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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 18, 2014.

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

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

ACCESS TO INPATIENT REHABILITATION THERAPY ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, coordinated medical rehabilitation provided in an inpatient rehabilitation setting is crucial to Medicare beneficiaries with injuries, disease, disabilities, or chronic conditions.

Unfortunately, beginning in 2010, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services began placing limitations on what types of therapy a beneficiary could receive, despite the professional judgment of a treating physician. This ties a physician's hands, and it limits recreational therapy from being prescribed, despite it being medically necessary in many cases.

These services are often prescribed to assist an individual in transitioning from the rehabilitation hospital to the home, helping patients recover their functions and decreasing the chances of costly readmissions. CMS, the Medicare agency, should not have put in place barriers for physicians and their patients when determining the best course of action for recovery.

This is why I introduced the bipartisan Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act of 2014 with my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

I encourage my colleagues to lend their support to this commonsense bipartisan measure, H.R. 4755. It has zero cost, yet will empower doctors and patients to gain access to the most appropriate mix of therapeutic rehabilitation services.

AMERICA'S DECAYING INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, America faces many challenges at home and abroad. We are watching deterioration in the Middle East. We are watching the problems dealing with climate change and global warming. Many of the problems seem beyond our control.

They are hard and complex. Some are political fodder, where the two parties are in a pitched battle and one denies fundamental science. This is what concerns our constituents: Why can't we get along and get something done?

Well, there are many issues that are not so hard, not so complex, not so controversial. One of the areas that has historically been a subject of people coming together in this Chamber and getting something done deals with our infrastructure.

America, sadly, is falling apart. Our infrastructure used to be the finest in the world, from rail passenger transportation, highways, sewer, and water. Now, it is slowly, steadily failing and has been rated 14th in the latest global rankings from the experts that analyze infrastructure, and it is falling further.

Our investment, as a percentage of our gross domestic product, is less than 2 percent—1.7 percent, the lowest it has been in 20 years. It is costing American families now.

Mr. Speaker, AAA estimates that the average car owner loses almost $1 a day from damage to their cars from inadequate roads. The American Society for Civil Engineers has projected that if we don't undertake the necessary repairs between now and 2020, that cost per family is going to be over a $3,000-per-year impact on each and every American family.

At the same time, it is understood that investment in infrastructure pays huge returns. For a $1.3 billion investment in road and sewer and transit, we create almost 30,000 jobs. The S&P latest report indicated that a $1.3 billion investment will produce $2 billion in economic benefit that spreads throughout the economy, and it will reduce the American budget deficit $200 million.

This is also an area where actually the public is ahead of us. Politicians here on Capitol Hill have not addressed long-term road funding for 21 years. That was the last time the gas tax was increased; yet the American public understands and supports—according to a AAA poll from last week, two-thirds of Americans support user fees to support our infrastructure.

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Sixty-six percent say that a user fee is the right approach and should be utilized. Fifty-two percent say they would be willing to pay more.

It is time for Congress to stop this dancing around on the issue of adequately funding American infrastructure. We have a transportation bill that is expiring September 30.

We couldn't do a full-fledged reauthorization last time; we could only extend it for 27 months because Congress wouldn't face the funding challenge, and even that inadequate money is going to run out before September 30.

The Federal Department of Transportation is going to have to start withholding payments later this summer, which means State and local governments are having to begin to cut back now. So instead of an investment that would grow the economy and improve the quality of life in our communities, we are seeing further deterioration.

Luckily, there is starting to be some movement here. If Congress will move with a small amount of money to keep the system afloat through after the election, avoid the summer shutdown, hopefully, we can come together after all of the Tea Party primaries are over and the elections are done.

When we are dealing with important cleanup legislation in the lameduck session, this should be at the top of the list. America wants it. America needs it.

It will improve our economy. It will strengthen job opportunities for people from coast to coast, and it will make our communities more livable and our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

CRISIS IN IRAQ

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and I are sending the following letter, and we urge Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to sign this letter to President Obama:

Dear Mr. President:

Many Americans have been deeply troubled by the unfolding crisis in Iraq. The rapid fall of multiple Iraqi cities to the terrorist Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS, brings the militant group notably closer to its declared aim of establishing a caliphate that spans the northern sections of Syria and Iraq.

A June 12 BBC article described ISIS in the following way: ''The group has a reputation for brutality. Parts of Syria and Iraq that have previously fallen under its rule have witnessed summary execution, beheadings, and even crucifixions.''

It is against this backdrop, Mr. President, that we write to you bearing in mind recent reports from Archbishop Bashar M. Warda of the Chaldean Diocese of Erbil. While his particular diocese is relatively calm at the moment, the picture that he painted, consistent with news report, of the situation in Mosul and the implications for Iraq's ancient Christian community and other religious minorities was bleak and sobering.

For years, we have witnessed a precipitous decline of Iraq's Christian community. Thousands have fled in the face of targeted violence. Many of those that remained relocated to Mosul and the Nineveh Plain. To people of faith, Nineveh is a familiar name: the site of a dramatic spiritual revival as told in the Biblical book of Jonah. These areas were one of the last remaining havens for this beleaguered community. In fact, Archbishop Warda indicated that this past Sunday, for the first time in 1,600 years, there was no Mass said in Mosul.

For the thousands who have already fled Mosul, they are facing not just displacement and imminent danger, but a growing humanitarian nightmare marked by lack of access to clean water, food, fuel, and electricity.

As such, Mr. President, we urge you and your administration to urgently and actively engage with the Iraqi central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, KRG, to prioritize additional security support for these particularly vulnerable populations and expanded humanitarian assistance and emergency aid delivery to those affected communities.

Absent immediate action, we will most certainly witness the annihilation of an ancient faith community from the lands they have inhabited for centuries.

Mr. Speaker, we urge Members to sign this letter by the end of the day. More Biblical activity took place in Iraq than any other country of the world, other than Israel.

Abraham is from Iraq, from Ur, which is Nasiriyah. Esther, for such a time like this, is from Iraq. Jonah is from Nineveh—many people believe may very well be buried in Iraq. Ezekiel is buried in Iraq. Daniel, one of the great men of the Bible, is buried in Iraq.

So we urge all Members, this is something we can unite on. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue. This is an issue of saving this ancient community and urging the administration to urge the Kurds to protect them as they flee from this area.

I urge all Members, please call my office, call ANNA ESHOO's office, to sign this letter by the end of the day, in order to save the Christian community and other religious minorities in the Middle East.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan proposed rule.

In the face of a Congress that is in denial about climate change, the administration is doing what it can to address a very real and very serious problem that is already manifesting itself in changing weather patterns, more frequent and hazardous wildfires, and devastating droughts.

This rule is a crucial step toward slowing climate change, developing domestic and affordable clean energy technologies, protecting public health, and reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

Some House Republicans have called the proposed regulations reckless and, others, unconstitutional. Some have even suggested adding a rider to the appropriations bill to block the rule's implementation.

As a member of that committee, I can tell you that this would be a huge mistake that would threaten to undo the hard-won compromises in the bill.

It is shocking to me the lengths to which the majority is willing to go to deny the scientific fact that our planet is warming and that human activity is the main cause.

Here are the facts: First, power plants, today, account for approximately one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, making them the single largest source of carbon pollution.

The EPA plan will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants by an estimated 30 percent from 2005 levels. That is 730 million tons of carbon pollution that will not be emitted into the atmosphere, warming the climate and causing sea levels to rise.

Second, the proposal will reduce smog and particulate pollution, including nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxides, by more than 25 percent by the year 2030.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, asthma prevalence has increased from 7.3 percent in 2001 to 8.4 percent in 2010. The proposed regulations are estimated to prevent up to 150,000 asthma attacks in children and 6,600 premature deaths by 2030.

□ 1015

Third, the vast majority of the American public supports these new rules. In fact, nearly 70 percent of Americans support Federal regulations to limit greenhouse gasses from existing power plants

These new rules won't be easy to implement and we will experience some difficulties along the way, but since when does America let a challenge prevent us from rolling up our sleeves and getting to work? This is a global problem and America must not act alone.

Just as we lead the world in many aspects, climate change is a critical issue where we must lead by example. I call on my colleagues to do the right thing. Stop denying the science and get to work. We can and we must act together to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, clean up our air and waters, and once again lead the way into the future.

I look forward to the EPA finalizing the proposed rule, and I hope it marks just the beginning of our efforts to address climate change before it is too late.

THE PAIN CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago today, this House passed H.R. 1797, the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, with bipartisan support. To this date, the Senate has not considered this measure to protect the lives of innocent children in the womb from the cruel, excruciating pain of an abortion procedure. This is unconscionable.

I fear for the conscience of our Nation because the termination of unborn children for any reason is tolerated in some parts of our country throughout pregnancy, even though scientific conclusions show infants feel pain by at least 20 weeks' gestation.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that the American people understand exactly what happens when they hear the word ''abortion.'' It is a heart-wrenching, painful procedure that tears a baby limb from limb before crushing his or her head or is a poisonous chemical injection. As a country, we should leave this practice behind. That is why I cosponsored and voted for H.R. 1797, which would prohibit elective abortions in the United States past 20 weeks.

Life is the most fundamental of all rights. It is sacred and God-given, but millions of babies have been robbed of that right in this, the freest country in the world. That is a tragedy beyond words and a betrayal of what we as a nation stand for.

Before liberty, equality, free speech, freedom of conscience, the pursuit of happiness, and justice for all, there has to be life. And yet, for millions of aborted infants, many pain-capable and many discriminated against because of gender or disability, life is exactly what they have been denied.

An affront to life to some is an affront to life for every one of us. One day we hope it will be different. We hope life will cease to be valued on a sliding scale. We hope the era of elective abortions, ushered in by an unelected Court, will be closed and collectively deemed one of the darkest chapters in American history. But until that day, it remains a solemn duty to stand up for life.

Regardless of the length of this journey, we will continue to speak for those who cannot. We will continue to pray to the One who can change the hearts of those in desperation and those in power, who equally hold the lives of the innocent in their hands.

May we, in love, defend the unborn. May we, in humility, confront this national sin. May we mourn what abortion reveals about the conscience of our Nation.

H.R. 1797 provides commonsense protections for unborn children who feel pain just as you and I do. It is time the Senate considers this measure and protects the vulnerable among us.

OPPOSING U.S. MILITARY INTERVENTION IN IRAQ

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to come today and add my voice and my constituents' voice to the situation in Iraq. I wanted to voice my strong opposition to any further United States military intervention in Iraq.

I don't think we should be sending our men and women back to Iraq or to engage in air strikes. I don't believe that this is the right course of action. Our Nation's military involvement in Iraq, I think, needs to be over.

