tax reform.

And what happened? When Reagan came in 1981 with across-the-board tax cuts and tax cuts for everybody, Democrats screamed, the media screamed, and yet the economy took off.

The fourth year of the Reagan Presidency, GDP growth wasn't 3 percent. It wasn't 4 percent. It wasn't 5 percent. It wasn't even 6 percent. It was 7.2 percent in 1984—7.2 percent, those are numbers you hear in the developing world. Those are numbers you hear in China and India.

All of our learned economists who are so world weary and all of our media reporters who are so world weary tell us: No, no, no, that kind of growth is not possible in America anymore. Accept the new normal of 1 and 2 percent of stagnancy, of young people buried in student loans, of people hurting. Accept that as the new normal.

That is nonsense. If we want to see Reagan-style growth, we need a Reagan-style tax cut—an unapologetic, unabashed tax cut that focuses on jobs.

The second big principle is simplicity. There is an old rule, KISS, or ''keep it simple, stupid,'' which is particularly powerful when it comes to tax reform. Bold simplicity has enormous power and, in particular, allowing every American to fill out their taxes on a postcard. I believe that should be an integral element of what we pass. It is what I have been pressing for many years, and what I would continue to urge my colleagues here in the Senate and in the House to do, which is to simplify the Tax Code so that we don't spend millions and millions of hours and paperwork wasted on compliance. Make it a postcard. Make it simple.

Then the third objective is fairness. We want a tax system that is fair, that isn't arbitrary, that isn't Washington picking winners and losers and deciding: OK, this industry we like; so you can do OK. This industry we don't like; so you are going to hurt. We are going to pick between them.

We need to cut everybody's taxes.

Last week, I debated BERNIE SANDERS on CNN on tax reform. BERNIE, to his credit, was very candid. He said he wanted to raise your taxes. If you are a taxpayer, your taxes are going up under BERNIE and the Democrats' vision.

My vision is every bit as simple on the other side. If you are a taxpayer, I want to cut your taxes. That is what we need to do—to cut taxes fairly, across the board for every American, to reduce the burden from Washington, and to create jobs and economic opportunity.

I would note that, in that debate with BERNIE, there was one exchange that I thought was particularly notable. BERNIE, as you know, when he ran in Vermont did not run as a Democrat. Rather, he ran telling the voters he was a socialist. I asked a simple question: What is the difference between a socialist and a Democrat on taxes?

He sat there for several seconds in silence and said: I don't know the answer to that.

My response was: Neither do I.

One side of this Chamber wants to raise your taxes if you are a taxpayer. The other side of this Chamber wants to cut your taxes if you are a taxpayer. That is a simple choice for the American people.

What are the elements that should reflect those principles? There are seven critical elements: No. 1, I believe we should create a simple, low, flat rate. Currently, there are seven individual rates with the top rate at nearly 40 percent. Ideally, what I believe we should have is one simple, low, flat tax.

When I was campaigning for President, I campaigned on a simple, flat tax of 10 percent for every individual and every family in this country, 16 percent as a business flat tax, and to abolish every other Federal tax, to abolish the corporate income tax, to abolish the death tax, to abolish the alternative minimum tax, and to abolish the payroll tax. Everyone pays a simple, flat 10 percent for individuals and 16 percent for businesses. Simplicity has power.

It may be the case that we don't have the votes to go to a simple, flat tax today. If that is where we are, if we don't have the votes to do it today, then the closer we get to that the better. If we can't get to a simple, flat tax, then going from seven brackets to three is an improvement, and going from three to two is even better, and going from two to one would be even better than that. We need to press consistently for a low, simple, flat rate that is fair for everyone.

The second element, which we talked about just a minute ago, is filing your taxes on a postcard. Let me tell you the most wonderful aspect of that simplicity. It is not the billions of hours, it is not the billions of dollars that are saved. The best aspects of filing your taxes on a postcard are actually the physical dimensions of the postcard. It means that Congress can't add a bunch of new things. Even if we tried to put it in four-point font, eventually you will run out of space on the postcard. The reason a postcard is so important is it imposes a discipline on the Federal Government that it can't carve out a special loophole for every favored or disfavored group because it is simple and flat and fair for everybody.

No. 3, allow immediate expensing. What does expensing mean? It means that if a business makes a capital expenditure, right now, they physically have to amortize it over a number of years. Instead, what we should do is allow full and immediate expensing.

If a farmer in the Presiding Officer's home State of Iowa buys a new tractor, that farmer should be able to expense it immediately, that year. If a steel factory buys new equipment and hires new workers to operate that equipment, that steel factory should be able to expense that new equipment immediately. If a diner buys new kitchen equipment and hires new cooks and waiters and waitresses, the owner of that small business should be able to expense that capital expenditure. And why is that? The reason is the first principle I started with—growth.

If you care about jobs and economic growth, expensing is a powerful engine for jobs and economic growth. It creates millions of new jobs because that capital has to be spent in the United States. It has to be spent here. That tractor is in the United States; that steel equipment is in the United States; that diner with the cooking equipment is in the United States, which means those jobs are in the United States.

I would note, by the way, the people who particularly benefit from immediate expensing are the working men and women of this country—the men and women with callouses on their hands, the men and women, frankly, who gave Donald Trump the victory in November of 2016 or the union workers whom, sadly, the Democratic Party has abandoned.

There was a time when the Democratic Party styled themselves as the party of the working man and woman. That time has been long since forgotten. The Democratic Party now listens to California environmentalist billionaires and ignores the plight of steelworkers, oilfield workers, farmers, ranchers, taxicab drivers, truckdrivers, waiters, and waitresses—the men and women who are working hard for their families. That is who the Republican Party should be fighting for—the working men and women of this country. Immediate expensing impacts working men and women, particularly in heavy manufacturing.

The fourth element is a lower corporate rate. We are seeing, and we have seen over the last 8 years, companies leaving America and moving their headquarters, moving their legal domicile to other countries. Why is that? Because the United States has the

highest corporate tax rate of any developed country in the world. We have created a tax environment that tells American businesses: If you simply get the heck out of Dodge, if you simply move somewhere other than America, immediately your profitability will jump because our corporate tax rate is higher and, in some instances, more than twice as high as our competitors.

Look at Ireland. Ireland used to have high corporate taxes. They cut their corporate tax rate. Then they cut it again, and they are seeing businesses flood into Ireland because of the low corporate tax rate, and they bring with them jobs.

Our focus should be jobs. If we cut the corporate rate so that it is low—so that it is at least as low as our competitors and ideally even lower—we will create an environment where more businesses want to do business in America where there are more jobs.

I am reminded of Hillary Clinton, who said during the Presidential campaign season: Don't let anybody tell you that corporations or businesses create jobs. Even in the world of politics, that was a particularly asinine statement. The last time I checked, you get a job from going to work for a business—unless you start your own business. You either start your own business or you go to work for another business. That is what gives you jobs. We need to create that environment.

In recent years, we have talked about corporate inversions, companies fleeing America. Our friends on the Democratic side of the aisle have all these ideas to punish the companies that flee America. Their approach is: We are going to tax you so high that you can't do business in this country, and then, when you try to survive, we are going to punish you on top of that with fines and penalties. It is actually reminiscent of their approach to ObamaCare, where they fine people who can't afford insurance after driving premiums through the roof.

It is a much better idea to cut our corporate tax rate. Let's create a tax and regulatory environment in America so that businesses want to be here and create jobs. It is my hope that 3, 5, 10 years from now, other countries—European countries and Asian countries—are complaining about corporate inversions because their companies are fleeing their countries and coming to American, because there is no place on Earth better to do business than America, because we will have honored our commitment on tax reform and cut taxes and created an environment where businesses can thrive.

No. 5, encourage repatriation. Right now, Federal tax law subjects American businesses to punitive double taxation at the highest rates in the developed world if they bring capital back here from overseas. U.S. companies have roughly $2.7 trillion in capital overseas, and our tax system inextricably incentivizes them to keep the money overseas, which means—what do they do with the money overseas? It means they build factories in China, in Mexico, in India, and countries overseas that aren't America, and then they hire people overseas. Why? Because if they bring the capital back here and hire Americans, our tax punishes them. That doesn't make any sense.

I want to see that $2.7 trillion come back to America. I want to see that money back in this country. I want to see new factories, I want to see new stores, I want to see new businesses, and I want to see new jobs. We need to encourage repatriation, not put a punitive tax on the money coming back. Do you want to talk about patriotism? There is a reason it is called repatriation. It is patriotic to use that money to hire Americans.

Our Democratic friends just want to yell and scream and insult them. That is not the right answer. People are going to respond to rational incentives. If you punish companies for bringing money back to America, they are going to respond rationally by not doing that. Let's change our tax system so we don't punish them for bringing jobs back to America.

The sixth element, end the death tax. The death tax is one of the most unfair aspects of the Federal tax system. The death tax also happens to be the very favorite tax our friends on the Democratic side of the aisle love to demagogue. I have heard over past weeks attack after attack after attack on the death tax—that it is about the superrich.

Here is a secret that the Democrats will never tell you. The superrich don't pay the death tax. By and large, they manage to avoid the tax with remarkable success rates. They hire armies of accountants and lawyers. Do you think George Soros will pay the death tax? Hold your breath, and let me know how that works out. It doesn't impact the superrich.

The death tax actually generates very little revenue for the Federal Government. Who gets hit by the death tax? It is the farmers, it is the ranchers, and it is the small business owners. In the debate last week with BERNIE SANDERS, BERNIE said that this doesn't affect farmers at all.

The Presiding Officer and I have both spoken with an awful lot of farmers in Iowa and in Texas. I have heard farmer after farmer after farmer lament the death tax because of what happens when the patriarch, when the farmer, passes away and passes the farm on to the next generation. Over and over again, the next generation is forced to sell the farm just to pay Uncle Sam. They have already paid taxes once; they pay taxes when they earn their money. The death tax says that for having the temerity to die, we are going to tax you again at a punitive rate. Death should not be a taxable event. That is not fair. It shouldn't be the case that when you die, the two people you get to see are the undertaker and the taxman.

We see farms that are sold, that are broken up; we see ranches that are sold, that are broken up; we see small businesses that are sold, that are broken up because the next generation that wants to run the small business, wants to keep the jobs, suddenly has a massive Federal tax bill. They don't have the fancy lawyers and accountants who, like the superrich, help them avoid the tax. So they get hit with the full force of the death tax.

If you care about jobs and economic growth, why do you want a small business owner to be forced to sell the factory just to pay the tax bill? This means the employees all get laid off; they lose their jobs. It is much better to have those small businesses growing, to have those farmers prospering, and to have those ranchers prospering.

The final element is that we need to end the alternative minimum tax. The AMT is a totally second set of taxation. Every year, it is growing the number of people who are hit by it, and it just adds complexity to the code.

We should focus on growth, simplicity, and fairness. If we do that, if we focus on bringing back jobs, we have the ability to have a tremendous impact on our country.

Finally, I want to make a plea to the Members of our conference, to the Republicans. We may get some Democrats to support us on tax reform. It is possible. We may get one or two. Sadly, we are in a different world than we used to be. In 1981 and 1986, Democrats actually used to be willing to work with Republicans on taxes.

Tip O'Neill, a Democrat, was Speaker of the House when Reagan passed massive tax cuts. Bill Bradley in this body, a liberal New Jersey Democrat, helped lead the effort for tax reform. There are no Tip O'Neills or Bill Bradleys left. There is not a single Democrat leading the fight for tax reform—not a one.

You may get one or two Democrats at the end of the day who cast a vote after everything is done because they are afraid of the electoral consequences in November. But I will make a prediction right now that if we don't have 50 votes on this side of the aisle, not a single Democrat will provide the 50th vote. They might be the 52nd or 53rd vote, but we ain't getting vote No. 50 from that side of the aisle, which means that for tax reform to happen, our conference has to get our act together. We have 52 Republicans, and we have to get 50 on the same page.

Listen, we are at a time when we are seeing personality battles, and we are seeing nastiness. This is a strange time in politics. Any three Republicans can torpedo tax reform. I am making a plea to all 52: Don't be selfish and petulant. Don't put personal animosities above the good of the country.

We were elected by the voters to do a job. Let's do the job. Let's honor the promises we made. Let's cut taxes, bring back jobs, bring back economic growth, and demonstrate to the voters

there is a reason they elected Republican majorities.

If we don't, if we can't get our act together, then I fear the consequences will be catastrophic, both as a policy matter and a political matter.

I urge my colleagues: Let's do what we said we would do. Let's cut taxes. Let's bring back jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

PUERTO RICO

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the dire humanitarian situation in Puerto Rico and to challenge this country to end a century of discrimination against the Puerto Rican people.

While the fleeting media attention may have waned, the desperation of the people of Puerto Rico has not. The lackluster response from the Trump administration is an outrage. It has been more than a month since the hurricane, and 80 percent of the island's electricity is still out. Roads and bridges have collapsed. Homes have been destroyed. Of the 67 hospitals that are open, less than half of them are operating with electricity. Families are searching far and wide for clean drinking water, and some have been drinking water from wells at a Superfund site.

This kind of inhumane response would never ever be permitted in a U.S. State. But one doesn't even have to look at other States to evaluate this response; we can look abroad. Within 2 weeks of the earthquake in Haiti, there were 17,000 U.S. military personnel on the ground in that country. Two weeks after Hurricane Maria made landfall in the United States, the United States had deployed only 10,000 troops to respond to the disaster in both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

News broke yesterday that the state-owned electric company on the island, PREPA, refused to operationalize mutual aid agreements with electric companies on the U.S. mainland. That is a standard step in normal disaster response. Fault lies with PREPA, but how on Earth did FEMA and the Trump administration allow that to happen, leaving millions of Puerto Ricans in the dark and in danger for almost a month? It is beyond comprehension, and it speaks to the failure of the U.S. Government's response.

The truth is that Hurricane Maria exposed far more than just immediate physical damage; the hurricane also laid bare a very simple truth that is plain to every resident of the island and every Puerto Rican living in my State. The truth is this: The United States has been screwing Puerto Rico for over 100 years, and this is just the latest, most disgusting chapter.

There is an undercurrent in the discourse about Puerto Rico that is as pernicious as it is ahistorical. You will hear people, like President Trump, say that Puerto Ricans are wholly responsible for the financial mess they find themselves in and that Puerto Rico should just pull itself up by its bootstraps. The rewriting of history ignores the fact that the Federal Government and Congress have had our hands tightly wrapped around those very bootstraps since 1898.

The United States acquired Puerto Rico from Spain through the Treaty of Paris in 1898, when the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish American War. Puerto Ricans didn't ask to be part of the United States; we acquired the island. A century ago, Congress extended U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans. In 1950, Congress recognized the island's limited authority over internal governance, and Puerto Rico became formally known as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Being a commonwealth or a territory is permanent second-class status. Without access to the same healthcare reimbursement, the same infrastructure funding, the same education dollars as other States, Puerto Rico starts every single race 50 feet behind the rest of America. These built-in disadvantages are designed to hold Puerto Rico back. They have been in place for 100 years to keep Puerto Rico from being a true economic competitor with the mainland.

Believe me, the Puerto Rican people have done everything they can to overcome this discriminatory treatment. There is an entrepreneurial, never-say-die spirit in Puerto Rico. I know this because no State has a greater percentage of residents with Puerto Rican roots than Connecticut. But despite the strength of the Puerto Rican people, they are stuck because Washington has tied their hands behind their backs by taking away the right to vote in Federal elections, virtually guaranteeing that Puerto Rico's economic disadvantage will never ever be remedied. It is a black hole from which Puerto Rico and the other four U.S. territories can never escape.

Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens—despite the fact that recent polling suggests that half of Americans don't know this—but they can't vote for President. They have no voting representation in Congress. Think about it this way: Americans with a mainland address can vote if they move to Mongolia or Sierra Leone, but if they temporarily take up residence in a U.S. territory like Puerto Rico, they miraculously lose their right to vote.

There are real, practical consequences to this lack of representation. We are watching the most egregious example right now. Do you really think that if Puerto Rico had two U.S. Senators, 80 percent of the island would still be without power a month after the hurricane? By the way, Puerto Rico has more citizens than 21 States that have a total of 42 Senators in this body. Do you think a President would denigrate and insult Puerto Rico the way President Trump has if it had electoral votes?

The botched response to Maria is just the latest attack on the island, perpetuated by a Congress that can afford to ignore a big part of the United States that has no voice in Congress to object.

For over six decades, the U.S. Navy pummeled the island of Vieques, just off Puerto Rico's coast, with ordnance, using it as a bombing range for military exercises. Those weapons allegedly contained uranium, napalm, and Agent Orange. Today, people who live on Vieques are eight times more likely to have cardiovascular disease and seven times more likely to die of diabetes than others in Puerto Rico. Cancer rates on Vieques are much higher.

If you want to know why Puerto Rico has been in a decade-long recession, look no further than Congress. More than 50 years ago, the U.S. Government launched several initiatives to help spur economic growth on the island. It was a good thing. Ironically enough, the initiatives were collectively called Operation Bootstrap. One of the tools that were used to spur economic growth was a tax break to allow U.S. manufacturing companies to avoid corporate income taxes on profits that were made in Puerto Rico. Manufacturers descended on the island in droves, and the entire economy in Puerto Rico became oriented around those companies. But what Congress gives, Congress can take away, especially if the entity you are taking from has no meaningful representation in Congress. In 1996, Congress phased out the tax breaks. Guess what. It sucked the island's tax base away, cratering Puerto Rico's economy for the next two decades.

It is worth noting that Puerto Rico is not blameless for the financial situation that it is in. There definitely has been a fair share of mismanagement on the island. Bad decisions have been made. Saying that Puerto Rico is only a victim of schemes of the mainland is not true. But the same can be said of fiscal mismanagement and bad decisions in other U.S. States. But a century of underinvestment in Puerto Rico has been a big part of the story as to how they arrived at this situation. And unlike all those other U.S. States, Puerto Rico has no way of rectifying the past misdeeds because its toolbox to reckon with its past is limited to what Congress sticks in the toolbox, and that toolbox doesn't provide access to the Bankruptcy Code.

As a result, Congress passed PROMESA, which created this financial oversight board on the island. Puerto Rican bondholders on Wall Street, who bought the bonds for pennies on the dollar, are now challenging the current oversight board's legitimacy, with the hope of being paid before the island gets relief. These practices of the bondholders, who have been circling the island for years, are made more menacing because they are spending boatloads of money lobbying Congress. Just watch TV at night in Washington, DC, to see their ads. They know that the people of Puerto Rico have no voice here, have no votes here.

Now it looks as though other predators are circling. News came out this week that a small, two-person company in Whitefish, MT, somehow, some way, got a no-bid $300 million contract to restore power in Puerto Rico from the island's power authority—the same power authority that refused the help of experienced electric companies that actually know how to turn the power back on. How does something like this happen? It turns out that the little town in Montana is the home of the new Secretary of the Interior.

Get ready, because this is just the start. President Trump and his billionaire cronies are going to use this disaster to enrich themselves. The Whitefish power contract given to a friend of the Secretary of Interior—with two people employed at that company—is just a scratch on the surface of what is to come.

Puerto Rico has been getting screwed for decades. None of this is new. None of this is unpredictable. If you think this is just one century-long string of rough luck, you are ignoring the last critical aspect of Puerto Rican history.

Back in 1901, when the U.S. Supreme Court decided that even though residents of the territories lived in the United States, they shouldn't be able to enjoy full constitutional protections, the Supreme Court was pretty explicit about why these citizens in places like Puerto Rico deserved this second-class treatment. Justice Henry Brown, who authored the separate but equal doctrine, held that Puerto Rico and the other territories didn't need to be afforded full rights under the Constitution because the islands were ''inhabited by alien races, differing from us in religion, customs, laws, methods of taxation, and modes of thought.'' That, my friends, is racism defined. And it is both past and present when it comes to the rationale for the historical and continued mistreatment of the people of Puerto Rico.

It is time for that mistreatment to change—not just by doing right by Puerto Rico at this moment, at their hour of need. Yes, it is time for President Trump to command that FEMA and the U.S. military and the powers that be in Puerto Rico turn the lights back on right now. Congress should give Puerto Rico every cent they need.

I am glad that we came together this week to approve the latest round of emergency aid, but it is long past time that we addressed the second-class treatment we have given the people of Puerto Rico for decades. Even that racist 1901 Supreme Court decision contemplated that the territories' unequal status could only be justified temporarily. It is time to untie the hands of the Puerto Rican people and ensure that they have full economic and political rights.

I hope my colleagues will join me in this conversation in the coming months. It is just as important as the one we are having on emergency response because if anything good can come from the disaster of Hurricane Maria, maybe it is that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, Republicans have spent months trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They knew that tens of millions of Americans would lose their care, they knew it would betray our Federal trust responsibility to Native Americans, and they knew it would throw one-fifth of our economy into chaos. TrumpCare failed because the American people opposed it. Americans spoke out against it in record numbers. TrumpCare failed to pass four times. We hope that now we have put that to bed and we can move on.

But rather than listening to millions of Americans, President Trump has responded by sabotaging the Affordable Care Act. His reckless behavior is already causing chaos in the marketplace. His actions have hyped up the cost of premiums. He has sent out-of-pocket costs through the roof. Instead of helping Americans get better healthcare, he has put it out of reach for millions.

I commend my colleagues Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY. They have found a bipartisan solution to this new healthcare crisis caused by our President. I urge Leader MCCONNELL to put it onto the floor.

The Affordable Care Act isn't the only healthcare program at risk. The President and Republicans are letting funds run dry for other critical health programs. Last month, the Children's Health Insurance Program expired. CHIP insures almost 9 million children across the country, including over 11,000 kids in my home State of New Mexico. The Community Health Centers Program also expired last month.

Republicans failed to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Services. That is one of the most effective health programs that we have. Without it, more than 1,000 New Mexico parents could miss out on home visits. They will not get crucial information about how to nurse their newborns, recognize healthy behavior in infants, and teach basic skills to their children. The Special Diabetes Program for Indians is also set to expire in December.

I urge Republicans to work with us to reauthorize these critical healthcare programs. We need to act urgently. We can get this done by Thanksgiving or earlier if we work together.

Madam President, I want to talk about CHIP first.

CHIP provides comprehensive health insurance for kids whose families do not quite qualify for Medicaid but who cannot afford private insurance. CHIP covers basic medical care, like immunizations, prescriptions, routine check-ups and dental visits. Thanks to CHIP, the rate of uninsured kids in America has dropped from 14 percent to 4.5 percent.

CHIP has been a lifesaver for some families. This is Colton. He is from the small town of Anthony, NM. Colton was 8 years old when he was diagnosed with cancer. Fortunately, the cancer was treatable, and he was insured by CHIP. So the cost of his treatment and medications were covered. Without CHIP, Colton's family would have had to have paid hundreds of dollars a month for his treatment, which is the cost of a month's rent.

Families should not have to choose between lifesaving care for their children and a roof over their heads.

Colton's father wrote to the Santa Fe New Mexican, and it read:

> Watching my son battle for his life was almost more than I could bear. I couldn't imagine dealing with the stress of scraping together everything we had to cover the medical bills if we didn't have coverage. Having [CHIP] allowed us to focus on what was truly important—Colton's future and being there for my family as we went through this life-changing experience.

But, now, States are looking at contingency plans. New Mexico has reserves but only until next spring. Some States will be forced to cover all of the cost in just a few months, and others are preparing to send notices to families that their coverage will end. No parent who is already in crisis because of a sick child should have to go through that. CHIP was a bipartisan success story. I hope that we can get back to working together on this.

The 50-year-old Community Health Centers Program delivers comprehensive healthcare services to some of our Nation's most vulnerable individuals—schoolchildren, people experiencing homelessness, agricultural workers, and our veterans. In New Mexico, 17 of these clinics serve 333,000 patients in 90 underserved and rural communities.

The Community Health Centers are also important to the economy in rural communities. In New Mexico, they employ almost 3,000 people across the State. These clinics cannot sustain a 70-percent funding cut if Federal support is canceled. Many would be forced to shut their doors.

I recently visited one of these clinics—the De Baca Family Practice Clinic in Fort Sumner, NM. It provides high-quality medical services to over 3,000 patients. Over one-fifth of its patients are children, and another one-fifth are seniors, but if funding runs out, the De Baca Family Practice Clinic will be forced to start laying off essential medical staff and to reduce its hours.

Clinic director Lisa Walraven told me: ''You simply cannot reduce funding by 70 percent from a small frontier healthcare facility and expect anything other than a significant loss of access to care.''

Both CHIP and community health centers provide preventive care to underserved communities throughout New Mexico. They are supporting our healthcare system to ensure that we don't let any families fall through the cracks.

Indian Country also depends on these programs and others like them to provide vital care to their communities. The Federal Government has a trust and treaty obligation to provide healthcare to Native Americans. Yet the Indian Health Service is severely underfunded. CHIP and similar programs help to supplement care that the Indian Health Service cannot provide. CHIP currently covers more than 1,400 Native American children in New Mexico. Allowing these programs to expire would betray our treaty obligations.

Another program cited that is critical to Indian Country is the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. It provides grants to Native communities for diabetes treatment and prevention. Without proper treatment, diabetes can lead to limb amputation and kidney failure. The disproportionate impact on Native Americans is a public health problem that we cannot ignore.

This program is making real progress. It helps to fund over 300 Native health programs in 35 States, including 29 programs in New Mexico. They help educate communities about how to prevent diabetes and provide care so that Native patients can manage their diabetes more effectively.

It is one of the most effective public health initiatives ever undertaken by the Federal Government. Diabetes-related kidney failure has dropped 54 percent among Native Americans. In some States, like Alaska, leg amputations among Native people with diabetes have decreased more than 68 percent. This program literally saves life and limb.

Program directors across Indian Country tell me that without this funding they will have to start laying off staff and limiting their diabetes programming. We need to provide funding to Tribal communities so that they can invest in projects that will be more effective in preventing diabetes over time.

Congress must act to allow this successful program to reach its full potential. We cannot allow diabetes to become a death sentence in Indian Country once again.

The failure to fund CHIP, the failure to fund the community health centers, home visiting health services, and the Special Diabetes Program will force families into another health crisis. Every day that we neglect these programs, more people will suffer. These programs have years—sometimes decades—of proven success.

The American people want Congress to work together to come up with bipartisan solutions. Most of these programs were created through bipartisan cooperation. Let's get back to that spirit and work together for the American people again.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, President Trump has been in office now for more than 9 months. For this entire time, Senate Democrats have been trying to obstruct him from doing the very job that he was elected by the American people to do. The President has laid out his agenda to create jobs, to grow the economy, and to help hardworking American taxpayers. Yet Democrats will do everything they can to stop the President from putting his team in place to accomplish these goals.

They have tried to stop the President's legislative agenda because they know that his policies will actually work. When Republican policies become law, Democrats know that the people will see how successful these Republican policies are. I think Democrats are worried that they may never win another election again once we get these policies into place. That is why we have seen a record number of delays and obstructions by the Democrats in the Senate. They have done it on legislation, and they have even blocked the President from filling some of the most basic jobs within his administration.

It started on day one. Normally, on Inauguration Day, the President gets a substantial number of people confirmed to his Cabinet. The idea is to let the President get his team in place so that it can hit the ground running. President Obama had six of his Cabinet Secretaries confirmed on Inauguration Day, and President Bush had seven Secretaries confirmed on Inauguration Day. These confirmations were by voice vote, but that was not the case with President Trump—just two with rollcall votes on Inauguration Day.

Republicans in the Senate did not do anything to try to block the Cabinet Secretaries for President Obama, for we understood that it was best to give a new President a chance and for all of us to work together when we could. With George W. Bush, it was seven. That is how it usually works, but not anymore—no, not with this group of Democrats in the Senate. They really were never interested in giving President Trump a chance. They really do not seem to be working together. Last January, President Trump had two people confirmed to the Cabinet on Inauguration Day—the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security. They were the only two jobs that the Democrats allowed the President to fill.

In President Trump's first 9 months in office, Democrats have continued to block the way. They have allowed just 185 of his nominees to take their jobs. That is how ridiculous the Democrats have been in trying to keep President Trump from putting his team in place. By this far into the administration at the same time, President Obama had 364 nominees in place. The Democrats have blocked judges, Cabinet Secretaries, and other high-ranking officials.

Now, it is interesting because you have seen this. Many of these nominees even have Democrat support, and they are not controversial at all, but Democrats are doing everything they can to slow down the process. During President Obama's first 9 months, he had 364 confirmed. So President Obama had gotten 2 for every 1 that President Trump has gotten confirmed.

There are 81 of President Trump's nominees who have gone through the committees and another some number today. They are 81 people who have been nominated by the President for positions in the government who are just waiting right now for a vote on the Senate floor. Many of these people got through the nomination process in June but are still waiting and being blocked by Democrats in the Senate. It is outrageous.

Do Democrats really think that these are not important jobs—that they do not need people in those jobs to do the important work that they have been assigned to do?

I believe that we should confirm as many of them as possible today. There are 13 judges waiting for confirmation. There are 8 U.S. attorneys waiting, including the U.S. attorney from my home State of Wyoming. These are important jobs.

We all understand that there is a process that we need to go through to fill these positions—to make sure the people are vetted and to make sure they are the right people for the jobs. All of these people have followed the process. They have been doing everything they have been asked to do in that they have filled out the paperwork, filled out the disclosures, and have gone through the committees. Now it is time for the Senate to get its work done. I would say let's do it today.

Interestingly enough, in August, the Democrats finally allowed a significant number of people to be confirmed. More than 60 people were confirmed by voice vote on one day. That is the kind of thing that used to be very routine in the Senate—letting a large number of noncontroversial nominees be approved all at once. It is now time to do it again. There is a significant backlog. So I want to get these folks confirmed now. It is time to clear the deck and let these people get to work who have been nominated and vetted, who have gone through the committees and been approved.

We need to move these nominations because we have more nominations on the way. We are going to have to deal with the nominations of two Cabinet Secretaries for positions that are currently vacant. President Trump has nominated Kirstjen Nielsen to be Secretary of Homeland Security. It is an important job, and she is very qualified for it.

Do the Democrats plan to block her confirmation to be Secretary of Homeland Security? Do the Democrats plan to obstruct this qualified woman from doing the important job she has been nominated by President Trump to do?

The President deserves to have his team in place. The Senate has an obligation to get that work done. The Department of Homeland Security deserves to have a Secretary in place to keep us safe. That is how it has worked in the past and how it should be working now.

These people manage major Departments of the government. They manage many career workers. We know that the Washington bureaucracy has grown tremendously over the years and that it is very difficult to eliminate people who aren't doing their jobs properly. We have seen it in the scandals over the years. Remember the Gold King Mine disaster? President Obama's EPA—the group who is supposed to protect the environment—actually dumped 3 million gallons of toxic wastewater in a river in Colorado. Remember the scandals involving bureaucrats in the Department of Veterans Affairs, the IRS, and the General Services Administration during the Obama administration? We need Presidential appointees in place overseeing these Federal workers to make sure that the government of the people is accountable to the American people.

The Senate needs to be involved in providing oversight through our power of advice and consent. Democrats don't want that to happen. They have been keeping the Senate from providing that oversight, dragging out the process, making sure that the bureaucrats whom they seem to have more faith in are accountable to the American people rather than those whom the American people voted for on election day.

These are important jobs, and we have qualified people ready to do the work. Democrats have delayed for 9 months. It is time to break that logjam today.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

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. 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.

WESTERN WILDFIRES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I am coming to the floor to talk about the challenge we have with forest fires that have been raging in the West, in Montana and Idaho and Washington and Oregon and California, and periodically we have devastating fires in Colorado, New Mexico, and Nevada.

We have to figure out how we do a better job in a multitude of ways. First, it is very important that we quit treating terrible fire years, enormous fires, as if they are some ordinary event because there is currently no FEMA-style reaction to terrible forest fires.

We respond with FEMA for tornadoes and for floods and for tidal waves and for hurricanes and for earthquakes but not forest fires. Well, the result is, the Forest Service runs out of funds to fight the fires in a bad year, and then they have to drain all the other programs they are working on, including the programs to prepare for future timber cuts, the programs to thin the forests, the programs to repair the infrastructure in the Federal forests, all these other efforts, and then they can't resume those efforts until we have restored their funding, which can come often far later.

This fire borrowing has to end. That is why we absolutely need to support the bill Senator WYDEN, Senator CRAPO, and others have been working on to say: Let's create a FEMA-like structure for these worst fires so we end this fire-borrowing devastation of the fire accounts. That absolutely needs to happen.

Right now, there are three funding issues we need to address. First, we need to help out the communities that have been impacted economically by these devastating fires. Some have been scorched directly, others have been profoundly affected by the smoke in the community, others have been affected by highways being shut down, and others have been impacted by tourism dropping dramatically. So it is very important that we send a message to the Department of Agriculture, the Small Business Administration, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to say: Use your emergency programs to assist these communities. We really should make sure they are at the front of the line, along with those who have suffered the disasters in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico, for emergency loans and assistance from the Small Business Administration and for an augmented share of community development block grants to assist them in a very flexible fashion.

I had the chance to meet this weekend with leaders in the Rogue Valley to talk about how smoke had affected them, and company after company after company had been dramatically impacted. Some you would say was obvious. If you have a zip line company and tourists aren't coming because the smoke is very thick, you are going to be impacted, but others are a little less obvious; for example, the production of wine and the potential impact of the smoke and the fires directly on the harvest but then also on perhaps tainting the flavor of the wine, which will have an impact down the road.

So we need to make sure we do all we can to assist these communities just as we are assisting the communities that have been devastated by Hurricanes Harvey, Maria, and Irma.

The second thing we need to do is, we need to include $200 million in the next package, the third tranche of assistance for the disasters this year. We need $200 million to fund the repair and replacement of infrastructure and trail infrastructure damaged—the buildings and the trails that were damaged by these forest fires. Now, that $200 million, that goes half to trails and infrastructure that were damaged by the hurricanes and half to those impacted by the fires. Essentially, the damage was roughly equally split. Without this type of funding, the Forest Service will be forced to postpone or cancel projects in fiscal year 2018 to accommodate the recovery. It will compromise the work to remove hazardous trees for public safety, road and trail maintenance, restoring vegetation in watersheds, and rehabilitating wildlife and fish habitat.

The third thing we have to do is seize the moment and invest in fire resilience. Every single time we have a fire season like this—and this season we spent almost twice as much, on average, to fight the fires—people ask: Why don't we do more on the front end to reduce the risk of these fires?

Well, that is such logical thinking to do more on the front end. What do they mean by that? We have millions of acres of second-growth forests. We clearcut them. Some of them regrew naturally. Others were replanted. We replant virtually everything now. After 10 or 20 years, the trees are very close together. The branches are very close to the ground. This is prime territory for fires. Fires love this. Disease loves this. So it becomes a real problem unless you go in and thin the trees enormously—take out a lot of those trees—and proceed to get rid of the hazardous fuels of branches that accumulate on the ground and so forth. But if you do those two things, those forests become much more resistant to fire.

When you are doing this on a stand that is a bit older—20 or 30 years older—you also get a significant supply of sawlogs for the mills. So this is a real win-win situation. You get a forest that is better in resisting fire, you get a forest that is better in resisting disease, you get a forest that is better for timber stands, and you get a forest that is better in terms of being an ecosystem. With all that winning, we need to do more to make it actually happen.

In my State of Oregon, there are 1.6 million acres that have already gone through the environmental process. They are ready to be thinned and have the hazardous fuels removed. In Washington State, it is at least 400,000 acres. There are probably hundreds of thousands of acres in every State from Montana and Idaho to California, Nevada, and New Mexico.

This picture shows the difference. This road right here had a stand on the left that had not been thinned. If you can make out the colors, these trees are dead. They are all brown—dead trees because of the heat of the fire when it swept through. This side of the road had been treated. The trees had been thinned. The brush had been

taken out from below. They often call that mowing. It has had prescriptive fire in it, which means after you have thinned it, you may go 10 or 15 years, and then let fire burn up the shrubs at the base. Therefore, on this side of the road, the forest is undamaged.

In fact, I went out to this area outside of Sisters, OR, this last weekend. It is just remarkable how the area that had been thinned and treated with mowing and prescription fire became very resistant to the fire that was sweeping toward Sisters. It really helped the Forest Service fight the fire because they could easily maneuver through the area that had been thinned, much more than the area that hadn't been thinned. So that Milli fire was stopped before it got to Sisters, thankfully. In other places where the forest hadn't been thinned, the outcome might have been very different.

Let's invest now in this win-win. Let's not succumb to the traditional timber wars of the past. After fires like this, there are those folks who come along and say: We just need to clearcut everything. Let's do a 10,000-square-foot timber sale with no environmental review and allow everything to be cut. That was the 1950s. In fact, we have a bill in this Chamber that says: Do exactly that, and you can take out the old growth and the big trees. The irony of that is those are the trees that are actually fire resistant. Those are the trees you want to leave.

This is a solution that brings the environmental world and the timber world together and provides a supply of sawlogs for our mills. Let's make that type of vision happen. But to do that, we have to fund the effort. We have to have the funds to be able to go in and do that thinning and mowing and fire prescription. That is why we are asking for about $600 million to help thin the forests of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, New Mexico, and wherever else there is a forest that has gone through that environmental review. It is ready for action. Let's put Americans to work in those forests in this win-win strategy.

Three things we need to do: Help our communities that are scorched, proceed to invest in emergency repair of the damaged infrastructure on our forest lands, and invest a significant $500 to $600 million in thinning the forests that have already gone through environmental review.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, for years, I have been calling on Democrats and Republicans to work together to improve the healthcare law. There are some, like me, who recognize the benefits of the existing healthcare law, as well as the areas that need fixing, and I have proposed that we partner together to strengthen our healthcare system.

For the first time, we have legislation in the Senate that has broad bipartisan support and would improve issues with our healthcare system by stabilizing the individual marketplace and lowering premiums for Americans. This is what I have long pushed for. Today, it is more important than ever that we act to pass this bipartisan legislation. I would like to take a few minutes to explain why.

Beginning next week, on November 1, millions of Americans, including Hoosiers, can sign up for healthcare coverage through the individual marketplace. Unfortunately, as consumers prepare to shop for health insurance plans, there is uncertainty and instability in the marketplace and confusion and higher prices for consumers. That wasn't the case earlier this year, as both public and private analyses showed that individual marketplaces were relatively stable and improving.

For the last 10 months, though, the administration has worked to make it harder for Americans to access affordable healthcare and destabilized the markets. For many months, the administration refused to commit to continuing important cost-sharing reduction payments that reduce costs for consumers and, even worse, played politics with these payments. This culminated with the administration's announcement earlier this month that it would discontinue cost-sharing reduction payments. This decision came only weeks before open enrollment.

There is no disputing a simple fact: The administration's actions created uncertainty for insurers, causing some to significantly raise rates and others to leave the market altogether. As a result, many Americans will be forced to pay more for healthcare plans through the individual marketplace.

For example, CareSource, an insurance company that offers insurance to Hoosiers through the individual marketplace, told me earlier this year that rates would rise 2.2 percent if the Federal Government committed to continuing cost-sharing reduction payments. Because the administration refused to do so, rates for CareSource plans are on average now 20 percent higher for Hoosiers than last year.

Centene, the other insurer offering coverage in the marketplace, will have average rate increases of nearly 36 percent. In addition to higher rates, it will be harder for Hoosiers to find help enrolling in healthcare plans because the administration slashed 82 percent of Navigator Program funding for my home State of Indiana—the deepest cut of any State in the country.

Consumers also have a shorter period to enroll than in past years. The administration plans to do maintenance and shut down HealthCare.gov for 12 hours on all but one Sunday throughout the open enrollment period.

It does not have to be this way. As I have said for years, there is another path—a bipartisan path. We should work in a bipartisan manner to improve our healthcare system, all Americans working together. I have pressed the administration to commit to providing stability for health insurance markets and to working together on bipartisan solutions that reduce healthcare costs and ensure access to quality medical care.

Over the past several months, I have engaged in bipartisan conversations in meetings with my colleagues to discuss ways we can partner together to stabilize our healthcare markets. We have talked to a range of healthcare experts. There has been a good-faith effort to find common ground on steps we can take to lower costs for families. That is what we should be doing.

After participating in this effort, I was pleased that Senators LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY reached a bipartisan agreement last week. It makes improvements to our healthcare system and helps reduce costs for our families.

I am proud to cosponsor this legislation. It continues cost-sharing reduction payments that reduce consumers' deductibles. It also reduces copays for two years and restores funding to help Americans navigate signing up for health insurance. It enables more flexibility for States without undermining essential health benefits or harming people who have preexisting conditions.

If this legislation came to a vote today, I am confident it would receive more than the 60 votes needed to pass in the Senate. It has wide-ranging support from both Democrats and Republicans. It has bipartisan support, not only in the Senate but also from Republican and Democratic Governors all across the country. We have heard from groups, including the American Medical Association, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and AARP, urging Congress to move forward on this proposal because it is common sense. It benefits families. It helps stabilize the insurance markets.

It is our job to protect families from unnecessary increases in the cost of healthcare, particularly those within our control. We have an opportunity to do that with the bipartisan Alexander-Murray agreement that we achieved by working together.

The healthcare debate should not be a political game. The stakes are way too high for that because healthcare impacts the well-being and the economic security of millions of Americans.

I have said over and over that the American people expect us to work together to try and make life a little bit better. At the very least, we should do no harm. The Alexander-Murray agreement not only provides relief for families, it actually helps put them in a better place. There is no doubt we have more work to do, but this proposal is an important first step. Let's strengthen the healthcare system and make healthcare more affordable with this bipartisan solution.

I yield back.

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. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ROHINGYA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Indiana for joining me on the floor today to raise awareness of the ethnic cleansing that has been occurring on the other side of our planet, ethnic cleansing by the Burmese military against the Rohingya Muslim minority.

Just last week, together we sent a letter to U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley. It was signed by 21 of our colleagues. It called for ''tangible actions against the Burmese government to end the violence, to help the Burmese people and make clear that there will be consequences for those who commit such atrocities against civilians.''

I am pleased to partner with my colleague on this. I think he will share some remarks, and then I will follow up with some remarks of my own.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his leadership on this issue. It has been a pleasure to lead a subcommittee in the Foreign Relations Committee with Senator MERKLEY. We have always worked in a constructive fashion on some consequential issues and none more consequential than the one before us today.

With respect to the crisis in Burma, we recently met with the lead person on an international NGO who just returned from camps in Bangladesh. He briefed us on some of the horrible circumstances facing these individuals who have been forced out of Burma.

This last Friday, as Senator MERKLEY indicated, we also led a letter to Ambassador Haley regarding the Burma crisis. I would also note that we had an important hearing on this topic yesterday in the full Foreign Relations Committee. I commend our leadership for putting that together.

I want to share some of my thoughts about this crisis. Before I do, I would like to acknowledge folks back home in the State of Indiana. I happen to represent a significant number of Burmese Americans. These are patriotic fellow Hoosiers, who have played an instrumental role helping to educate me and members of my team on this crisis, and I am happy we can be responsive to their concerns.

It is important for all Americans to understand what is happening in America and everything outside our shores. Burma is a country that doesn't typically capture the imagination or attention of people in the United States, but, right now, in light of this humanitarian crisis, it requires all of our attention.

The Burmese military has conducted a deplorable campaign of violence against the Rohingya Muslim minority, including the systematic use of arson, murder, and rape. Our State Department tells us that nearly 300 villages have been either partially or completely destroyed by fire just since August 25 of this year by the Burmese military. That is more than half of the approximately 470 Muslim villages in northern Rakhine State.

Ambassador Haley has indicated that the Burmese military's actions constitute a sustained campaign to cleanse the country of an ethnic minority—ethnic cleansing. The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights has referred to this situation as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.

We have seen more than 600,000, who are mostly of the Rohingya ethnic minority, flee the violence in the Rakhine State and seek refuge in Bangladesh. They travel on foot for days, carrying what they can of their belongings, carrying their young children. It is mostly women and children who make this trek. Upon arrival in Bangladesh, we have been briefed that many of them require immediate lifesaving assistance.

To put this severity in some measure of context, yesterday, our Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development characterized the resulting population movement as ''almost unprecedented''—almost unprecedented—amidst all of the other challenges we have seen in recent years, including the migrant crisis coming out of the Middle East and across the shores of the Mediterranean. Some research suggests the refugee flow from Burma has been swifter than the exodus from Rwanda in 1994.

Many Americans will say: You know, honestly, we have a lot of challenges in the world. Why should I care about this one? Well, here is why: In Burma, we see a group of people—the Rohingya—being systematically targeted because of their ethnicity. This, of course, runs afoul of our basic values, the principles upon which our country was founded. These principles inform the rules of the international order that has existed for some number of decades now. These rules are the mortar that holds the order together. We simply cannot allow certain rules of international behavior to be violated or that will encourage other bad actors, and they will continue to be undermined, thus, undermining our national interests.

Recent history demonstrates that the systematic violation of fundamental human rights sooner or later engenders security threats to Americans, to our allies, and to our collective interests—think of Tunisia, think of Syria, think of the countries of Yemen or Nigeria. There are almost countless examples just in recent history where we have seen or are seeing right now the depravation of basic human rights. That, in turn, is undermining our values and our national interests.

Let me apply this observation about the linkage between our values and our interests—not just domestically but internationally—to the situation in Burma. We know the past and present Burmese Governments have systematically deprived the Rohingya population of their most fundamental human rights. Not surprisingly, this has compelled a small number to join the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, ARSA.

The most recent wave of ethnic cleansing began after ARSA conducted a coordinated attack on Burmese security outposts, and the Burmese military responded with disproportionate military actions and deplorable attacks on civilians.

Here is a point the Burmese Government and the Burmese military must understand. By refusing to treat the Rohingyas as full, equal citizens and by attacking their own people who just want to live in peace, the Burmese military is only going to increase the number of Rohingyas who will be radicalized, exacerbating the very problem the Burmese military says it is trying to address. So this is not in Burma's interest. I can't emphasize that enough.

Before the most recent iteration of this crisis, in December 2016, the International Crisis Group—an international nongovernmental organization—issued a report titled ''Myanmar: A New Muslim Insurgency in Rakhine State.'' The report said a number of things, among them that the ''continued use of disproportionate force that has driven tens of thousands from their homes or across the border to Bangladesh . . . could create conditions for further radicalizing sections of the Rohingya population that transnational jihadists could exploit.''

As we saw in Syria—to choose just one comparative example—when the government fails to respect the basic human rights of their citizenry, then conflict ensues. It can lead to far wider radicalization. The conflict becomes a magnet, a magnet for international terrorists. It becomes a factory that creates more international terrorists.

In short, when governments commit systematic and large-scale violence, oppression, and injustice against its own people, it creates a fertile ground for Islamist terrorist recruitment and radicalization. This is contrary to the interests of everyone, including the Burmese Government.

Further, if left unaddressed, the humanitarian and security situation in Burma and Bangladesh will worsen and increasingly threaten regional stability and U.S. national security interests.

The United States must continue to lead. There has to be an international response in Burma. We need other partners to step up and participate in that response, but the United States must continue to lead. Part of leading comes down to clarity. What do we want of the Burmese Government? I see at

least four things the Burmese Government must do.

First, the Burmese Government and their military must immediately end its ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingyas. Second, the Burmese Government must address the root of this conflict by implementing the recommendations of a U.N. panel, the so-called Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. Third, the Burmese Government must permit safe access for journalists, for humanitarians, and for a United Nations fact-finding mission and all of their personnel so we can figure out precisely what is going on and who is responsible. Finally, the Burmese Government must facilitate the safe and voluntary return of all these individuals who have been displaced.

When I leave the Senate floor today, I am scheduled to immediately visit with Burma's Ambassador to the United States. The points I just mentioned are points I intend to reiterate directly to that Ambassador.

Moving forward, the United States should lead efforts to document atrocities in Burma however we can so the perpetrators can be held accountable. I also support the administration's announcement yesterday that it is exploring accountability mechanisms that are already available under U.S. law, including the so-called Global Magnitsky targeted sanctions.

I call on countries like China and Russia to support the suspension of all international weapons sales to the Burmese military. They should not be transferring weapons to this murderous regime.

In conclusion, as Senator MERKLEY and I stated in our letter on Friday to Ambassador Haley, now is the time. Now is the time to take bold and effective actions against the Burmese Government to end the violence, not just to help the Burmese people but to help stabilize the region and protect U.S. national security interests. Now is the time to uphold our fundamental values, the values, frankly, of civilized nations. Now is the time to work with this administration and colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure we can reach as peaceful and as positive a resolution to this horrible situation as possible.

I want to close by once again acknowledging the tremendous leadership of Senator MERKLEY. I thank him for his partnership in this effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague and the opportunity for us to work together to help shine a light on this moment of great atrocities in the world. A great deal of what we are calling for is for America to do more to shine a light on it and for the world to work together, not just to shine a light on it but to end it and to proceed to have as much healing as can possibly take place.

I thank my colleague from Indiana for being deeply in this conversation. It is a real pleasure to work on the Foreign Relations Committee together.

We must address this situation. According to a report from the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, ''government forces and Buddhist extremists in Burma have carried out 'a well-organized, coordinated and systematic' campaign of human rights violations against the Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State,'' with a strategy to ''instill deep and widespread fear and trauma—physical, emotional and psychological—among the Rohingya population.'' This comes after the commissioner's statement that this ''security operation,'' as they refer to it, in Burma was ''a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.''

As we ponder international relations, we see from time to time that one group, somewhere in the world, will respond to deep tribal impulses and prejudices and seek to wipe out another group. These are horrific moments in history, and we have seen this movie—this situation—occur time and again. After such atrocities, the world has said ''never again''—''never again,'' meaning that we will respond when we see this happening. We will apply great pressure. We will coordinate with the world to make sure it stops, because such effort to wipe out another ethnic group is so unacceptable and it is such a crime against humanity.

But here we are, and it is happening right now in Burma. It is happening with a Buddhist nation.

We normally associate the Buddhist religion with a main emphasis on peaceful conduct. Yet this tribal impulse—these deep prejudices are so powerful that they overcome whatever peaceful impulse there is, and they have resulted in a massive effort to wipe out the Rohingya people. In the course, there have been a massive number of rapes. There have been children killed right in front of their mothers. There have been villages surrounded by soldiers and then the village huts set on fire, and then they have been shot as they flee. This is about as inhumane as it can get.

Something close to 300 villages have burned to the ground. By some estimates, 3,000 civilians have been killed. A few weeks ago, we were talking about 400,000 refugees pouring into Bangladesh. Now, the number is 600,000 Rohingya refugees.

Roughly half the Rohingyas live in Burma, and those refugees include 300,000 children. Think about the type of trauma those children have just experienced and the challenges they will have regaining a foundation to thrive. Then there are those who are internally displaced inside of Burma, who have been driven out of their villages but haven't been able to make their way to Bangladesh. This is the challenge we face.

There is an area of Bangladesh called Cox's Bazar. That is where these two main refugee camps are. International aid groups are working to quickly get as many resources as they can into this area so that people do not starve and so that medical wounds can be addressed. But there is still a significant lack of food, a lack of clean water, and a lack of sanitary bath and toilet facilities. That condition is ripe for spreading disease—diseases like cholera.

When I was home in Oregon, I met with a group of Rohingya refugees who came and settled in Oregon. As we can imagine, they have a very personal connection to what is happening. Some of them have distant relatives still there. Some have immediate family members. They don't know exactly what has happened to everyone in the middle of this chaos.

We also heard about villages that didn't get burned down but where the military was blockading people from leaving the village to go to the fields to secure food and blocking them from leaving the fields and going back into the village, probably responding to international outrage over villages being burned and essentially resorting to a strategy of starving out the villages to drive people away. Imagine being trapped in one of those villages, knowing what is happening to village after village after village, knowing children have been slaughtered, women have been raped and often killed, and men have been shot. The desperation is enormous.

I heard firsthand accounts of conditions of refugees from Reza Uddin, who had just returned from a 2-week trip to visit them. He told powerful and moving stories about children who had been brutalized, children who had been separated from their parents, children who might possibly now be orphans because it is not clear if their parents are still alive or, if alive, where they are.

The world collectively has not done enough. The community of nations has not done enough to address this unspeakable brutality. Bangladesh should be complimented for accepting these refugees fleeing for their lives. They have been cooperative. It is a challenge for them, and we should acknowledge that. We should continue to ask them to do everything possible and to give the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and various aid organizations full opportunity, full access, and full authority to be in and assist those in these refugee camps.

The United States, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations have condemned the actions of the Burmese, and that is certainly appropriate, but we haven't done enough. We have not taken the steps to which my colleague referred to strengthen sanctions or coordinate international countries to all weigh in. The only thing that will make a real difference here is pressure on the Burmese military. They are in charge. We can criticize the civilian government in Burma, and many have, and they have been unable to stop what

is going on and sometimes often reflect the prejudices that contributed to this, but it is the military that makes the decisions.

We had testimony from the State Department yesterday, and one of the officials used the term ''vigilantes'' for what the vigilantes are doing in this oppression. That is not the right term to use. This is not uncoordinated action. This is action coordinated through the military decision-making process. You don't surround camps, you don't have significant planning that goes into it, and have it just be vigilantes. Vigilantes may be involved, but they are not the driving force. They might be assisting the soldiers in some cases, but this is a coordinated act of the military of Burma, and it is important that the community of nations convey to the military how unacceptable this is and that there will be significant consequences.

My colleague has referred to the fact that in this situation no military sales should be made to such a military. That is important, but that takes a conversation among nations, and the United States needs to be deeply engaged in this.

There is a lot of international fundraising going on. There was a donors conference held on Monday to assist the refugees. It raised about $200 million or a little more in new funds. That is about $400 per refugee. That is not nearly enough to provide for shelter or care in a situation with complete lack of access to fields or farming or support. It is going to take more than that. We should be involved in working with the United Nations, UNICEF, World Health, UNHCR, or the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, and the World Food Program to step up and assist. I certainly believe it would be very helpful to have President Trump take this issue on and speak from the heart of our Nation to this dark and evil deed that is happening—that we reject it and we will partner with the rest of the world to end it.

I do feel that there is a history in which we have helped lead nations in these situations. We haven't always been there. I know that President Clinton said that the biggest regret of his administration is that he didn't respond quickly in Central Africa when the Tutsis and Hutus went to battle against each other, slaughtering each other with machetes. This is a chance for us to really respond—to respond aggressively, to have that moral clarity, and to exercise that leadership in the world. I join my colleague in calling for such action for more assistance, with the aid to both Burma and Bangladesh, for the moral clarity to take action that pressures the Burmese military in a significant and compelling way and to provide assistance in the right of return—the ability of these individuals to be able to return to their villages.

Traditionally, this group has been denied citizenship. Early on, we heard from the civilian government in Burma: We will let them come back if they show they are citizens. No. 1, they have never been granted citizenship. No. 2, after a horrific situation like this, if they did have papers, they wouldn't have papers now. They would have been burned along with the villages. There needs to be a change in attitude, a change of heart among the Burmese civilian leadership, and certainly among the military, to lead an effort in the peaceful tradition, the Buddhist tradition, of embracing this diversity and returning these people to their land.

Former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan now serves as chairman of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. He and his team have laid out a report with very specific actions—actions that will help end the cycle of radicalization and the cycle of violence. We need to work to try to make sure those things are implemented, to show oppressive governments and the rest of the world that the world will not stand—that the world will respond, and respond aggressively, in a coordinated, forceful way when ethnic cleansing occurs. That is the best deterrent we could have for future atrocities.

Again, I thank my colleague for being in this dialogue and for his support to shine this light and to take a compelling more forceful action. Like him, I look forward to meeting with the Ambassador from Burma later today.

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. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING PAUL AND SHEILA WELLSTONE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I wish to speak this afternoon to honor the memory of Paul and Sheila Wellstone. Today marks 15 years since we lost Paul and Sheila, their daughter Marcia, and staff members Tom Lapic, Mary McEvoy, and Will McLaughlin. Because Paul was such a memorable and incredible person, it is hard to believe that it has been 15 years since we lost all of them.

For me, as for so many Minnesotans, it is impossible to forget the moment that we first heard about their plane going down. It is impossible to forget the wait to get the final news that there were no survivors. That is how much Paul and Sheila meant to the people of our State.

I get my own special reminders every day. First, I get a reminder from the employees at the Capitol who were around when Paul graced these hallways. They remember him because he treated everyone with dignity. Whether it was the tram operator, the elevator operator, or the police at the front door, he treated them as though they were Senators. I also have the flags in my office from his Senate office. Every day, they are a reminder for me of Paul and all that he did for the people of our State.

Paul and Sheila were always on the move. They were full of joy. They were persistent in their fight against injustices, small and large. During his lifetime as an educator, as an activist, and as a U.S. Senator, Paul Wellstone touched the lives of people throughout Minnesota and across the country. That is because his philosophy was simple. A lot of people, he said, would have people paid to represent them in Washington, but he was going to represent the other people. As he said in one of his famous campaign ads, he wasn't there to represent the Rockefellers; he was there to represent the ''little fellers.''

If you go to any local mental health group, they remember Paul. If you go to any Somali event in our State, they remember Paul. If you go to any community on the Iron Range in Minnesota, they remember Paul—both the man and then what he did.

Paul was my friend and mentor. He told me that I should run for office, and, as he did with so many others, he taught me that politics should have a purpose.

He also taught me how to campaign on city buses. This is how he would do it. At Nicollet Mall—being from a nearby State, the Presiding Officer is aware of Nicollet Mall in the city of Minneapolis. We would get on a city bus at one end of the mall, and we would work it as though we had just got on the bus: Meet everyone on the bus, go to the end, get off, and then get on another bus going the other way and meet a whole group of people. I have no idea what the busdrivers thought after an hour of this, but that is what we did.

Paul Wellstone worked it bus by bus, block by block, precinct by precinct, and he made a lasting impression on people in a way that made them believe and know that getting involved in politics could make a real difference in their lives. He had an unending sense of optimism—optimism that maybe people he didn't agree with in this Chamber would eventually change their views.

He made a lot of friends here, on both the Democratic and Republican sides of the aisle. That was the message Paul took to new citizens, new voters, and everyone looking to get involved. He told them that working in public service can make a difference, and he showed them through his actions.

He had many passions. He fought for everything from campaign finance reform to improving our rural economies. He fought against veteran homelessness, to protect the environment, and, of course, he fought for the rights of workers.

He truly believed, as he famously said, that ''we all do better when we all do better'' and that politics is simply about improving people's lives.

Anyone who ever met or talked with Paul found out that he had a special passion for helping those struggling with mental illness. That was shaped by his own family. As a young child, Paul watched his brother Steven's traumatic descent into mental illness. In college, his brother suffered a severe mental breakdown and spent the next 2 years in hospitals. Eventually, he recovered and graduated from college with honors, but it took his immigrant parents years to pay off the hospital bills.

Paul would always talk about how, when he grew up, his house was dark because no one wanted to talk about mental illness back then because it had so much stigma. He wanted to get it out in the sunlight. He knew that there were far too many families going through the same experience, too many devastated by the physical and financial consequences of mental illness. He knew that we could and we should do better. For years as a Senator, he fought for funding for better care, better services, and better representation for the mentally ill, and he fought for mental health parity in health insurance coverage.

Even years after his death, Paul's voice was heard loud and clear. Congressman Ramstad from Minnesota, a Republican Congressman at the time, took up the cause in the House. I helped. Ted Kennedy led the way and, of course, Pete Domenici, who had paired up with Paul on this important bill.

Finally, in 2008, we passed the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act. The bill requires insurance companies to treat mental health on an equal basis with physical illness. For Paul, this fight was always a matter of civil rights, of justice, and of basic human decency, and that landmark legislation is one fitting way we honor him.

Sheila, of course, also dedicated herself to helping others, especially survivors of violence. I had the opportunity to work closely with Sheila when I served for 8 years as Hennepin County Attorney. She focused on domestic violence and was instrumental in creating and getting the funding for the Hennepin County Domestic Abuse Center. That center is an international model for serving victims of domestic violence by bringing together a full range of services and resources in one central location. Victims of domestic violence don't have to go through the redtape that would be difficult even for a lawyer to figure out.

Of course, one of Paul's greatest legislative achievements was the work he did, along with Vice President Biden and others, to pass the original Violence Against Women Act. It was a team effort, and Sheila was right there on the frontlines with Paul.

Together, they accomplished so much. Their commitment to others never wavered, and neither did they.

It was just a few weeks before that tragic crash that I last saw Sheila and Paul. Sheila and I had been asked to speak to a group of new citizens, immigrants from Russia. It was a very small group, and we were there to talk about our own immigrant experiences, our own relatives. I remember she talked about her relatives in Appalachia, and I talked about my relatives on the Iron Range coming over from Slovenia. The event was winding down. It was a small, small event in a synagogue with these new immigrants, and, all of a sudden, a big surprise—in walked Paul. He wasn't supposed to be there. It was just a few weeks, a month away, from one of the biggest elections he had ever faced in the U.S. Senate. But he had gotten on an early flight and had come home from Washington. There he was—he and a group of immigrants and us—with no press, no TVs, not even a big crowd, all just a few weeks before his election.

He came for two reasons. He loved Sheila, and he wanted to be there to support her. But he was also there because he loved the immigrant experience. He embraced it. His family, like so many Minnesota families, was an example of how you can come to America, succeed in America, and then, in turn, help America succeed.

That is my last memory of Paul as he stood before those immigrants, telling about his own story, embracing them. I will remember him in that way, but I will also remember the joy he felt for politics, how he would run around that green bus of his, with people running alongside him on the parade routes.

In the last year of his life, he told the public he had MS, and he couldn't run like that anymore. So he would stand in the back of the bus with Sheila and wave. What was so amazing about it was that he had energized so many people in those green Wellstone shirts to run around that bus that you didn't even notice he wasn't running. He had given them the energy and the hope to carry on his work, and they were doing it for him.

Now, 15 years after we lost Paul and Sheila, it is our job to carry on and run around that bus. That is organizing, that is politics, and that is the gift of joy in improving people's lives that Paul, Sheila, Marcia, and those other beloved staff members left for us.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the devastation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and the need to rebuild the electric grid in a more resilient and sustainable way.

Over the last few months, communities around the country have been devastated by natural disasters. We have had terrible hurricanes in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as tragic wildfires across the West. These communities need immediate help, and that is why the disaster supplemental appropriations bill we passed yesterday is so important. I am glad this bill provides nearly $19 billion to replenish FEMA's emergency disaster accounts that help communities start to rebuild, but it is just a downpayment. As we know, it will take a lot more Federal assistance.

One thing we need to focus on is the electric grid. Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria demonstrated the risks the electric grid faces from extreme weather. The communities hardest hit in Texas and Florida underwent days—sometimes much longer—without any power, and when this happens, it is a serious risk to the safety and health of everyone in the area.

Now, American citizens in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are facing a major humanitarian crisis, and the Federal Government needs to do everything it can to assist.

More than a month after Hurricane Maria hit, only 25 percent of Puerto Rico has access to electricity, and it will take many months to get power back to those communities. That is completely unacceptable. Without electricity, pumping stations can't supply drinking water to households. In fact, 25 percent of the island still lacks access to potable water. Without electricity, wastewater treatment facilities can't operate, which means raw sewage is contaminating rivers and streams. Without electricity, cell towers cease to function, making communication with first responders difficult. Without a stable electric grid, hospitals have to rely on backup power to keep lifesaving equipment working. That backup power is often diesel generators that require fuel, which is in short supply.

Given the dire situation, it is no surprise that we have already seen tens of thousands of Puerto Ricans leave the island, with nearly 60,000 arriving in Florida alone.

The majority of the transmission and distribution lines were destroyed in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. We need to rebuild them, and I think we can all agree they should be rebuilt to withstand the next disaster. So let's rebuild the electric grid in a more resilient and sustainable way that reduces future threats and future costs. I have been talking with my Republican colleagues and members of the administration, and everyone agrees this is a good idea. That is why I want to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to include language in the next supplemental disaster aid package that does exactly this.

I am talking about investing in a more modern and more decentralized

grid so that not everyone is relying on a handful of powerplants that can go down. Decentralized energy resources operating in microgrids are more likely to remain functioning during and after storms. There are many instances of distributed energy keeping important facilities online after natural disasters, including the Texas Medical Center, which is the largest medical complex in the world, which has a combined heat and power plant that kept running during Hurricane Harvey. That is because during extreme weather, these technologies can go into island mode or operate independent of the grid.

Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have some of the highest electricity prices in the United States, and that is because they rely on oil, coal, and gas that must be shipped from the mainland. While these islands do not have fossil fuels, do you know what they do have? Lots of Sun. And the rapidly declining costs of distributed clean energy technologies such as solar, wind, energy efficiency, and battery storage, in many instances make them more affordable than existing power generation, which means these clean energy technologies could help reduce prices.