The United States has already spent trillions of dollars in Iraq while, here at home, our economy is still suffering. Our schools are going without needed funding. Families in my district are struggling to find jobs, to put food on the table, and our own infrastructure is crumbling.

My colleague earlier, on the other side of the aisle, talked about Esther and her great line of ''for such a time as this,'' which is something I actually try to live by, but I don't believe that this is the time to go back and fight a war that I don't believe is ours. I believe it is the time for America to focus our resources here at home.

We can't afford to spend millions of dollars on this military action when our schools are failing, one in five children lives in poverty in the United States, and so many of our veterans are not being taken care of when they come home.

I don't sit on the Committees of Armed Services, of Foreign Affairs. I am not on the Intelligence Committee. I sit on the Small Business Committee and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. From that perspective, I know that our small businesses want us to help them. Our infrastructure is failing and crumbling. We have 70,000 bridges in this country that are structurally deficient. I believe that we need to focus our resources here at home.

We have had nearly 4,500 brave men and women that sacrificed their lives for what I believe was a misguided mission in Iraq. More than 30,000 Americans have come home emotionally and physically scarred. Let's not do this again.

I don't think we have any place trying to solve a modern-day civil war. I think enough is enough. I hope, before the President takes action, he will come to Congress and ask us and the people that we represent what action needs to be taken.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, we take in approximately $39 billion a year for the highway trust fund to take care of transportation needs all over this country. We have spent $103 billion over the last several years rebuilding Afghanistan. Now they tell us projects all over this country will have to stop because of a $15 billion shortfall in our highway trust fund.

Today and tomorrow we will have before us a Defense bill that has a $79 billion placeholder for overseas contingency operations over and above the regular Defense budget. It has been this amount or much more over the last several years.

This OCO account is primarily for Iraq and Afghanistan, where we are still spending megabillions. We should take at least some of this money to cover the shortfall in the highway trust fund to keep these projects and jobs going all over the U.S.

We have spent far too much blood and treasure in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last few years, and that needs to stop. Mr. Speaker, we need to stop spending all of these billions in Iraq and Afghanistan and start taking better care of our own people and our own country.

HONORING CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT WILLARVIS ''DEE'' SMITH

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Chief Master Sergeant Willarvis ''Dee'' Smith, who, this week, will be retired after an illustrious 28-year career in the United States Air Force, a career that spanned many decades and took him to many continents across the globe.

I am personally honored and grateful that Chief Smith is here in the House gallery today as we celebrate his outstanding career and service and congratulate him on his retirement from the U.S. Air Force.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Smith was born and raised in the district that I now have the privilege to represent. In fact, he was raised in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, graduated from Northwestern High School, the school just to the north of Northern High School, my high school.

Shortly after graduation, he entered the Air Force in 1986, where he completed his basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. Upon graduation from his technical training as an aircraft maintenance specialist for the B–52 in Texas, he was assigned to many stations, including New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Maryland, Virginia, and Hawaii.

During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, he was deployed in Saudi Arabia, afterward also serving 2 years at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam. In 1991, Chief Smith held the rank of staff sergeant. Over his 28-year career in the U.S. Air Force, he was promoted five times: first, to technical sergeant; then master sergeant; then senior master sergeant; and lastly, in 2010, he was promoted to chief master sergeant, the highest ranking enlisted position in the Air Force.

As the chief enlisted manager of the Directorate of Communications of the

Air Force District of Washington, Chief Smith served as senior adviser to the 844th communications group, which is made up of more than 900 military personnel. In this highly important and visible position, he helped to provide cyber support to the President of the United States and also to other senior officials at the Pentagon.

During his 28 years of service to our country, Chief Smith's commitment and excellence as an outstanding airman did not go unnoticed. In 1989, he was recognized as the Air Mobility Command Student of the Year. In 2001 and 2003, Chief Smith earned the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Information Management Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year Award. In 2005, he was named Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year and Air Force Communications and Information Professional of the Year.

John Rogers, the deputy director of the 844th Communications Group, summed up Chief Smith's career by saying: ''He took care of our airmen and he was phenomenal. He embodied our core value of service before self.''

Chief Master Sergeant Smith, on behalf of the people of the Fifth Congressional District, on behalf of the Congress of the United States, thank you for your admirable service to our country. The motto of the Air Force is ''Aim High . . . Fly-Fight-Win.'' Chief Smith, throughout your career, you have aimed high and truly represented the best of the U.S. Air Force, and you have represented the best of our shared hometown of Flint, Michigan.

On behalf of my constituents in the Fifth Congressional District and on behalf of my colleagues here in Congress, congratulations to you on your outstanding career in the Air Force and your outstanding service to our country.

ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA

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

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, the crisis unfolding in Iraq is deeply troubling to the American people. The rapid fall of several cities in Iraq to terrorist Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, also known as ISIS, has brought the militant group dangerously closer to establishing a caliphate that spans the northern sections of Syria and Iraq.

ISIS has a reputation for brutality, including summary executions, beheadings, and, in some cases, crucifixions. The implications of the rise of ISIS for Iraq's ancient Christian community, along with its other religious minorities, is troubling.

For years we have witnessed the decline of Iraq's Christian community. Thousands have fled in the face of targeted violence. Those who remained relocated to Mosul and the Nineveh plains. These areas were some of the last remaining havens for this beleaguered and brutalized Christian community in Iraq. In fact, Archbishop Warda, the Chaldean Diocese of Erbil, indicated this past Sunday that for the first time in 1,600 years there was no mass in Mosul.

The thousands who fled Mosul face displacement, imminent danger, and a growing humanitarian nightmare, including access to clean water, food, fuel, and electricity.

I urge the administration to engage with the Iraqi central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to prioritize security and support for these vulnerable populations and provide emergency humanitarian assistance to those brutalized communities.

If nothing is done, we will most certainly witness the annihilation of an ancient faith community. I call on our international community to stand together to protect the natural rights of being persecuted by ISIS.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Michael Lotker, Temple Ner Ami, Camarillo, California, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, You sustain us and inspire us. Yours is the unity connecting all things created by You and directing us to serve You in unity of purpose, spirit, and strength. Bless us with the resources to do Your work.

The very name of this Nation, the United States, and the very name of this institution, the Congress, underlines the power and indeed the holiness of such unity.

I therefore humbly request Your most ancient blessing for the people of this great Nation and for their elected Representatives.

''May God bless you and protect you. May God's light shine upon you and may God be gracious to you. May God's face be lifted before you and may God grant you peace.''

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. MARCHANT 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 RABBI MICHAEL LOTKER

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege to welcome a very good friend, Rabbi Michael Lotker, to be the guest chaplain of the House of Representatives today.

Rabbi Lotker is a teacher and a leader in Ventura County. He is the rabbi emeritus at Temple Ner Ami in Camarillo, California; the rabbi of Congregation Khilat HaAloneem in Ojai, California; and the community rabbi and teacher for the Jewish Federation of Ventura County. He is also a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Board of Rabbis of Southern California.

In addition to his work as a rabbi, Rabbi Lotker is an author and a physicist, with a focus on researching alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, and geothermal.

Known for his quick-witted humor, Rabbi Lotker writes parody songs for each of the Jewish holidays throughout the year.

For his spiritual leadership and thoughtful words, I would like to thank Rabbi Lotker for leading us in prayer today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CONSEQUENCES OF PRESIDENT'S FAILURE TO ENFORCE THE LAW

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, the current situation on our southern border is a direct result of this administration's failure to enforce our laws.

Since October, 47,000 unaccompanied women and children have illegally entered the U.S. By year's end, 90,000 minors will have illegally crossed into our country. When apprehended, the majority of those questioned say they came

expecting to be able to stay, to get a free pass. This is wrong, and my constituents are angry about it and will not tolerate it.

The President should immediately begin returning these illegal immigrants to their home countries. He must demand cooperation from the respective foreign governments and press them to stop spreading the false belief that America rewards illegal immigration with a de facto amnesty.

This is a crisis of the President's own creation. He must take real action to strengthen the border and strengthen security before it grows even worse and send a strong message that illegal immigration will not be rewarded.

HONORING LIFE AND LEGACY OF SAM GARCIA

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Sam Garcia, a World War II veteran, businessowner, and renowned civic leader in the Fort Worth Hispanic community.

Mr. Garcia immigrated to the United States from Mexico at the age of 2, with his undocumented parents. After serving in the Army during World War II and earning three Bronze Stars, Mr. Garcia moved to Fort Worth in 1958. He later started his own successful construction company.

Mr. Garcia served Fort Worth, where he led many community service organizations in an effort to raise scholarship money. Mr. Garcia also edited and published The Community News, a newspaper committed to improving the quality of life in the Latino community of Fort Worth.

Mr. Garcia devoted his life to improving the life of others and was rightfully recognized in 1990 as the Fort Worth Volunteer of the Year and, in 1991, the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Member of the Year. In 1999, he was the Man of the Year.

Mr. Garcia's leadership and dedication to the Fort Worth community will forever be marked in history.

CONGRATULATING MONTANA HISTORY DAY CONTEST TOP FINISHERS

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

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, today, I am so proud to congratulate Sean-Daniel Taylor, Kane Knudson, Emma Gabbert, and Hayden Kunhardt, who are students from Washington Middle School in Glendive, Montana, for being top finishers in the Montana History Day Contest.

This week, they are among seven Montana students who traveled to the National History Day Contest in Washington, D.C. Out of 600,000 participants in National History Day, less than 3,000 advance to the national contest, so I speak for all Montanans when I say that we are incredibly proud of their success.

It is truly great to see young students—young Montanans like Sean-Daniel, Kane, Emma, and Hayden—thinking critically about our Nation's history and the rights and responsibilities that come with citizenship.

Congratulations, again, to all seven Montana students competing in the National History Day Contest.

HONORING TROY EDGAR

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Troy Edgar, the chair of the board of the Orange County Sanitation District, and I congratulate him on his upcoming retirement.

Mr. Edgar was instrumental in ensuring the successful upgrade of the sanitation district's facilities, and I applaud him for his leadership in implementing a sustainable financial plan for the district, creating successful partnerships, and adopting effective policy in order to ensure the highest quality of water by the most cost-effective methods.

I hold Mr. Edgar in the highest regard for his outstanding public service and his efforts on behalf of the sanitation district and its mission to protect public health and our environment.

I thank Mr. Edgar for his role in Orange County. He is a great example of what a great public servant looks like, does, and acts. Again, I thank him for his leadership, his vision, for his commitment to the residents of Orange County.

I congratulate him. He is a star in our community, and I wish him luck in his future endeavors.

AMERICANS DON'T TRUST THE MEDIA

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Americans do not trust the liberal national media to provide them with accurate, fair, and balanced news.

A recent poll conducted by The Brookings Institution and Public Religion Research Institute found that only 23 percent of Americans consider the national broadcast news networks to be their most trusted news outlet, but 26 percent of independents listed FOX News as their most trusted network, compared to only 17 percent who chose the broadcast networks.

The least trusted network, according to the poll, is MSNBC. Only 5 percent of Americans selected that network as their must trusted news source.

Americans' distrust of the liberal national media will continue to grow until the media stops telling them what to think. There is a good reason why FOX News has been the highest rated cable news network for 12 straight years.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF TONY GWYNN

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, there has never been any question that Tony Gwynn was a great hitter, but probably the second most talked about aspect of Tony Gwynn was his laugh.

On Monday, we lost a great leader both on and off the field. Tony Gwynn passed away—surrounded by family—at age 54. We lost that great laugh.

Tony was described as a person who, after spending a few minutes with him, you felt better than you did before. Part of it was his laugh. He displayed that in playing baseball, as a teacher, and in his charitable work with his wife, Alicia. There was a special quality about him.

Tony turned down lucrative offers, offers that others might have picked up, but he turned those down to remain a San Diego Padre, and in this time of sports trades, that is a big deal.

It was not surprising that, after his playing days, he returned to his alma mater, San Diego State University, to teach and coach Aztec baseball—to be a mentor.

One of his students plays not too far from this Chamber at Nationals Park. Pitcher Stephen Strasburg played for Tony, who he described as a father figure.

Tony Gwynn leaves a lasting impact in San Diego. His loss is being felt throughout the community. We see that in the collective grief and celebration of his life.

CONGRATULATING BILL CLINE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Bill Cline for receiving the 2014 Colonel Edwin Drake Legendary Oilman Award, presented by the Petroleum History Institute.

The award is named after the famed Colonel Edwin Drake who, in 1859, drilled the first commercial oil well in the world, beginning the oil industry in Titusville, Pennsylvania. The award honors a lifetime of achievement within the oil and gas industry.

Mr. Cline is no stranger to the oil industry. Following his grandfather Willard Cline, he owns and operates Cline Oil in Bradford, Pennsylvania. The company operates hundreds of small

wells in the same oil patch that once produced over 80 percent of our Nation's oil. These small wells pump out several barrels a day, slowly churning day and night. Cline's well number one has been producing oil for over 140 years.

It is because of the tireless efforts and ingenuity of men like Bill Cline and his family that America has led the world in energy production and will continue to be a leader for generations to come.

Congratulations, Bill, on this very well-deserved award.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND GOING BROKE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the highway trust fund will be broke by the end of July. This is right in the middle of road construction season.

In Erie and Niagara counties, we have almost 400 bridges that are structurally deficient. This is unacceptable and just a small representation of the crumbling infrastructure nationwide.

Congress should be increasing our investment in nation-building right here at home, not cutting back; but, Mr. Speaker, doing this at the expense of the United States Postal Service by eliminating Saturday delivery is not the answer.

This is a one-time fix that does not actually provide a long-term solution to our Nation's transportation funding problem.

Furthermore, this hurts small businesses and other Americans who rely on the ability to receive paper mail on Saturday. It eliminates jobs for postal workers and would create a significant loss of mail volume and revenue for the Postal Service.

Reports today indicate this plan may be dropped, and I hope that is the case. I urge my colleagues to reject this misguided proposal and explore more reasonable and effective solutions to restore the highway trust fund.

□ 1215

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, more than 3 million Americans have been left behind by the failure to renew unemployment insurance. These individuals live in urban America, in suburban America, and in rural America. They live in blue States and they live in red States. They are simply Americans in need.

As a result of the callousness of some in this Chamber, they have been put in great economic jeopardy, and we have cost the economy more than $5 billion. We should be extending a helping hand to these individuals, but instead we have slapped them in the face in a manner that is disrespectful of the compassion of the American people.

It is time to do the right thing and to renew unemployment insurance so that we can rescue those Americans left behind on the battlefield of the Great Recession.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE EXTENSION

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I follow the gentleman from New York. I rise today because I think it is absolutely unconscionable that after more than 6 months the House Republicans continue to fail to act to extend unemployment benefits.

There are more than 3 million Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own who are waiting for Congress to do something for them. I have heard from many of them, my constituents, about their struggles because of Congress' failure to act.

Lily of Linden, New Jersey, has been out of work for 2 years. She and her husband have dipped into their entire savings just to get by. Because of her age and her illness, she has found it increasingly harder to find gainful employment. It has come to this sad point, Mr. Speaker, that Lily can no longer afford her medicine, and her family may soon be homeless.

By failing to act, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have coldly turned their backs on millions of Americans and people like Lily. Turning their backs on people who have elected them is simply unacceptable, and I will not stay silent.

TERRORIST GROUPS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a mother, as a senior member in the Homeland Security Committee which was created in the backdrop of the horrific tragedy of 9/11.

Today, the President and America confronts a heinous group in Iraq, ISIS, that is beheading persons and proclaiming one religion over another. And again, an op-ed appears in The Wall Street Journal from the former Vice President, who wants to blame everything on President Obama whose administration has just brought into justice one of those who perpetrated the violence and killed our Americans at Benghazi.

This is not an American issue in Iraq. We gave them that opportunity. We gave 4,000 in treasure. This is really an international issue that calls upon the United Nations and the nations surrounding Iraq and Maliki to be able to have a coalition government.

It is the same in Nigeria with Boko Haram that is beheading persons, kidnapping girls. We need a coalition that faces down these terrible, horrific, tragic terrorists—these are thugs—and it cannot be on the shoulders of Americans. We have given our treasure.

We can protect our Embassy and we should. Thank you, Mr. President. We can give resources, but there needs to be a strong coalition. Those who come back from the ghost of yesteryear and blame this administration should be silenced. America should stand united together, and others need to work together to stop this tragedy.

NATIONAL ASK DAY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, this week I will introduce a resolution to designate June 21 as National ASK Day, to raise awareness among parents to ask a simple lifesaving question: ''Is there an unlocked gun where my child plays?'' Those nine words could ultimately save your child's life.

I recently met Karen Reed from Cumberland, Rhode Island, whose youngest son was severely injured in 2011 when his older brother played with a loaded pellet gun at a friend's house on Christmas Eve. Karen had no idea there was an unlocked gun at the house where her son was playing. Her 9-year-old son mistakenly thought the pellet gun was a video game accessory and shot his younger brother in the eye.

1.7 million children live in a home with a loaded, unlocked gun, and every year thousands of kids are killed or injured as a result. Unfortunately, Karen's story is just one example of a tragic accident that can occur when a child gets hold of a loaded gun.

This isn't a partisan issue or an attempt to take guns away from anybody. This is about keeping our kids safe by asking a simple, lifesaving question. We owe it to our kids to provide them with safe areas to play and to pass the National ASK resolution and encourage parents to ask this simple question: ''Is there a gun where my child plays?''

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, June 18, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, 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 June 18, 2014 at 10:37 a.m.:

That the Senate concur in the House amendment S. 1254.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4870, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 628 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 628

Resolved, That (a) at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived.

(b) During consideration of the bill for amendment—

(1) each amendment, other than amendments provided for in paragraph (2), shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment except as provided in paragraph (2);

(2) no pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate; and

(3) the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read.

(c) When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, with the Senate amendments thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order or question of consideration, a single motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee that the House: (1) concur in the Senate amendment to the title; and (2) concur in the Senate amendment to the text with the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. The Senate amendments 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 Veterans' Affairs. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question. If the motion is adopted, then it shall be in order for the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee to move that the House insist on its amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3230 and request a conference with the Senate thereon.

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

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 628 provides for the consideration of H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriation Act for FY 2015 under a modified open rule.

This resolution will give Members on both sides of the aisle the opportunity to offer as many amendments to the bill as they wish, provided they comply with the rules of the House. It ensures that all Members can be active participants in shaping this bill. I think my colleague on the Rules Committee from Georgia described it best when he called this process a ''festival of democracy.''

The underlying legislation will give the Department of Defense the resources it needs to protect our country at home and abroad. I am encouraged that both sides of the aisle can usually unite around this cause. This bill is another example of that bipartisanship, as it was reported out of the committee unanimously.

The DOD Appropriations Act will also provide support for our warfighters, the 1 percent who risk all in defense of this Nation. It is critical that we give our troops the tools they need to carry out their mission abroad and the resources they need to support their families here at home. This legislation will fully fund a 1.8 percent pay increase for the military instead of the 1 percent raise requested by the President.

Secondly, this rule allows us to begin ironing out the differences between the House and the Senate attempts to address the VA scandal. While we have yet to uncover the full scope of this scandal, it is apparent the problems are systemic to that institution.

There have been secret wait lists, unacceptable patient wait times, inadequate care, backlogs, a culture of retaliating against whistleblowers, and a serious lack of leadership, to name only a few of the issues plaguing the VA.

Tragically—tragically—veterans have died because of these problems. Mr. Speaker, it is disgraceful. The fact that a veteran died waiting for care from this country that they fought for, it is just tough to come to grips with that reality, but it is a reality.

As a father of three sons serving in the military, I am appalled, I am horrified, and I believe the American people are, too, as to the treatment of our veterans. Our veterans deserve a whole lot more, a whole heck of a lot more from their government than to have the government turn their back on them. They deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and the House will make every effort to ensure that these problems never happen again.

One of the ways we can begin this effort is by giving the VA the authority to terminate employees for performing poorly, much like the private sector, much like I had as sheriff. It is what most employers have the ability to do. This will give the Secretary of the VA the ability to quickly remove bureaucrats who falsified, in this instance, wait times.

As we have come to find out with all other scandals this administration is engulfed in, it is difficult to hold people accountable in the executive branch, try as we might. Therefore, the provisions are sorely needed.

We can also require the VA to reimburse private health care for veterans who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility or those who have not received timely medical treatment at the VA.

□ 1230

This will allow our veterans to get the care that they need when they need it.

Finally, it is a bit discouraging that we even have to codify this into law, but we need to end the bonuses and awards at the VA for at least the next two fiscal years. Incredibly, the Phoenix VA—where veterans actually died waiting for care—felt it was appropriate to pay out $10 million in bonuses over the last 3 years.

By prohibiting this practice, we can ensure that the funds we provide to the VA are going where they are needed: toward the care of our veterans and not to fatten bureaucrats' pockets.

I stand in strong support of this rule and the underlying legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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, today, we debate the rule to consider two measures: H.R. 4870, the fiscal year 2015 Defense Appropriations bill; and the motion to go to conference on legislation addressing the problems at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I regret that this is not an open rule. Strict time limits have been placed on debate, which make it impossible to adequately discuss important issues. On issues regarding our national security, we should have ample time for discussion. This is hardly a festival of democracy, as my friend from Florida described this process—this is muzzling democracy. But less debate in a more closed process has become the signature of the Republican majority, I am sad to say.