These investments will also save money in the long run. In 2005, the National Institute of Building Sciences completed a study for FEMA that found that every dollar invested in disaster preparedness and resilience saves $4 in future avoided losses. We know we are going to see more hurricanes and extreme weather events, so let's rebuild in such a way that impacts are not as severe the next time around. Let's protect people and save taxpayer money.

That is my message: Let's protect people, and let's all save taxpayer money and do the thing that makes sense.

Thank you.

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. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is nice to see the distinguished Senator in the chair presiding. I am not sure, in my 183 ''Time to Wake Up'' speeches, I have yet had the pleasure of speaking while the Senator was presiding.

I am here to once again call for us to wake up to the corporate capture of Congress and this administration—the capture of governance by the fossil fuel industry that keeps us from honestly addressing climate change. There is a saying that ''personnel is policy.'' Well, the Trump personnel for positions at the Environmental Protection Agency reflect a policy to undo the public welfare mission of the Agency and align it with the special interests of the fossil fuel industry.

There is a word for that. It is called corruption, at least as the Founding Fathers knew the meaning of that term. It starts at the top. Trump named Scott Pruitt head of the EPA. Pruitt has a long record of dark money fundraising and long, cozy relationships with Big Energy industry political donors. In effect, he is a tentacle of the fossil fuel climate denial operation, wiggling and wriggling in the Administrator's chair, near his new $25,000 ''cone of silence'' secret communications booth that he built so no one would hear him checking in with his masters.

Results are as expected. The New York Times has reported: ''How Rollbacks at Scott Pruitt's EPA are a Boon to Oil and Gas.'' No surprise. In the 4 months that followed his appointment, Pruitt moved to undo, delay, or otherwise block more than 30 environmental rules benefiting his fossil fuel friends. This regulatory rollback, larger in scope than any over so short a time in the Agency's near-half century history, went straight into the pockets of the fossil fuel industry.

Longtime Pruitt benefactor Devon Energy is cashing in dividends on its investment in Scott Pruitt's political career, as Pruitt is working to eliminate rules on the leaking and flaring of methane, and has rescinded requirements for reporting methane emissions. Devon, as you may recall, is that company whose letter to the EPA Pruitt put on his own Oklahoma attorney general letterhead to mask Devon's hand and submit their work as his own official work as attorney general of his State.

So this hand-in-glove relationship between Devon as the hand and Pruitt as the glove goes back a long way. The EPA has career scientists and legal experts who bring decades of experience in environmental law and science to the EPA who are all being cut out as the Administrator takes drastic steps to undo environmental protections. Just this week, EPA scientists were yanked from a conference in Rhode Island where they were going to talk about climate change. The matter of climate change on Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island is pretty significant. This is the day's Providence Journal, our leading newspaper in Rhode Island. Headline: ''Will climate change negate Bay cleanup?'' It has a big map of Narragansett Bay with all the facilities at risk of being flooded and overwhelmed. It is front page news.

It is a matter of extreme importance in Rhode Island, and EPA yanked out its scientists. They weren't allowed to come down and talk at an event where they were going to talk about climate change. It is not just yanking the scientists. Here is a New York Times article by Lisa Friedman from October 20. Headline: ''EPA scrubs a climate website of 'climate change.'" An EPA website has been scrubbed of scores of links. ''About 15 mentions of the words climate change have been removed from the main page alone. . . .''

It is not just at EPA. Here is today's exclusive headline: ''The Interior Department scrubs climate change from its strategic plan.'' I mean, they act as if this is the Soviet Union and the government is allowed to tell scientists what they can say and not say and put phony propaganda onto official websites and keep scientists from going to meetings because they might actually tell the truth about climate change.

I am the son and grandson of Foreign Service officers. I grew up serving in countries that did that, where the government could tell the scientist: No, you don't say that. No, you don't go there. No, this is the party line. I never thought that would happen in the United States of America—and here we are.

To aid Pruitt in his fossil fuel industry crusade, our President has nominated a parade of fossil fuel lackeys, lobbyists, and operatives whose main qualification seems to be allegiance to their corporate clients and benefactors. It is not just the fossil fuel industry that gets their hacks planted in government offices.

Do you remember in the ''Cat in the Hat,'' where they had Thing One and Thing Two running around? Let's look at Hack One and Hack Two, who just cleared committee today in the Pruitt ''EPA for Sale'' roster.

Hack One is a toxicologist who consults for major chemical corporations and has spent the better part of his professional life fighting regulation of potentially toxic compounds in consumer goods. His name is Michael Dourson. President Trump nominated him to run the EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. A lobbying group for sellers of pesticides, fungicides, and rodenticides called Dourson ''a perfect fit'' for the job—the perfect industry hack for that job, more like.

Hack Two is William Wehrum, nominated to run the EPA Office of Air and Radiation. Wehrum is a lobbyist who has represented a host of major industrial and energy corporations, and the Rubber Manufacturers Association, the American Forest and Paper Association, and the American Petroleum Institute. President George W. Bush actually nominated this guy to the same post in 2006, but the White House withdrew his nomination because it was so controversial.

Well, that was 2006. That was before Citizens United. That was before that decision amped up industry power to the point where it can now ram through conflicted and objectionable candidates with—as happened this morning—unanimous Republican support. Not one Republican Senator on the committee would voice an objection.

When Senators asked questions for the record in the Environment and

Public Works Committee nomination hearing on Wehrum and Dourson, these captured nominees played dumb about the central issues and programs they will oversee if confirmed.

For instance, I asked Dourson if he agreed that ''the tobacco industry manipulated and obfuscated scientific research into the dangers of smoking for decades.'' Dourson, who conducted scientific studies designed, reviewed, and paid for by the tobacco industry and whose name is all over, in hundreds of places, the discovery records of the tobacco industry's denial operation, replied: ''I do not have firsthand knowledge to comment.''

I ''do not have firsthand knowledge to comment''? This is the President's selection to run the office that protects Americans from dangerous chemicals who doesn't know the tobacco industry's history of falsifying science? Please. He worked for them. He was part of it.

Remember that the tobacco industry was taken to court by the U.S. Department of Justice—back when the Department of Justice would take an industry to court—and the Department of Justice won a judgment declaring that tobacco had engaged in a fraud conspiracy to deny tobacco's harms. Dourson sees no evil. He knows nothing.

I asked him whether he believes that hydrofluorocarbons are greenhouse gases and about the global warming potential of methane. His response: I am not sufficiently familiar with the definition of greenhouse gases and do not have the expertise to answer these questions.

He is not familiar with the definition of greenhouse gases? This is basic high school science. Every one of us has a home State university that teaches this stuff. This has been science for more than 100 years.

On to Hack Two, Bill Wehrum. When I asked Wehrum about carbon dioxide's role in the observable effects of climate change, he replied: ''The degree to which manmade greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to climate change has not been conclusively determined.'' This claim just doesn't match the scientific record.

The EPA—the very Agency to which Mr. Wehrum is nominated, along with NOAA—states that ''carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas that is contributing to recent climate change.'' This consensus is held by published climate scientists, by scientific agencies and societies, by all of our National Laboratories, and by universities in America and around the globe.

As I said, every one of us in this room—I haven't found an exception yet, and I have looked, but I expect every Senator has a home State university that doesn't just know this to be true, but it teaches it in its curriculum. But Hack Two sees no evil. He knows nothing.

Wehrum's disregard for well-established science provides a grim preview of what we can expect from him if confirmed. His predictable dodging falls in lockstep with Administrator Pruitt, who has stated he does ''not agree that [carbon dioxide] is a primary contributor to the global warming that we see.'' That puts him in a very small circle of people, every one of whom I think is connected by money to the fossil fuel industry.

I asked Mr. Wehrum what he believes is a healthy standard for ozone. Now, bear in mind that one of the goals of the Clean Air Act is to set national ambient air quality standards for ozone, that the office to which he is nominated oversees this ozone standard, and that the EPA has had ozone standards in place since 1971, more than 45 years.

In response to my question, Wehrum answered: ''I am not familiar with the current science on the health effects of ozone, so I cannot comment on your question as to the appropriate level of the standard.'' Really?

I asked Wehrum whether he agreed with EPA's 2009 finding that the current and projected concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. I asked if he would commit not to narrow or weaken the EPA's endangerment finding. Wehrum wrote back that he had not read the endangerment finding or the record prepared in support of the finding; therefore, he said: ''I currently do not have a view.'' I currently do not have a view? That is funny.

I bet he had a view when he was being paid by the Rubber Manufacturers Association, the American Forest & Paper Association, and the American Petroleum Institute. I guess it was the miraculous, evaporating view.

Maybe these ''see no evil'' nominees, Dourson and Wehrum, don't know the basics of the problems they would confront. Maybe they just don't know, but let's not be fooled here. Polluters have paid these nominees well for their services over the years. They were expert enough to be hired by industry groups as lobbyists and consultants. We know where their allegiances lie. We know who has been paying them. We know whom they will serve.

A preview of coming attractions, coming up before the EPW soon is Andrew Wheeler, Trump's nominee for the EPA's second in command. Wheeler was a top lobbyist for the coal mining behemoth, Murray Energy. Not only did this company support Trump's campaign and provide $300,000 to help pay for his inauguration, Murray Energy has also donated to Pruitt-affiliated political action committees to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars. I can't wait to hear his answers on the role of coal in climate change, childhood asthma, and mercury poisoning.

The sad part of all of this is, the polluting interests that own these nominees also throw their weight around in Congress. So good luck getting an honest look at this mess through congressional oversight.

Over and over, appalling nominees get through confirmation with no Republican dissent, more ''see no evil.'' It is just wrong.

For now, the American public will pay the price of dismantling these regulatory safeguards. They will pay the price in poisonings and carcinogenic exposures, in rising seas and raging wildfires, in childhood asthma and northbound tropical diseases. Mark my words, one day there will be a reckoning for all of this.

When captured EPA officials put payback to their donors first and clean air and public health a way distant second, it stinks. It is crooked by any reasonable definition of the term. It is corrupt in exactly the way the Founding Fathers understood corruption.

The fossil fuel industry will one day be held to account for this binge of corruption and manipulation. ExxonMobil, Koch Industries, Arch Coal, Murray Coal, Peabody Coal, you own this just as the Republican Party does.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to talk about the Healthcare Tax Relief Act, legislation I introduced to delay the health insurance tax that was created by the Affordable Care Act.

This tax is often referred to as the HIT tax. The HIT tax imposes fees on health insurance coverage to consumers. It is a pretty simple business concept that this HIT tax results in. If a fee increases on an insurance policy and the fee goes up—there is a fee charged to the company that issues this insurance policy—then that fee gets passed on to the consumer. It is the consumer, then, who pays the fee in the form of higher health insurance costs.

As is the case with most excise taxes, whether it is an excise tax on food or beverage or any other item of personal good, if this health insurance tax takes effect, costs will be passed on to consumers directly in the form of higher premiums. That is confirmed by the Congressional Budget Office.

This is one of the cost drivers that was built into the Affordable Care Act. This health insurance tax would directly increase the premiums of the consumer's insurance product. This tax was supposed to begin a few years back in 2014. It was going to start at $8 billion, and by 2018 the tax would reach $14.3 billion. However, Congress recognized that this tax was going to have a significant impact on the price of coverage and, as a result, suspended the tax from taking effect in 2017. Without congressional action to delay or stop or prevent this ObamaCare tax from taking place again, this tax will take effect in 2018.

According to nonpartisan actuarial analysis conducted by Oliver Wyman,

an estimated 157 million Americans will be affected by this massive tax. Even more middle-income earners across this country, 157 million Americans and working Americans, are expected to shoulder the weight of this tax.

Oliver Wyman estimated that premiums will rise by 3 percent in each year; 2018, 2019, and 2020. That is 3 percent each year. That is 9 percent over 3 years.

To put this in simple perspective, in Colorado alone, premiums in the individual market rose by 34 percent from plan year 2017 to plan year 2018. Adding an additional 3 percent every year for those 3 years would leave those on the individual market paying nearly 43.3 percent, on average, more year to year if combined with the 2018 increases at the end of that 3-year, 9-percent increase run.

What is more, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, the average individual market premiums have increased by 105 percent from 2013 to 2017. Think about that. When the Affordable Care Act passed, when ObamaCare was passed, a promise was made that the average family would see a decrease in their healthcare costs of $2,500 per family, but, instead, from 2013 to 2017, they saw a 105-percent increase in costs. If the health insurance tax takes effect, as planned by ObamaCare, then we would see another 9-percent increase over the next several years on top of that.

Without congressional action to delay this tax, estimates show that costs will rise between $200 and $300 annually for individuals and $500 annually for families. That is a $200 to $300 increase for individuals and a $500 increase annually for families.

To put that into some perspective, 25 percent of Americans don't have access—emergency access—to $100. In an emergency, 25 percent of Americans don't have immediate access to $100. Yet here we are talking about a mandated law—you have to have insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act—but this law would then increase costs $200 to $300 on an individual and $500 annually for families.

Statistics from the Federal Reserve show how much of a hardship this would create. The Federal Reserve found that 46 percent of Americans did not have enough money to cover a $400 emergency expense. Yet the ObamaCare HIT tax would increase family insurance costs by $500. Forty-six percent of Americans don't have access to $400 in an emergency. Yet the ObamaCare HIT tax would increase it by $500.

This tax has the potential to push over half of Americans into financial ruin, and it would be negligent for Congress to allow this tax to take effect. The financial threat this tax imposes on hard-working families is a far cry from that bold promise that was made to reduce costs by $2,500 per family—one of the biggest Pinocchios, so to speak, of the Affordable Care Act. At a time when we know that almost half of Americans could not shoulder a $400 emergency expense, it would simply be irresponsible to allow this ObamaCare HIT tax to take effect.

Furthermore, the impacts of this tax touch our seniors who have earned their benefits as well. For seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans—and Medicare Advantage is one of the most popular aspects of Medicare—premiums are expected to rise by roughly $370 a year per enrollee if Congress doesn't find a resolution. In many cases, these are fixed-income individuals who would see their premiums increase $370 a year because of the ObamaCare HIT tax.

In addition, seniors enrolled in Medicare Part D prescription drug plans can expect their premiums to increase as well. Hit them on their Medicare plans and hit them on the prescription drug plans—higher costs due to this ObamaCare HIT tax.

Even more, the impacts of the health insurance tax have large-scale consequences in the workplace as well. A study by the National Federation of Independent Business found that allowing the HIT tax to take effect could result in job losses for as many as 283,000 people by 2023. This tax could have the impact of costing 286,000 jobs by 2023. Research and analysis from our most respected actuaries continue to validate the negative consequences of the health insurance tax.

On behalf of all hard-working Americans, I call upon my colleagues in the Senate to join me in cosponsoring this commonsense piece of legislation, the Healthcare Tax Relief Act. Healthcare plans are being finalized right now for the 2018 rate year, and it is urgent for Congress to take action so that consumers are not saddled with yet one more cost that they can't afford.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S BICENTENNIAL

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the bicentennial of the University of Michigan. The university has adopted the motto ''Always Leading, Forever Valiant'' for its bicentennial year—a motto that captures its 200 years at the forefront of American academic excellence.

The genesis of the University of Michigan predates the founding of my home State of Michigan.

On August 26, 1817, Lewis Cass, Governor of the Michigan territory, enacted a charter to create the University of Michigania, aligned with territory judge Augustus Woodward's envisioned System of Universal Science.

In 1852, the university's first president, Henry Philip Tappan, pioneered a model of higher education in which scholars do not settle for existing knowledge but actively pursue new knowledge through rigorous science. This approach solidified the university's enduring legacy as a center for scientific research and discovery.

The university has paved the way for future innovation with many firsts throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It was the first university with a chemical laboratory, the first to own and operate a hospital, the first to teach aeronautical engineering, the first public university with dental and pharmacy schools, and the first with a program in human genetics. Perhaps the most game-changing first—it was the first large State university to open its doors to both men and women.

Today, faculty and students continue to reach new firsts by answering important research questions that will affect future generations. Take, for instance, how the university has laid the groundwork for breakthroughs in American mobility.

In 2015, Mcity, a public-private partnership led by the University of Michigan, became the world's first controlled environment designed to test connected and automated vehicle technologies. The 32-acre simulated urban and suburban landscape is designed to support rigorous, repeatable testing of self-driving car technologies before they are tested on public roads and highways. This hub of innovation reflects our State's legacy as the heart of the American auto industry and will help lead our country into the next era of transportation.

A similar nexus between our past and future is true across nearly every discipline that U of M's research touches—engineering, medicine, social sciences, humanities, and more. Students and faculty are developing new cancer treatments, creating energy-efficient batteries, engaging in cutting-edge environmental science to protect the Great Lakes, and building prototypes of engines to take us to Mars. That is just to name a few.

Tied with the University of Michigan's drive to pursue knowledge is its drive to put that knowledge into action for the greater good. At its core, the university's mission is to serve society. This has been demonstrated by its history of activism and civic engagement.

The university commemorates one such event that occurred on October 14, 1960. Senator John F. Kennedy, whose former desk is just a few feet in front of me here today, delivered an unplanned speech on the steps of the Michigan Union at 2 a.m. He challenged University of Michigan students to work abroad in developing nations in an effort to promote peace. These remarks laid the blueprint for the U.S. Peace Corps, which was established in 1961.

The University of Michigan continues to have a truly global reach. It provides a world-class education to a diverse student body of 63,000 students on its Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses, educating instate, out-of-state, and international students alike. They are drawn to the university's unfaltering endeavor to expand our

base of knowledge and empower individuals to leave a lasting and positive impact on the world around them.

With more than 572,000 living alumni—including my daughter Madeline, who just graduated this past May—the University of Michigan has one of the largest alumni networks, full of artists, astronauts, business and government leaders, entrepreneurs, and humanitarians, as well as Nobel laureates in economics, medicine, and science.

The University of Michigan's many illustrious alumni include U.S. President Gerald R. Ford, Swedish diplomat and humanitarian Raoul Wallenberg, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Arthur Miller, actor James Earl Jones, civil rights leader Mary Frances Berry, Google cofounder Larry Page, and author and scholar Robin Wright. Many more alumni will follow in these footsteps. They share a drive to make what is affectionately known as the Michigan Difference and, of course, cheer for the Maize and Blue.

I would like to congratulate the University of Michigan on its bicentennial as we look forward to a future driven by Michigan innovation.

With that, I will close with something very simple: ''Go Blue!''

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.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue that is devastating families and communities in my home State of New Hampshire and across the United States: the fentanyl, heroin, and opioid crisis. This crisis is the most pressing public and safety challenge that New Hampshire faces. It does not discriminate. It affects people in every community and from every walk of life.

In 2016 alone, 485 people in New Hampshire lost their lives as a result of this epidemic. The rising use of synthetic drugs like fentanyl is making matters worse, killing people faster with smaller amounts. Last year, 72 percent of drug-related deaths in New Hampshire involved fentanyl. Behind those numbers are real people—moms and dads, sons and daughters who are dying. Their loss reverberates in pain and suffering for the family and friends whom they have left behind.

The people of my State have a longstanding tradition of sharing their stories and their priorities with their elected officials who represent them. Everywhere I go, I hear stories from those families and friends of people who have been affected by this crisis. Granite Staters are stepping forward and explaining what they have gone through, all in an attempt to break down the stigma of addiction, push for solutions, and hope that they can help others by making their voices heard.

Earlier this year, Greg and Linda of Derry, NH, reached out to my office to share the story of their son, who was also named Greg. They wrote to say:

> If you were to put a name and face to this disease, it would be that of the devil. Let's change that. Let's put a face of hope and humanity to the disease of addiction. If by doing so, even if just one life is saved, it is worth it.

I would like to share some of Greg's story today. Greg was born on November 16, 1985. He and his younger brother Neil were raised in a caring and loving home, where their parents did their best to teach them right from wrong, stressing the importance of being considerate, polite, and kind.

When Greg was 15, his parents moved to Derry, where he attended Pinkerton Academy and graduated with honors in 2004. During his senior year, like so many other students his age, he applied for college, eventually deciding on Keene State College, pursuing a major in biochemistry. He had a dream of becoming a physician.

He excelled academically, but his mom Linda said that during his transition between his freshman and sophomore year, something began to appear off. She wrote:

> I saw firsthand that something was off about him. He was very quiet and withdrawn. He was showing obvious signs of depression which runs in both sides of the family.

Even as his depression progressed, Greg battled through. He graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in biochemistry. After graduating and moving back home, his parents urged him to seek help, but Greg held back. During this time, he had an outpatient surgery, after which he was prescribed an opioid-based painkiller. His mom said that after he was prescribed that opioid, he went from bad to worse.

Eventually Greg sought help. He saw a physician and was prescribed an antidepressant. His mom said he seemed to be coming back around; he seemed happier. He took steps to advance his career, hoping to find a job with his biochemistry degree that would offer him a reimbursement on tuition so that he could continue to pursue a career in medicine. Though the job market was tough, his mom said:

> Hands down, I have to say that one of the happiest days of my life was when he finally got a decent job. . . . The dark cloud was lifted—temporarily.

Unfortunately, Greg eventually lost that job, and then things spiraled out of control. His mom wrote:

> The years following were a nightmare to remember. Just imagine a loved one slowly losing all sense of themselves. Legal trouble, bouncing from one job to the next, losing his license more than once while we drove him back and forth from jobs—some an hour away.
>
> A restraining order here, a night in jail there. Debts that weren't getting paid. Fits of rage, fights, a lack of interest in family, friends, and basic hygiene.

She said:

> By the time our worst fears were confirmed, he was using heroin, we basically lost the soul of our son.

Greg's last few years were filled with back-and-forths. He had overdosed, his brother finding him in the bathroom of their home. Tired of being dependent on heroin, he sought help, signing up for a methadone clinic, entering rehab, and giving his parents hope that he would make progress.

Unfortunately, he started to use again but was getting ready to enter a drug court program. After joining his family on a vacation to visit an ailing relative, he decided to clean up his act, going to the gym and eating right.

Tragically, though, his mom wrote:

> This was short lived however, as the demon snuck into his room and stole him from us. All he left for us was a lifeless body on the floor behind a locked door.

Greg's death and his heartbreaking story is the story of far too many people in New Hampshire and across the country, of people with dreams, hopes, and aspirations, whose lives are cut short as a result of this illness. Greg wanted to be a doctor. He wanted to be a husband and a father. He loved dogs and video games, and he loved to watch Patriots games on Sunday with his mom, his dad, and his brother. As his mom put it:

> Brilliant and head strong, he was to be reckoned with, and as his parents, we will never stop trying, on his behalf, to see that there is an end to this epidemic.

His parents wanted to make clear that his substance use disorder really grew as a result of the opioid he was prescribed following surgery, a painkiller that was originally manufactured for terminally ill patients. They believe that pharmaceutical companies marketed this drug at the expense of their son, saying: ''Given to ease pain and suffering, ironically, it has caused irreparable pain, suffering, and death.''

We can never thank families who have lost loved ones enough for speaking out about this issue and for working tirelessly and courageously to try to prevent others from suffering as they have. Nor can we forget to thank law enforcement and first responders who are on the frontlines of this epidemic.

I want to make a special mention of Greg's father, Greg senior, who is a firefighter in Nashua, witnessing as a first responder every day the havoc that this crisis wreaks on other families and living with the reality of his own family's loss too.

Greg's mom said that at the moment of his death, she vowed that she would ensure that his life would not be in vain. His family reached out because they wanted to make a difference. I am grateful for their efforts to do this because they do, in fact, have the ability to make change.

Speaking up helps break down the stigma that prevents too many from seeking help and prevents too many others from offering it. It provides a

voice to the voiceless, making those who have died more than just a statistic. It gives us a perspective from which we can learn, and it pushes us to take action.

While thanking these families for their bravery is appropriate, it is simply not enough. Their bravery and their struggle must be marked by constant vigilance and urgent action. We must continue to focus on an ''all hands on deck'' approach at all levels of government and with those on the frontlines in order to make progress, save lives, and end this epidemic.

I am going to continue fighting and working with Members of both parties to combat this crisis, and I will continue sharing the stories of the people of my State. It is up to all of us to stop this from happening to more families.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTHCARE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on September 30, the Children's Health Insurance Program expired. It has now been 25 days since the Congress has put our children's health and well-being on the back burner. My colleagues and I do not think that children's health belongs on the back burner. So we have come to the floor of the Senate to spend the afternoon speaking up for kids.

Thank you to everyone who joins me today to say that we should not wait any longer to make sure that children, community health centers, and new mothers have access to the healthcare programs that they need.

Republicans control Congress. It is up to them what we vote on and when we do it. So what was more important to the Republican leadership than the health of little kids? Republican leaders blew through the days before the children's healthcare deadline by trying to repeal healthcare for millions of Americans.

Once the Children's Health Insurance Program had already expired, Republican leaders burned through more time by holding a series of votes on a budget with giant tax cuts for billionaires and giant corporations that would also gut Medicare, Medicaid, and a bunch of programs that help working families. Republicans jammed through their terrible budget without a single Democratic vote last week, 19 days after blowing past the deadline to fund healthcare for kids.

Last night, 24 days past the deadline to make sure the kids had healthcare coverage, what were Republican leaders doing? Republican leaders stayed up late into the night holding a vote to make it easier for financial institutions to cheat people.

The days continue to tick by—24, 25. Tomorrow Members of Congress will leave for the weekend, 26 days past the deadline, and still there will be no vote to fund this critical program.

Senator Ted Kennedy and Senator ORRIN HATCH, a Democrat and Republican, wrote this legislation together back in the late 1990s. The Children's Health Insurance Program, also called CHIP, provides health insurance to low-income children and to pregnant women. Senator Kennedy and Senator HATCH created this program because they knew that providing healthcare coverage for children would make them healthier as children and healthier even after they grew up. They knew that some children were slipping through the cracks, and this was their solution. The children covered by CHIP didn't qualify for Medicaid, they weren't covered by employers, and they couldn't afford to buy private insurance.

In 1997, 15 percent of all the children in this country lacked any form of health insurance coverage. Today, because of the CHIP program and the Affordable Care Act, that number has shrunk to 5 percent of children. CHIP works with Medicaid to provide health insurance for one out of every three kids in this country.

States choose whether or not they want a CHIP program. Here is the deal. Every single State has chosen one because every single State recognizes the value of providing their children with healthcare coverage. In Massachusetts, the percentage of children with healthcare coverage is even higher than the national average. It is at 99 percent. We are doing something right here.

The original program was set for 10 years, and since then, every few years, Congress has had to act to reauthorize the program so that children can continue to get healthcare coverage. The CHIP program has been reauthorized four times since 1997, and not one of those times has Congress missed the deadline—not one—until now. In fact, in past years, Congress has made sure to reauthorize the program many months ahead of its expiration in order to give States the time they need to plan their budget. It sounds like a pretty sensible thing to do—but not this year. We are 25 days past the deadline for reauthorizing CHIP—25 days and counting. This isn't fair to States, to kids, or to their families.

So what actually happens now?

Well, the money runs out. Eleven States are set to run out of their CHIP funding by the end of 2017, and the others, soon after. Our Republican Governor in Massachusetts sent me a letter on day 3 past the CHIP deadline, and he wrote:

> Parents are already afraid that their children's insurance may be lost in the near future. With each passing week, their fears continue to grow.

My Governor is right. States have to start making tough decisions. They may have to decrease enrollment, turning away sick little kids who qualify for coverage but don't make it through the door on time. They could start kicking kids off of their insurance saying: Sorry, we just can't help anymore. Or they could be forced to make tough calls on benefits: We can't cover the wheelchair you need to get around. There is no physical therapy or no prenatal care until the funding comes through again.

That is just flat out immoral. Tax cuts for billionaires shouldn't come before making sure that a sick kid gets the help he or she needs. Mothers are lying awake at night. Fathers are tossing and turning, worrying about their healthcare coverage. What is the Republican leadership doing? Tomorrow they will be heading home for the weekend without lifting a finger to fund a bipartisan program that has been reauthorized four times over the past 20 years.

If that isn't bad enough, September 30 wasn't just the deadline for Congress to reauthorize CHIP. We also blew past the deadline on several other healthcare programs to help children, to help pregnant women, to help older Americans, and to help the chronically ill. We blew past the deadline to reauthorize the Community Health Center Fund and the National Health Service Corps, which funds health centers and supports healthcare workers that provide children with high-quality primary care. We blew past the deadline to reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, which funds home visits to new and expectant parents to give them help keeping a new baby healthy and safe. We blew past the deadline to reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program, which funds diabetes research that could offer hope to many children living with diabetes.

When a kid is sick, moms and dads move Heaven and Earth to get them the care they need. They don't wait 25 days to go to the doctor and check to see if something is wrong. They stay up all night to make sure their little ones are all right. They wait outside the hospital room, pacing until they get an answer, but Republican leaders in Congress just don't seem to care. They don't seem to care if these families have the health insurance coverage they need so they can get an x ray or pay for an antibiotic or run some tests.

Twenty-five days, 26 days, 27 days—it just doesn't seem to matter to Republican leaders, but it sure matters to moms and dads and kids in Massachusetts and all over this country.

Senator Kennedy used to say: ''The test of greatness for a nation is how it cares for its children.'' Right now Republican leaders in Congress are failing that test. My colleagues have come to the floor today to say that time is up. We are here to fight for kids.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise in support of my colleagues who have come to the floor to urge the Senate to quickly pass funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, known as CHIP.

CHIP provides comprehensive health insurance to 9 million low-income children who don't qualify for Medicaid, including 18,000 children in my home State of Delaware. Lots of other States would say that 18,000 children is a small number, but in Delaware that is a significant population. Bluntly, whether it is 1 or 100 or 1,000 or 18,000, how can we allow inaction in this Chamber to put at risk the healthcare of millions of children across our country?

It has now been more than 3 weeks since funding for CHIP expired. While some States have enough money in their accounts to carry them through to the end of the year or just beyond, the uncertainty about when or if CHIP funds will be reauthorized is causing chaos, concern, and anxiety across the country. Some States will have to start issuing notices to households that they will face the loss of CHIP coverage. Imagine the unnecessary fear this will bring to parents and families and struggling households across the country as they are facing other challenges in their life.

This is totally unnecessary. We can stop this uncertainty right now and bring needed stability for parents, children, and States and show some kind of leadership from our Federal Government. I am a proud cosponsor of the bipartisan KIDS Act, S. 1827, being led by Senator ORRIN HATCH of Utah and Senator RON WYDEN of Oregon. This KIDS Act would extend funding for CHIP for 5 years. I urge the Senate to do right by America's children and America's working families and swiftly take up and pass this bill.

While we are on the topic of programs desperately in need of reauthorization, I also want to draw attention to the expiration of the Community Health Center Fund, which ensures access to cost-effective primary and preventive care for 26 million patients across the country. In my home State of Delaware, about 50,000 Delawareans benefit from several community health centers that are widely respected, well run, and provide affordable, accessible, and preventive healthcare in communities up and down my State. Funding for this critical program also lapsed more than 3 weeks ago, and now, sadly, community health centers across my State and across the country are struggling to make key decisions—decisions like signing new leases or signing on new medical personnel to positions. Without certainty that the Federal Government will authorize their funding, how can we expect health centers to plan, to provide services, and to provide preventive healthcare that improves health and strengthens our community?

We should do everything we can to swiftly pass a 5-year reauthorization for funding for community health centers, such as the bipartisan bill that Senator BLUNT of Missouri and Senator STABENOW of Michigan have introduced, the Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence Act of 2017, S. 1899, which I am proud to support.

Folks, I urge that we work together in a bipartisan way. We should not be using children's access to healthcare as a bargaining chip. We should be taking up these two bills to provide reauthorization, funding, and certainty immediately for both CHC and CHIP funding now and without hesitation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, as you know, the Children's Health Insurance Program expired on September 30, in large part because we spent much of this year and the days leading up to that date debating the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, instead of focusing on bipartisan priorities like the Children's Health Insurance Program. As a result, the program known as CHIP expired and the health of 9 million children, including some 340,000 Pennsylvania children, are now at risk.

CHIP is not just a bipartisan program but a successful program with a Pennsylvania history. It was modeled after a State program in Pennsylvania that was signed into law by my father when he served as Governor in the early 1990s. The program provides affordable health insurance to children whose family incomes mean they don't qualify for Medicaid but still struggle to find affordable health insurance options. It is a program that working families rely upon and that provides peace of mind to parents.

Many families turn to CHIP during times of economic hardship, such as when a parent loses his or her job. At such a stressful time, I have heard from parents over and over how they have peace of mind knowing that their children will get the healthcare they need.

Some parents who rely upon CHIP for their children are, in fact, students, working and going to school so they can make that leap into stable, middle-class life. They may not have a job with health insurance or they may not be able to afford the insurance, but they know their children will get the healthcare they need.