I am pleased that legislation addressing the problems at the VA is moving forward in a timely way. However, I want to echo the statement of my friend from Maine, the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Mr. MICHAUD. The distinguished ranking member correctly pointed out in testimony presented to the Rules Committee that while this bill is important, it is shortsighted and should include many of the bipartisan measures that have been worked on at the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Like Mr. MICHAUD, I would prefer that this process be more open, and it is just another example of how this closed process denies many good bipartisan ideas from being considered and adopted.

Although I have serious concerns with the final Defense Appropriations product, I do want to thank Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for working together in a bipartisan way on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, we take up this bill at a very serious moment in time. Every day we turn on our TVs and see conflict, war, and turmoil around the world. It is often hard to remember that most of the world is not at war.

I am very concerned that this bill continues funding the longest war in United States history: the war in Afghanistan. Even though the President has announced that he will draw down most of our combat forces by the end of this year, he has also said that he will keep 10,000 of our servicemen and -women in Afghanistan through 2016.

I believe strongly that Congress should debate and vote on approving the President's proposal to keep our uniformed men and women in harm's way for another 2 years. What are these 10,000 troops supposed to accomplish that 100,000 troops have not yet done? Our own generals were quoted in Monday's Washington Post saying that security is not the problem in Afghanistan, corruption is the problem. Ten thousand U.S. troops are now going to magically eliminate corruption in Afghanistan.

Just last month, at the end of May, during consideration of the NDAA, Armed Services Ranking Member ADAM SMITH, Congressman WALTER JONES, and I attempted to offer a germane amendment that would have required the House to vote early next year on whether to maintain U.S. military forces in Afghanistan as the President has proposed.

Outrageously, the Republican leadership of this House refused to let us offer that amendment. We were denied the chance to debate one of the most important questions facing this Congress, the American people, our troops, and their families. So, as we get ready to deliver in this Defense Appropriations bill a $79.4 billion blank check to the President to continue the war in Afghanistan, I call upon the Speaker and the leadership of this House to promise—to promise—that before the 113th Congress adjourns they will bring before this House a joint resolution whether to approve the President's proposal to maintain U.S. Armed Forces in Afghanistan through 2016.

Let the House debate it, and let the House vote on it, up or down. Let's do our jobs. I have no idea what the result of such a vote might be, but I do know that we owe that vote to our troops, their families, and to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I am tired of endless wars. I am increasingly anxious as I listen to talk shows where politicians and pundits rattle their sabers and advocate for more full-scale war in Iraq, and many other places around the world.

It is especially galling to listen to the people who got us into this mess in Iraq in the first place. In The Wall Street Journal today, Dick Cheney actually had the audacity to write:

> Rarely has a U.S. President been so wrong about so much at the expense of so many.

Are you kidding me? How pathetic. If it is possible to have less than zero credibility, then Dick Cheney has it on Iraq.

I believe in our military, Mr. Speaker. I believe in our men and women in uniform. I believe we should have a military second to none. I believe we shouldn't hesitate to use that military when our Nation is directly threatened and when the cause is serious enough to warrant the sacrifice of American lives.

But there are many problems—indeed most problems—in the world where sending the U.S. military is not the solution. The crisis facing Iraq has been years in the making. It is not happening because Iraq does not have a well-trained and well-equipped military. The United States took great pains to make sure that it is.

No, Mr. Speaker, Iraq is facing this current crisis because a corrupt, exclusive, power-hungry, sectarian government, headed by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, deliberately chose to exclude ethnic and religious minorities and other factions of Iraqi society from government decisionmaking. Indeed, the Maliki government often went out of its way to deliberately fan the flames of sectarianism and extend the power of the Shiite majority. Now it is reaping the whirlwind that it created, but in ways it likely never imagined.

If Iraq is to be saved from this crisis, then Iraqi leaders need to learn real fast how to lead—not just their own faction, but how to lead a Nation, to stand up for all their people, and to order their troops and their militias to protect all the Iraqi people: Sunni, Christian, Jewish, Bahai, north, south, and center. They know how to do it. They just have to choose to do it and pray it is not too late. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it is time for the governments and powers in the region to stand up against the vicious militias and violent jihadists wreaking havoc in their own countries and among their neighbors. They are the ones who need to lead the way to a political solution to the challenges facing the entire region, or watch it go up in flames around them.

Several of our generals and commanders have commented in recent news articles that it is difficult for the U.S. to respond with air power or drones or special operations because the Iraqis rebelling against the central government are not just made up of extremist ISIS members, but they include local Sunnis and other disenfranchised Iraqis. So who do you target? How do you target them? Should you target groups at all?

If one thing has become clear after watching the crisis unfold and listening to all the pundits, the solution to the crisis in Iraq will depend on Iraqis, not on American bombs or firepower, let alone manpower.

Mr. Speaker, as we take up the Defense Appropriations bill, these matters weigh heavily on the minds of all of us who serve in this House. While we work to ensure that our uniformed men and women have what they need to carry out their duties and missions, let us also be clear that there are many problems confronting the world today that, unfortunately, our military simply cannot fix.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

Today, I rise in support of going to a conference committee with the Senate on VA reform. I am pleased that the Senate has followed our lead in swiftly passing legislation that will help the thousands of veterans waiting for care in a dysfunctional VA system.

While I don't agree with everything in the Senate bill, we all agree that our veterans deserve better than the VA has been giving them. Today, Congress will renew its commitment, on a bipartisan basis, to overhauling the VA and working to give our veterans the care they have earned.

I was a surgeon at the VA for 20 years treating our veterans, and today I am

grateful for the opportunity to continue that care by working to get a VA reform bill to the President's desk.

The bottom line is this: we cannot allow the VA to continue operating as a failed, bloated bureaucracy.

I believe we can give the VA the tools to be smarter, leaner, and much more responsive to the needs of our veterans. As a father of a veteran, I am dedicated to making this a reality. The time for excuses is over, the time for action is now.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I certainly appreciate the gentleman's very expansive assessment on the two underlying bills that we are about to address today.

Let me, first of all, say that I live in a community of a very major veterans hospital. In fact, I carried the legislation to name it after Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, who created the MASH units in World War II. We care about veterans, as do my colleagues across the aisle in both the House and the Senate.

I believe that it is important to move the Veterans' Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability, continue through the process, and to make sure that our veterans, after the many audits that we have received on the individual hospitals, know that there is a long period of time for those veterans newly accessing veterans health care.

Who does that include? That includes the recent returnees of Afghanistan veterans or Iraq veterans or even those veterans who have maintained good health and now find themselves in senior years, such as Vietnam veterans, and are coming to the system for the first time. It is intolerable for them to have to wait. I believe this is a very important initiative. If we are to send soldiers overseas or in the line of battle, as many are promoting now in light of the violence in Iraq, can we not without shame stand and provide them the kind of health care for them and their families?

I rise as well to comment on the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, and I am glad that there has been attention to PTSD. I intend to offer an amendment addressing resources for PTSD and resources for the epidemic of breast cancer among military women in the Appropriations Act.

But I do think it is important that again we have a prohibition against the transfer of Guantanamo detainees to the United States. That means that this facility continues to be open.

Then, of course, we have appropriations for the overseas contingency operations, for which the President has not yet made a request. But I think in the context of providing an increase in wages for our military personnel, I congratulate the chairman and ranking member for working so cooperatively.

But I raise a point in the backdrop of the crisis in Iraq, the ISIS, and all of the disjangled chords of calling for troops on the ground and to do airstrikes when in actuality we live in a world family, we live in a family with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Jordan, we live in a family with NATO alliances, and we need to be able to work together to demand why an untoward leader in Iraq, who was given an opportunity for a consensus government, never made any effort. Yes, these individuals are horrific, they are radicalized, they are vicious, they are vile. But there are Sunnis and Shiites who have worked together, there are Sunnis who are moderate, who want to be in the government, who want their children to have an opportunity for education, they want their young people to have jobs, they want an Iraq where they can pledge allegiance to their flag, a united Iraq. Where was the leadership, the selfish leadership of Maliki, to be able to do that—and now we must clean up his dirty kitchen? I think not.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield an additional minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman.

This must be a unified effort. Frankly, the President is right to be deliberative. We yet do not know, as I speak—there may be some news announcement—what his decision may be. But I do believe he has done the right thing by providing security and safety for the thousands of Americans that are in Baghdad and protecting our Embassy. That is the right thing to do. He has done the right thing by finding one of the perpetrators of Benghazi.

I would ask we do the right thing by not ignoring again another terrorist threat, Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria, that is fueling the flames, taking over municipalities, ready to pounce on places other than the northeast. These are threats that need the collective body of the United Nations—in this instance, the African Union, the ECOWAS, and all the states surrounding Nigeria, and, of course, the Nigerian government, of which we are friends with.

But I will say that America cannot continuously go it alone. We have given our treasure. Our young men and women never say ''no.'' When they are called to duty, they go, reservists and all.

I believe it is time to be responsible, respectful, and cautious in the way we move forward using our troops around the world. I ask my colleague to consider this as we deliberate on this appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the rule for H.R. 4860, the ''Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2015'' and the underlying bill.

I thank Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for their work on this legislation to the floor and for their devotion to the men and women of the Armed Forces who risk their lives to keep our nation safe.

I also want to extend thanks and appreciation to the men and women in and out of uniform who defend our nation and serve honor and distinction.

My work in the 18th Congressional District of Texas has allowed me the privilege of working with men and women in the military, the workers in aeronautics and space industries that contribute to our nation's defense as well as those in the Department of Defense who work in and around our nation's capital.

Through my work as a Member of Congress I know those who have served and returned home to a tough economy, struggles with physical disabilities and life changing injuries associated with their service to our nation.

The men and women who serve in the military are collection of statistics and data points, but individuals with names and faces—real people who depend on us to ensure they are the best trained, best equipped, and best led defense force in the world.

I appreciate the Committee's continued support for providing funding that assists military men and women's ability in operating in unconventional and irregular warfare and countering unconventional threats, supports capacity-building efforts with foreign military forces, and supports ongoing operations, as well as programs that will improve the health and well-being of the force, including sexual assault prevention.

This bill before us does much but not enough to recognize the sacrifices of the men and women serving in the military.

The fiscal year 2015 Department of Defense military personnel budget request was for $128.95 billion. The Committee appropriated $128.127 billion, nearly $800 million less the request and less than the need.

While we watch Al Qaeda-inspired terrorists in Nigeria in the form of Boko Haram and ISIS in Iraq carry out terrible acts of violence, it is important to ensure that military has the resources needed to respond to any threat to our nation or its allies.

The bill recognizes that the military is changing due to the expanded roles for women who pursue careers in the armed services and it is essential that this change not lead to a diminution of rights or opportunities from what women would enjoy had they pursued a different career path.

That is why I will be offering an amendment (Jackson Lee No. 1) to provide $5 million in increased funding and support for medical research related to breast cancer research. The identical amendment was offered and adopted by the House last year.

This additional funding will be made available for Triple Negative Breast Cancer research. TNBC is one of the most deadly forms of the disease that is extremely difficult to detect, and has an extremely high mortality rate.

I will also be offering an amendment (Jackson Lee Amendment No. 2) to reprogramming $500,000 toward outreach programs targeting hard to reach veterans, especially those who are homeless or reside in underserved urban and rural areas, who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). An identical amendment was offered by me and adopted by the House last year.

PTSD, along with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), are the signature wounds of the Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The need for treatment and support of those afflicted will be with us long after the conflict ceases and our heroes have returned home.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. May I inquire of the gentleman as to how many more speakers he has.

Mr. NUGENT. I have none.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will insert in the RECORD a Statement of Administration Policy on this bill, but first I would just highlight a couple of points.

□ 1245

The administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 4870, as it now stands—and so do I—for a number of reasons. I want to highlight one. There are provisions in this bill that make it difficult, if not impossible, for the President to close down Guantanamo.

Let me read from the administration's statement in reference to some of these restrictive provisions that prevent them from shutting down something that I think does nothing to enhance our security:

Operating the detention facility at Guantanamo weakens our national security by draining resources, damaging our relationships with key allies and partners, and emboldening violent extremists. These provisions are unwarranted and threaten to interfere with the executive branch's ability to determine the appropriate disposition of detainees and its flexibility to determine when and where to prosecute Guantanamo detainees based on the facts and circumstances of each case and our national security interests.

There are other issues as well, but that is something that Members ought to know. This bill does contain these extraneous provisions.

Let me close by saying to my colleagues that it is no secret to people in this House that I believe that the war in Afghanistan—the longest war in U.S. history—should be brought to a close.

It is also no secret that I have expressed my frustration loudly on this House floor over the fact that we have not been given the opportunity to discuss that war in an open debate.

When the defense authorization bill came up before us, a germane bipartisan amendment was offered that would give Members of Congress the ability to vote on whether we should continue to maintain troops there or not. That is an important question. That is an important issue, certainly, as we discuss the defense authorization and the Defense Appropriations bills.

We were denied that opportunity in this House of Representatives, which my friend is saying is a festival of democracy, on the most important issue that is confronting this country right now, the fact that we are at war. We were denied the opportunity to be able to deliberate on that issue.

As I said in my opening statement, we have Members of Congress and pundits that are rattling sabers and trying to get us recommitted to a war in Iraq. I think that would be a horrible mistake.

I want to close by making a plea to the leadership of this House to let us discuss these issues openly on the House floor. Let us deliberate on those issues. Let us live up to our responsibilities, as Members of Congress, to have a role in some of these discussions. Let's not abdicate that responsibility.

In fact, it has become a habit with this leadership to just kind of brush aside those issues, to allow no debate, to allow no deliberation. I find that appalling.

When you go to Walter Reed and talk to those veterans who have been wounded and who suffered enormously as a result of their service, when you talk to their parents and their loved ones, we owe those men and women a hell of a lot better than they have received on this House floor. The least we can do is deliberate on those issues.

I make a plea to this leadership to let us talk about these things. This is important. If this isn't important, I don't know what is.

I oppose the final passage of the bill for a number of reasons, but I do want to commend the chairman and the ranking member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee for their hard work, as well as their staff, and I yield back the balance of my time.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 4870—DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

(Rep. Rogers, R–KY, June 17, 2014)

The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 4870, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. The Administration appreciates the bill's continued support for providing funding that assists the warfighter in operating in unconventional and irregular warfare and countering unconventional threats, supports capacity-building efforts with foreign military forces, and supports on-going operations, as well as the support for programs that would improve the health and well-being of the force, including sexual assault prevention. While there are a number of areas of agreement with the bill, the Administration has serious concerns with provisions that would constrain the ability of the Department of Defense (DOD) to align military capabilities and force structure with the President's defense strategy and to reduce unneeded costs.

The Administration will soon submit a budget amendment to request funding for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO). This request will reflect the President's decision on troop levels in Afghanistan and include funding for the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan, DOD's supporting presence in the broader region, as well as the recently proposed Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund and European Reassurance Initiative. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress on this request.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress on an orderly appropriations process that supports economic growth, opportunity, and our national security while avoiding unnecessary fiscal crises that hold the Nation's economy back. This process should include reconciling funding levels for individual appropriations bills to promote economic growth and national security, and passing bills without ideological provisions that could undermine an orderly appropriations process.

The President's fiscal year (FY) 2015 Budget provides a roadmap for making investments to accelerate economic growth, expand opportunity for all hard-working Americans, and ensure our national security, while continuing to improve the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. At the same time, the Budget takes key steps to both continue and enhance the Administration's efforts to deliver a Government that is more effective, efficient, and supportive of economic growth.

The President's Budget adheres to the FY 2015 spending levels agreed to in the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) and shows the choices the President would make at those levels. However, the levels agreed to in the BBA are already below FY 2007 funding levels adjusted for inflation and are not sufficient—either in FY 2015 or beyond—to ensure the Nation is achieving its full potential. For that reason, the Budget also includes a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative—evenly split between defense and non-defense priorities—that presents additional investments to grow the economy, expand opportunity, and enhance security. The Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative would provide $26.4 billion for DOD to make progress on restoring readiness lost under sequestration, accelerate modernization of key weapons systems, and improve DOD facilities across the United States.

In the Administration's view, the risk to the Nation will grow significantly should the Congress not accept reforms proposed in the FY 2015 Budget. Without congressional support for meaningful compensation reforms and other cost saving measures, force structure changes, and flexibility to manage weapon systems and infrastructure, there is an increased risk to the Department's ability to implement the President's defense strategy, which will contribute to a military that will be less capable of responding effectively to future challenges.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill and urges the Congress to resolve these issues during the FY 2015 appropriations process.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Prohibition on Retirement, Divesture, Realignment, or Transfer of Aircraft. The Administration appreciates the Committee's support of the Air Force's A–10 fleet divesture plans. Divesting the A–10 fleet will help the Air Force meet near-term readiness and achieve long-term modernization objectives. However, the Administration strongly objects to provisions that restrict the Department's ability to retire other weapon systems and aircraft platforms in accordance with current strategic and operational plans. These divestitures are critical and would provide funding for higher priority programs.

Specifically, the Administration strongly objects to sections 8122, 8133, and 8136 of the bill, consistent with previously stated objections to provisions in the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act. Section 8122 of the bill would prohibit the cancellation or modification of the C–130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP). DOD plans to replace the C–130 AMP with a less expensive, fully capable alternative that has been validated by independent study to ensure that the fleet continues to meet future requirements. Section 8133 would prevent the Air Force from using funds to divest or to disestablish any units of the active or reserve

component associated with E–3 airborne warning and control system aircraft. This provision would force the Air Force to take funding from higher priority defense needs in order to operate, sustain, and maintain aircraft that are not needed and are unaffordable in today's constrained fiscal environment. Section 8136, which limits the transfer of Apaches from the Army National Guard to the active Army, would result in gaps in the Army's armed reconnaissance units that would require approximately $4 billion to fill. As DOD transitions out of a decade of war, aircraft force structure changes are necessary to shape a force that is more agile and ready to respond to the requirements of the defense strategy.

Compensation Reform. To achieve a proper balance between DOD's obligation to provide competitive pay and benefits to servicemembers and its responsibility to provide troops with the training and equipment they need to do their jobs, it is imperative to slow the growth of basic pay and housing allowances, modernize military healthcare, and reform how commissaries operate. The Administration strongly urges the Congress to support these reforms, which would save $2 billion in FY 2015 and $31 billion through FY 2019. While the Committee restored funding to offset the FY 2015 savings associated with proposals that were not supported, the rejection of these proposals will likely require DOD to find over $27 billion in additional reductions to readiness, modernization, and force structure for FY 2016 through FY 2019. The Administration looks forward to the recommendations of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission on long-term compensation and retirement issues, but delaying DOD's holistic package of proposed initial changes will only result in increased costs, degradation in training and modernization efforts, and risks to the force.

Guantánamo Detainee Restrictions. The Administration strongly objects to sections 8107, 8108, 8139, and 9015 of the bill, each of which would restrict the Executive Branch's ability to manage the Guantánamo detainee population. The President has repeatedly objected to the inclusion of these or similar provisions in prior legislation and this year has reiterated his call to the Congress to lift such restrictions. As the President said in his State of the Union Address, ''this needs to be the year Congress lifts the remaining restrictions on detainee transfers and we close the prison at Guantánamo Bay.'' Operating the detention facility at Guantánamo weakens our national security by draining resources, damaging our relationships with key allies and partners, and emboldening violent extremists. These provisions are unwarranted and threaten to interfere with the Executive Branch's ability to determine the appropriate disposition of detainees and its flexibility to determine when and where to prosecute Guantánamo detainees based on the facts and circumstances of each case and our national security interests. Sections 8107, 8139, and 9015 would, moreover, violate constitutional separation-of-powers principles under certain circumstances.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The Administration strongly objects to the proposed $4.8 million reduction in funds that would support a BRAC 2017 round. This impairs the ability of the Executive Branch to plan for contingencies or make other needed adjustments that would improve military effectiveness and efficiency. The Administration strongly urges the Congress to provide the BRAC authorization and funding as requested, which would allow DOD to rightsize its infrastructure while providing important assistance to affected communities. Without authorization for a new round of BRAC, DOD will not be able to properly align the military's infrastructure with the needs of our evolving force structure, which is critical to ensuring that limited resources are available for the highest priorities of the warfighter and national security.

Limitation on Funds Available to Procure Equipment. The Administration objects to section 8116 of the bill which would continue and expand prohibitions on using funds to procure certain equipment, including maintenance for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This section would severely limit DOD's ability to sustain military-use helicopters and other equipment that is already in ANSF's inventory and is critical to their ability to continue the fight against extremists who threaten the security of Afghanistan, the United States, and our allies. If enacted, this section could force DOD to seek more costly alternatives than contracting with the Russian helicopter industry to sustain ANSF aircraft, increasing costs to the U.S. taxpayer.