Regardless of what drives families to the CHIP program, it is thanks in large part to CHIP that the United States of America has the highest rate of insured children in our Nation's history. According to the Census Bureau, 95.5 percent of children had health insurance in 2016. CHIP is also a popular program, as repeated studies have demonstrated. Parents think CHIP is a valuable program, and they are satisfied with the coverage and with the care their children receive.

Unless the Senate acts and acts very soon, we will have betrayed all of those children and all of those families. There is no reason for CHIP to have expired and no reason why we shouldn't pass the bill right now, if not in the next couple of days—certainly, in the next 2 or 3 weeks—to ensure that not one single child loses his or her health insurance.

We have taken important steps to extend the program. The Finance Committee marked up the bipartisan Keep Kids' Insurance Dependable and Secure Act of 2017, known by the acronym K-I-D-S, or KIDS. The KIDS Act came out of the Finance Committee, which reauthorizes CHIP for 5 years, and that happened some 3 weeks ago. I am proud to be a cosponsor of that bill.

So it is time to act. We have a commonsense, bipartisan, successful bill in the Senate that is ready to go. It is out of the Finance Committee. So I would urge my colleagues to join me and to join others who have come to the floor today and on earlier days to take swift action to pass the KIDS Act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. 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. BROWN. Mr. President, healthcare for our Nation's children is something we ought to be able to all come together on, but this Congress, which has not done much of anything, is always able to find a way to help Wall Street. Think about the middle-of-the-night vote last night, where the Vice President of the United States came to the rescue of Equifax and the rescue of Wells Fargo and the rescue of Wall Street overall. Think of the celebrations last night on Wall Street because of that tie vote, which stripped consumers of their days in court. It stripped consumers of their consumer rights.

This Congress, when it came to the Children's Health Insurance Program, allowed it to expire at the end of last month. It left millions of families afraid they will lose healthcare for their kids. Think about what this uncertainty means for parents. Trying to make sure your children are safe and healthy is enough to worry about.

Families shouldn't have to fear losing coverage for their kids because of some politicians in Washington. All of us have taxpayer-funded health insurance. Some politicians in Washington don't seem to care much about these kids.

In my State, more than 200,000-plus children have insurance under CHIP. So even if something happens to their parents—even if they lose their job or their insurance—those 200,000-plus children in Ohio have insurance because of CHIP. But it expired on September 30.

Governor Kasich is a Republican. I am a Democrat. We stand together on

this, as we stand together protecting Medicaid and as we stand together protecting the Affordable Care Act. He tells us that there is still a little bit of money left over in Ohio to get us through these next few weeks until Congress does its job. But that doesn't mean parents don't worry about their children possibly losing their health insurance.

Kids on CHIP are a little more likely to have asthma or a little bit more likely to have an illness, in part because they are low-income kids and they may live near a bus line and the air they breathe may not quite be so good. Or they live in Appalachia, where they might not be able to get to the doctor quickly. Those kids are more at risk, and those parents are worried, even though Governor Kasich assures them and I assure them we are going to do this.

Congress worked into the middle of the night last night and debated for hours on a giveaway to Wall Street. They debated for hours on helping Equifax, which abused the public trust of 145 million people—5 million in my State. They bailed out Wells Fargo, which fraudulently attacked, for want of a better term, 3.5 million customers. Congress can bail them out, but it can't pass the Children's Health Insurance Program?

Because of CHIP, 209,000—I said more than 200,000 before; more precisely, 209,000 Ohio children have access to affordable healthcare today—healthcare they may not have received otherwise. That is the importance of this program. It used to be bipartisan until this Congress, always in its rush to help Wall Street, forgot about these children.

This program provides peace of mind for parents. Regardless of income, when a parent knows that a daughter or a son has health insurance, it provides peace of mind. They know if their child has a sore throat or earache, they don't have to wait until the child is so sick they take her to the emergency room. They won't have to hesitate or wonder if they can afford the doctor visit or antibiotic. They get the care their kids need.

Most of us in this body are parents. Most of us in this body have insurance provided by taxpayers. Wouldn't you think that this would be important enough to Leader MCCONNELL and the leaders of this body and to President Trump and to Speaker RYAN? Wouldn't you think it would be important enough?

We all talk about loving our kids. We talk about grandchildren. Most of us are at the age where many of us have grandchildren. We don't care enough about these children as we get insurance from taxpayers. We don't care enough about these kids to do this?

It has already been 3 weeks now since CHIP expired. CHIP means a child in Cincinnati or Dayton or Portsmouth or Akron or Youngstown or Mansfield can see a family doctor when they need it, preventing a costly ambulance ride and emergency room visit. CHIP means getting vaccines and shots. It means having dental coverage. We know what happens to low-income kids who don't get good dental care.

The State of Ohio probably has enough money to help protect CHIP kids through the end of the year, but Congress needs to act now.

I have met with CHIP families across Ohio. Let me tell you some stories. Josh, whom I met in Cleveland—his children were covered by CHIP when he was laid off from his job. He said, ''The ability to take health insurance out of the equation, feeling confident that my family will continue to get the same quality of care they had while I was working, was a huge weight lifted.'' Think about that.

This father, knowing that he has insurance—he had plenty of things to worry about. He lost his job. Who knows what that means about their home and their lifestyle and their family? But at least he knew he could rely on insurance—until now. Look what this Congress has failed to do.

Think about Noble from Columbus, who came to my office earlier this year with his mom to talk about how important CHIP is. Noble relies on CHIP for coverage for the five pediatric specialists he sees at one of America's great hospitals, Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus.

My colleagues need to think about Josh and his kids in Cleveland and Noble and his mom in Columbus. We need to think about the mother of a son with diabetes, worrying about whether her son will be able to see the same doctor next year or about a father with a daughter with asthma, praying she doesn't lose her inhaler on the playground because in a few months they might not have insurance to pay for that inhaler.

My wife has asthma, and I know what that means. She had a father who had health insurance through his union plan with the Illuminating Company in Northeast Ohio. He worked maintenance. It was a good blue-collar job. It didn't pay enough to send her to college, but it did pay enough with good insurance that it gave them a decent lifestyle. They didn't have CHIP back then. More people had union plans. More people were protected.

We used to have CHIP until September 30, when this Congress didn't care enough to provide it. We should not be playing politics with families' lives.

Two years ago, I led the fight in this body to protect CHIP. Because of that work, with the support of advocates all across Ohio—and there are so many of them across the country—we extended funding for CHIP for 2 years. Again, this was with bipartisan support, back when Congress operated that way.

We have already come a long way this year. We passed a 5-year extension of CHIP out of the Senate Finance Committee. It had every vote in that Committee, with the exception of one. I thank Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN and my colleague from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN, and so many of our colleagues for their help with that.

But this process is taking too long. Josh and Noble and the 209,000 Ohioans and 9 million children across the country are in a situation in which their parents are unsure of whether they will have insurance through the end of the year and next year and the year after.

It is time for us to come together to ensure that the families we work for have the healthcare they need for their children.

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.

Ms. HIRONO. 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. HIRONO. Mr. President, Donald Trump and the Republican Congress have spent most of the past year pushing their misplaced priorities, no matter the direct and collateral damage it causes for millions of Americans across the country.

There are many examples to choose from to illustrate this point. Just last night, the Vice President had to come in and break a tie to protect huge corporations from the victims of the frauds they perpetuated. Now they are putting together a huge tax cut for the wealthiest people in our country, and they are trying to sell it as a raise for the middle class. In Hawaii, we call this shibai—or B.S.

But there is perhaps no issue in which Donald Trump's dangerous agenda has caused more harm than his quest to deprive millions of Americans the healthcare and the health insurance they need. His first attempt at repealing the Affordable Care Act would have thrown as many as 30 million people off of their health insurance. Thanks to the combined efforts of so many people—active people, engaged people across the country—we defeated this proposal.

A few months later, continuing the assault on healthcare, Donald Trump renewed his attack on our healthcare system under the so-called Graham-Cassidy bill. But once again, the combined outrage of millions kept the bill from coming to the floor.

In the time they spent on their single-minded, unrelenting quest to repeal the Affordable Care Act, Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress have allowed authorization for the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, to lapse. Nearly 30,000 children in Hawaii and more than 9 million across the country depend on CHIP for their healthcare. You heard just now my colleague from Ohio tell you stories about the children in Ohio—children with asthma. In Hawaii, we have children with asthma, children with diabetes.

Nearly 30,000 children in Hawaii who rely on CHIP for their healthcare are being affected by our inaction. Primarily covering children from low-income families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, CHIP provides critical and much needed care for children with complex medical conditions.

Although existing funding has allowed States to stretch budgets to keep the program in place, money is quickly running out. If we don't take action soon, as many as 4 million children could lose their health insurance entirely—4 million children.

Congress cannot and should not be complicit in what I would call gross negligence. It is not negligence; it is gross negligence.

CHIP has traditionally enjoyed bipartisan support. In fact, it emerged from the committee with bipartisan support. I am glad Senators Wyden and Hatch have come together to create the KIDS Act, which I have cosponsored. This bill would extend CHIP's authorization and funding through 2022 and provide much needed certainty to millions of families across the country.

If we brought this bill to the floor right now, it would pass. It would clearly have the votes to pass. The only question is, Why don't we do it? Why don't we provide healthcare to millions of children in our country, for Heaven's sake?

I cannot believe that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are afraid to risk incurring the wrath of a vengeful President. I cannot believe that is what is keeping them from doing the right thing.

I encourage the majority leader to bring this bill to the floor for a vote as soon as possible.

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. MARKEY. 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. MARKEY. Mr. President, this summer the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, turned 20 years old.

I served on the House committee that created this bill and was proud to support providing the affordable comprehensive health insurance to low-income children and pregnant women. It is a bipartisan program, and it is an effective program. Last year alone, CHIP covered nearly 9 million children throughout the country. In Massachusetts, CHIP has been instrumental in achieving near-universal coverage for our children in the Bay State.

Yet, instead of celebrating CHIP's successes over the last two decades, congressional Republicans have placed CHIP in programmatic purgatory. That is because they allowed CHIP to expire at the end of September. Instead of focusing on reauthorizing this critical healthcare lifeline, Republican leadership chose to waste months of time trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They let just one of these successful programs lapse while they tried unsuccessfully to end another. They were more interested in ripping healthcare coverage away from millions of Americans and taking a machete to Medicaid rather than protecting our Nation's children.

We should not forget that CHIP stands on Medicaid's shoulders. Any fundamental changes to how Medicaid operates—whether it is block-granting or capping the program—will hamstring CHIP's ability to serve children as effectively and efficiently as it was intended to do, but instead of immediately returning attention to ensuring that this lapsed deadline is not effective, House Republicans have further delayed action by inserting partisan policies to pay for the program. This has not only caused an unnecessary delay in passing a bill to reauthorize CHIP, but it has dragged CHIP onto the political game board, turning it and our children into pawns in their ruthless game of partisan chess.

CHIP has historically been and should be above such games because CHIP is not just an insurance program, it is a reassurance program. It reassures States that they can provide comprehensive healthcare coverage to some of their most vulnerable, it reassures doctors that their patients will be able to access care and treatment, it reassures teachers that their students can be healthy enough to learn, and it reassures Mom and Dad that their children can still get well in the face of financial hardship.

Continued inaction on CHIP is dangerous and damaging. Every day we delay reauthorizing CHIP is another day parents across the United States live in fear that their children may soon lose their health insurance. They panic at the thought of leaving their child's asthma untreated, skipping a trip to the dentist, or delaying a doctor's visit because they can't afford to pay for the treatment or medication that may be prescribed. If we don't act soon, this fear may become a terrible reality for families. In Massachusetts, CHIP funding will expire early next year. This could impact coverage for 160,000 children in the Commonwealth, potentially delaying access to treatment and services that could have ramifications into adulthood.

In Congress, we are celebrating the 20th birthday of a successful children's insurance program by effectively threatening to end it. That is what Congress is now doing to the State of Massachusetts. That is what they are saying to the State of Massachusetts; that they are going to effectively try to shut down a program that for 20 years has served the children in our State. That makes no sense.

I urge my Republican colleagues to put their partisan games aside to provide certainty and stability to States, to providers, and to reassure families by reauthorizing CHIP. When President Trump says he wants to make the healthcare system in America better, when President Trump says he wants to make sure families are able to take care of their children, we have a program that does that already. It is successful, and families and the States love it. All we need is Republicans in the Senate to work together in order to make sure that program continues for the health of all children in our country.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, the Senate is currently considering the nomination of Scott Palk to a lifetime appointment as a Federal district court judge on the Western District of Oklahoma. I voted against Mr. Palk's nomination in the Judiciary Committee, and I will oppose his nomination on the floor.

While his nomination was pending for a lifetime appointment to be a Federal judge, Mr. Palk changed his membership with the National Rifle Association to take out a life membership in the organization. When I asked Mr. Palk about this change, he asserted he expects to maintain this ''lifetime member'' status, even if he is confirmed, and he refused to commit to recuse himself from any cases where the National Rifle Association has taken a legal position.

What I find disconcerting about this is Federal judges must be impartial. Federal judges must not have any appearance of conflicts of interest. When individuals come before a court, they need to trust that their case will be heard fairly and on the merits.

Every American must believe that they will get a fair, unbiased hearing no matter who their judge is. Federal judges must follow applicable laws and regulations that severely limit the kinds of organizations they can participate in.

For example, the code of conduct for Federal Judges says, ''[A] judge should not participate in extrajudicial activities that detract from the dignity of the judge's office, interfere with the performance of the judge's official duties, reflect adversely on the judge's impartiality, lead to frequent disqualification, or violate the limitations set forth below.''

That is why members of the Senate Judiciary Committee often ask judicial nominees at their hearings what steps they will take to prepare for the bench. It is the committee's duty to determine whether a nominee is prepared to leave their former roles and personal beliefs at the door and instead serve in an impartial arbiter.

In fact, when nominated for lifetime appointments, most nominees try to rid themselves of conflicts and limit their affiliations, especially with advocacy organizations. However, Mr. Palk not only chose to maintain his membership with the NRA, he chose to extend his membership for life.

The fact that we are considering this nominee, given this issue with his background, just 3 weeks after the Las Vegas shooting, should really give us all a reason to pause. Las Vegas is now the deadliest mass shooting committed by an individual in the United States. It has only been a year since the Pulse Nightclub massacre in Orlando, which was previously the deadliest mass shooting in our Nation's history. It has been only 5 years since 20 6-year-olds and 6 adults were murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT. What happened after each of those shootings?

After Sandy Hook, the NRA opposed any legislation that would have restricted high-capacity magazines or military-style assault rifles.

After the Pulse Nightclub shooting, the NRA opposed any legislation to expand background checks on gun buyers or to prevent gun sales to people on terrorist watch lists.

After the Las Vegas shooting, the NRA, despite initial statements to the contrary, has come out opposed to any legislation to ban ''bump-fire stocks,'' even though such devices allow guns to function as machineguns, which are already banned under the law.

The NRA has never supported any commonsense gun legislation. The NRA's views on gun control issues could not be clearer, which is why it is so problematic that a judicial nominee chose to double-down on his NRA membership while his nomination was pending, rather than extricate himself from his prior commitments and then refuse to commit to recusing himself on cases where the NRA has made its views abundantly clear. This should trouble all of us.

Our job in evaluating judicial nominees is to ensure our Federal courts are an independent part of our system of checks and balances. To do that, we need confidence that judicial nominees will safeguard their own impartiality. I think all of my colleagues feel that way.

That is not what Mr. Palk has done. Instead of taking steps to separate himself from strong political views, he has proactively taken steps to increase his commitment to specific views of the law.

I will vote against Mr. Palk's nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. MARKEY. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFRICOM, FOREIGN POLICY, AND OUR MILITARY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I came back just a week ago from visiting our troops stationed all around the world, in all the commands—AFRICOM, EUCOM, CENTCOM—and talked to them about the threats in all these regions.

At a time when I hear colleagues across the aisle and political pundits ask the question, Why do we have troops in various places like Africa, it is important to remember the strategic importance of Africa.

I remember 10 years ago we didn't have a command for Africa. It was part of three commands: Pacific Command, Central Command, and European Command. Now we have AFRICOM. It is its own command. It seemed a little unreasonable that we were treating Africa as somewhat of a stepchild when that is the breeding ground out there for a lot of the things happening in terms of terrorism.

Despite our military's reach and influence, our Nation's shrinking defense budget has put AFRICOM at risk during a time when commanders are saying we face the most dangerous world we have ever faced, and we have.

I have often said that I look wistfully back at the days of the Cold War, when we had two superpowers and they were predictable. We knew what they had. They knew what we had. You have people from all over the world who are putting together equipment that we never dreamed they would have.

We have just gone through 8 years of another administration. I don't say this critically of him, but one thing about President Obama was that he was a committed, sincere liberal. Liberals generally don't pay a lot of attention to the military. Now we find ourselves in a situation where we are hurting. A lot of people assume that we don't have any problems militarily.

Sometimes I remind people that up until about 1962, we spent more than half—52 percent in 1962—of all of our revenues on defending America. What is it today? It is 15 percent. When I tell people that, they are in shock that we are in the situation we are in. We have terrorist groups in Africa—such as ISIS, al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram—and they are all growing in capability and have expanded their areas throughout Africa. This year we have seen horrific events occurring at the hands of these extremists. On October 14, a truck bombing killed 300 people in Somalia's capital. In Niger—it just happened—we had four of our U.S. soldiers who were killed in action on October 4 by an ISIS group.

We know that we have serious problems. I think it is a great disservice for people to say that we must have known that we had the threat that was out there in Niger, when in fact we didn't know it. They even compare it sometimes with Benghazi. I remember Benghazi. I was there at the time. I remember Chris Stevens. Chris Stevens was the Ambassador who went there. He was in my office right before he left, talking about the threats that were there, talking about the Taliban, his training there, and talking about organized terrorist activity.

I have to remind people that the persons who are responsible for advising the Secretary of State, who at that time was Hillary Clinton, and the President, who was President Obama at that time, are the DNI—that was James Clapper at that time—the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When the Benghazi event happened, the annex was blown up. They all said at that time—they advised us, the President, and the Secretary of State—that they were forewarned by more than a month that on the anniversary of 9/11 things would blow up, and it was going to be an organized attack.

Right now there is an investigation going on to determine whether or not there is any way that we could have anticipated that in Niger this would be happening, and so far, that hasn't come up.

Despite the best of intentions, many of our partners in the region lack the capacity and the effectiveness to adequately defend themselves. People say: What do we have to gain there? This is exactly the same situation that we saw in Afghanistan prior to the war there. The terrorists have to have a safe harbor to train in, and that is what has happened.

During my travel, I had the opportunity to meet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. I have to say this about him. I have never seen him so ecstatic. A lot of us were looking back at what they were trying to do during the Obama administration. It was disheartening to think that they put together this Iran deal, and our Secretary of State at that time, John Kerry, talked about how great it was and all of these concessions that were made when, in fact, that wasn't the case. Nonetheless, when our President came out and said that he was not going to recertify the Iran deal, that was kind of neat because people don't realize that it takes a recertification every 30 days by the President in order to keep the Iran deal together. He has not done that.

Shortly after that, I happened to be talking to Prime Minister Netanyahu. It was an incredible relief to him that we were going to be looking at this. Still today, I think we all understand that Iran is the one that is financing terrorism all around the world. We discussed the shortcomings and looked forward to working with my colleagues in the future so that Iran does not become a nuclear nation, not now or ever.

What is perhaps the most encouraging is the message that this approach sends to the rest of the world, specifically to North Korea. President Trump's approach shows me—and, more importantly, shows Kim Jong Un—that an America-first foreign policy means that we refuse to take a single-minded approach to global threats.

I recall the changes taking place 8 years ago when our new President, President Obama, started his appeasing tour by going over and talking about

how America hadn't been doing the right thing. Now, all of a sudden, we have changed that around. That is what is taking place now. At that time we didn't have the threats that are out there today.

We look at North Korea. North Korea is run by a questionable person, totally unpredictable, according to our own military leaders. He is rapidly getting the capability not just of an ICBM—he has already proven he has an ICBM—but with a range not just of Alaska and some of those areas but of the entire continental United States.

On July 4 he launched his first successful ICBM. If that were fired on a standard trajectory, that missile could have reached Alaska. Some experts think it could have reached even further, into the continental United States. In light of that test, the Defense Intelligence Agency updated their assessment of the timeline by which North Korea would have the capability of hitting an American city. Instead of being 2 years out and 3 years out, it is now down to 1 year out. Some people say they have it right now. We have that threat that is out there. It is the greatest threat, in my opinion, that we are facing now or that we have ever faced.

Following this, on September 3, North Korea tested what is believed to be a hydrogen bomb. That would be seven times the power of what was dropped on Hiroshima. Even if delivered by a relatively inaccurate ICBM, there would be horrible damage imposed on our continent.

It is important to remember that all of this power is being wielded by an erratic despot, Kim Jong Un. North Korean officials have stated that they are not interested in diplomacy until they have an ICBM capable of reaching the east coast of the United States.

What does that tell you? It tells you that they are on their way. This stresses the need for the United States to enhance and accelerate our ballistic missile defense systems and to continue to put pressure on North Korea through every other means we can, diplomatic and otherwise.

My recent travels enforced again what I have been saying for some time; that is, that this is the most dangerous situation we have had, certainly in my lifetime. We have an opportunity to counter that threat right now. We are in the midst of our NDAA. One thing about the National Defense Authorization Act is that this act is going to pass. It has passed for 55 consecutive years so we know it is going to pass now. But we need to go ahead and get it done. It is important because the primary constitutional responsibility that we have is to provide for the common defense of our great Nation.

We have serious readiness issues that are going to have to be addressed, and they are being addressed in this bill. I am the chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, and we have fought hard to ensure that this year's NDAA takes care of these shortfalls we have had. Our forces are smaller now. We actually had a Readiness Subcommittee hearing, and we had the Vice Chiefs of all of the services there. They came in and said that right now we are in the same situation we were in when we had the hollow force following the Carter administration in the 1970s.

In January of this year, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Daniel Allyn, said: What it comes down to is that we are going to be too late. Our soldiers arrived too late. Our soldiers required too much time to close the manning, the training, and the equipment we have, and the end result is extensive casualties to civilians and to our forces.

We are talking about death. That is what is at stake right here. Just last week, I met with the Secretary of the Air Force, Heather Wilson, to discuss aviation readiness. Right now we are 1,500 pilots short, and 1,300 of those are fighter pilots. Only 50 percent of the Air Force's squadrons are actually trained and ready to conduct all of their assigned missions. One-third of our ground brigades don't work. They are not ready for combat. As to the aviation brigades, it is the same thing.

Right now, as we know, the Marines use our fleet of F–18s. Sixty-two percent of them don't work. They don't have the parts for combat. We have this situation. That is going to have to be direct. This year's bill will increase the troop levels. We will do what is necessary to correct these problems. We need to get moving on that and make people aware that help is on the way.

By the way, here is one of my concerns in this bill. A lot of people are interested in the BRAC process. We do prohibit base realignment closings to take place for another year. The reason for that is not that there may be excess capacity right now or excess resources out there, but when we are in a rebuilding mode, we would rather be able to use those resources that aren't being used now rather than build new ones. One thing is true about a BRAC; it always loses money the first 3 years. Right now we can't afford to lose any of the money that goes to defending America.

Anyway, of the additional funding, there is going to be $8.5 billion for the missile defense that has been suffering, and we are going to be doing some good things. As we continue the conference process, which started today—we had our first conference meeting today—we need to focus on where we are.

Again, I repeat, the threat is there. We understand that. We know what is happening in Africa. By the way, the number of troops we have over there—you have to quit using this number of about 6,000—is really 1,300 troops for the entire continent who are not committed or working in some of the Embassies. We need to get busy on that.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr. President, I have another issue I wish to visit. A lot of people are critical of what is happening right now in the Environmental Protection Agency. I feel I have to talk about this because, first of all, I was chairman of the committee that had jurisdiction over the Environmental Protection Agency for about 8 years. I see the things that are happening now, improvements that are being made.

One is by a guy named Scott Pruitt. Scott Pruitt happens to be from Oklahoma. He is doing things now, and I don't know of anyone who has ever been abused during a confirmation process like he was. Poor Scott sat there. As a general rule, after a committee gets through with that process, they have questions for the record. Normally, they are somewhere between 15 and 20 questions for the record. Do you know how many questions Scott Pruitt got? He got 675 questions for the record. Anyway, he sustained that. He is now doing great things.

Over the last 8 years, I have had little, if any, chance to praise the work of the EPA, but I can do it now. After 8 years of being relentlessly targeted by the Obama administration to shut out our farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, and energy industries, we have an administration that will listen to them and work with them. This is what jobs are all about.

There is a lot of talk about the visit that was made to our conference by President Trump yesterday. What he talked about most of the time was jobs. We are in the position to correct it.

What have we done to do that? A lot of the overregulations have been eliminated. There is the caricature of businesses referred to as greedy, loony boogeymen. But in reality, businesses are run by people who want what is best for America, for their families, and for the stockholders.

Now, like any sector of society, you are going to find a few bad actors, but we have laws and remedies in place to make sure we go after those individuals. The last administration treated those they regulated as the enemy, not as partners in ensuring that the environment was taken care of, which led to very harmful, unworkable regulations.

All of that is changing right now with President Trump and his administration. The administration realizes that working with those they regulate will produce better outcomes than only listening to those who wish to drive the industry into the ground. Administrator Pruitt has been meeting with farmers, ranchers, energy producers, and other industries to listen to and learn about how regulations affect them and how a worthwhile regulation might be implemented in a way that is producing an unintended harm.

I really cannot see why this is a bad thing, as the goal of the EPA is not to put companies or farmers out of business; it is to put forward policies that protect the environment and do not have a heavy cost, but just meeting with those who have been shut out of

the process in the past has extremists on the left seeing red. I guess they are just upset that they have lost their monopoly and their ability to write rules for the EPA.

Pruitt and the EPA are also moving forward to repeal the unlawful waters of the United States. This is one of the things, if you talk to the farmers throughout not just Oklahoma but throughout America, they will say, of all of the rules and regulations, this is the most harmful. This is No. 1. That is what they say. In fact, Tom Buchanan is the head of the Farm Bureau in the State of Oklahoma, and he says that is the problem.

People are not aware. In my State of Oklahoma, when you get out into Western Oklahoma, it is dry out there. I mean, it is about as arid as any part of the United States. Yet we know, if they were to move that jurisdiction of water away from the States and to the Federal Government, as was proposed in a rule that was promulgated by the previous administration, that area in Western Oklahoma would be considered a wetland before it is over. Anyway, that is probably, singularly, the best of the rules that he changed.

By the way, if anyone wants to see the rules—a lot of people say the President has not been doing anything. Most of these rules and regulations—there are up to 48 now—that have been costing jobs and putting people out of business have now been addressed by this administration, by the Trump administration, and very successfully. Right now, we are in the process of getting some of these things done.

The waters rule is going to take a while to get done because that is going to take some hearings and so forth. Another of the rules the EPA is working on repealing is the Clean Power Plan. Now, this is the thing that came from the Paris show. In fact, I have done this before. I have talked about the history of these things that have been put forth for 21 consecutive years now by the U.N., which is that they have these meetings. They get 196 countries together, and they try to see what they can do to get them to reduce $CO_2$ emissions, when, in fact, they have not been able to do this.

Besides that, 87 percent of the power that is developed to run our country is either from fossil fuels or it is nuclear. If you extract those, as they tried to do, how do you run the machine called America? The answer is, you can't.

Anyway, as far as the Clean Power Plan, that was put together by President Obama, and it was something you could talk about as long as you wanted to, but the fact is, it was not good for the country. The rule was so unpopular that 27 States, 37 rural electric co-ops, and 3 labor unions challenged it in court. The cost of the rule was estimated to be $292 billion, but I have seen estimates that are well in excess of $400 billion.

The plan would raise electricity prices in 47 States; 40 of those States would see double-digit increases, and these increases would be shouldered by American families, many of whom already have to choose between making rent payments and paying their power bills or choosing between putting food on their tables or paying their power bills. The plan would also see the closure of 66 powerplants and eliminate over 125,000 jobs in the coal industry—an industry that has already been struggling in recent years.

The goal of this rule was to effectively end the use of coal-fired powerplants, which is a cheap and bountiful energy. What benefit would we get out of this? It would be more expensive energy.

By the way, the whole idea of the Paris thing was not just the Clean Power Plan put forth by our President; it was also what other countries were forced to do. For example, in signing on to this deal in Paris, which everyone was so upset about, China committed, for the next 10 years, to continue to increase, every 10 days, an additional coal-fired powerplant. Then they would try to reduce them after that.

What kind of a deal is that? They look back at the United States and think they know what is going to happen to our manufacturing base. They would go to China if we had to do this thing.

The most ridiculous thing about this is, the President's commitment under the Clean Power Plan was to reduce our $CO_2$ emissions by somewhere between 26 and 28 percent by 2025. The problem with that is, it cannot be done. We even called in the EPA so they may tell us how this could be done, and they agreed it could not be done.

Anyway, that is something that is behind us now. I commend Scott Pruitt for realizing the legal footing of this rule and seeing that the costs the American people will bear under this rule is not going to happen.

Just last week, the EPA announced that it will end its controversial policy known as sue and settle. This is a good one. It is a policy that has cost the taxpayers an estimated $67 billion in new regulations that stemmed from this practice. How this works is that some extremist group will come in and sue the EPA for not doing something, and so they go into a settlement agreement with the EPA, and the EPA is in concert with them to come up with the very thing they were not able to get through legislatively. It is called sue and settle. You have heard the President talk about ending that practice. It is one that needs to be ended, and it is going to be. This practice circumvented the Administrative Procedure Act and usually ended up in settlements that were extremely beneficial to extremist groups and got them exactly what they wanted all the time.

My State of Oklahoma was a victim of this practice. In 2011, the EPA used consent agreements that stemmed from court cases in other States, not in Oklahoma, as Oklahoma was not even part of it or aware of it. They do that to overrule the State's Regional Haze Plan to impose EPA's own costly plan on Oklahoma electricity ratepayers. Now, the plan the EPA has pushed on this State costs an estimated $282 million each year. That is just in our State of Oklahoma, and it is something we would have to pay for.

The regional haze problem has nothing to do with health. It is all visibility. So this was ruining the theme of the Obama EPA. Never mind that regional haze is entirely a visibility issue and not a health issue, never mind that Congress specifically gave States the authority to regulate regional haze under the Clean Air Act in the amendments I strongly supported when they went through because it is a visibility issue and not a health issue. Yet because an environmentalist group did not like how Oklahoma was handling its own business, it sued the EPA in court outside of Oklahoma and did not include Oklahoma as a party in the case. The EPA capitulated and entered into an agreement with some of the extremists that conveniently required the EPA to impose its own expensive plan on my State of Oklahoma.

So I am glad Administrator Pruitt has announced an end to this policy, and I urge my colleagues to take up S. 119. It is the Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act, of which I am an original cosponsor, to ensure that this practice is ended across the government and cannot be implemented by future administrations.

Finally, I would like to encourage the EPA to move ahead with a hinted-at, pending directive that would restrict scientists who receive EPA grants from serving on the Agency's scientific advisory committees. I have previously expressed concerns over the composition of the Agency's advisory committees for many reasons, including highlighting the fact that many science advisers under the Obama EPA, including a majority of those on the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee—that is called CASAC—have received considerable financial support from the EPA. They are calling into question their independence and the overall integrity of panels on which the advisers sit.

The National Academy of Sciences and the EPA's own ''Peer Review Handbook'' state that grants can constitute a conflict or a lack of impartiality. We are not talking about small grants either; we are talking about millions of dollars in grants. During the last year of the Obama administration, CASAC had six of seven members receiving these. Keep in mind, six of the seven members received a total of $119 million in grants—in EPA research grants—and three of the members received in excess of $25 million each. These are the scientists who are making the decisions. There were 22 of the 26 members of the CASAC Subcommittee on Particulate Matter who

received more than $330 million in EPA grants.

The scientists who receive vast sums of money from the very agencies they are advising certainly constitute a conflict of interest and, at a minimum, give an appearance of a lack of impartiality. As such, I welcome the news that Administrator Pruitt will be seeking to limit this worrisome practice.

I have laid out only a few of the many great things the EPA is doing right now and what Administrator Pruitt is doing. I got to know him a long time ago. In fact, I flew him around the State in my airplane back when he ran for the first statewide office. He is a guy who is a tiger and who is doing the right thing. I am very proud of what they are doing.