Liquid Rocket Engine Development. The Administration objects to the unrequested $220 million for a new rocket engine. An independent study recently concluded that such a program would take eight years to field and could cost $1.5 billion with another $3 billion needed to develop a suitable launch vehicle. This approach prematurely commits significant resources and would not reduce our reliance on Russian engines for at least a decade. With a goal of promptly reducing our reliance on Russian technology, the Administration is evaluating several cost-effective options including public-private partnerships with multiple awards that will drive innovation, stimulate the industrial base, and reduce costs through competition. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress on this issue once the analysis is complete.

Limitations on Phased Modernization of Weapon Systems. While appreciative of the bill's overall support for cruiser modernization, the Administration objects to the unnecessary limitations on the current plan, which would preclude modernization in the most cost effective and timely manner and may hinder the Navy's ability to retain 11 modernized cruisers into the 2040s.

Reducing the Force Structure at Lajes Air Force Base. The Administration objects to section 8123 of the bill, which would prohibit the Secretary of the Air Force from reducing the force structure at Lajes Air Force Base and is duplicative of section 341 of the FY 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. Because DOD is nearing completion of the section 341 requirements for Lajes, duplicating and amplifying these requirements is unnecessarily onerous.

Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). The Administration objects to finding reductions for the LCS program. The reductions leave the program with insufficient funds to procure three LCS in FY 2015, delaying the delivery of much needed capability to the Fleet. Deferring additional ships into FY 2016 would compound the already significant challenges the Navy faces in funding the shipbuilding account in a fiscally constrained environment while increasing overall costs to the Navy and increasing risk to the industrial base, including sub-tier suppliers.

Reallocation of Missile Defense Agency Funding. The Administration objects to the reallocation of $370 million from the FY 2015 Budget request. These changes would reduce capability and capacity, and may possibly hinder the Department's ability to effectively manage the Agency. Specifically, this reallocation of funds would delay critical engineering, testing, command and control, and weapons system development, and would affect homeland and regional commitments, including a likely delay of one year for the European Phased Adaptive Approach Phase 3—a national commitment to our allies. Also, the reduction in advanced procurement funding for the Standard Missile–3 IB could increase its planned procurement cost by about $140 million.

Opposition to Unrequested Funding. The Administration objects to the billions of dollars provided for items DOD did not request and does not need, such as additional EA–18G aircraft, High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles, M–1 Abrams upgrades, and a significantly larger amount of funding for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account than provided in recent years. The Administration is also concerned that section 8006 of the bill makes spending on these and other unnecessary items statutorily required, diverting scarce resources from more important defense programs and limiting the Secretary's flexibility to manage the Department efficiently.

Classified Programs. The Administration looks forward to providing its views on the adjustments contained in the Classified Annex to the bill once it becomes available.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as the FY 2015 appropriations process moves forward.

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

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us allows for an open and transparent consideration of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2015. Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN has done an excellent job in the appropriations area, working with his minority member, to craft this appropriations bill to fit the needs of our military. They have done an excellent job.

Providing for the common defense is a constitutional responsibility that we share with the President. This Congress shares that with the President. Without a strong defense, we have no way of ensuring that our liberties we enjoy and the safety of our citizens from threats, both foreign and domestic, keep us safe here at home.

The underlying legislation helps fulfill Congress' responsibility to provide for our national defense by funding the Armed Forces and addressing critical readiness gaps.

The DOD Appropriations bill provides $1 million to be used exclusively for improving military readiness. That commitment is vital because we need to give our warfighters the best possible chance to complete their mission and make it home safe and sound.

As a father of three soldiers, I can only tell you that the ability to train and equip our men and women that have volunteered to serve this country is the utmost responsibility that this country has to them to make sure that they have the ability to come back. We need to give them the best possible fighting chance to come home to their families.

As a father who has sons serving in both Iraq and Afghanistan, we have got to make sure this country provides the best possible military, second to none in the world.

We want to make sure that our men and women have the ability to have the medical treatment that they so rightly

deserve when they come back after serving their country. I think that we have taken the steps in the Rules Committee to do just that.

This rule and this appropriations bill actually rejects, again, the President's proposed cuts to TRICARE. Once again, in the last 4 years, TRICARE has come under fire.

We don't believe that we should balance the budget on the backs of our men and women who fight for this country. We need to make sure of our priorities that we owe our troops, which is a debt we can never repay, but you don't repay it by cutting their benefits, and you don't repay it by cutting their pay, you don't repay it by ignoring them as it relates to when they come back with a service-connected disability, go in front of the VA, and be denied the service they rightfully earned.

Finally, the rule provides for the motions necessary to go to conference with the Senate because, if you remember right, the Senate passed a bill, the House passed a bill as it relates to the VA, in regards to trying to fix the VA. It is a good first step.

Those bills have already been passed. Now, it is the opportunity to provide an opportunity to conference with the Senate to come up with a compromise that puts our veterans first—not last, not behind bureaucrats, but in front of the line, not the back of the line.

We can quickly resolve those issues between the House and the Senate by going to conference, and that is what this bill helps us do.

I think we all agree the treatment of our veterans has been shameful. It is a complete disservice to those who risked their lives for us. The severity of this issue, the sheer gravity of it, demands input from both Chambers.

We have heard about how keeping GTMO open makes us less safe. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that releasing five members of Taliban's senior leadership positions makes America less safe—which we just did, without input from this House or without input from the Senate, as required by law. It was just done.

Are we safer because we released these five Taliban leaders? They are not the trigger pullers. They are not the guys on the ground. These are the guys that actually helped design and implement the Taliban and the attacks on us. Some of those leaders are purported to be members of that group that helped design and implement those.

I agree with my good friend from Massachusetts. We agree on a lot of issues, particularly as it relates to our military and open-ended conflicts. We do agree on that.

Having sons that have served both in Iraq and Afghanistan, I want to make sure that this body has a say in what happens. I want to make sure this body hears from the President in a cohesive way in regards to what he expects to accomplish and what our mission is.

I have two sons in Iraq in the conflict. I happened to travel there and got to see my two kids. The night that I was there, a U.S. base was struck by an IRAM, which is an Iranian rocket warhead.

The only place you get that is from Iran. You don't find it on the shelf at a store. Iran provided a warhead that killed five troops the night I was in Iraq. They were part of the division where my youngest son served.

Here we are, talking about working with Iran, who has been the most destablizing country in the world, as it relates to Afghanistan and Iraq. This is a sectarian issue going on between the Sunnis and the Shiites.

I don't know what the best way forward is, but I want to hear from the President what his plan is. We sent more troops to Iraq. I want to hear specifically what we expect to get out of that. What do we expect?

I will tell you that the ISIL in the media, they want to hurt America. They are the ones that are advancing towards Baghdad. They have the ability, from what I am reading in the press, to reach out and touch America.

Do we have a vested interest in seeing what happens in Iraq? I believe we do, but I want to hear from this President about how you move forward and how you fix something that my good friend from Massachusetts talked about, the corrupt government within Iraq.

We have some of the same issues in Afghanistan. How do we do that?

I think he hit it on the head. The people of those countries have got to stand up and take control. The problem is we don't want terrorists to take control. The ISIL is a terrorist organization; there is no doubt about it.

Lastly, I just want to touch on the conference allowing us to give instructions to conferees as relates to the Senate. We want to make sure that that gets done—and it gets done right and done in a timely fashion. It is amazing that the Senate, when motivated, can do the right thing and move a piece of legislation through.

I support this straightforward rule and the much-needed underlying legislation. I urge my colleagues to do the same,

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

The previous question was ordered.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 244, nays 163, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 315]

YEAS—244

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Capito
Carney
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Enyart
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Maffei
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—163

Barrow (GA)
Bass
Becerra
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney

DeLauro	Kilmer	Pocan
DelBene	Kind	Polis
Deutch	Kirkpatrick	Price (NC)
Dingell	Langevin	Quigley
Doggett	Larsen (WA)	Rahall
Doyle	Larson (CT)	Richmond
Edwards	Lee (CA)	Roybal-Allard
Ellison	Levin	Ruppersberger
Engel	Lewis	Rush
Eshoo	Lofgren	Sánchez, Linda T.
Esty	Lowenthal	Sanchez, Loretta
Farr	Lowey	Sarbanes
Fattah	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Schakowsky
Foster	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Schiff
Frankel (FL)	Lynch	Schrader
Fudge	Maloney, Carolyn	Schwartz
Gabbard	Maloney, Sean	Scott (VA)
Gallego	Matheson	Serrano
Grayson	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Green, Al	McCarthy (NY)	Sherman
Green, Gene	McCollum	Sires
Grijalva	McDermott	Slaughter
Gutiérrez	McGovern	Smith (WA)
Hahn	McNerney	Speier
Hanabusa	Michaud	Swalwell (CA)
Hastings (FL)	Moore	Takano
Heck (WA)	Moran	Thompson (CA)
Higgins	Nadler	Thompson (MS)
Himes	Napolitano	Tierney
Hinojosa	Neal	Titus
Holt	Negrete McLeod	Tonko
Honda	O'Rourke	Tsongas
Hoyer	Pallone	Van Hollen
Huffman	Pascrell	Vargas
Israel	Pastor (AZ)	Veasey
Jackson Lee	Payne	Vela
Jeffries	Pelosi	Velázquez
Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter	Visclosky
Johnson, E. B.	Peters (MI)	Wasserman Schultz
Kaptur	Peterson	Waters
Keating	Pingree (ME)	Wilson (FL)
Kelly (IL)		Yarmuth
Kennedy		
Kildee		

NOT VOTING—24

Bachus	Garamendi	Miller, Gary
Beatty	Hall	Miller, George
Bera (CA)	Hanna	Mulvaney
Bridenstine	Horsford	Nunnelee
Cantor	Lankford	Rangel
Costa	McKeon	Ryan (OH)
Cramer	Meeks	Waxman
Crawford	Meng	Welch

□ 1322

Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LIPINSKI and Ms. SHEA-PORTER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained today and missed roll No. 315. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 628, I call up the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, with the Senate amendments thereto, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the Senate amendments.

The text of the Senate amendments is as follows:

Senate amendments:

H.R. 3230

Resolved, That the bill from the House of Representatives (H.R. 3230) entitled ''An Act making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period.'', do pass with the following amendments:

Strike all after the enacting clause, and insert in lieu thereof:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENT OF SCHEDULING SYSTEM FOR HEALTH CARE APPOINTMENTS

Sec. 101. Independent assessment of the scheduling of appointments and other health care management processes of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 102. Technology task force on review of scheduling system and software of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE II—TRAINING AND HIRING OF HEALTH CARE STAFF

Sec. 201. Treatment of staffing shortage and biannual report on staffing of medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 202. Clinic management training for managers and health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 203. Use of unobligated amounts to hire additional health care providers for the Veterans Health Administration.

TITLE III—IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS TO CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVIDERS

Sec. 301. Expanded availability of hospital care and medical services for veterans through the use of contracts.