After this morning, the EPA is now advancing five EPA nominees for the EPA general counsel and for the Offices of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Air and Radiation, Water, and Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. Each of these nominees is needed for the issues I have talked about and for the many others that are on the Agency's plate.

Scott Pruitt has been working on so much of the President's conservative agenda alone, and he needs help to run these policies. I call on my colleagues and the leadership to prioritize these nominations. You cannot get this stuff done unless you have help. We have never seen a time when we have gotten this far into an administration and have had this large of a number of people who have not been confirmed.

Mr. President, I do want to mention one other thing because, for some reason, the Democrats have decided they are going to run out the whole 30 hours on the confirmation of a guy named Scott Palk. I have to say, Scott Palk has been doing a great job. In fact, on the vote that just took place on him, he received 79 votes in the U.S. Senate. Yet, just to be obstructionists, they are still demanding 30 hours.

Scott Palk is an experienced prosecutor with a decade of service. He was the assistant district attorney for Cleveland County in my State of Oklahoma and spent 9 years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the criminal division of the Western District of Oklahoma. He has a reputation for honesty, integrity, and a commitment to fairly applying the law. Mr. Palk will serve Oklahoma with distinction as a principled jurist who will uphold the Constitution.

He is going to be confirmed. We know he is going to be confirmed because he already received 79 votes. There is no reason to delay it, other than to hold people here and be obstructionists. I would urge my friends on the other side of the aisle to go ahead and confirm the guy. He is going to do a great job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). 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.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have remarks that I wish to make, but I will yield at this time in order for the Republican leader to be recognized after which I will seek recognition.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Illinois.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

## VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 250, on the motion to invoke cloture on Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.•

## CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT RESOLUTION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the vote in the Senate last night to overturn the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's rule regarding forced arbitration that would protect consumers and make sure they get their day in court when financial institutions violate the law. The floor schedule did not allow me to give these remarks before the vote, so I am giving them today. This rule would have restored the ability of servicemembers, veterans, and other consumers to join together and seek relief through class action lawsuits. I opposed this rule repeal.

In 2010, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act included a provision instructing the CFPB to study mandatory arbitration and write a rule based on what they found. After several years of careful study, the CFPB released a 728-page report in 2015. This year, the CFPB finalized its arbitration rule mandating that consumer financial product contracts no longer include language barring class actions.

This rule was an important step forward in protecting consumers from the fine print arbitration clauses included in all sorts of contracts, including contracts for credit cards, debit cards, prepaid bank cards, payday loans, and even cell phones. The 2015 CFPB report found that 93 percent of consumers whose credit cards included forced arbitration clauses did not know that they could not sue their credit card companies.

The CFPB rule enhanced protections for consumers in the military. That is why the American Legion, the Nation's largest wartime veterans service organization, which represents 2 million veterans, and the Military Coalition, which represents 5.5 million current and former servicemembers and their families, supported the protections provided under this rule.

I have cosponsored the Military Consumer Protection Act led by Senator REED, which would put the enforcement of the Servicemember Civil Relief Act under the CFPB so that the agency responsible for protecting servicemembers and their families is also able to enforce those protections.

Our servicemembers and veterans face challenges that are different from civilian consumers, especially during deployment. We need to make sure that they have all the protections they earn through their service. That is why I voted against H.J. Res. 111, the resolution of disapproval with respect to the CFPB arbitration rule, and I will continue to fight for our servicemembers, veterans, and consumers to get the protections they deserve.

## TRIBUTE TO RICHARD LINCOLN

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, throughout our Nation's history, young Americans have left the comfort and security of home in order to preserve our freedom and to extend the blessings of freedom to others. We set aside Veterans Day to express our gratitude.

One such veteran is Mr. Richard Lincoln of Wayne, ME. Although the story of his service in Italy during World War II is extraordinary, the virtues of courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty it demonstrates describe the character of American patriots in all places and at all times.

Now 91 years of age, Mr. Lincoln entered the U.S. Army in 1943 when he was just 17. He served with the legendary 88th Infantry Division, the first all-draftee division to serve in combat during the war. The 88th, known as the Fighting Blue Devils, proved that with rigorous training, able leadership, and unflagging determination, peace-loving Americans could stand up to a battle-hardened, militaristic enemy.

The 88th played a key role at the Battle of Anzio, the long, costly, and critically important amphibious landing on the Italian coast in January of 1944 that eventually led to the liberation of Rome. Mr. Lincoln served as a first scout, an extremely dangerous assignment in a forward position under constant fire, to locate enemy artillery positions. When the Allies liberated Rome on June 4, 1944, the all-draftee

88th was the first division to enter the city. It was Mr. Lincoln's 18th birthday. He later was awarded the Bronze Star for his heroism during that grueling campaign.

Victory came at a steep price. Between the Battle of Anzio and the German surrender in May of 1945, the Fighting Blue Devils spent 344 days in combat, with nearly 3,000 killed and more than 9,200 wounded.

After returning home, Mr. Lincoln raised a family, served his community, and never forgot his comrades. Until he suffered a stroke that hampered his mobility, he marched in 58 consecutive Memorial Day parades in his hometown. He never rode in a ceremonial car; he always marched.

In a speech to the Association of the U.S. Army on October 9, Defense Secretary James Mattis discussed the serious current threats to peace and security facing our Nation and the world. He told the story of Richard Lincoln to underscore his point that Americans are always willing and able to meet any challenge.

On October 14, family and friends gathered around Mr. Lincoln at the Maine Veterans' Home in Augusta, where he was presented with a personal letter from Secretary Mattis and a book on the Battle of Anzio, inscribed by both Secretary Mattis and former Defense Secretary William Cohen, Maine's former Senator.

Secretary Mattis's handwritten note to Mr. Lincoln includes these words: ''You have the respect and affection of today's military. You and your brothers-in-arms are the pride of our country.'' I am honored to join Secretary Mattis and all grateful Americans in thanking Mr. Richard Lincoln and all of the men and women who serve our country.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT OWEN LAWLER

• Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a living example of an American hero. MSG Owen Lawler has spent a lifetime in service, committing nearly three decades to defending U.S. national security at home and abroad.

Owen began his military service as an infantryman with the Iowa National Guard in 1990 and attended basic training at Fort Benning in Georgia. He entered Active service in 1993 and served in the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, among other roles. In 1999, Owen was selected for special forces training, and in 2001 he was assigned 5th Special Forces Group at Fort Campbell in Kentucky. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Owen participated in the invasion of Afghanistan and went on to serve four more tours in Iraq. In 2009, Owen was assigned to the 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, where he served as a team sergeant for a special forces A-team. During his assignment as the senior sergeant on a special forces detachment, Owen led his team on three tours to Afghanistan until being seriously wounded. In 2013, Owen was selected to serve as first sergeant for the headquarters company of the advanced skills training battalion at Fort Bragg. After an extremely admirable career serving his country, Owen will retire on October 30, 2017.

Owen received multiple awards during his 27 years with the Armed Forces, including the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Korea Service Medal.

I ask my colleagues to join me as I proudly recognize the service and the sacrifice of MSG Owen Lawler, a dear friend, patriot, and American hero.•

### REMEMBERING MARJORIE ''MARGE'' COUNSILMAN

• Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I am saddened to report the recent passing of Marjorie Counsilman, a treasured member of the Bloomington and Indiana University community. Mrs. Counsilman passed away on August 17, 2017, at the age of 93. I join her family and friends in mourning the passing of a beloved Hoosier, who was a dedicated mother and mentor to countless Indiana swimmers.

Mrs. Counsilman, or ''Marge,'' as she was affectionately known by her colleagues, friends, and family, helped lead IU's swim team to a string of national and Big Ten titles. Marge was the wife of the late IU swimming coach, James ''Doc'' Counsilman, who led the Hoosiers to six consecutive NCAA championship victories, 23 Big Ten titles, 52 broken world records, 154 American records, and 106 individual NCAA records. In 2013, Marge and Doc were inaugurated into the Monroe County Sports Hall of Fame. Trophies aside, Marge was best known for her compassion towards her fellow coaches, customers at her family-owned restaurant in Bloomington, and the countless young swimmers she encountered over her decades of service. Her impression on the sport stretches well beyond the swimming lanes of Indiana. In 2004, she was honored by the International Swimming Hall of Fame as a ''Grande Dame'' for her leadership and influence.

In 2012, Mrs. Counsilman received the Bill Orwig Award, which recognizes exceptional contributions made by nonalumnus to IU's athletic program. Marge was constantly hosting team dinners, running swim meets, and keeping the official records. Throughout her husband Doc's 33 years at IU, Marge acted as a substitute mother for all the collegiate swimmers, either providing help with assignments or offering her famous lasagna and pecan pie.

In her memory, I would ask that we take a moment to reflect on her exemplary life and model of service. It is a privilege to honor Marjorie Counsilman, and I want to offer my condolences to her two daughters, Cathy Counsilman and Jill Morris, and to the many friends and family members she leaves behind. We will continue to honor her legacy and generous spirit.•

## MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:28 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 732. An act to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2142. An act 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.

H.R. 3101. An act to enhance cybersecurity information sharing and coordination at ports in the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3898. An act to impose secondary sanctions with respect to North Korea, strengthen international efforts to improve sanctions enforcement, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3972. An act to clarify that family offices and family clients are accredited investors, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

At 4:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill and joint resolution:

S. 504. An act to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.

H.J. Res. 111. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to ''Arbitration Agreements''.

The enrolled bill and joint resolution were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 5:31 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2266. An act making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

## MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 732. An act to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which

the United States is a party, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3101. An act to enhance cybersecurity information sharing and coordination at ports in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3898. An act to impose secondary sanctions with respect to North Korea, strengthen international efforts to improve sanctions enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 3972. An act to clarify that family offices and family clients are accredited investors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

## EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–3267. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order that amends Executive Order 13223 of September 14, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3268. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13712 of November 22, 2015, with respect to Burundi; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3269. A communication from the Chief of the Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modernizing Common Carrier Rules'' ((FCC 17–112) (WC Docket No. 15–33)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 20, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3270. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Moral Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act'' (RIN0938–AT46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3271. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Religious Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act'' ((RIN1545–BN92) (TD 9827)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3272. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Moral Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act'' ((RIN1545–BN91) (TD 9828)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3273. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Strategic Plan for the Department of Health and Human Services for fiscal years 2018 - 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3274. A communication from the Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance—Coverage Amendment'' (RIN2900–AP49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 23, 2017; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

## PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–124. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California relative to federal rescheduling of marijuana from a schedule 1 drug; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

Whereas, Marijuana and its derivatives remain classified as a Schedule I drug by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); and

Whereas, Schedule I drugs, substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical, use and a high potential for abuse and include heroin, lysergic acid diethylarnide (LSD); marijuana or cannabis, 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (ecstasy), methaqualone (Quaalude); and peyote; and

Whereas, Marijuana or cannabis and its congeners have been studied worldwide outside the United States for years and have shown efficacy for various conditions, such as wasting syndrome, as an antinauseant in those taking chemotherapy, Glaucoma (reduces intraocular pressure), Epilepsy (antiseizure properties), migraine headaches and other types of pain, and anxiety; and

Whereas, The medical and recreational use of marijuana in the State of California has been authorized by the voters through initiatives; and

Whereas, Marijuana or cannabis is presently classified by the DEA as a Schedule I drug wherein the possession, sale, or utilization can trigger federal prosecution statues, including federal forfeiture provisions; and

Whereas, Concerns about the criminality and forfeiture provisions in federal law impede traditional banking institutions from doing business with potential clients cultivating, researching, selling, or utilizing marijuana or cannabis and its derivatives, therefore making marijuana commerce very difficult; and

Whereas, The inability to use traditional banking institutions impedes local and state government from adequately monitoring true marijuana or cannabis utilization and shortchanges the respective taxes owed to taxing agencies, potentially costing state and local governments hundreds of millions of dollars in lost tax income; and

Whereas, Since marijuana, or cannabis businesses are unable to legally use traditional banking institutions, many vendors resort to the black market and involvement of organized crime making communities less safe; and

Whereas, Marijuana or cannabis and its derivatives cannot be legally studied by research institutions if it remains a Schedule I drug, thereby prohibiting newly discovered and verifiable pharmacological attributes of marijuana or cannabis and its deriatives, which otherwise may enhance the quality of life of those that could truly benefit from its use; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly*, That the Legislature urges the Congress of the United States to pass a law to reschedule marijuana or cannabis and its derivatives from a Schedule I drug to an alternative schedule, therefore allowing the legal research and development of marijuana or cannabis for medical use and allowing for the legal commerce of marijuana or cannabis so that businesses dealing with marijuana or cannabis can use traditional banks or financial institutions for their banking needs, which would result in providing a legal vehicle for those businesses to pay their taxes, including, but not limited to, payroll taxes, unsecured property taxes, and applicable taxes on the products sold in accordance with state and local laws; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Legislature urges the President of the United States to sign such legislation; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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POM–125. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California relative to the California Nonmotorized Trails Master Plan, to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 8

Whereas, California established significant greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2020 through the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and for 2050 through Executive Order S–3–05; and

Whereas, In 1974, the California Recreational Trails Act was enacted to increase accessibility and enhance the use, enjoyment, and understanding of California's scenic, natural, historic, and cultural resources; and

Whereas, The act and the California Recreational Trails System Plan, which is prepared and continuously maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation pursuant to the act and in cooperation with the Department of Transportation, provides for both motorized and nonmotorized accessibility and use; and

Whereas, In order to help meet those greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, a California Nonmotorized Trails Master Plan is urgently needed to create a statewide plan and timeline for a coordinated network of California trails for walking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation in both urban and rural regions; and

Whereas, Human-powered, nonmotorized transportation can serve the dual purposes of providing healthy exercise for citizens and transporting them from one location to another with a zero-carbon footprint; and

Whereas, Many of California's local entities, including municipalities, public agencies, private organizations, and individual citizens, are currently in the process of developing their own local trails master plans in their neighborhoods, cities, counties, or regions that are designed to create avenues for environmentally friendly methods of nonmotorized transportation and that are likely to expand rural economic development benefits and outcomes; and

Whereas, According to a 2014 report issued by the Governors Highway Safety Association, 338 cyclists were killed in collisions

with motor vehicles in California between 2010 and 2012, the most in any state; and

Whereas, Other states, including New York, have found that a coordinated nonmotorized trails network offers myriad health benefits and valuable experiences, including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, taking short nature walks, touring, including agricultural touring, exploring greenways, parklands, and rural agricultural lands, and other nonvehicular experiences in the unique settings of local communities, and that these related activities bring commercial opportunities to those communities; and

Whereas, The federal Recreational Trails Program is a Federal Highway Administration assistance program that provides federal funds to states to develop and maintain recreational trails in both urban and rural regions for motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail use; and

Whereas, California's rural regions have limited access to networks of nonmotorized recreational trails; and

Whereas, There is currently no deadline to complete and connect the state's many diverse and separate trails into a statewide coordinated nonmotorized transportation network in both urban and rural regions: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly*, That the Legislature requests the Governor to designate the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Transportation, in partnership with the National Park Service and other relevant federal, state, regional, and local agencies, private organizations, and individual citizens, to accelerate the planning, creation, and completion timelines for a California Nonmotorized Trails Master Plan for urban and rural regions to expand opportunities for all Californians to benefit from new recreational, tourist, and economic development options in their daily lives, which will reduce the overall usage of fossil-fuel powered vehicles for public transportation and create a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists who use nonmotorized transportation trails networks to walk or ride; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Legislature requests the Governor to request the President, Members of Congress, and the Federal Highway Administration, through its Recreational Trails Program, to dedicate increased funding to California to accelerate and support the planning and development of the California Nonmotorized Trails Master Plan as an expanded network of nonmotorized recreational trails in rural and urban regions of the state and to accelerate the completion of existing nonmotorized recreational trails, including the California Coastal Trail; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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POM–126. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California urging state and federal departments and agencies to make collaborative, statewide salmon fishery restoration an urgent and high priority; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas, Salmon has been a fundamental and irreplaceable part of the cultural traditions of Native American tribes in California, and a staple of Native American diets, since time immemorial; and

Whereas, The California salmon fishery is among the oldest and most important historic commercial fisheries in California, and among the most iconic commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries in the United States; and

Whereas, The California Bay-Delta ecosystem, including the rivers that flow into it, is the most important salmon-producing system south of the Columbia River; and

Whereas, The Klamath and Trinity Rivers are home to culturally and commercially important, and biologically unique, salmon runs; and

Whereas, The California salmon fishery annually draws a vast amount of trade and tourism to California; and

Whereas, A decade ago, the California salmon fishery supported 23,000 jobs and $1.4 billion in economic activity; and

Whereas, California salmon contains high levels of omega–3 fatty acids, offers abundant health benefits for Californians, including lower cholesterol and lower risk of skin and breast cancer, and is delicious; and

Whereas, Salmon runs are responsible for the largest transfer of biomass from the oceans to the land on the planet and are vital to the healthy functioning of ecosystems from the coast to the mountains; and

Whereas, Salmon spawned in California rivers are caught by fishermen in Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and as far away as Alaska; and

Whereas, The health of a salmon population is an important benchmark of the health of its native rivers and ecosystems; and

Whereas, The Fish and Game Code and the State Water Resources Control Board Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan establish the doubling of wild salmon populations as state policy; and

Whereas, The California salmon fishery was closed from 2008 to 2009 due to declining populations and fish kill of salmon resulting from decreased river flows and warm water conditions that caused direct mortality, leading to dramatic impacts on the fishing industry and fishing-dependent communities; and

Whereas, Salmon populations have declined during California's historic drought; and

Whereas, Depressed salmon populations in 2015 and 2016 have resulted in a shorter fishing season, a reduction in landed fish from 981,000 annually from 1986 to 1990, inclusive, to 92,000 in 2016, and severe hardship to the fishing industry and fishing-dependent communities; and

Whereas, Many salmon populations in California are listed as endangered or threatened under the California Endangered Species Act or the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, or both, including Central Valley winter-run and spring-run Chinook salmon, California Coastal Chinook salmon, and all coho salmon; and

Whereas, The United States Secretary of Commerce determined a commercial fishery failure for the Yurok Tribe Klamath River Chinook salmon fishery in 2016 due to a fishery resource disaster; and

Whereas, On May 24, 2017, the Governors of California and Oregon urged the Secretary of Commerce to expedite declaration of a fishery resource disaster for California and Oregon for the 2016 and 2017 seasons; and

Whereas, It is critical that further commercial fishery failure determinations be made, fishery resource disasters declared, and disaster relief provided, for California salmon fisheries for 2016 and 2017: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly*, That the Legislature urges state departments and agencies, including the Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Department of Water Resources, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, and the State Water Resources Control Board, to make collaborative, statewide salmon fishery restoration an urgent and high priority; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Legislature urges federal departments and agencies, including the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service, to make collaborative, statewide salmon fishery restoration an urgent and high priority; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Legislature urges the federal government to undertake all appropriate measures to provide necessary disaster relief for California salmon fisheries for 2016 and 2017; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, to the Director of Fish and Wildlife, to the Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, to the Director of Water Resources, to the President of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, to the Chairperson of the State Water Resources Control Board, to the Secretary of the Interior, to the Commissioner of Reclamation, to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, to the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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POM–127. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to recognize the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Artsakh, to establish economic and cultural ties with the nation, and to support the peace and stability of the South Caucasus; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 99

Whereas, The region of Artsakh is located in the South Caucasus and has historically been Armenian territory. The region is populated by an overwhelming majority of Armenians; and

Whereas, Despite its historical and cultural ties to Armenia, in 1921, Joseph Stalin arbitrarily severed Artsakh from Armenia, and in violation of the national, territorial, and human rights of the Armenian people, the severed region of Artsakh was placed under the administration of Soviet Azerbaijani; and

Whereas, For decades, the Armenian peoples' peaceful demonstrations for national independence, for individual freedom, and in opposition to the Soviet Azerbaijani repression and discrimination were met with acts of violent repression by Soviet Azerbaijani forces who refused to allow the self-determination of the people of Artsakh. Soviet Azerbaijani's bloody response resulted in the deaths of ethnic Armenians in Sumgait (February 1988), Kirovabad (February 1988), and Baku (January 1990) and the forced deportation of more than 350,000 Armenians from Azerbaijani. In the aftermath of the Sumgait tragedy, the United States Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690 to the Fiscal Year 1989 Foreign Operations Appropriations

bill (H.R. 4782), concerning the Karabakh conflict and called on the Soviet government to ''respect the legitimate aspirations of the Armenian people . . . '' and noted that ''dozens of Armenians have been killed and injured during the recent unrests . . . ''; and

Whereas, The people of Artsakh overwhelmingly voted to support independence. On December 10, 1991, despite continued violence against the people of Artsakh, a popular referendum proclaiming an independent republic took place during the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Under the watchful eye of more than 50 international observers, and in full compliance with international standards for a free and fair election, more than 80 percent of eligible voters cast a ballot, and the measure passed with 98 percent in favor. On January 6, 1992, the democratically-elected Parliament of Artsakh adopted the Declaration of Independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic; and

Whereas, Despite a cease-fire agreement between the Republic of Artsakh, Azerbaijani, and Armenia that ended years of intense fighting, the security and sovereignty of Artsakh continue to be threatened by regional tension and hostile acts. The Armenians of Artsakh remain resolute in their efforts to exercise the right to self-determination and live free from violence and repression, and by recognizing the government of Artsakh, the international community can help put to rest this century-old conflict; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate*, That we urge the President and Congress of the United States to recognize a free and independent Republic of Artsakh; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we memorialize the United States government to strengthen and solidify our country's economic and cultural relationship with the Artsakh Republic and its citizens and continue to promote the humanitarian and economic rehabilitation of the region; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we support the Republic of Artsakh's continued efforts within the international community to reach a lasting solution to the existing regional problems and establish peace and stability in the strategically important region of South Caucasus; and be it further

*Resolved*, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

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POM–128. A resolution adopted by the Alpena County Board of Commissioners, Alpena, Michigan, opposing slashing federal funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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POM–129. A resolution adopted by the Eaton County Board of Commissioners, Charlotte, Michigan, opposing slashing federal funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 763. A bill to improve surface and maritime transportation security (Rept. No. 115–178).

By Mr. BURR, from the Select Committee on Intelligence, without amendment:

S. 2010. An original bill to extend the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 for 8 years, and for other purposes.

## EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2023.

*Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*David Ross, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Paul Trombino III, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration.

By Mr. ISAKSON for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*Melissa Sue Glynn, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Enterprise Integration).

*Cheryl L. Mason, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals for a term of six years.

*Randy Reeves, of Mississippi, to be Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Memorial Affairs.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 2003. A bill to modernize the regulation of cosmetics; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. KING, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2004. A bill to increase funding for the State response to the opioid misuse crisis and to provide funding for research on addiction and pain related to the substance misuse crisis; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. BENNET, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. KING, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2005. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the publicly traded partnership ownership structure to energy power generation projects and transportation fuels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2006. A bill to require breast density reporting to physicians and patients by facilities that perform mammograms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 2007. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the exclusion for educational assistance programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 2008. A bill to combat the opioid epidemic and drug sample backlogs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. REED, Mr. UDALL, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2009. A bill to require a background check for every firearm sale; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2010. An original bill to extend the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 for 8 years, and for other purposes; from the Select Committee on Intelligence; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2011. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the negotiation of lower covered part D drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries and the establishment and application of a formulary by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under Medicare part D, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2012. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the Indian Employment Credit and the depreciation rules for business property on Indian reservations, 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 Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. Res. 303. A resolution expressing support for the designation of October 2017 as ''National Audiology Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Res. 304. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that entrepreneurship on the part of minority women-owned businesses should be fully supported and encouraged; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 305. A resolution recognizing the month of October 2017 as Filipino American

History Month and celebrating the history and culture of Filipino Americans and their immense contributions to the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. WICKER):

S. Res. 306. A resolution recognizing the month of October 2017 as ''National Principals Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 307. A resolution designating October 26, 2017, as ''Day of the Deployed''; considered and agreed to.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 109

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) 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. 194

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 194, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a public health insurance option, and for other purposes.

S. 292

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 292, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 301, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion.

S. 497

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 989

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 989, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pediatric subspecialists in the National Health Service Corps program, and for other purposes.

S. 1136

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill to improve the structure of the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1161

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1161, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate copayments by the Department of Veterans Affairs for medicines relating to preventative health services, and for other purposes.

S. 1361

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1361, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs.

S. 1503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

S. 1674

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1674, a bill to provide grants for the repair, renovation, and construction of public elementary schools and secondary schools, to establish a school infrastructure bond program, and for other purposes.

S. 1753

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1753, a bill to amend the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 to provide a temporary license for loan originators transitioning between employers, and for other purposes.

S. 1790

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1790, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve college savings under section 529 programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1827, a bill to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1870

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1870, a bill to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to secure urgent resources vital to Indian victims of crime, and for other purposes.

S. 1899

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1899, a bill to reauthorize and extend funding for community health centers and the National Health Service Corps.

S. 1942

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1942, a bill to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians, and for other purposes.

S. 1953

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1953, a bill to amend the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 and the Indian Law Enforcement Reform Act to provide for advancements in public safety services to Indian communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1967

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1967, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide additional exemptions to the individual mandate, and for other purposes.

S. 1979

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1979, a bill to block the implementation of certain presidential actions that restrict individuals from certain countries from entering the United States.

S. 1997

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1997, a bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to protect privacy rights, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 250

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 250, a resolution condemning horrific acts of violence against Burma's Rohingya population and calling on Aung San Suu Kyi to play an active role in ending this humanitarian tragedy.

S. RES. 297

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 297, a resolution supporting Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of afterschool programs held on October 26, 2017.

## STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2006. A bill to require breast density reporting to physicians and patients by facilities that perform mammograms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the ''Breast Density and Mammography Reporting Act,'' a simple, yet potentially life-saving solution to ensure that women receive their own medical information. I thank Senator HELLER for working with me on this bipartisan bill and I appreciate Representatives DELAURO and FITZPATRICK for introducing a House companion to this legislation.

We have accomplished so much in the treatment and diagnosis of breast cancer, and it still continues to be the second leading cause of death for women in the United States and the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanic women. Mammograms have aided tremendously in early detection efforts, helping many more women survive this diagnosis.

For women with dense breast tissue, however, a mammogram may not be capturing the whole picture. Dense breast tissue and cancer tumors look similar on a mammogram and make cancer harder to detect in women with higher breast density. Unfortunately, many women are never told about their tissue density on the report they receive after their screening, even though it is assessed and reported to their health care provider. This leaves women unaware their mammogram could be missing signs of cancer. If a patient doesn't have information to begin with, how would she know to ask her doctor about what additional screening might be right for her?

There is currently no Federal requirement for women to receive notice that they have dense breast tissue on their mammogram report. This bill would require that women be informed on the mammogram report, something they already receive, if they have dense breast tissue, as well as a recommendation that they talk with their health care provider to discuss any questions and if they might benefit from additional screening. The bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to focus on research and improved screening for patients with dense breast tissue.

The bill does not impact State laws and simply sets a minimum Federal standard on a report that women already receive. Any State wishing to have additional reporting requirements would be able to do so. Withholding from women their own medical information just does not make sense. Having access to your breast tissue density could mean the difference between catching breast cancer early and surviving, or waiting until it's too late.

This bipartisan bill has the support of major cancer organizations, including American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Are You Dense Advocacy, Susan G. Komen, DenseBreastinfo, Tigerlily Foundation, Prevent Cancer Foundation, Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered, Don't be a Chump! Check for a Lump!, Sharsheret, National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health, Black Women's Health Imperative, and Men Against Breast Cancer.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue, and I urge my fellow Senators to cosponsor the Breast Density and Mammography Reporting Act. Thank you Mr. President and I yield the floor.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

### SENATE RESOLUTION 303—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 2017 AS ''NATIONAL AUDIOLOGY AWARENESS MONTH''

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 303

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition in the United States;

Whereas the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found that 24 percent of adults in the United States, or 40,000,000 individuals, may have noise-induced hearing loss in 1 or both ears;

Whereas, although the prevalence of hearing loss increases with age, approximately 40 percent of individuals with hearing loss are under the age of 60;

Whereas people with hearing difficulty frequently delay seeking assessment and treatment for their hearing loss;

Whereas audiologists, whose academic and clinical training provides the foundation for patient management from birth through adulthood, are dedicated health care professionals who diagnose, treat, and manage hearing loss and balance disorders;

Whereas audiologists treat patients in many different settings, including private practice, hospitals, schools, Veterans Health Administration hospitals, and otolaryngology offices;

Whereas October 2017 would be an appropriate month to designate as ''National Audiology Awareness Month''; and

Whereas there is a need for greater awareness on the part of the public regarding issues related to the hearing and balance care provided by audiologists, including—

(1) the diagnosis and treatment options available to the public;

(2) the research needs of audiologists; and

(3) the public policy implications of changes in the field of audiology: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of October 2017 as ''National Audiology Awareness Month''; and

(2) applauds the actions of audiologists, including clinicians, researchers, and others who strive to raise public awareness of hearing and balance care by advancing the profession of audiology.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 304—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE PART OF MINORITY WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES SHOULD BE FULLY SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED

Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 304

Whereas the number of women-owned small businesses increased by 3,500,000 from 2007 to 2016;

Whereas, for every 10 women-owned businesses launched since 2007, 8 were started by women of color;

Whereas women are now majority owners of 38 percent of all businesses in the United States;

Whereas there are currently almost 5,000,000 minority women-owned small businesses;

Whereas minority women are the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs in the United States;

Whereas African-American women own fully 49 percent of all African-American-owned businesses;

Whereas Latina-owned firms employ 550,400 workers;

Whereas there are currently 922,700 Asian-American women-owned small businesses;

Whereas Native American and Alaska Native women-owned small businesses generated $10,500,000,000 in revenues; and

Whereas the number of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women-owned small businesses more than doubled between 2007 and 2016: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) October has been designated ''National Women's Small Business Month'' by the Small Business Administration;

(2) minority women often work in low-paying jobs in the traditional workforce, which means the gender salary gap, child care expenses, and a lack of paid family leave impact women of color more severely than other populations, and expanding access to opportunities for entrepreneurship can help women of color get ahead economically, serve their communities, and care for their families;

(3) minority women entrepreneurs are paving the way for women-owned businesses;

(4) minority women entrepreneurs are an important segment of the domestic economy of the United States as well as the global economy; and

(5) in order to sustain the economy of the United States, Congress must fully support and encourage the growth of minority women-owned businesses.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 305—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2017 AS FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF FILIPINO AMERICANS AND THEIR IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr.

DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 305

Whereas the earliest documented Filipino presence in the continental United States was October 18, 1587, when the first ''Luzones Indios'' arrived in Morro Bay, California, on board the Nuestra Señora de Esperanza, a Manila-built galleon ship;

Whereas the Filipino American National Historical Society recognizes 1763 as the year in which the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States was established in St. Malo, Louisiana;

Whereas the recognition of the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States adds a new perspective to the history of the United States by bringing attention to the economic, cultural, social, and other notable contributions made by Filipino Americans to the development of the United States;

Whereas the Filipino American community is the second largest Asian American and Pacific Islander group in the United States, with a population of approximately 4,000,000;

Whereas, from the Civil War to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, Filipino Americans have a longstanding history of serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas more than 250,000 Filipinos fought under the United States flag during World War II to protect and defend the United States in the Pacific theater;

Whereas 20,000 Filipino World War II veterans were granted United States citizenship as a result of the Immigration Act of 1990, which was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on November 29, 1990;

Whereas, effective June 8, 2016, the Filipino World War II Veterans Parole Program allowed for Filipino World War II veterans and certain family members to be reunited more expeditiously than the immigrant visa process allowed at that time;

Whereas on December 14, 2016, President Barack Obama signed into law S. 1555 (114th Congress), the Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015, to award Filipino veterans who fought alongside troops of the United States in World War II the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress, a recognition for which Filipino World War II veterans have waited more than 70 years;

Whereas the presentation of Congressional Medals of Honor pursuant to such Act will take place on October 25, 2017, in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Building;

Whereas Filipino Americans continue to demonstrate a commendable sense of patriotism and honor;

Whereas 9 Filipino Americans have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force that may be bestowed on an individual serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas the late Thelma Garcia Buchholdt, born in Claveria, Cagayan, on the island of Luzon in the Philippines—

(1) moved with her family to Alaska in 1965;

(2) was elected to the House of Representatives of Alaska in 1974;

(3) was the first Filipino woman elected to a State legislature; and

(4) authored a comprehensive history book entitled ''Filipinos in Alaska: 1788–1958'';

Whereas Filipino American farmworkers and labor leaders, such as Philip Vera Cruz and Larry Itliong, played an integral role in the multiethnic United Farm Workers movement, alongside Cesar Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and other Latino workers;

Whereas Filipino Americans play an integral role in the healthcare system of the United States as nurses, doctors, and other medical professionals;

Whereas Filipino Americans have contributed greatly to music, dance, literature, education, business, journalism, sports, fashion, politics, government, science, technology, the fine arts, and other fields that enrich the landscape of the United States;

Whereas, as mandated in the mission statement of the Filipino American National Historical Society, efforts should continue to promote the study of Filipino American history and culture because the roles of Filipino Americans and other people of color have largely been overlooked in the writing, teaching, and learning of the history of the United States;

Whereas it is imperative for Filipino American youth to have positive role models to instill—

(1) the significance of education, complemented by the richness of Filipino American ethnicity; and

(2) the value of the Filipino American legacy; and

Whereas it is essential to promote the understanding, education, and appreciation of the history and culture of Filipino Americans in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the celebration of Filipino American History Month in October 2017 as—

(A) a testament to the advancement of Filipino Americans;

(B) a time to reflect on and remember the many notable contributions that Filipino Americans have made to the United States; and

(C) a time to renew efforts toward the research and examination of history and culture so as to provide an opportunity for all people of the United States to learn more about Filipino Americans and to appreciate the historic contributions of Filipino Americans to the United States; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to observe Filipino American History Month with appropriate programs and activities.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 306—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2017 AS ''NATIONAL PRINCIPALS MONTH''

Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 306

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the American Federation of School Administrators have declared the month of October 2017 to be ''National Principals Month'';

Whereas principals are educational visionaries, instructional and assessment leaders, disciplinarians, community builders, budget analysts, facilities managers, and administrators of legal and contractual obligations;

Whereas principals work collaboratively with teachers and parents to develop and implement a clear mission, high curriculum standards, and performance goals;

Whereas principals create school environments that facilitate great teaching and learning and continuous school improvement;

Whereas the vision, actions, and dedication of principals provide the mobilizing force behind any school reform effort; and

Whereas the celebration of National Principals Month would honor elementary school, middle school, and high school principals, and recognize the importance of principals in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the month of October 2017 as ''National Principals Month''; and

(2) honors the contribution of principals in the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools of the United States by supporting the goals and ideals of National Principals Month.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 307—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 26, 2017, AS ''DAY OF THE DEPLOYED''

Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 307

Whereas more than 2,000,000 individuals serve as members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas several hundred thousand members of the Armed Forces rotate each year through deployments to 150 countries in every region of the world;

Whereas more than 2,900,000 members of the Armed Forces have deployed to the area of operations of the United States Central Command since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks;

Whereas the United States is kept strong and free by the loyal military personnel from the total force (the regular components, the National Guard, and the Reserves), who protect the precious heritage of the United States through their declarations and actions;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces serving at home and abroad have courageously answered the call to duty to defend the ideals of the United States and to preserve peace and freedom around the world;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces personify the virtues of patriotism, service, duty, courage, and sacrifice;

Whereas the families of members of the Armed Forces make important and significant sacrifices for the United States; and

Whereas the Senate designated October 26 as ''Day of the Deployed'' in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) designates October 26, 2017, as ''Day of the Deployed'';

(2) honors the deployed members of the Armed Forces of the United States and the families of the members;

(3) calls on the people of the United States to reflect on the service of those members of the Armed Forces, wherever the members serve, past, present, and future; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States to observe the Day of the Deployed with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

## AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 8 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 COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SR–253 to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Commercial Satellite Industry: What's Up and What's on the Horizon.''

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, and David Ross, of Wisconsin, each to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, Paul Trombino III, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Act of 2017.''

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled ''Nigeria Security Update.''

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–628 to conduct a hearing on: S.1223, Klamath Tribe Judgment Fund Repeal Act.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–628 to conduct a hearing on: S.1870, Securing urgent resources vital to Indian Empowerment Act 2017; S.1953, Reauthorization of the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010; and S.1942, to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, off the Senate floor to conduct a hearing on nominations.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–562 to conduct a hearing entitled ''Working and Aging with Disabilities: From School to Retirement.''

## PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Sarah Finley, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Radhika Gharpure, who is currently serving as a legislative fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted to Tessa Rebholz, a fellow on my staff, for the remainder of the session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On Tuesday, October 24, 2017, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 96–388, as amended by Public Law 97–84, and Public Law 106–292, reappointed and appointed the following Senators to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council: the Honorable ORRIN G. HATCH of Utah, The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida, and The Honorable TIM SCOTT of South Carolina.

## VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1329 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1329) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2017, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1329) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 280 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 280) designating the week of October 2 through October 6, 2017, as ''National Health Information Technology Week'' to recognize the value of health information technology in transforming and improving the healthcare system for all people in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 280) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 3, 2017, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

## RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 305, S. Res. 306, and S. Res. 307.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

## ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, at 12 noon on Thursday, October 26, all postcloture time be considered expired on the Palk nomination, and that following disposition of the Palk nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate

vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the McFadden nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, October 26; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Palk nomination under the previous order.

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 DURBIN and Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

## ROHINGYA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Rohingya are one of many ethnic groups, largely Muslim, who have been living for centuries in Burma and now in Myanmar, with the majority of them in the western coastal Rakhine State.

Deep-seated misconceptions about their roots and faith have led to decades of discrimination, about which many of us are aware because of press reports. They have been denied citizenship, had their movement restricted, and have been deprived of basic healthcare. It is no wonder that the Rohingya people are considered to be one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

Today, as a result of a military crackdown against them in the Rakhine State—an overzealous, disproportionate response to attacks on security outposts by some militants last October and then again this August—countless Rohingya have been brutally killed, and more than 600,000 have fled to overwhelmed and desperate camps in neighboring Bangladesh.

The scorched-earth tactic by the Burmese military has left hundreds of villages literally burned to the ground, and the reports of rape, starvation, mass killing—even reports of security forces burning people, babies, alive—have been horrifying. Satellite images and maps indicate that the destruction by the Burmese military is not episodic, it is systematic.

In Bangladesh, aid groups have been unable to keep up with the influx of refugees. The unprecedented scale of the crisis and the lack of infrastructure in the makeshift camps have created significant gaps in access to food, medical care, and even safety and shelter.

The international community has condemned the violence against the Rohingya, and rightly so.

Countries around the world—reputable international human rights organizations such as the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and even the U.N.—have denounced the military's campaign against the Rohingya.

In a speech to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva last month, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, called the Burmese military operation against the Rohingya people ''a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.''

Many of my colleagues in this Chamber joined me when I introduced S. Res. 250 to condemn these atrocities, and a large group of us also wrote to the administration recently to urge Secretary Tillerson and Administrator Green to help resolve the crisis and provide critically needed aid.

Just yesterday, in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, my friend and colleague, Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland, labeled the crisis a ''genocide.'' Yet Aung San Suu Kyi, the de facto leader of Burma, the Nobel laureate, has largely done and said too little.

I have followed Aung San Suu Kyi over the years. I joined many of my colleagues in praising her struggle for democracy. After 15 years under house arrest, she and the National League for Democracy won a landslide victory in the first national vote since Burma's transition to civilian rule in 2015, more than two decades after her party was denied its victory in the 1990 election.

I admired her so much for her nonviolent struggle for political freedom and human rights. And while I recognize she still has a fragile relationship with the Burmese military, which still has considerable power, I am sadly disappointed in her lack of leadership when it comes to the plight of the Rohingya people—her fellow countrymen—men and women who are in a desperate situation.

She claims she is committed to restoring peace and the rule of law. Yet she has spoken of so-called allegations and counterallegations instead of addressing the widespread, well-documented abuses by her own country's security forces.

I was glad that Aung San Suu Kyi in 2016 appointed investigators, led by former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, who recommended this summer that Burma review a 1982 law that strips most Rohingya of citizenship. Yet the Burmese Government has yet to implement any of the Commission's recommendations and further continues to deny access to the Rakhine State to other U.N. investigators, journalists, and NGO groups. Some officials have even accused the Rohingya of faking rape and faking the burning of their own homes. What a preposterous claim.

I recognize the dramatic progress Burma has made over the years. It will take a long time to overcome many of the challenges in such a young democracy, and I understand that Aung San Suu Kyi, as State Counselor, has a limited role under the power-sharing agreement with her military, which has largely been responsible for the violence I have described. But I would urge her to live up to her own words upon delivering her Nobel Peace Prize lecture in 2012 to address the historic and brutal suppression of the Rohingya and support ethnic reconciliation in Burma. In fact, Aung San Suu Kyi quoted the following passages from the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1948, as the answer to why she fought for democracy and human rights in her home country in Burma. She said:

> [D]isregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,
>
> [I]t is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.

These are wise words used by Aung San Suu Kyi when she received her Nobel Prize. They are words that apply today to this crisis within her own country.

I am committed to doing what I can in Congress to hold those in the Burmese military personally accountable for the reprehensible human rights violations against the Rohingya.

I want to note that I have also had the opportunity over the October recess to meet with some members of the Rohingya community who have resettled in my home State of Illinois over the years.

About 1,500 Rohingya people live in the Chicagoland area. Among them is Nasir Zakaria. He helped found the Rohingya Culture Center in Chicago—the first Rohingya community center in America. The center helps provide a safe, familiar space for Rohingya people new to the country, as well as critically needed resources, such as translators, ESL and computer classes, help with paperwork, and much more.

When I met Nasir and the other members of the community about a week ago with my wife, they told me about the phone calls and photos they receive late at night from family and friends fleeing the violence, looking for safety in Bangladesh.

I also heard from community members who recently returned from a medical mission to Bangladesh. They showed me the photos they brought back. One food line to feed refugees was literally 1 mile long. Healthcare is limited. Safe drinking water is limited. Cholera is detected. It is a horrible situation for these people who have been tossed out of Myanmar and now are trying just to survive nearby Bangladesh. The stories are horrific, and they are all the same.

Here is an image of this exodus that was printed in the New York Times. It shows families fleeing Burma across the border to Bangladesh with smoke rising in the background from the villages that they lived in being burned.

The stories I heard were of helpless, poor families walking on foot through jungles, crowding in boats along the Naf River, leaving behind everything with accountings of rape, killing, and arson by the Burmese military. They arrive in Bangladesh sick, exhausted, and desperately in need of the most basic things—food, clean water, medicine, a safe space to rest their heads.

Here is another image, which is heartbreaking. It is an indication of what happens in the refugee camps when food arrives, this time in a camp known as Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

A UNICEF report last week stated that 58 percent of the refugees who have poured into Cox's Bazar are children, noting that they are in hell on Earth. They are acutely malnourished, they need clean water and vaccines, and they are at risk of exploitation by traffickers. This is unacceptable.

I understand that Bangladesh and Burma have discussed a repatriation plan recently, but many refugees don't have any documents. They were literally burned out of their homes. We need to call on the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Filippo Grandi was in my office last week, and he stressed how important it is for us to speak up and to help on this issue, that we ensure the voluntary right of return and we ensure the safety of those who do return and we make sure that the paper requirements for return are reasonable for people who are literally homeless and stateless at this moment.

Many are wary of returning without an assurance of full citizenship, given the risk of further persecution or the threat of being placed in camps in Myanmar when they return. I don't blame them, because the atrocities committed against the Rohingya over the past months and weeks are not new by any means.

Nasir Zakaria in Chicago told me that more than three decades ago, when he was only 14, he was kidnapped by militants targeting the Rohingya in Burma. He never saw his parents again.

Nasir eventually escaped to Bangladesh, made his way to Malaysia, where he worked for 18 years in construction before he finally made it to the United States with a green card in 2013. He learned English, worked as a dishwasher in a hotel near Chicago, supported his wife and three children, met others in the community, and helped to create the Rohingya Center that I visited.

Here is a picture of Nasir Zakaria with his son, Mohamed, in their Chicago apartment. You can see the American flag in the background. He is very proud of this Nation that he now calls home.

The Rohingya Culture Center provides critical resources to more than 400 families in the Chicago area, one of the largest concentrations of Rohingya refugees in America. More than three decades after Nasir first escaped Burma, the Rohingya continue to be attacked and demonized.

Let me close by saying that we met today with the Myanmar Ambassador. Seven Senators sat down with him and expressed the sentiments that I have included in this statement.

First, let me give Mr. U Aung Lynn, the Ambassador, credit for coming to the meeting. He knew what we were going to raise. Yet he came, he took notes, and he assured us that he would respond to this; that we would be able to come back in a week or two for a progress report on what is being done; that he would allow or plead for access of U.N. personnel, as well as NGO groups, into the northern Rakhine area currently being denied access; that he would personally make it clear to his government we want those responsible for these atrocities held accountable. We want to make certain, as well, that those who are repatriated have a fair chance to return to a safe atmosphere in Myanmar and, ultimately, for citizenship.

It was a long list of requirements and requests that we gave to the Ambassador. He took them all in a positive way and told us he would be back to us in a matter of a week or two with a progress report.

Let me close by appealing to Aung San Suu Kyi to help resolve this crisis. I am counting on her. I do believe she is a good person. I hope that she will respond to this crisis in her own country the way she stood up with so much courage before.

I plan to meet with this Ambassador in a few weeks to chart the progress, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to end this ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya people in Myanmar. We cannot allow the Burmese military to commit these atrocities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before Senator DURBIN leaves the floor, I just want to commend our colleague from Illinois. He and I have worked together for many years, and throughout that time, the Senator from Illinois has constantly been a voice for those who have no voice on these human rights concerns, laying out why the effort to step up is what we are all about as Americans.

I thank him. I enjoyed listening to him again. You don't really enjoy it because you hear about the suffering, but I am so glad that Senator DURBIN has made this case, and I thank him for it.

## WILDFIRE DISASTER FUNDING ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, across the West, 2017 will be long remembered as the year when fire was seared into our collective consciousness and ash rained down on homes and cars. There were mass evacuations, and scores just lost their hopes and dreams.

Devastating fires have hit my home State of Oregon, but Idaho, California, Washington, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, and more all were hit by fires that always seemed bigger and hotter and more powerful than what we have seen in the past.

These are not our grandfathers' fires. There are a whole host of reasons behind this, and today I just want to talk a bit about what happened, what it has meant, and at least a commonsense approach that Senator CRAPO and I have advocated for moving forward on a bipartisan basis.

The fact is, in the West, dozens of lives have been lost. Entire communities have been wiped out. An iconic national treasure in my home State, a place that Oregonians have always regarded—a special love for our Columbia River Gorge is practically in our chromosomes—it was burned over this year.

This month, a huge part of Northern California was burned. We talked to our colleagues Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator HARRIS about that. It is not just rolling hills and unoccupied land; the fires swept through entire cities. Some of the stories about those whose lives were lost in California just break your heart. School has been disrupted for more than a quarter million children. In some cases, it could be weeks before classes are back up and running.

In my home State, more than 600,000 acres were burned, nearly a third of that in the Chetco Bar fire that burned through southwestern Oregon. I was there to visit with folks in the community and the volunteers. There were volunteers from all over the country who were stepping up to help us deal with these fires. It sure was needed because, nationwide, almost 9 million acres burned. It is an area bigger than the size of eight States in our country—all of it up in flames. Compare that to the 1980s and the 1990s, when an average of around 3 million acres burned per year.

A brandnew report is out from the Department of the Interior forecasting how much the cost of fighting these fires is going to climb in the near future. The agency predicts a jump of 20 percent from fiscal year 2018 to 2019, and they believe that is a conservative estimate. If conditions are dry and temperatures are high, it could be even worse.

I am of the view—and it is something Senator CRAPO and I have worked on

together for years now. Sometimes we believe it is the longest running battle since the Trojan War. It is based on the proposition that Congress should no longer sit back and accept that these fires can only get larger, cost more, and that somehow the Forest Service is not all that big a problem. We just call it the fire service, which is the way a lot of people describe it in our part of the world.

Now, the way the Federal budget works for these fires is a broken, commonsense-defying policy, and it literally adds fuel to the fires and in effect disrupts not just the West but the rest of the country because the consequences of this broken budgeting process for fighting fires takes a toll on communities across the country.

A few years ago, I came back from Oregon for a visit, and I learned that our colleague and friend, the distinguished senior Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, had signed on to legislation that I am going to describe shortly that Senator CRAPO and I have been working on. When I heard Senator SCHUMER had signed on to it, I, of course, was very pleased to have someone of his influence. I said to my colleagues: What am I missing here? I don't remember there being a lot of Federal forests in Brooklyn.

Well, it turns out that at that time, Senator SCHUMER, because he goes all over his State, was I believe in Upstate New York. There was a company that made baseball bats. As a result of this broken system of fighting fire, when Senator SCHUMER's constituent had a problem with the baseball bats because there was an invasive species that was eating its way through these baseball bats, the local Forest Service folks didn't have the money to help him deal with this economic issue.

It might seem like a small thing to some people, but when you are talking about these smaller communities, if they don't have the resources because they are victims of this broken system of fighting fire, this is a problem. It is a problem that Senator CRAPO and I have taken on now to ensure that, once and for all, we substitute common sense for a system that is everything but common sense.

What I am going to describe now is something called fire-borrowing. It starts like this: Over the years, prevention, which everybody talks about—Smokey is the symbol of prevention. Prevention gets short shrift. It gets hot and dry in our part of the world in the West, and if you don't go in there and do the preventive work, if you don't thin out the forests and it gets hot and dry, and then all of a sudden you have a lightning strike on your hands, you will have what amounts to an inferno. It just whips through the area. It knows no boundaries. Federal land is affected. Private land is affected. State land is affected. There are bigger and more expensive fires, and I can tell you that what we have seen are unprecedented fires.

In our Columbia River Gorge that I mentioned, we saw a fire leap the river. It used to be that rivers were a break. They were a break to ensure that the communities were safe. Now, in my home State, we have seen a fire actually leap the river.

So what is happening is, as prevention gets short shrift, these big fires break out, the Federal Government borrows from the prevention fund to put the fires out, and the problem just gets worse. Common sense is defied. There is absolutely irrational budgeting that ripples not just through the West but through communities all across the country, producing what I think most colleagues would say they would never expect, which is forestry personnel—when Senator SCHUMER visits in New York—having challenges paying for local forestry matters.

Fire prevention programs help thin out dead and dying material from forests and clear dried grasses from open landscapes—the kindling that goes up in flames when lightning strikes or when a small ground fire grows out of control. Those are the very real problems we have in the West. The programs we need to deal with this are being robbed because of the cycle I just described. Fire-borrowing. Prevention. Short shrift. The government borrows from the prevention fund to put the fire out, and the problem gets worse. That is fire-borrowing in our part of the world.

You can look at the recent fires in California to see how dangerous this is. If fire prevention had gotten a fair shake, lives could have been saved, and businesses and property might have been spared. Western communities would not be trying to recover from the ravages of summer and fall 2017.

Many of our colleagues of both parties and now 205 groups—timber companies, scientists, environmentalists, academics, and people from all across the political spectrum—are joining Senator CRAPO and me in saying that what is needed is a clean fix for the wildfire budgeting system and a complete end to fire-borrowing. We have been working on this, as I said, for years.

We know some of our colleagues want to see a variety of other policies attached, particularly policies dealing with forest management. One of the reasons I wanted to come to the floor tonight was to say that I take a back seat to no one when it comes to finding the right approach to forest management. I have written bipartisan forest management laws. But let's make sure that as we go forward on this issue, we understand that we cannot let other matters get in the way of stopping the cycle of fire-borrowing once and for all.

What Senator CRAPO and I have proposed is essentially to say that the really big fires, once and for all in America, will be treated like what they really are—natural disasters. And you can look at that relatively small number of fires and say: We are going to deal with them through the disaster fund. Then you don't raid the prevention fund. And what the government scorekeepers have said in the past is that not raiding the prevention fund through fire-borrowing will, in their judgment, means fewer fires in the first place; hence, there will be fewer natural disasters if you end fire-borrowing once and for all.

My view is that we are going to go forward this year on the disaster relief issue, and I want it understood that I am going to work with Senators of both political parties to finally see this matter wrapped up and an end to fire-borrowing.

I think anyone who has kept an eye on the news or has read stories or seen reports about natural disasters understands that unfortunately disasters have visited too many of our communities—hurricanes flooding Houston, violent winds and rain in Florida. Weeks after Maria made landfall, millions of American citizens in Puerto Rico are still in desperate need of help. Our neighbors to the south suffer with the aftermath of a massive earthquake. Tornados are a threat across much of the country. In our part of the world, these wildfires are our natural disasters.

The Congress can't get up one day, come to the floor of the Senate, and just say: We are going to stop all the hurricanes and the earthquakes. There is something that Congress can do about preventing so many wildfires. We, with our legislation, want to build a new ethic of fire prevention. That is what ending fire-borrowing is really all about. It is saying that we are in effect going to take—it is almost like an old stage with a dilapidated set on it, and you just pull it out because it is outdated. That is what we are talking about with fire-borrowing. It is like an old stage that is dilapidated. It doesn't make sense for the times. We are talking about replacing fire-borrowing with a modern policy so that we can deal with the big fires as the natural disasters they are and get back in the business of putting fire prevention first and replacing a commonsense-defying Federal budget plan that has caused so much harm to folks in the West.

I hope my colleagues will support the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. Senator CRAPO and I want to work with every single Senator in this Chamber to get across the finish line. We are not saying that ending fire-borrowing is going to mean there will never be another fire in this country. What we are saying is that it is past time to replace such an illogical, commonsense-defying budget system as that presented by fire-borrowing. With that, we can reduce the risk of major wildfires to communities across the West.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:10 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m.

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted Nay on Roll Call No. 575, Nay on Roll Call No. 576, Nay on Roll Call No. 577, Nay on Roll Call No. 578, and Nay on Roll Call No. 579.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call No. 580 and Yea on Roll Call No. 581.

## HONORING GASTON DAY SCHOOL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. PATRICK T. McHENRY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, the Tenth District of North Carolina is home to many excellent schools that develop and inspire our young people to become leaders in their communities. This year marked the 50th anniversary of one of these institutions, Gaston Day School. The school was founded by families and community leaders in Gaston County who were seeking to offer an educational alternative to the area's parents and children. In an article from The Gastonia Gazette published in 1967 the first Head of School, J.B. Davis, lays out Gaston Day's mission when he says, ''We are not interested in teaching only the excellent student. We are interested in teaching the youngster who can achieve.'' Gaston Day has realized this mission since its very first class. In fact, Gaston Day's current Head Master, Richard Rankin, was a student in Gaston Day's very first class.

Although the school may have moved on from its humble beginnings in the former First Presbyterian Church building and is now established in the Gaston County community, it has not forgotten its roots. Over the past fifty years Gaston Day School has graduated students who have not only become leaders in the Gaston County community but in many other parts of the world as well. Today, the school continues to expand and evolve so it can continue to teach its students to succeed in our constantly changing world.

Congratulations to Gaston Day School on fifty years of teaching students and developing leaders.

## HONORING MARGARET ''PEGGI'' HANRAHAN

### HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Margaret ''Peggi'' Hanrahan for her years of service to the people of Alabama and the United States.

On October 27, 2017, Peggi will retire from her current position as Confidential Assistant to Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Prior to this role, Peggi served as Executive Assistant to Mr. Sessions during his twenty-year career in the United States Senate. Peggi oversaw all administrative and front office staff and was essentially involved in every function of the office.

Peggi has a very unique background, including a period of time working in the oil and gas industry, time as co-owner of a professional party planning company, and work in a law office. These experiences helped shape her future role in public service.

I have had the honor of working with Peggi in a professional capacity, and I also came to know her personally through my family and our work together with a children's home in Mobile, Alabama. Peggi was the Firm Administrator at Miller, Hamilton, Snider & Odom, and I worked closely with her in my role as managing partner of the firm. Throughout our time together, I always found Peggi to be competent, capable, friendly, dedicated, and knowledgeable.

After being elected to the United States Senate in 1996, Mr. Jeff Sessions hired Peggi to serve on his staff. There is no way to quantify the numerous tasks Peggi has completed, the various roles she has held, or the number of individuals she assisted during her time on Capitol Hill. Whether it was arranging a tour of the United States Capitol or giving career advice to an intern or drafting personal correspondence to an Alabama family, Peggi's impact has been profoundly felt over the last twenty years.

Mr. Speaker, as a sign of Peggi's impressive skillset and track record, Mr. Sessions asked Peggi to continue serving with him once he was confirmed to serve as our nation's 84th Attorney General.

Mr. Sessions had this to say about Peggi and her years of service: ''Peggi has been at the center of everything we have accomplished in public service. She loves America and its ideals, is smart, decisive, loyal, and a total professional. She speaks up for the high principles she believes in, and for two decades has been the key point of contact in our office for thousands of Alabamians and Americans all over the country. She has provided invaluable service to me, the nation, and the so many who she trained and mentored. Though we will miss her marvelous contributions, we wish her all the best as she and Kevin embark on this next adventure.''

So, on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District and a grateful nation, I want to wish Peggi and her husband, Kevin, all the best upon her retirement. Alabama and our nation are better off today thanks to the service, dedication, and leadership of Peggi Hanrahan.

## RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY PRIVATE FIRST CLASS (PFC) CHRISTOPHER MCCRAW

### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Private First Class (PFC) Christopher McCraw, who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on October 14, 2008, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. PFC McCraw was killed by wounds sustained when he encountered small arms fire while on dismounted patrol in Nasar Wa Salam, Baghdad. PFC McCraw was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

PFC McCraw, a Columbia, Mississippi native, joined the Army in February 2006 and went to Basic Training at Fort Benning, Georgia where he graduated in June 2006. He deployed to Iraq in December of 2007. According to the Associated Press, PFC McCraw is remembered by his friends and family for having a jovial sense of humor. Wendy Bracey, PFC McCraw's Sunday school teacher described him as, ''a charmer, an all-around, happy-go-lucky kid.'' His father, Avon, recalled that their last conversation was over the phone, and that at the time PFC McCraw was laughing and in good spirits.

PFC McCraw was laid to rest at Foxworth Cemetery, located in Marion County. According to the Associated Press, PFC McCraw's uncle, Jerry McCraw, remembers him as, ''always a happy kid, a bursting-with-energy-type kid, I guess what you would call a perfect soldier.''

PFC McCraw was awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, and the Good Conduct medal.

PFC McCraw is survived by his parents, Avon McCraw and Cathy McCraw; his uncle, Jerry McCraw; his son, Issac; and his fiancée Brianna Bell.

PFC McCraw proudly served our nation to protect the freedoms we all enjoy. His service will always be remembered.

## A TRIBUTE TO BONDURANT-FARRAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Bondurant-Farrar School District for being named the 2016 Bondurant Organization of the Year at the Bondurant Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony on January 20, 2017.

The Bondurant-Farrar School District has been an integral part of the Bondurant Community for years. While it's teachers have remained dedicated year after year in educating the area's children and preparing them for the future, administrators have worked hard in meeting the challenges and surpassing the educational needs of a growing population. I am immensely proud of the educators and administrators in our state that dedicate their lives to ensuring the success of our future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to represent the Bondurant-Farrar School District in the United States Congress and commend them for their outstanding achievements in their community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the Bondurant-Farrar School District and in wishing them all nothing but continued success.

## HONORING MOUNT SAINT DOMINIC ACADEMY'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mount Saint Dominic Academy of Caldwell, New Jersey on the occasion of its 125th Anniversary.

Mount Saint Dominic Academy serves the surrounding community as an all-girls Catholic College Preparatory School dedicated to the education of young women from a variety of ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds. The institution's goal of inclusivity aims to both inspire and empower students to realize their unique gifts and talents in an academic atmosphere fostering excellence, respect, and diversity while at the same time reinforcing the Christian-centered value of moral integrity.

The history of Mount Saint Dominic Academy began in 1892 with the Academy's founding by the Sisters of Saint Dominic. Although the Caldwell Dominican congregation was initially based in Jersey City, New Jersey, the municipality was ravaged by tuberculosis throughout the 1880s. With the threat of contracting the disease an everyday concern, Mother Mary Catharine Muth sought out a location for her ill sisters to recover. This refuge was found twenty miles west of Jersey City in the Borough of Caldwell. It was here where Mother Catharine purchased the Harrison Estate on Roseland Avenue, a plot of land comprising of a small home and garden where Mother Catharine taught day students and boarders, all the while, looking after her ill Sisters.

Over the next decade as the student body increased, so did the necessity for larger quarters. In 1893, the cornerstone was laid for a new Motherhouse convent and school in Caldwell. In 1903, with the increased demand in time devoted toward the education of New Jersey's youth, the sisters decided to renounce their cloistered lifestyle and become Third Order Dominicans.

By the late 1920s history repeated itself as the school saw a greater influx of new students. This influx led to renewed efforts to expand. Under Mother Joseph Dunn, the institute constructed a larger dormitory that came to encompass both the school itself as well as the residences for those boarding. More improvements and renovations were made under Sister Germaine in the 1950s to add additional classrooms, offices, and a larger library.

Recently, the academy has continued to improve upon the renovations that took place during the twentieth century by continuing to add more physical alterations and expansions to the campus. Among these expansions has been the construction of a new 19,000 square foot athletic center to accommodate the growth in participation within women's athletics. Furthermore, under the guidance of Sister Francis Sullivan, the school transformed its former gymnasium into the Doris M. Byrne Performing Arts Center which offers Broadway quality experiences for both performers and patrons. These installments not only serve to improve the experiences of students attending the Academy, but are also available to benefit the greater West Essex community as well. Mount Saint Dominic Academy remains today one of New Jersey's foremost educational. institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in congratulating Mount Saint Dominic Academy on its 125th Anniversary.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes due to a funeral. Had I been present for roll call vote number 569, H.R. 3551 C-TPAT Reauthorization Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 570, S. 504 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 571, Approval of the Journal, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 572, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 577—The combined rule providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 469—Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2017 and of the bill H.R. 732—Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 573, Adoption of H. Res. 577—The combined rule providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 469—Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2017 and of the bill H.R. 732—Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 574, H.R. 2142 INTERDICT Act, as amended, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 575, Cohen (D–TN) Amendment No. 2—Exempts settlement agreements based on race, religion, national origin, or any other protected category, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 576, Johnson (D–GA) Amendment No. 3—Exempts settlement agreements that direct funds to remediate the indirect harms caused by the manipulation of emissions standards in automobiles, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 577, Jackson Lee (D–TX)—Amendment No.4—Exempts settlement agreements that pertain to providing restitution to a State, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 578, Cicilline (D–RI)—Amendment No. 5—Exempts settlements that resolve predatory or fraudulent conduct involving residential mortgage-backed securities, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 579, Conyers (D–MI)—Amendment No. 6—Exempts settlement agreements that direct funds to remedy indirect harm resulting from lead in drinking water, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 580, Passage of H.R. 732—Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 581, Passage H.R. 3898 Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanctions Act, as amended, I would have voted "yea."

## A TRIBUTE TO ELDORA GOWING

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Eldora Gowing of Shenandoah, Iowa, on the very special occasion of her 100th birthday.

Our world has changed a great deal during the course of Eldora's life. Since her birth, we have revolutionized air travel and walked on the moon. We have invented the television, cellular phones and the internet. We have fought in wars overseas, seen the rise and fall of Soviet communism and witnessed the birth of new democracies. Eldora lived through eighteen United States presidents and twenty-two governors of Iowa. In her lifetime, the population of the United States has more than tripled.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Eldora in the United States Congress and I'm proud to recognize her today on this momentous occasion. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her on reaching this milestone and in wishing her nothing but the best.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF VAN MICHAEL

### HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on October 11, a great Tennessean and very

patriotic American, Van Michael, passed away at the age of 82.

Van was a longtime friend and supporter of both me and my late father.

He was a lawyer, successful businessman, and served as City Judge for Sweetwater, Tennessee.

He also enjoyed his work in Washington as the lobbyist for the National Christmas Tree Growers Association.

Van was the primary developer of a popular Tennessee tourist attraction called the Lost Sea, an amazing body of water in an underground cavern in Monroe County.

I still remember riding in a boat with my dad at the Grand Opening of the Lost Sea.

He also was a leader in bringing about Cherohala Skyway, one of the Nation's most beautiful scenic highways.

Van was a very well-informed conservative with strong views on the great issues of the day.

As Sweetwater Mayor Doyle Lowe said, "Sweetwater and the County will miss him. He was a large part of the community."

Van Michael touched thousands of lives in good and positive ways. This Country is a better place because of the life he led.

I would like to include in the RECORD the following article about Van Michael from the Monroe County newspaper The Advocate & Democrat.