Sec. 302. Transfer of authority for payments for hospital care, medical services, and other health care from non-Department providers to the Chief Business Office of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department.

Sec. 303. Enhancement of collaboration between Department of Veterans Affairs and Indian Health Service.

Sec. 304. Enhancement of collaboration between Department of Veterans Affairs and Native Hawaiian health care systems.

Sec. 305. Sense of Congress on prompt payment by Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE IV—HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Sec. 401. Improvement of access of veterans to mobile vet centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 402. Commission on construction projects of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 403. Commission on Access to Care.

Sec. 404. Improved performance metrics for health care provided by Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 405. Improved transparency concerning health care provided by Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 406. Information for veterans on the credentials of Department of Veterans Affairs physicians.

Sec. 407. Information in annual budget of the President on hospital care and medical services furnished through expanded use of contracts for such care.

Sec. 408. Prohibition on falsification of data concerning wait times and quality measures at Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 409. Removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance.

TITLE V—HEALTH CARE RELATED TO SEXUAL TRAUMA

Sec. 501. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.

Sec. 502. Provision of counseling and treatment for sexual trauma by the Department of Veterans Affairs to members of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 503. Reports on military sexual trauma.

TITLE VI—MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES

Sec. 601. Authorization of major medical facility leases.

Sec. 602. Budgetary treatment of Department of Veterans Affairs major medical facilities leases.

TITLE VII—VETERANS BENEFITS MATTERS

Sec. 701. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.

Sec. 702. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher learning for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.

TITLE VIII—APPROPRIATION AND EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS

Sec. 801. Appropriation of emergency amounts.

Sec. 802. Emergency designations.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENT OF SCHEDULING SYSTEM FOR HEALTH CARE APPOINTMENTS

SEC. 101. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEDULING OF APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with an independent third party to assess the following:

(A) The process at each medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs for scheduling appointments for veterans to receive hospital care, medical services, or other health care from the Department.

(B) The staffing level and productivity of each medical facility of the Department, including the following:

(i) The case load of each health care provider of the Department.

(ii) The time spent by each health care provider of the Department on matters other than the case load of such health care provider, including time spent by such health care provider as follows:

(I) At a medical facility that is affiliated with the Department.

(II) Conducting research.

(III) Training or overseeing other health care professionals of the Department.

(C) The organization, processes, and tools used by the Department to support clinical documentation and the subsequent coding of inpatient services.

(D) The purchasing, distribution, and use of pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies,

and medical devices by the Department, including the following:

(i) The prices paid for, standardization of, and use by the Department of the following:

(I) High-cost pharmaceuticals.

(II) Medical and surgical supplies.

(III) Medical devices.

(ii) The use by the Department of group purchasing arrangements to purchase pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies, medical devices, and health care related services.

(iii) The strategy used by the Department to distribute pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies, and medical devices to Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical facilities of the Department.

(E) The performance of the Department in paying amounts owed to third parties and collecting amounts owed to the Department with respect to hospital care, medical services, and other health care, including any recommendations of the independent third party as follows:

(i) To avoid the payment of penalties to vendors.

(ii) To increase the collection of amounts owed to the Department for hospital care, medical services, or other health care provided by the Department for which reimbursement from a third party is authorized.

(iii) To increase the collection of any other amounts owed to the Department.

(2) ELEMENTS OF SCHEDULING ASSESSMENT.—In carrying out the assessment required by paragraph (1)(A), the independent third party shall do the following:

(A) Review all training materials pertaining to scheduling of appointments at each medical facility of the Department.

(B) Assess whether all employees of the Department conducting tasks related to scheduling are properly trained for conducting such tasks.

(C) Assess whether changes in the technology or system used in scheduling appointments are necessary to limit access to the system to only those employees that have been properly trained in conducting such tasks.

(D) Assess whether health care providers of the Department are making changes to their schedules that hinder the ability of employees conducting such tasks to perform such tasks.

(E) Assess whether the establishment of a centralized call center throughout the Department for scheduling appointments at medical facilities of the Department would improve the process of scheduling such appointments.

(F) Assess whether booking templates for each medical facility or clinic of the Department would improve the process of scheduling such appointments.

(G) Recommend any actions to be taken by the Department to improve the process for scheduling such appointments, including the following:

(i) Changes in training materials provided to employees of the Department with respect to conducting tasks related to scheduling such appointments.

(ii) Changes in monitoring and assessment conducted by the Department of wait times of veterans for such appointments.

(iii) Changes in the system used to schedule such appointments, including changes to improve how the Department—

(I) measures wait times of veterans for such appointments;

(II) monitors the availability of health care providers of the Department; and

(III) provides veterans the ability to schedule such appointments.

(iv) Such other actions as the independent third party considers appropriate.

(3) TIMING.—The independent third party carrying out the assessment required by paragraph (1) shall complete such assessment not later than 180 days after entering into the contract described in such paragraph.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the independent third party completes the assessment under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the results of such assessment.

(2) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 30 days after submitting the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall publish such report in the Federal Register and on an Internet website of the Department accessible to the public.

SEC. 102. TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE ON REVIEW OF SCHEDULING SYSTEM AND SOFTWARE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) TASK FORCE REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, through the use of a technology task force, conduct a review of the needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to the scheduling system and scheduling software of the Department of Veterans Affairs that is used by the Department to schedule appointments for veterans for hospital care, medical services, and other health care from the Department.

(2) AGREEMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall seek to enter into an agreement with a technology organization or technology organizations to carry out the review required by paragraph (1).

(B) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—No Federal funds may be used to assist the technology organization or technology organizations under subparagraph (A) in carrying out the review required by paragraph (1).

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the technology task force required under subsection (a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the findings and recommendations of the technology task force regarding the needs of the Department with respect to the scheduling system and scheduling software of the Department described in such subsection.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Proposals for specific actions to be taken by the Department to improve the scheduling system and scheduling software of the Department described in subsection (a)(1).

(B) A determination as to whether an existing off-the-shelf system would—

(i) meet the needs of the Department to schedule appointments for veterans for hospital care, medical services, and other health care from the Department; and

(ii) improve the access of veterans to such care and services.

(3) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the receipt of the report required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall publish such report in the Federal Register and on an Internet website of the Department accessible to the public.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than one year after the receipt of the report required by subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall implement the recommendations set forth in such report that the Secretary considers are feasible, advisable, and cost-effective.

TITLE II—TRAINING AND HIRING OF HEALTH CARE STAFF

SEC. 201. TREATMENT OF STAFFING SHORTAGE AND BIANNUAL REPORT ON STAFFING OF MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) STAFFING SHORTAGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than September 30 each year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall determine, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register, the five occupations of health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs for which there is the largest staffing shortage throughout the Department.

(2) RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT.—Notwithstanding sections 3304 and 3309 through 3318 of title 5, United States Code, the Secretary may, upon a determination by the Inspector General under paragraph (1) that there is a staffing shortage throughout the Department with respect to a particular occupation of health care provider, recruit and directly appoint highly qualified health care providers to serve as health care providers in that particular occupation for the Department.

(3) PRIORITY IN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO CERTAIN PROVIDERS.—Section 7612(b)(5) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph (B):

''(B) shall give priority to applicants pursuing a course of education or training towards a career in an occupation for which the Secretary has, in the most current determination published in the Federal Register pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014, determined that there is one of the largest staffing shortages throughout the Department with respect to such occupation; and''.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than December 31 of each even numbered year thereafter until 2024, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report assessing the staffing of each medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The results of a system-wide assessment of all medical facilities of the Department to ensure the following:

(i) Appropriate staffing levels for health care providers to meet the goals of the Secretary for timely access to care for veterans.

(ii) Appropriate staffing levels for support personnel, including clerks.

(iii) Appropriate sizes for clinical panels.

(iv) Appropriate numbers of full-time staff, or full-time equivalents, dedicated to direct care of patients.

(v) Appropriate physical plant space to meet the capacity needs of the Department in that area.

(vi) Such other factors as the Secretary considers necessary.

(B) A plan for addressing any issues identified in the assessment described in subparagraph (A), including a timeline for addressing such issues.

(C) A list of the current wait times and workload levels for the following clinics in each medical facility:

(i) Mental health.

(ii) Primary care.

(iii) Gastroenterology.

(iv) Women's health.

(v) Such other clinics as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(D) A description of the results of the most current determination of the Inspector General under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) and a plan to use direct appointment authority under paragraph (2) of such subsection to fill staffing shortages, including recommendations for improving the speed at which the credentialing and privileging process can be conducted.

(E) The current staffing models of the Department for the following clinics, including recommendations for changes to such models:

(i) Mental health.

(ii) Primary care.

(iii) Gastroenterology.

(iv) Women's health.

(v) Such other clinics as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(F) A detailed analysis of succession planning at medical facilities of the Department, including the following:

(i) The number of positions in medical facilities throughout the Department that are not filled by a permanent employee.

(ii) The length of time each position described in clause (i) remained vacant or filled by a temporary or acting employee.

(iii) A description of any barriers to filling the positions described in clause (i).

(iv) A plan for filling any positions that are vacant or filled by a temporary or acting employee for more than 180 days.

(v) A plan for handling emergency circumstances, such as administrative leave or sudden medical leave for senior officials.

(G) The number of health care providers of the Department who have been removed from their positions, have retired, or have left their positions for another reason, disaggregated by provider type, during the two-year period preceding the submittal of the report.

(H) Of the health care providers specified in subparagraph (G) who have been removed from their positions, the following:

(i) The number of such health care providers who were reassigned to other positions in the Department.

(ii) The number of such health care providers who left the Department.

(iii) The number of such health care providers who left the Department and were subsequently rehired by the Department.

SEC. 202. CLINIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR MANAGERS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) CLINIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a clinic management training program to provide in-person, standardized education on health care management to all managers of, and health care providers at, medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The clinic management training program required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Training on how to manage the schedules of health care providers of the Department, including the following:

(i) Maintaining such schedules in a manner that allows appointments to be booked at least eight weeks in advance.

(ii) Proper planning procedures for vacation, leave, and graduate medical education training schedules.

(B) Training on the appropriate number of appointments that a health care provider should conduct on a daily basis, based on specialty.

(C) Training on how to determine whether there are enough available appointment slots to manage demand for different appointment types and mechanisms for alerting management of insufficient slots.

(D) Training on how to properly use the appointment scheduling system of the Department, including any new scheduling system implemented by the Department.

(E) Training on how to optimize the use of technology, including the following:

(i) Telemedicine.

(ii) Electronic mail.

(iii) Text messaging.

(iv) Such other technologies as specified by the Secretary.