[From the Advocate and Democrat, Oct. 15, 2017]

LOST SEA DEVELOPER VAN MICHAEL DIES AT 82

(By Michael Thomas)

A man who helped bring The Lost Sea to prominence among many other life accomplishments died Oct. 11 at the age of 82.

Van Reeves Michael was known for a lot of things throughout his long life, but it was his part in the development of the former Craighead Caverns into the Lost Sea that will mark his legacy.

"I can't think of anyone that knows more about The Lost Sea than him," said Lisa McClung, director of The Lost Sea. "I used to get him to come out and talk to the new tour guides and share some of the history of it with them so they would know it firsthand. He was a wonderful person. He stopped by to see us frequently and tell us stories about The Lost Sea. I can't believe he's gone. We will definitely miss him."

McClung said she did not know anyone who loved The Lost Sea more than Van Michael.

"He was passionate about it becoming an attraction and he worked relentlessly in the early 60s to get it open," she said. "He kept on and on until he was able to see it become reality. He said he would stand on Main Street and count the car tags of people who were coming through going to Chattanooga or Knoxville and he knew if it were open to the public, they would stop and see it."

In a story commemorating the 50th anniversary of The Lost Sea, Michael said, "It was called the 'Lake Room' until 1965. People had come and gone in the cavern before that, but only a few had actually seen the big room with the cave. Nobody in Sweetwater believed it existed."

According to family members, Michael was also instrumental in helping bring the Cherohala Skyway into existence, something his father, W.E. Michael, helped start.

Michael was also well known in the City of Sweetwater, where his law office was known as the "Michael and Michael building."

"Everybody knew that building on Oak Street," Sweetwater Mayor Doyle Lowe said. "I hated to hear that Van had died. He was quite a character. He always had a joke ready and a lot of times, he would make your day. We were friends for more than 40 years and he was always encouraging, always thinking of ways to make things better."

"Sweetwater, and the county, will miss him," Lowe added. "He was a large part of the community."

Michael was preceded in death by his parents, W.E. Michael and Claudia Francis Michael, and son Richard Michael. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Margaret (Peg) Bowland Michael, his daughter and son-in-law, Teresa Michael Glasgow and Steven Glasgow of Franklin, and his grandchildren, Carson and Campbell Glasgow.

He was a 1952 graduate of Tennessee Military Institute. He went on to receive his bachelor and law degrees from Cumberland University and practiced law in Sweetwater for 57 years at Michael and Michael Attys.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI ARMY SERGEANT (SGT) ERIC C. NEWMAN

### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen Mississippi Army Sergeant (SGT) Eric C. Newman, who gave his life while in service to our nation on October 14, 2010, during Operation Enduring Freedom. SGT Newman was killed when enemy combatants attacked his unit in Akatzai Kalay, Afghanistan. SGT Newman was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

SGT Newman, a Waynesboro, Mississippi native, graduated from Wayne County High School. SGT Newman worked for the Waynesboro Police Department several years before joining the Army in 2006.

According to the Associated Press, Waynesboro Police Chief James Bunch said, "SGT Newman was an outstanding individual. It didn't surprise me at all that he would sacrifice himself for his country."

SGT Newman's funeral was held at Freeman Funeral Home in Waynesboro. He was buried at Hebron Cemetery, located in Wayne County, Mississippi.

SGT Newman was awarded the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Infantrymans Badge and the Parachute Badge.

SGT Newman is survived by his wife, Charidy Newman; mother, Dianne Newman; stepdaughter, Larissa Leigh; grandmother, Rowena Loper; grandmother, Jolene Newman; uncle, Michael Earl Newman; aunt, Sandra Newman; and sister, Kimberly Delbosco.

SGT Newman proudly served our nation to protect the freedoms we all enjoy. His service will always be remembered.

## A TRIBUTE TO DAMIAN BELL

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Damian Bell of Pleasant Hill, Iowa for being honored with the Carnegie Medal by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission for the role he played in saving the life of Richard Rauzi.

Richard was snowshoeing and taking photographs on Lake Ahquabi on February 14, 2016, when he fell through the ice trying to rescue a goose frozen in the slush. Damian, his friend Jesse Bannor, and their sons were ice fishing in a local shack. Damian's son, Konnor, heard Richard yelling for help, and the two men raced to the rescue. Using a nearby canoe, Damian made his way over to Richard. Unable to pull him aboard, and with the canoe threatening to tip over, Damian secured Richard to the boat with a rope, then stepped onto the ice and attempted to pull Richard from the water before firefighters arrived on scene to help in the efforts. Even though he had been in the water for 40 minutes on a 15 degree day, Richard survived after two days with extreme hypothermia.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Damian Bell for his courage and heroic actions in helping to save the life of Richard Rauzi. It is humbling to know that there are people like Damian who are willing to risk their own lives to save the life of another. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating Damian on receiving this esteemed designation and in wishing him nothing but the best.

## HONORING THE SERVICE AND LIFE OF SGT. FRED CUARESMA YURONG

### HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today. to honor the life and accomplishments of U.S. Army Sergeant Fred Cuaresma Yurong. Following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor, Fred answered President Roosevelt's call to service and joined the 1st Filipino Infantry Regiment. He went on to serve in both New Guinea and the Philippines during WWII. During this time, Fred served with distinction, reaching the rank of Sergeant and displayed a level of commitment to serving others that would show throughout the rest of his life.

Out of the 250,000 Filipino soldiers who served during World War II, Sergeant Yurong was one of the few to be granted citizenship in a mass naturalization ceremony held in Camp Beale on March 20, 1943.

Upon completion of his service, Sergeant Yurong married his wife in the Philippines before relocating back to California and raising a family of five children. He continued his service to the community through his active involvement in the American Legion and several Filipino organizations in Stockton, California. His contributions speak to the testament of our country's servicemen and women selfless commitment to serve our communities. While

he passed away on May 26, 1976, the impact of his contributions to this country and to those whose lives he touched remains just as strong today. His children continue to honor his legacy by engaging in community building and serving others, values that their father instilled in all of them.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service and life of a man whose commitment to serving others was displayed through a life of service to his country and community. It is both fitting and appropriate that we recognize Sergeant Yurong, who made sacrifices for the freedoms enjoyed by our country, served with distinction, and went on to leave a legacy that is carried on by his family today as he is honored for his service. I join the family of Sergeant Fred Cuaresma Yurong and wish them the best as we honor his service with the Congressional Gold Medal along with the other Filipino Veterans of World War II.

## SUPPORTING MEASURES AGAINST IRAN AND HEZBOLLAH (H.R. 1698, H. RES. 359, H.R. 3342, & H.R. 3329)

### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of four critical pieces of legislation that will significantly strengthen our efforts to counter the Iranian menace in the Middle East.

Appropriately, these measures follow the President's determination, announced two weeks ago, that the suspension of sanctions under the Iran nuclear deal no longer serves the national security interests of the United States. President Trump's determination simply acknowledges the reality that has existed since day one of the deal—the nuclear deal put the United States on a perilous course to confronting a nuclear armed Iran.

By agreeing to submit to a minimal and inadequate standard of inspections, Iran earned international recognition of its enrichment program, reaped billions of dollars in sanctions relief, and positioned itself to become a nuclear threshold power by the time the deal expires in less than a decade. In addition to these unacceptable concessions, Tehran managed to secure an agreement that ignores its massive support for international terrorism and its pursuit of nuclear blackmail through an advanced ballistic missile program.

Mr. Speaker, the bills we are considering today are a first step towards correcting the balance in our relationship with the Iranian regime—a balance that must have as its first priority the national security interests of the United States and its regional allies, especially Israel.

My good friend and Chairman, ED ROYCE, introduced two of these pieces of legislation that will expand and refine sanctions against Iran's ballistic missile program, its trade in conventional weapons, and the illicit network of financial support for its regional terrorist proxy Hezbollah. H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, and H.R. 3329, the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, target the money and resources that enable Iran and Hezbollah to terrorize the State of Israel and other civilian populations across the region. Both of these bills rightly enjoy large bipartisan support—I am proud to join more than 320 of my colleagues in co-sponsoring H.R. 1698 and more than 110 have co-sponsored H.R. 3329.

Mr. Speaker, I also stand today in support of H.R. 3342, the Sanctioning Hezbollah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act, introduced by my good friend MIKE GALLAGHER, and H. Res. 359, introduced by my friend TED DEUTCH, urging the European Union to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization. These bills expose Hezbollah for what it is: a merciless organized crime organization wrapped in a terrorist organization, masquerading as a political party. H.R. 3342 directs the President to apply penalties, principally visa bans, against individuals determined to direct Hezbollah's use of innocent human lives to protect its cruel mechanisms of murder. Meanwhile, H. Res. 359 urges the European Union to recognize what should be plain as day: there is no merely political wing to Hezbollah. Rather, the entire organization is dedicated to expanding Iranian influence in the region and threatening Israel's existence by all means possible.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Congress must get these bills to the President's desk as soon as possible. Just this week, Prime Minister Netanyahu addressed the Israeli Knesset and underscored the urgent task of denying Iran's attempts to secure strategic footholds in Syria and acquire nuclear weapons. Also this week, Defense Minister Lieberman told Israeli legislators that a volley of rockets fired into the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights from Syria was "intentional . . . carried out by a cell operated by Hezbollah."

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to note that Monday was the 34th anniversary of the horrific 1983 bombing. of the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut perpetrated by Hezbollah with Iranian support that killed 241 Americans. Just a few blocks away from here, at the Marine Corps Barracks in Washington D.C., Vice President Pence commemorated this anniversary on Monday, vowing that America will never forget those who gave everything in service to their country. Our fight against Hezbollah began that October day in Beirut and we must see it through until the evil of Iran and Hezbollah are completely vanquished.

I urge my colleagues to pass these critical measures to honor the memory of our fallen soldiers and our unfinished work against this pernicious threat.

## A TRIBUTE TO MARCELLA HAMANN

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Marcella Hamann of Atlantic, Iowa, on the special occasion of her 100th birthday.

Our world has changed a great deal during the course of Marcella's life. Since her birth, we have revolutionized air travel and walked on the moon. We have invented the television, cellular phones and the internet. We have fought in wars overseas, seen the rise and fall of Soviet communism and witnessed the birth of new democracies. Marcella lived through eighteen United States presidents and twenty-two governors of Iowa. In her lifetime, the population of the United States has more than tripled.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Marcella in the United States Congress and I'm proud to recognize her today on this momentous occasion. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her and in wishing nothing but continued happiness.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF U.S. ARMY SERGEANT (SGT) JACOB DAN DONES

### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of U.S. Army Sergeant (SGT) Jacob Dan Dones who died while defending our great nation on October 20, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Dones was killed when his forward operating base was attacked by enemy forces using indirect fire in Hit, Iraq. SGT Dones was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Irwin, California that was task organized under the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Tupelo, Mississippi.

According to the Associated Press, SGT Dones was born March 5, 1984, in Dimmitt, Texas. SGT Dones enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after his graduation from Dimmitt High School in 2002.

SGT Dones was remembered by many who knew him on a memorial website. Elizabeth Nunez of San Diego, California wrote a tribute in his honor. "I served with Jacob for a few days while I was on election duty in Hit, Iraq. He was one of the soldiers providing security for the elections and I was one of four female Marines there to search female Iraqis who came to vote. He was a great guy and kept all of us laughing and helped us to not be afraid. I still cry when I think about him and what a shining light he was to all of us on the election team."

A funeral service was held at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church located in SGT Dones' hometown. Following the service, SGT Dones was laid to rest at Castro Memorial Gardens in Dimmitt, Texas.

SGT Dones is survived by his parents, Danny Dones and Rosa Dones; his fiancee, Mindy LeAnn Gonzales; his daughter, Alyssa Monique Gonzales; his two brothers, Daniel Dones and Jason James Dones; his two sisters, Jessica Ramirez and Priscilla Rojas; his paternal grandparents, George Dones and Maria Estella Layva; and his maternal grandmother, Guadalupe Ramirez.

SGT Dones was the recipient of the following awards: the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon and the Combat Infantryman's Badge (CIB). He was an Expert Infantry Rifleman (EIR).

SGT Dones demonstrated courage and bravery protecting the freedoms we all enjoy. His service and sacrifice for America will not be forgotten.

## HONORING MAYOR JAMES ''JIM'' OSCOVITCH, TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM, NEW JERSEY

### HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mayor James ''JIM'' Oscovitch from the Township of Byram, New Jersey.

Mayor James ''JIM'' Oscovitch has given over 20 years of service to the Township of Byram and its residents as an elected official, beginning his first term as a Council member in 1997 and then becoming Mayor in 2009. During that time, he served on its Planning Board and Recreation Committee. Jim has also served on the Board of Directors for the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, and as a member of Legislative Committee on Land Use for the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

Jim is also very active within the community. He was a founding Board member of the Friends of Waterloo Village; a past Co-Chairman of the Andover-Byram Chamber of Commerce; and a past Board of Governors member and Parliamentarian of the Cranberry Lake Community Club. He has also served as a coach in the Township's youth sports programs and Byram's Boy Scout Troop 276, along with his son Matthew. An outdoors enthusiast, Jim can regularly be seen hiking and biking local trails, or conducting spin classes at a local fitness center.

Jim has always been a very ''hands-on'' elected official, and in over eight years as Mayor, he has worked hard to establish a high level of professionalism within the township. Jim quickly earned a reputation for maintaining respect and decorum during public meetings. As ''the face of Byram Township,'' he has earned the respect of our neighboring municipalities and Sussex County, working closely with them to establish and maintain shared services programs.

Jim Oscovitch is ending his over two decades of service to Byram on December 31, 2017. As Byram's Mayor—and most importantly, as a friend to Byram residents—Jim motivates everyone he works with to do their best. I am proud to have someone of his caliber among my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in congratulating Mayor James ''Jim'' Oscovitch, on the occasion of his 20 years of extraordinary public service.

## TRIBUTE TO HON. JULIAN L. RIDLEN

### HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a prominent Hoosier leader. Mr. Julian Ridlen passed away on October 10, 2017 surrounded by his loving family.

Julian was born to Charles Fred and Doris Franklin Ridlen in Decatur, Illinois on February 4, 1940. He graduated from MacArthur High School in 1958. On June 1, 1963, Julian was married to his wife Susanne Smith in Logansport, Indiana.

He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in history, with minors in political science, chemistry, and English from Anderson University. He then pursued his J.D. at the George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C. before becoming a practicing attorney in 1968.

Anyone who knew Julian will tell you that he held three remarkable qualities: he was a historian, a true statesman, and had a deep love for the political process. He was no stranger to public service and frequently sought opportunities to provide leadership in various levels of government. He was elected City Court Judge in Logansport in 1971 and again in 1975. He then served as Indiana State Treasurer for two terms from 1979–1987. During this period, Julian was responsible for the creation of the Indiana Bond Bank, which has had a significant impact on the State of Indiana by helping us utilize our outstanding bond ratings and passing the interest savings onto all of our local schools, county and city governments, parks, and countless other entities. For the past ten years, Julian served as Judge of the Cass Circuit Court, serving as Senior Judge until his retirement in December 2016. In this capacity, he spearheaded many local initiatives that will benefit our community and the great State of Indiana for years to come.

Julian possessed another quality that can be recognized all too well: a servant's heart. Over the years, he was very active in various local organizations throughout our community, giving back more than we could ever return to him. He served in leadership positions as President of the Red Cross Board, Chairman of the U.S. Bicentennial Committee, Vice President of the United Fund, and President of the Youth Services Bureau. He was an active member of the Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the Mental Health Association, and the Salvation Army. Julian also served as an Elder and taught Sunday school at Calvary Presbyterian Church.

Julian leaves behind his wife, Susanne, to carry on his legacy of service to fellow Hoosiers. His passing is a great loss for our community and the State of Indiana. Today, we recognize and respect that he led an amazing life and impacted more lives than we will ever know. Rest in peace Julian, he will never be forgotten.

## HONORING JIMMY TERRY, SR.

### HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we honor Jimmy Terry, Sr., beloved pastor, devoted family man, tireless community leader, and passionate proclaimer of the love of Jesus.

Raised by his beloved ''Aunt Lucy'' in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Pastor Terry served in the United States Navy on the USS *Saratoga* and in his hometown of Dayton, Ohio before he was called to minister to Clarksville-Montgomery County, first as pastor of Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church, then as founder of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church and Christian School.

Although renowned statewide for his vast civic involvement in the NAACP, Legend Bank, Chamber of Commerce, United Way, hospitals, colleges and associations, it was his gift of uniting people through powerful prayer, joyous celebration, and the simplicity of the words ''I love you'' that made him such a Tennessee treasure. His servant leadership, continual encouragement, and fierce defense of the Christian faith inspired thousands. His mission to return Christ to the central meanings of Christmas and Easter became The Jesus Sign Ministry, extending from Clarksville-Montgomery County to all 95 Tennessee counties to communities nationwide. His life's work was his life.

On June 21, 2017 Pastor Terry left Clarksville on the evening train to Glory. His influence is far-reaching, his legacy is profound, and his impact in our community is immeasurable. We rejoice in simply knowing him.

## A TRIBUTE TO JACK AND MONA QUEE

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jack and Mona Quee, of Afton, Iowa for being selected as Union County's 2017 inductee into the Iowa 4–H Hall of Fame.

Over the past 50 years, the Quees have been stepping up to help with youth wherever help is needed. From organizing food for the Saddle Club trail rides, to chaperoning youth while camping at the Iowa State Fair, Jack and Mona have been providing youth leadership in Union County for generations. It was in 1970 that they first became involved with 4–H as Horse and Riders club leaders and haven't stopped helping out since.

Mr. Speaker, Jack and Mona's efforts embody the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent them, and Iowans like them, in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jack and Mona for this award and wishing them nothing but continued success.

## HONORING DR. MICHAEL SNELL ON EARNING THE ''SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD'' FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

### HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I extend my sincere congratulations to Dr. Michael Snell, Superintendent of the Central York School District, for being named the ''Superintendent of the Year'' by the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

Dr. Snell earned his bachelor's degree at Kutztown University and his master's and doctoral degrees from Temple University. He gained administrative experience in the Hempfield and West York Area School Districts before ultimately being named Superintendent at Central York School District.

Dr. Snell presides over a growing school district of more than 5,800 students, and a steadfast dedication to providing educational opportunities through which students strive to achieve their full potential. Dr. Snell is a recognized leader in our community, serving on the boards of the York County Economic Alliance, the Byrnes Health Education Center and myriad other organizations. His numerous honors and awards are a testament to his commitment to students, his personal integrity and his tireless work ethic.

Dr. Snell's colleagues describe a forward-thinking leader who looks ''outside the box'' for solutions rather than settling for obvious ones. His peers also describe a true professional who dedicates his time to mentoring new superintendents and preparing the next generation of educational leaders.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I congratulate Dr. Michael Snell on being named the ''Superintendent of the Year'' by the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators. I wish him continued great success and service in the years to come.

## IN RECOGNITION OF RACHEL ISKOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MUTUAL HOUSING CALIFORNIA AND MUTUAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT

### HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to recognize Ms. Rachel Iskow on the occasion of her retirement from the position of Executive Director of Mutual Housing California and Mutual Housing Management. I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring Rachel and her dedication to sustainable housing.

Since its incorporation in 1988, Mutual Housing California has worked to create a locally-led nonprofit that spurs the revitalization of low-income communities by strengthening existing neighborhood leaders and houses. As Mutual Housing's Executive Director, Rachel has utilized her experience in nonprofit leadership, housing development, and community outreach. Under her guidance, Mutual Housing has seen the expansion of environmentally-friendly developments, inclusive housing for all residents, and overall compassionate housing. Rachel supports permanent solutions to the pressing housing needs of our region's diverse families. Ultimately, Rachel's work has led to positive outcomes for the health and stability of families and for Sacramento as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand and honor Ms. Rachel Iskow today and to wish her the best of luck in her retirement from Mutual Housing. I ask all my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Rachel for her unwavering dedication to sustainable housing.

## CONGRATULATING CHIEF STEVEN T. EDWARDS ON HIS RETIREMENT

### HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my congratulations to former Prince George's County Fire Department Chief Steven T. Edwards as he prepares to retire as Director of the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) after twenty-four years. I've had the pleasure of working with him throughout those years, including in my capacity as Co-Chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

Steve is a fifty-year veteran of the fire services. He began his career with the Prince George's County Fire Department as a high school cadet. Over the years, Steve rose through the ranks and became Chief in 1989. After a four-year tenure marked by accolades for his leadership and citations for the Department—including the International Association of Fire Chiefs Award for Excellence—he stepped down to take on a new challenge leading MFRI. A world-renowned training institution for firefighters and emergency services personnel, MFRI prepares more than 38,000 students each year to enter the fire services. Under Steve's leadership, MFRI set high standards that help ensure that trainees are ready to face any emergency when they go out to serve in fire departments across the country. MFRI has been working closely with the Congressional Fire Services Caucus for more than a quarter-century, conducting training programs for Congressional staff. Steve has been instrumental in preparing these programs and making them so informative.

Steve has also contributed his time and talents to advancing the safety and health of fire service personnel at the national level. In 1997, he was named President of the North America Fire Training Directors, a forum for exchanging information and best practices among state fire training and education programs. In addition, Steve has served in leadership positions with National Fire Protection, the National Board on Fire Service Professional Certification, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute's National Advisory Committee. For the latter, he served as Chair from 2004 to 2006, and we worked closely together to ensure that Congress was providing fire departments with all the tools necessary to carry out their work safely and effectively.

I'm proud that Prince George's County has produced such a fine national leader for the fire services in our country. Throughout the years I've known Steve, I've seen him give all his passion and talents to the work of supporting firefighters and emergency services personnel and their families. I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Chief Steve Edwards on his retirement, and thanking him for his work on behalf of the fire services in Maryland and across this nation.

## TRIBUTE TO CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Crossroads Christian Church, located in my hometown of Corona, California, as it celebrates a major milestone in the church's history. On this date in 1892, a small group of about ten people joined together to worship in a small building in Corona, establishing the Crossroads Church. Now, 125 years later, Crossroads Christian Church continues to be a house of worship in Corona, though the church has grown a little larger than that original group of ten in 1892.

In fact, Crossroads has seen tremendous growth since its founding. Within its first year, the church was already in need of a larger space and looking for a new building. The growth experienced in those early days of Crossroads would become a trend over the next 125 years. Crossroads experienced moves and the building of larger churches in the 1960s under the leadership of Pastor Ted Smith, in the early 1980s under the leadership of Pastor Tim Coop, and most recently in 1993 under the leadership of Pastor Barry McMurtrie.

Today, the Crossroads Christian Church and the Crossroads Christian School are located at a beautiful site, where Kellogg Avenue meets Ontario Avenue in Corona. Together, the church and the school are integral parts of the Corona community and touch the lives of families far beyond those who attend them. Crossroads continues to take an active role reaching out to young people throughout the region and encouraging them to touch the lives of others with simple acts of care and kindness.

Mr. Speaker, over the past 125 years Crossroads Christian Church has made an invaluable impact in the lives of a countless number of members of our community. I join with everyone at the church in celebrating this remarkable anniversary and I look forward to the next 125 years. May God continue to bless Crossroads Christian Church and all of the people who worship there, and may God bless America.

## A TRIBUTE TO GLEA MICKELSON

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Glea Mickelson of Atlantic, Iowa, on the very special occasion of her 100th birthday which was on August 11, 2017.

Our world has changed a great deal during the course of Glea's life. Since her birth, we have revolutionized air travel and walked on the moon. We have invented the television, cellular phones and the internet. We have fought in wars overseas, seen the rise and fall of Soviet communism and witnessed the birth of new democracies. Glea has lived through eighteen United States presidents and twenty-

two governors of Iowa. In her lifetime, the population of the United States has more than tripled.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Glea in the United States Congress and I'm proud to recognize her today on this momentous occasion. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her and in wishing nothing but continued happiness.

## HONORING SOPHIA ANN MYERS

### HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember Sophia Myers, who joined our Heavenly Father on October 20, 2017 after an eight-month battle with a type of brain cancer known as Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG).

To all who knew her, Sophia was as strong as she was kind. Fondly referred to as ''Bug'', she is remembered as a confident and witty little girl with an infectious smile and laugh. Sophia was a seven-year-old student at Oak Park Elementary in Ocean Springs, Mississippi and was admired and loved by those who knew her for her vibrant love of life. She enjoyed the outdoors and was an accomplished fisherman, having won two awards at Sea and Sail Camp last year. Sophia was a fast runner and enjoyed running 1-mile races with her dad. She excelled at a variety of sports and participated in swimming, soccer, and was a member of the Girl Scouts. Her mother describes her as a talented dancer with her first lessons beginning when she was only two-years-old. She was a dancer on the competitive dance team Itty Bitty DKG and a student dancer at Donna's Visual and Performing Arts Center. Sophia was also known to be a beautiful singer and regularly made up love songs for her mom and dad.

Sophia was a child of the Lord and believed in His love and goodness even when faced with cancer. Although she was only seven-years-old when God called her home, Sophia's life and story have impacted not only the Gulf Coast community, but international communities as well. Stories of hope, prayer, and loss have been expressed to Sophia and her family from communities in South Africa, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Finland, France, Canada, Brazil, and Sweden to name a few. Many people go through life wishing to make an impression on the world, and Sophia did just that during her short time on this Earth. Her goodness and love inspired many and will continue to do so long after her departure from this world. We offer thanks to the many doctors, nurses and medical staff who worked tirelessly to fight for Sophia and, when time came, made her comfortable during her final moments with her friends and family.

I offer my sincerest condolences to Sophia's parents Angel and Josh Myers, as well as her many friends and family who remember her as a joy for all who were lucky enough to meet her. From my family to yours, we bear this grief with you and offer many prayers as well as thanks for gifting the world with as beautiful a person as Sophia ''Bug'' Myers.

## RECOGNIZING AMRO FABRICATING CORP. ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the pivotal role that small businesses in California's 38th district are playing in transporting humanity to new frontiers in our solar system. As a proud member of the NASA Caucus, I know that the extraordinary feats that the United States has made in space exploration and human spaceflight would not be possible without the ingenuity of small businesses and manufacturers across our country.

I want to recognize one such manufacturer, AMRO Fabricating Corp., which is celebrating its 40th anniversary next week. In 1977, AMRO was established in South El Monte, California by Michael K. and Thora A. Riley. The company first entered the aerospace industry in 1979, and in 1986, McDonnell Douglas selected AMRO to manufacture Isogrid panels for the Titan IV rocket. Over the past 30 years, AMRO has honed its forming process for Isogrid and Orthogrid designs, which allow metal structures to be both lightweight and durable, and are critical for enabling spacecraft and aircraft to fly efficiently and safely.

I am proud of the integral work AMRO is contributing to the development of NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) and the Orion spacecraft, which will carry U.S. astronauts farther than ever before and eventually to Mars. Just this August, AMRO delivered window panels for the Orion spacecraft that astronauts will use on its first manned mission, Exploration Mission–2, in the early 2020s. AMRO is also working on elements for the SLS's core stage, which will carry the Orion spacecraft beyond Earth's orbit.

From 1977 to 2017, AMRO's innovation in spaceflight and aerospace have allowed it to grow from just 6 employees to more than 250, as well as to develop training programs for high school and university students. The U.S. space program has an exciting future ahead of it, in no small part due to the dynamism of America's small businesses. Please join me in congratulating AMRO on its 40th anniversary.

## HONORING THE SERVICE AND LIFE OF FILEMON ''MEMOY'' CABASAL DANTES ALINEA

### HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Filemon ''Memoy'' Cabasal Dantes Alinea, Sr., and the accomplishments of this distinguished gentleman. Filemon was living in the Philippines and attending Mapua Engineering College when WWII broke out. Upon the news of the war, Filemon immediately gathered his sisters from their college dorms and brought them back to Cabangan, Zambales to be reunited with their parents. He then enlisted and joined the military, where he held a position in the Filipino Army.

During his service in WWII, Filemon was captured by the Japanese, tortured as a prisoner of war, and forced to dig his own grave. Luckily he was rescued. After the war, he reunited with his family and waited for his college to reopen, at which point he returned to Mapua Engineering College to finish his undergraduate studies. Upon completion of his degree in mechanical engineering, Filemon graduated as one of the top students in his class and scored among the highest on his engineering board exams. This marked the beginning of a long and distinguished engineering career.

Filemon's engineering career started when he was a junior engineer assigned to the Caliraya Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant in Caliraya, Laguna. He then became the Chief Engineer for Marcelo Fertilizer Plant and then Chief Engineer of Union Carbide in Iligan City. After this point, brilliant as he was in his career, Filemon was recruited by PHINMA, a huge conglomerate in the Philippines, where he became their Chief Engineer and Project Manager. In this position, his leadership and building expertise led him to oversee a multitude of expansion and infrastructure projects, including the building and construction of a cement plant and steel plant in Davao, a steel plant in Cebu, and a pulp and paper plant in Bulacan.

At this point in Filemon's career, he was brought on to the team at the PHINMA Corporate Headquarters in Makati. During this time, Filemon decided that the corporate environment of wearing suits and attending board meetings was not for him, and decided to go work for Roblett, an international engineering company. It was at Roblett where he completed the final project of his career, the Mosul Dam in Iraq.

Upon his retirement, Filemon, petitioned by his two daughters who had come for graduate school, immigrated to the United States. During retirement, he enjoyed traveling, touring, fishing and spending time with his family, which included his 6 children and 9 grandchildren. In 1992, Filemon passed away from cancer, may he rest in peace.

He is survived today by his dear wife Beatriz, his 5 remaining children, and his 8 remaining grandchildren. He is beloved and remembered by his family, relatives, and those whose lives he touched for his service during WWII and many throughout the world from his engineering career. He had helped a lot of his relatives, friends, and ''kababayan'' to find work wherever he had a project to build.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a man who made immense sacrifices for his country and his family through service during WWII, as well as contributions made during his distinguished career as an engineer. It is both fitting and appropriate that we recognize a man who endured hardships for the betterment of others, served his country with distinction, and went on to leave a legacy through his family and his life's work as he is honored for his service. I join the family of Filemon ''Memoy'' Cabasal Dantes Alinea, Sr. and wish them the best as we honor his service with the Congressional Gold Medal along with the other Filipino veterans of World War II.

## A TRIBUTE TO RON LANDPHAIR

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ron Landphair, of Mount Ayr, Iowa for being selected as a member of the Mount Ayr Community School's Hall of Fame.

Ron graduated from Mount Ayr High School in 1968. He received an education degree and returned to his Alma Mater as an industrial arts teacher and assistant wrestling coach in 1980. Known for his building trades and drafting classes, students were tasked with building houses, designing commercial buildings and school additions, and restoring local landmarks.

Mr. Speaker, Ron's dedication to his community embodies the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ron for his achievements and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

## HONORING 1ST LT. DONALD GILLEN (RET.)

### HON. MIKE BOST

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Donald Gillen's honorable service to our nation during World War II.

Born April 14, 1927 in Lincoln, Nebraska, Donald graduated from Lincoln High School and joined the U.S. Army on July 26, 1945. Faithfully serving our country at Camp O'Donnell, Philippines from November 1946 until June 1947, Donald was a part of the 12th Philippine Scout Division before becoming a company commander in the 57th Infantry Regiment in Manila.

Becoming a reservist and member of the National Guard, Donald returned home to Lincoln to graduate with a Bachelors Degree in Journalism from the University of Nebraska. He began a new career with the York News-Times in 1969 and eventually became the publisher of the newspaper, retiring in 1988. Husband to his college sweetheart Marilyn Gillen, father to one, and grandfather to four, Donald is known as a family man—moving to Belleville, Illinois to be closer to his child and grandchildren. Today, he is a guest editorial staffer for the Belleville News-Democrat and writes occasional editorials while supporting his wife's singing in the St. George Episcopal Church choir.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service that Donald dutifully gave to our nation during World War II. We are forever grateful for his service.

## HONORING DAVID GILL FOR RECEIVING THE 2017 AWARD OF HONOR BY WESTERN GROWERS

### HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague Representative JIMMY PANETTA, rise today to congratulate and honor Mr. David Gill, who was selected by Western Growers to receive the 2017 Award of Honor for his numerous contributions and esteemed leadership in the agriculture industry.

Mr. Gill, a third generation California grower, began his agricultural career at age six by helping his father and grandfather install pipes on their farm. He continued working on his father's ranch while attending California Polytechnic State University. In 1979, he and his brother, Steve, founded Rio Farms in Ventura City. Then, in 1983, they formed Gills Onions and pioneered the first system to deliver peeled, sliced, and diced onions in the food processing industry. It is now the largest onion processor in the United States.

David has routinely advocated to Congress and the state legislature about the agriculture industry's most significant issues regarding labor, water, and regulatory compliance laws. Gills Onions has also focused on reducing their carbon footprint by developing a system that uses the waste from onion processing to generate electricity and eliminate disposal costs.

As Gill Onions and Rio Farms continued to grow, David played an integral role in some of California's largest fresh vegetable companies, including Taylor Farms California Inc., Earthbound Farms, and Church Bros. LLC. In 1987, David and seven farmers formed Growers Express, one of the nation's largest suppliers of fresh vegetables.

In addition to involvement in various business operations, David values a strong emphasis on community involvement and industry organizations. He has generously donated his time in leadership roles with Western Growers, Hartnell College Ag Steering, Grower Shipper Association of Central California, California Farm Bureau Federation, and Produce Marketing Association.

Mr. Speaker, please join us in honoring and recognizing our friend for receiving Western Growers' 2017 Award of Honor. David Gill has provided innovative technology to the agricultural community and he continues to be a leading voice for change in the agriculture industry. God bless him always.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on October 12, 2017, I was not able to cast my votes during the first vote series due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on Democrat Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 2810—National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018; YES on Motion on Closing Portions of the Conference on H.R. 2810—National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018; YES on H.R. 2266—Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017, as amended; YES on Motion to Recommit S. 585—Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017; and YES on Passage of S. 585—Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017.

## CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MS. VIRGENE WEBB PETERSON

### HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's 15th Congressional District to celebrate the life and legacy of one of Clinton County's most distinguished citizens, a woman who devoted her life to the service of others, Ms. Virgene Webb Peterson.

Born in 1924, Ms. Peterson spent nearly all 93 of her years working to improve the lives of her Clinton County neighbors by undertaking one of the most noble of all professions: teaching children. From the onset of her career at Kingman Township School in 1943, to her retirement from Denver Place in 1993, thousands of students passed through her classroom, and each one left motivated by Ms. Peterson's love of learning.

To attempt to quantify Ms. Peterson's impact is impossible. She has inspired generations of engaged citizens with her example of kindness, stewardship, and civic participation. In addition to being one of the longest-serving teachers in the State of Ohio, she volunteered her time and talents to countless organizations including the Leadership Clinton Youth Collaborative, Chester Friends Meeting, the Clinton County Retired Teachers Association, the Ohio Retired Teachers Association, the Mt. Pleasant Grange, Young Mother's Club, Progress Club, and Turning the Corner.

Like a pebble dropped in a pond, the ripples created by Ms. Peterson's life and work are far-reaching. Her legacy will live on in the memories of those who knew her and loved her: her son, Jay, and daughter, Bunny, and their spouses, Cindy and Ed; her grandchildren, Adam, Maggie, Heath, Amanda, and Curt; her greatgrandchildren, Owen, Ava, and Aubrie; and the rest of her extended family.

Clinton County is undeniably a better place because of Ms. Virgene Webb Peterson, and I am honored to celebrate her life and legacy.

## A TRIBUTE TO JUDY AND GARY NISSEN

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Judy and Gary Nissen of Afton, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Judy and Gary's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies our

Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Judy and Gary on this momentous occasion and in wishing them both nothing but continued success.

## CELEBRATING 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BAHA'U'LLAH

### HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, October 22nd marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith. There are more than five million Baha'is around the world, including in my district in South Florida. Over the weekend, they came together to celebrate the bicentenary of Baha'u'llah's birth by honoring his life and his teachings.

Like many religious leaders, Baha'u'llah taught of the unity of mankind and the need for us to work to build better communities and a better world. Baha'is believe that Baha'u'llah was God's most recent messenger and that all religions should live in harmony. This religious tolerance is an important message in a world where we too often see religious oppression.

In fact, Baha'u'llah was born in Tehran but was imprisoned and exiled for his teachings. Today, Baha'is in Iran are still openly persecuted for their faith. Baha'i youth are often deprived of access to higher education and public jobs, Baha'i-owned business are frequently attacked, and Baha'i cemeteries are desecrated and disrespected. Baha'is are vilified in state sponsored media and their leaders are arbitrarily arrested and cruelly held in Iran's notorious prisons.

That is why I was proud to introduce H. Res. 274 with a bipartisan group of colleagues to condemn Iran's human rights violations, particularly its persecution of its Baha'i minority, and urge sanctions against officials who have carried out these abuses. This resolution passed unanimously through the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, of which I am Ranking Member, and I look forward to moving it through the full Committee and to the House Floor.

The bicentenary, though, is about celebration and shared optimism for the future. I'm pleased to join with my colleagues in congratulating Baha'is around the world, and in Florida in particular, as they celebrate this festive and momentous occasion.

## HONORING THE CATALOGUE FOR PHILANTHROPY: GREATER WASHINGTON

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington for its contributions to the District of Columbia and the region on the occasion of its 15th anniversary.

The Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington was founded in 2003 by Barbara Harman, who recognized the need to identity and highlight the best community-based nonprofits in the region.

It has built the foundation of its success based on a rigorous vetting process that is implemented by local experts to ensure excellence in the programming, finances and impact of selected nonprofits. In addition, the organization raises the visibility and resources of these nonprofits, connects them with philanthropic dollars that fuel their growth and works to create a movement for social good in the D.C. region.

The organization also has a tradition of advocating for and supporting nonprofits through capacity-building programs designed to strengthen them in the face of rapid change.

Since it began, the Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington has demonstrated its impact by raising over $40 million for charities in its network, including 200 organizations that operate in the District.

Therefore, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the leaders of the Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington and their commitment to create a stronger, more resilient, more hopeful community that is a better place to live for everyone.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, on October 11, 2017, I was unable to cast my votes during the second series due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on H.R. 452—To designate the facility of the United States Post Office located at 324 West Saint Louis Street in Pacific, Missouri, as the "Specialist Jeffrey L. White, Jr. Post Office" (Rep. LUETKEMEYER—Oversight and Government Reform); and YES on H.R. 3243—FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017 (Rep. CONNOLLY—Oversight and Government Reform).

## A TRIBUTE TO LARRY WOHLERS

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Larry Wohlers of Council Bluffs, Iowa on his retirement after 34 years of service with the Council Bluffs Fire Department.

Larry began his public service career in the Council Bluffs Public Works Department before he joined the local fire department. He was hired in September of 1983 as a firefighter. Larry then began moving through the ranks as a captain, assistant chief, and was ultimately promoted to Fire Marshall in 2008. Council Bluffs Fire Chief Justin James said, "It's going to be a huge loss for the department. Larry has done a great job."

Mr. Speaker, Larry has made a difference in his community by helping and serving others. It is with great pride that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the Unites States House ofRepresentatives join me in congratulating him for his accomplishments and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

## HONORING THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 120th anniversary of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in Newport News, Virginia.

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church had humble beginnings. Originally known as Warwick Parish, and then as St. Paul's Church, its mission was started in 1897 with the intention of providing a religious community for African-American Episcopalians. The church was started with neither a full-time pastor nor an official building, so the congregation ran their early services out of the upper floor of the Columba Opera House in Newport News. Reverend Joseph F. Mitchell became the first vicar for St. Paul's Mission in the fall of 1897 and spent the next six years of his ministry trying to grow the parish and raise enough funds to afford to build a chapel for the congregation.

Under the leadership of Reverend Adolphus A. Birch, the church's sixth rector, the name of the mission was officially changed to St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in 1924. Reverend Birch's successor, Reverend J.J. Posey, oversaw the church's move into their official building on Marshall Avenue at Twenty-Sixth Street in Newport News. The congregation still meets at this location in a new church building that was constructed in 1962 under the leadership of Reverend Lloyd M. Alexander.

Today, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church is home to a thriving parish life with a variety of ministries and programs aimed at bettering the congregation as well as the Newport News community. The Feeding Program was established in 1988 and offers hot meals to hungry adults and children every month. The Twelve Steps Program meets five days every week to extend counseling, support, and mentorship for men and women in the area who are struggling with substance abuse. The church also sponsors a yearly "Back to School Drive" which ensures that local children can begin the school year with a backpack and school supplies that they might struggle to otherwise

afford. These programs provide an invaluable service to the church and its neighbors.

St. Augustine's growth in these past 120 years has been facilitated through the hard work and tireless efforts of seventeen devoted rectors—Rev. Joseph F. Mitchell, Rev. Henry J. Geiger, Rev. E.H. Hamilton, Rev. Byron E. Floyd, Rev. J.T. McDuffie, Rev. Adolphus A. Birch, Rev. J.J. Posey, Rev. Julian F. Dozier, Rev. Charles S. Sedgwick, Rev. Charles H. Dukes, Rev. Theodore R. Gibson, Rev. George E. Harper, Rev. Lloyd M. Alexander, Rev. Robert C.S. Powell, Rev. R. Scott Copeland, Rev. Ralph E. Haines, III, and Rev. Terry D. Edwards.

Mr. Speaker, today the congregation of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church can feel affirmed and celebratory in light of this historic milestone. As a longtime member of St. Augustine's, I wish to extend my warmest congratulations to Reverend Terry Davis Edwards and the entire St. Augustine's community. With the church's distinguished history in mind, the congregation may truly take this occasion to feel proud about their past, joyful about their present, and hopeful for their future. I wish St. Augustine's Episcopal Church 120 more years of growth, fellowship, and service.

## HONORING THE WASHINGTON INFORMER

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the Washington Informer Newspaper Co. Inc. for its 53 years of service in the District of Columbia metropolitan area.

The Washington Informer Newspaper Co. Inc. (Washington Informer), a multimedia organization, was founded on October 16, 1964, by Dr. Calvin Rolark, who was assisted by his wife, the late Attorney Wilhelmina Rolark, who served on the Council of the District of Columbia for 16 years representing Ward 8 residents. Both recognized the need to identify and highlight the achievements and contributions of African Americans in the District of Columbia metropolitan area.

The Washington Informer's award-winning newspaper has a tradition of tackling key issues that impact the African American community in the District, including financial literacy, homeownership and sustainability. Since 1994, the paper has been published by Denise Rolark Barnes, Dr. Calvin Rolark's daughter. Today, the Washington Informer has an average of 50,000 weekly readers and more than 7,500 weekly email newsletter subscribers.

The Washington Informer is a member of several associations as well, including the National Newspaper Publishers Association, where Denise Rolark Barnes serves as chair. In addition, the organization sponsors an annual spelling bee for District children in grades three through eight, and an African American Heritage Tour and an annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Peace Walk and Parade. The Washington Informer also provides internship opportunities for high school and college students interested in pursuing careers in journalism and media through its charitable organization, Washington Informer Charities.

Therefore, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the Washington Informer, its founders and its current publisher for their 53 years of service to the District of Columbia metropolitan area and for continuously upholding the Washington Informer's mission, to educate, empower and inform through the production of quality news content that focuses on African Americans and particularly their positive contributions to the communities in which they live and work.

## A TRIBUTE TO LAUREN BUFFINGTON

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Lauren Buffington on being awarded the Golden Apple Award, which recognizes central Iowa teachers who make a difference in the lives of their students.

Lauren teaches middle school science and history at Southeast Polk High School. In only her fourth year of teaching, she has learned how to engage her students in their studies through hands on activities to discover and learn on their own. She also uses life lessons to help prepare them for the difficulties and hardships it can bring. Lauren told WHO TV, who presented the award to her after she was nominated by her students, that she loves teaching middle school because "this is the time they are deciding who they are and who they want to become." She also finds that she learns more about the world everyday through her students.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Lauren on this outstanding honor, and look forward to many more years of her molding students in Iowa's Third Congressional District into tomorrow's leaders. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her on receiving the Golden Apple award and in wishing her nothing but continued success.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. HAKEEM S. JEFFRIES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 25, 2017*

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 585 on agreeing to the Amendment, Johnson of Georgia Amendment No. 3, offered to H.R. 469, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye."

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 586 on agreeing to the Amendment, McEachin of Virginia Amendment No. 4, offered to H.R. 469, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye."

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 587 on agreeing to the Amendment, Cartwright of Pennsylvania Amendment No. 6, offered to H.R. 469, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye."

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 588 on passage of H.R. 469, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "Nay."

## SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

### MEETINGS SCHEDULED

OCTOBER 30

5 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the Authorizations for the Use of Military Force, focusing on Administration perspectives.

SD–419

OCTOBER 31

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To receive a closed briefing on recent Navy collisions at sea.

SVC–217

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Leon A. Westmoreland, of Georgia, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, Raymond Martinez, of New Jersey, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Diana Furchtgott-Roth, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, and Bruce Landsberg, of South Carolina, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine new efficiency opportunities provided by advanced building management and control systems.

SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the 2017 hurricane season, focusing on the Federal response.

SD–342

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

To hold hearings to examine exploring Native American subsistence rights and international treaties.

SR–253

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act,

focusing on achieving the promise of health information technology.

SD–430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the 2020 Census, focusing on cost overruns, information security, and accuracy.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism

To hold hearings to examine extremist content and Russian disinformation online, focusing on working with tech to find solutions.

SD–226

NOVEMBER 1

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Scott Garrett, of New Jersey, to be President, Kimberly A. Reed, of West Virginia, to be First Vice President, Mark L. Greenblatt, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, and Spencer Bachus III, of Alabama, Judith Delzoppo Pryor, of Ohio, and Claudia Slacik, of New York, each to be a Member of the Board of Directors, all of the Export-Import Bank.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of James Bridenstine, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Dana Baiocco, of Ohio, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and Nazakhtar Nikakhtar, of Maryland, and Neil Jacobs, of North Carolina, both to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

SR–253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Irwin Steven Goldstein, of New York, to be Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, Rebecca Eliza Gonzales, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho, Lisa A. Johnson, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia, James Randolph Evans, of Georgia, to be Ambassador to Luxembourg, and Sean P. Lawler, of Maryland, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service, all of the Department of State.

SD–419

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Leonard Steven Grasz, of Nebraska, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, Terry A. Doughty, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, Terry Fitzgerald Moorer, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Alabama, and Mark Saalfield Norris, Sr., to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine building tribal economies, focusing on modernizing tax policies that work for Indian country.

SD–628

NOVEMBER 8

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 1400, to amend title 18, United States Code, to enhance protections of Native American tangible cultural heritage, S. 465, to provide for an independent outside audit of the Indian Health Service, and H.R. 597, to take lands in Sonoma County, California, into trust as part of the reservation of the Lytton Rancheria of California.

SD–628

CORRECTION

# Daily Digest

# Senate

## Chamber Action

*Routine Proceedings, pages S6777–S6824*

**Measures Introduced:** Ten bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2003–2012, and S. Res. 303–307. **Pages S6816–17**

**Measures Reported:**

S. 763, to improve surface and maritime transportation security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 115–178)

S. 2010, to extend the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 for 8 years. **Page S6816**

**Measures Passed:**

***Enrollment Correction:*** Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 85, providing for a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 2266. **Page S6871**

***Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act:*** Committee on Veterans' Affairs was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1329, to increase, effective as of December 1, 2017, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6820**

***National Health Information Technology Week:*** Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 280, designating the week of October 2 through October 6, 2017, as "National Health Information Technology Week" to recognize the value of health information technology in transforming and improving the healthcare system for all people in the United States, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S6820**

***Filipino American History Month:*** Senate agreed to S. Res. 305, recognizing the month of October 2017 as Filipino American History Month and celebrating the history and culture of Filipino Americans and their immense contributions to the United States. **Page S6820**

***National Principals Month:*** Senate agreed to S. Res. 306, recognizing the month of October 2017 as "National Principals Month". **Page S6820**

***Day of the Deployed:*** Senate agreed to S. Res. 307, designating October 26, 2017, as "Day of the Deployed". **Page S6820**

**Appointments:**

***United States Holocaust Memorial Council:*** The Chair, on Tuesday, October 24, 2017, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, pursuant to Public Law 96–388, as amended by Public Law 97–84, and Public Law 106–292, reappointed and appointed the following Senators to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council: Senators Hatch (reappointment), Rubio, and Scott. **Page S6820**

**Palk Nomination—Agreement:** Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Scott L. Palk, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma. **Pages S6777–S6812**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 79 yeas to 18 nays (Vote No. 250), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S6781–82**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 26, 2017; that at 12 noon, all post-cloture time on the nomination be considered expired, and that following disposition of the Palk nomination, Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia. **Page S6821**

**Messages from the House:** **Page S6813**

**Measures Referred:** **Pages S6813–14**

**Executive Communications:** **Page S6814**

**Petitions and Memorials:** **Pages S6814–16**

**Executive Reports of Committees:** **Page S6816**

**Additional Cosponsors:** **Page S6817**

**Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:** **Pages S6817–18**

**Additional Statements:** **Page S6813**

**Authorities for Committees to Meet:** Pages S6819–20

**Privileges of the Floor:** Page S6820

**Record Votes:** One record vote was taken today. (Total—250) Pages S6781–82

**Adjournment:** Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:10 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 26, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6821.)

# *Committee Meetings*

*(Committees not listed did not meet)*

## MAJOR THREATS FACING NAVAL FORCES

*Committee on Armed Services:* Subcommittee on SeaPower received a closed briefing on the major threats facing naval forces and the Navy's current and planned capabilities to meet those threats from Admiral William F. Moran, USN, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and Jason A. Reynolds, Director, Special Programs, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, both of the Department of Defense.

## COMMERCIAL SATELLITE INDUSTRY

*Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine the commercial satellite industry, after receiving testimony from Patricia Cooper, SpaceX, Washington, D.C.; Mark Dankberg, ViaSat, Inc., Carlsbad, California; Stephen Spengler, Intelsat, McLean, Virginia; and Greg Wyler, OneWeb, Arlington, Virginia.

## BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Environment and Public Works:* Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, and David Ross, of Wisconsin, each to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, Paul Trombino III, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

## WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION ACT

*Committee on Environment and Public Works:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine an original bill entitled, "Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Act of 2017", after receiving testimony from Bill Crasper, Wyoming State Forestry Division, Cheyenne; Miles Moretti, Mule Deer Foundation, Salt Lake City, Utah; and Dylan Kruse, Sustainable Northwest, Portland, Oregon.

## NIGERIA SECURITY

*Committee on Foreign Relations:* Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy received a closed briefing on Nigeria security from Donald Y. Yamamoto, Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, and Mike Miller, Office Director, Regional Security and Arms Transfers, both of the Department of State.

## BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Indian Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported S. 1223, to repeal the Klamath Tribe Judgment Fund Act, with an amendment.

## INDIAN AFFAIRS LEGISLATION

*Committee on Indian Affairs:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 1870, to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to secure urgent resources vital to Indian victims of crime, S. 1953, to amend the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 and the Indian Law Enforcement Reform Act to provide for advancements in public safety services to Indian communities, and S. 1942, to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians, after receiving testimony from R. Trent Shores, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Oklahoma, Department of Justice; Bryan Rice, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; David Flute, Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, Agency Village, South Dakota; Joel Boyd, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Nespelem, Washington; and Carmen O'Leary, Native Women's Society of the Great Plains, Eagle Butte, South Dakota.

## BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Veterans' Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Melissa Sue Glynn, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Enterprise Integration), Randy Reeves, of Mississippi, to be Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, and Cheryl L. Mason, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

## WORKING AND AGING WITH DISABILITIES

*Special Committee on Aging:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine working and aging with disabilities from school to retirement, after receiving testimony from David Michael Mank, Indiana University, Bloomington, on behalf of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities; Tamar Heller,

University of Illinois Institute on Disability and Human Development, Chicago; Eric Meyer, Spurwink Services, Portland, Maine; and Jeff Smith, Judith Creed Horizons for Achieving Independence, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

# House of Representatives

## *Chamber Action*

**Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced:** 23 public bills, H.R. 4115–4137; and 5 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 86–87; and H. Res. 586–588 were introduced. **Pages H8224–25**

**Additional Cosponsors:** **Pages H8226–27**

**Reports Filed:** Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2936, to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–370, Part 1); and

H.R. 2936, to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–370, Part 2); and

H.R. 2823, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–371, Part 1). **Page H8224**

**Speaker:** Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Perry to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H8147**

**Recess:** The House recessed at 11:01 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H8153**

**Guest Chaplain:** The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Christopher D. Girata, St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Dallas, TX. **Page H8153**

**Journal:** The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a yea-and-nay vote of 230 yeas to 180 nays with two answering "present", Roll No. 584. **Pages H8153, H8167–68**

**Establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027—Rule for consideration:** The House agreed to H. Res. 580, providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027, by a recorded vote of 233 ayes to 188 noes, Roll No. 583, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 229 yeas to 188 nays, Roll No. 582. **Pages H8157–67**

**Authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for the unveiling of the American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Chair of Honor:** The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and agree to S. Con. Res. 26, authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for the unveiling of the American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Chair of Honor. **Page H8168**

**Meeting Hour:** Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, October 26. **Page H8168**

**Recess:** The House recessed at 2:22 p.m. and reconvened at 2:31 p.m. **Page H8171**

**Suspensions:** The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

***Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act:*** H.R. 3342, amended, to impose sanctions on foreign persons that are responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use by Hizballah of civilians as human shields; **Pages H8178–83**

***Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017:*** H.R. 3329, amended, to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah; and **Pages H8183–91**

***Urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on it and its members:***

H. Res. 359, amended, urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on it and its members. **Pages H8191–94**

**Sunshine for Regulations and Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2017:** The House passed H.R. 469, to impose certain limitations on consent decrees and settlement agreements by agencies that require the agencies to take regulatory action in accordance with the terms thereof, by a recorded vote of 234 ayes to 187 noes, Roll No. 588. **Pages H8194–H8204, H8204–09**

Pursuant to the Rule, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–34. **Page H8199**

Agreed to:

Collins (GA) amendment (No. 1 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–363) that clarifies the application of 5 U.S.C. 552a (The Privacy Act) to the bill. **Page H8202**

Rejected:

Conyers amendment (No. 2 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–363) that calls for exception for consent decrees or settlement agreements relating to the enforcement of civil rights laws. **Pages H8202–03**

Johnson (GA) amendment (No. 3 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–363) that sought to exempt any consent decree or covered settlement agreement pertaining to a deadline established by Congress to significantly improve access to high-speed broadband in under-served markets, such as low-income and rural communities; and to facilitate economic development in locations without sufficient access to such service (by a recorded vote of 185 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 585); **Pages H8203–04, H8206–07**

McEachin amendment (No. 4 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–363) that sought to exempt any consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to the improvement or maintenance of air or water quality (by a recorded vote of 187 ayes to 226 noes, Roll No. 586); and **Pages H8204–05, H8207**

Cartwright amendment (No. 6 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–363) that sought to create additional exception for consent decrees or settlement agreements entered into pursuant to Meese Policy (by a recorded vote of 186 ayes to 232 noes, Roll No. 587). **Pages H8205–08**

H. Res. 577, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 469) and (H.R. 732) was agreed to yesterday, October 24th.

**Suspension—Proceedings Postponed:** The House debated the following measure under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

***Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act:*** H.R. 1698, amended, to expand sanctions against Iran with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran. **Pages H8168–78**

**Senate Referrals:** S. 226 was held at the desk. S. 1766 was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. **Page H8222**

**Senate Messages:** Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on page H8154.

**Quorum Calls—Votes:** Two yea-and-nay votes and five recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H8166, H8167, H8168–69, H8206–07, H8207, H8208, and H8208–09. There were no quorum calls.

**Adjournment:** The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

# *Committee Meetings*

## DOWN SYNDROME: UPDATE ON THE STATE OF THE SCIENCE AND POTENTIAL FOR DISCOVERIES ACROSS OTHER MAJOR DISEASES

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held an oversight hearing entitled ''Down Syndrome: Update on the State of the Science and Potential for Discoveries Across Other Major Diseases''. Testimony was heard from Chairman Sessions, and Representatives McMorris Rodgers and Bustos; and public witnesses.

## FEDERAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT THE OPIOID CRISIS: A STATUS UPDATE ON CARA AND OTHER INITIATIVES

*Committee on Energy and Commerce:* Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Federal Efforts to Combat the Opioid Crisis: A Status Update on CARA and Other Initiatives''. Testimony was heard from Neil Doherty, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Administration; Scott Gottlieb, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration; Elinore McCance-Katz, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Anne Schuchat, Principal Deputy Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and Nora Volkow, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health.

## OVERSIGHT OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

*Committee on Energy and Commerce:* Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission''. Testimony was heard from the following Federal Communications Commission officials: Brendan Carr, Commissioner; Mignon Clyburn, Commissioner; Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner; Ajit Pai, Chairman; and Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner.

## SUSTAINABLE HOUSING FINANCE: PRIVATE SECTOR PERSPECTIVES ON HOUSING FINANCE REFORM

*Committee on Financial Services:* Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''Sustainable Housing Finance: Private Sector Perspectives on Housing Finance Reform''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

## EXAMINING THE EQUIFAX DATA BREACH

*Committee on Financial Services:* Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Equifax Data Breach''. Testimony was heard from Sara Cable, Director, Data Privacy and Security, Assistant Attorney General, Consumer Protection Division, Office of Attorney General, Massachusetts; and public witnesses.

## THE PRESIDENT'S IRAN DECISION: NEXT STEPS

*Committee on Foreign Affairs:* Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing entitled ''The President's Iran Decision: Next Steps''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

## STATE VOTER REGISTRATION LIST MAINTENANCE

*Committee on House Administration:* Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''State Voter Registration List Maintenance''. Testimony was heard from Connie Lawson, Secretary of State, Indiana; and a public witness.

## MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

*Committee on the Judiciary:* Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 4092, the ''AG Act''; and H.R. 3711, the ''Legal Workforce Act''. H.R. 4092 and H.R. 3711 were ordered reported, as amended.

## EMPOWERING STATE BASED MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS FOR GREATER SAGE GROUSE RECOVERY

*Committee on Natural Resources:* Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Empowering State Based Management Solutions for Greater Sage Grouse Recovery''. Testimony was heard from Scott Bedke, Speaker, House of Representatives, Idaho; Darin Bird, Deputy Director, Department of Natural Resources, Utah; John Tubbs, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Montana; and J.J. Goicoechea, Chairman, Board of Commissioners, Eureka County, Nevada.

## LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

*Committee on Natural Resources:* Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 215, the ''American Indian Empowerment Act of 2017''. Testimony was heard from John Tahsuda III, Acting Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

## ONGOING MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES AT IRS

*Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:* Subcommittee on Government Operations; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits, and Administrative Rules held a joint hearing entitled ''Ongoing Management Challenges at IRS''. Testimony was heard from J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration; Gregory Kutz, Deputy Inspector General for Inspections and Evaluations, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration; Jeffrey Tribiano, Deputy Commissioner for Operations Support, Internal Revenue Service; and Gina Garza, Chief Information Officer, Internal Revenue Service.

## BOLSTERING THE GOVERNMENT'S CYBERSECURITY: ASSESSING THE RISK OF KASPERSKY LAB PRODUCTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

*Committee on Science, Space, and Technology:* Subcommittee on Oversight held a hearing entitled ''Bolstering the Government's Cybersecurity: Assessing the Risk of Kaspersky Lab Products to the Federal Government''. Testimony was heard from Donna Dodson, Associate Director and Chief Cybersecurity Advisor, Information Technology Laboratory, National Institute of Standards and Technology; David Shive, Chief Information Officer, General Services Administration; and public witnesses.

## GAO AUDIT REVEALS HALF-MEASURES TAKEN BY SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATES

*Committee on Small Business:* Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce held a hearing entitled ''GAO Audit Reveals Half-Measures Taken by Small Business Advocates''. Testimony was heard from William B. Shear, Director, Financial Markets and Community Investment, Government Accountability Office; Robb N. Wong, Associate Administrator,

Office of Government Contracting and Business Development, Small Business Administration; Kevin Boshears, Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, Department of Homeland Security.

### EXAMINING HOW VBA CAN EFFECTIVELY PREVENT AND MANAGE OVERPAYMENTS

*Committee on Veterans' Affairs*: Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Examining How VBA Can Effectively Prevent and Manage Overpayments''. Testimony was heard from Willie C. Clark, Sr., Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

### MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

*Committee on Veterans' Affairs:* Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a markup on H.R. 815, to amend title 38, United States Code, to adjust certain limits on the guaranteed amount of a home loan under the home loan program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 3018, the ''Veterans' Entry to Apprenticeship Act''; H.R. 3634, the ''Securing Electronic Records for Veterans' Ease Act of 2017''; H.R. 3949, the ''VALOR Act''; H.R. 3965, the ''Veterans Armed for Success Act''; and legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the use of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for flight training programs. H.R. 3949 was forwarded to the full Committee, as amended. Legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the use of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for flight training programs, H.R. 815, H.R. 3018, H.R. 3634, and H.R. 3965 were forwarded to the full Committee, without amendment.

### MISCELLANEOUS TARIFF BILL: PROVIDING TARIFF RELIEF TO U.S. MANUFACTURERS THROUGH THE NEW MTB PROCESS

*Committee on Ways and Means:* Subcommittee on Trade held a hearing entitled ''Miscellaneous Tariff Bill: Providing Tariff Relief to U.S. Manufacturers Through the New MTB Process''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

## *Joint Meetings*

### ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

*Joint Economic Committee:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine the economic outlook, after receiving testimony from Kevin Hassett, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers.

### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

*Conferees* met in closed session to resolve the differences between the Senate and House passed versions of H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, but did not complete action thereon, and recessed subject to the call.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017

*(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)*

### Senate

*Committee on Armed Services:* to receive a closed briefing on Niger, 10 a.m., SVC–217.

*Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:* to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Brian D. Montgomery, of Texas, Robert Hunter Kurtz, of Virginia, and Suzanne Israel Tufts, of New York, each to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, 10 a.m., SD–538.

*Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:* to hold hearings to examine advanced cyber technologies that could be used to help protect electric grids and other energy infrastructure from cyberattacks, 9:45 a.m., SD–366.

*Committee on Foreign Relations:* business meeting to consider S. Res. 279, reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia, and the nominations of Michele Jeanne Sison, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti, Peter Hoekstra, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Kenneth Ian Juster, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of India, Larry Edward Andre, Jr., of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti, Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Richard Duke Buchan III, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to Andorra, Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Jamie McCourt, of California, to be Ambassador to the French Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Monaco, Edward T. McMullen, Jr., of South Carolina, to be Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Liechtenstein, Peter Henry Barlerin, of Colorado, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon, Michael James Dodman, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Nina Maria Fite, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Angola, Daniel L.

Foote, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia, David Dale Reimer, of Ohio, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Republic of Seychelles, Eric P. Whitaker, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Niger, W. Robert Kohorst, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia, Carla Sands, of California, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, Thomas L. Carter, of South Carolina, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization, Michael T. Evanoff, of Arkansas, to be an Assistant Secretary (Diplomatic Security), Manisha Singh, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary (Economic and Business Affairs), Samuel Dale Brownback, of Kansas, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, and a routine list in the Foreign Service, all of the Department of State, 9:30 a.m., S–116, Capitol.

*Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:* to hold hearings to examine free speech on college campuses, 10 a.m., SD–430.

*Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:* Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine improving oversight of the regulatory process, focusing on lessons from state legislatures, 10 a.m., SD–342.

*Committee on the Judiciary:* business meeting to consider S. 807, to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers, and the nominations of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Liles Clifton Burke, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, Walter David Counts III, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas, Michael Joseph Juneau, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Karen Gren Scholer, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Tilman Eugene Self III, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia, and John F. Bash, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, Erin Angela Nealy Cox, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas, and R. Andrew Murray, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina, all of the Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

*Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship:* to hold hearings to examine strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women, 11 a.m., SR–428A.

*Select Committee on Intelligence:* to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

## House

*Committee on Energy and Commerce,* Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1733, to direct the Secretary of Energy to review and update a report on the energy and environmental benefits of the re-refining of used lubricating oil; H.R. 2872, the ''Promoting Hydropower Development at Existing Nonpowered Dams Act''; and H.R. 2880, the ''Promoting Closed-Loop Pumped Storage Hydropower Act'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

*Committee on the Judiciary,* Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the United States Refugee Admissions Program'', 9 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

*Committee on Small Business,* Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access, hearing entitled ''Financing Through Fintech: Online Lending's Role in Improving Small Business Capital Access'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

*Next Meeting of the* SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, October 26

Senate Chamber

**Program for Thursday:** Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Scott L. Palk, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at 12 noon.

Following disposition of the nomination of Scott L. Palk, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

*Next Meeting of the* HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, October 26

House Chamber

**Program for Thursday:** Consideration of the Senate Amendment to H. Con. Res. 71—Establishing the Congressional Budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027.

## Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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