(F) Training on how to properly use physical plant space at medical facilities of the Department to ensure efficient flow and privacy for patients and staff.

(3) SUNSET.—The clinic management training program required by paragraph (1) shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date on which the Secretary commences such program.

(b) TRAINING MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After the termination of the clinic management training program required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide training materials on health care management to each of the following employees of the Department upon the commencement of employment of such employee:

(A) Any manager of a medical facility of the Department.

(B) Any health care provider at a medical facility of the Department.

(C) Such other employees of the Department as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) UPDATE.—The Secretary shall regularly update the training materials required under paragraph (1).

SEC. 203. USE OF UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS TO HIRE ADDITIONAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS FOR THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—At the end of each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015, all covered amounts shall be made available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire additional health care providers for the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or to carry out any provision of this Act or the amendments made by this Act, and shall remain available until expended.

(b) PRIORITY IN HIRING.—The Secretary shall prioritize hiring additional health care providers under subsection (a) at medical facilities of the Department and in geographic areas in which the Secretary identifies the greatest shortage of health care providers.

(c) COVERED AMOUNTS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered amounts'' means amounts—

(1) that are made available to the Veterans Health Administration of the Department for an appropriations account—

(A) under the heading ''MEDICAL SERVICES'';

(B) under the heading ''MEDICAL SUPPORT AND COMPLIANCE''; or

(C) under the heading ''MEDICAL FACILITIES''; and

(2) that are unobligated at the end of the applicable fiscal year.

TITLE III—IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS TO CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVIDERS

SEC. 301. EXPANDED AVAILABILITY OF HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS THROUGH THE USE OF CONTRACTS.

(a) EXPANSION OF AVAILABLE CARE AND SERVICES.—

(1) FURNISHING OF CARE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Hospital care and medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, shall be furnished to an eligible veteran described in subsection (b), at the election of such veteran, through contracts authorized under subsection (d), or any other law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, with entities specified in subparagraph (B) for the furnishing of such care and services to veterans.

(B) ENTITIES SPECIFIED.—The entities specified in this subparagraph are the following:

(i) Any health care provider that is participating in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

(ii) Any Federally-qualified health center (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

(iii) The Department of Defense.

(iv) The Indian Health Service.

(2) CHOICE OF PROVIDER.—An eligible veteran who elects to receive care and services under this section may select the provider of such care and services from among any source of provider of such care and services through an entity specified in paragraph (1)(B) that is accessible to the veteran.

(3) COORDINATION OF CARE AND SERVICES.—The Secretary shall coordinate, through the Non-VA Care Coordination Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the furnishing of care and services under this section to eligible veterans, including by ensuring that an eligible veteran receives an appointment for such care and services within the current wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration for the furnishing of hospital care and medical services.

(b) ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—A veteran is an eligible veteran for purposes of this section if—

(1)(A) the veteran is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code; or

(B) the veteran is enrolled in such system, has not received hospital care or medical services from the Department, and has contacted the Department seeking an initial appointment from the Department for the receipt of such care or services; and

(2) the veteran—

(A)(i) attempts, or has attempted under paragraph (1)(B), to schedule an appointment for the receipt of hospital care or medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, but is unable to schedule an appointment within the current wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration for the furnishing of such care or services; and

(ii) elects, and is authorized, to be furnished such care or services pursuant to subsection (c)(2);

(B) resides more than 40 miles from the nearest medical facility of the Department, including a community-based outpatient clinic, that is closest to the residence of the veteran; or

(C) resides—

(i) in a State without a medical facility of the Department that provides—

(I) hospital care;

(II) emergency medical services; and

(III) surgical care rated by the Secretary as having a surgical complexity of standard; and

(ii) more than 20 miles from a medical facility of the Department described in clause (i).

(c) ELECTION AND AUTHORIZATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary confirms that an appointment for an eligible veteran described in subsection (b)(2)(A) for the receipt of hospital care or medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is unavailable within the current wait-time goals of the Department for the furnishing of such care or services, the Secretary shall, at the election of the eligible veteran—

(A) place such eligible veteran on an electronic waiting list described in paragraph (2) for such an appointment; or

(B)(i) authorize that such care and services be furnished to the eligible veteran under this section for a period of time specified by the Secretary; and

(ii) send a letter to the eligible veteran describing the care and services the eligible veteran is eligible to receive under this section.

(2) ELECTRONIC WAITING LIST.—The electronic waiting list described in this paragraph shall be maintained by the Department and allow access by each eligible veteran via www.myhealth.va.gov or any successor website for the following purposes:

(A) To determine the place of such eligible veteran on the waiting list.

(B) To determine the average length of time an individual spends on the waiting list, disaggregated by medical facility of the Department and type of care or service needed, for purposes of allowing such eligible veteran to make an informed election under paragraph (1).

(d) CARE AND SERVICES THROUGH CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts with health care providers that are participating in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) to furnish care and services to eligible veterans under this section.

(2) RATES AND REIMBURSEMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In entering into a contract under this subsection, the Secretary shall—

(i) negotiate rates for the furnishing of care and services under this section; and

(ii) reimburse the health care provider for such care and services at the rates negotiated pursuant to clause (i) as provided in such contract.

(B) LIMIT ON RATES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), rates negotiated under subparagraph (A)(i) shall not be more than the rates paid by the United States to a provider of services (as defined in section 1861(u) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(u))) or a supplier (as defined in section 1861(d) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(d))) under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) for the same care and services.

(ii) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may negotiate a rate that is more than the rate paid by the United States as described in clause (i) with respect to the furnishing of care or services under this section to an eligible veteran if the Secretary determines that there is no health care provider that will provide such care or services to such eligible veteran at the rate required under such clause—

(I) within the current wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration for the furnishing of such care or services; and

(II) at a location not more than 40 miles from the residence of such eligible veteran.

(C) LIMIT ON COLLECTION.—For the furnishing of care and services pursuant to a contract under this section, a health care provider may not collect any amount that is greater than the rate negotiated pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i).

(3) INFORMATION ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall provide to any health care provider with which the Secretary has entered into a contract under paragraph (1) the following:

(A) Information on applicable policies and procedures for submitting bills or claims for authorized care and services furnished to eligible veterans under this section.

(B) Access to a telephone hotline maintained by the Department that such health care provider may call for information on the following:

(i) Procedures for furnishing care and services under this section.

(ii) Procedures for submitting bills or claims for authorized care and services furnished to eligible veterans under this section and being reimbursed for furnishing such care and services.

(iii) Whether particular care or services under this section are authorized, and the procedures for authorization of such care or services.

(e) CHOICE CARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of receiving care and services under this section, the Secretary shall issue to each eligible veteran a card that the eligible veteran shall present to a health care provider that is eligible to furnish care and services under this section before receiving such care and services.

(2) NAME OF CARD.—Each card issued under paragraph (1) shall be known as a ''Choice Card''.

(3) DETAILS OF CARD.—Each Choice Card issued to an eligible veteran under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The name of the eligible veteran.

(B) An identification number for the eligible veteran that is not the social security number of the eligible veteran.

(C) The contact information of an appropriate office of the Department for health care providers to confirm that care and services under this section are authorized for the eligible veteran.

(D) Contact information and other relevant information for the submittal of claims or bills for the furnishing of care and services under this section.

(E) The following statement: ''This card is for qualifying medical care outside the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please call the Department of Veterans Affairs phone number specified on this card to ensure that treatment has been authorized.''.

(4) INFORMATION ON USE OF CARD.—Upon issuing a Choice Card to an eligible veteran, the Secretary shall provide the eligible veteran with information clearly stating the circumstances under which the veteran may be eligible for care and services under this section.

(f) INFORMATION ON AVAILABILITY OF CARE.—The Secretary shall provide information to a veteran about the availability of care and services under this section in the following circumstances:

(1) When the veteran enrolls in the patient enrollment system of the Department under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) When the veteran attempts to schedule an appointment for the receipt of hospital care or medical services from the Department but is unable to schedule an appointment within the current wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration for delivery of such care or services.

(g) PROVIDERS.—To be eligible to furnish care and services under this section, a health care provider must—

(1) maintain at least the same or similar credentials and licenses as those credentials and licenses that are required of health care providers of the Department, as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this section; and

(2) submit, not less frequently than once each year, verification of such licenses and credentials maintained by such health care provider.

(h) COST-SHARING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall require an eligible veteran to pay a copayment to the Department for the receipt of care and services under this section only if such eligible veteran would be required to pay such copayment for the receipt of such care and services at a medical facility of the Department.

(2) LIMITATION.—The copayment required under paragraph (1) shall not be greater than the copayment required of such eligible veteran by the Department for the receipt of such care and services at a medical facility of the Department.

(i) CLAIMS PROCESSING SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for an efficient nationwide system for processing and paying bills or claims for authorized care and services furnished to eligible veterans under this section.

(2) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prescribe regulations for the implementation of such system.

(3) OVERSIGHT.—The Chief Business Office of the Veterans Health Administration shall oversee the implementation and maintenance of such system.

(4) ACCURACY OF PAYMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that such system meets such goals for accuracy of payment as the Secretary shall specify for purposes of this section.

(B) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter until the termination date specified in subsection (n), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the goals for accuracy of such system.

(ii) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by clause (i) shall include the following:

(I) A description of the goals for accuracy for such system specified by the Secretary under subparagraph (A).

(II) An assessment of the success of the Department in meeting such goals during the year preceding the submittal of the report.

(j) MEDICAL RECORDS.—The Secretary shall ensure that any health care provider that furnishes care and services under this section to an eligible veteran submits to the Department any medical record related to the care and services provided to such eligible veteran by such health care provider for inclusion in the electronic medical record of such eligible veteran maintained by the Department upon the completion of the provision of such care and services to such eligible veteran.

(k) TRACKING OF MISSED APPOINTMENTS.—The Secretary shall implement a mechanism to track any missed appointments for care and services under this section by eligible veterans to ensure that the Department does not pay for such care and services that were not furnished to an eligible veteran.

(l) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe interim final regulations on the implementation of this section and publish such regulations in the Federal Register.

(m) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 540 days after the publication of the interim final regulations under subsection (l), the Inspector General of the Department shall submit to the Secretary a report on the results of an audit of the care and services furnished under this section to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of payments by the Department for the cost of such care and services, including any findings and recommendations of the Inspector General.

(n) TERMINATION.—The requirement of the Secretary to furnish care and services under this section terminates on the date that is two years after the date on which the Secretary publishes the interim final regulations under subsection (l).

(o) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the publication of the interim final regulations under subsection (l), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of care and services under this section that includes the following:

(A) The number of eligible veterans who have received care and services under this section.

(B) A description of the type of care and services furnished to eligible veterans under this section.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 540 days after the publication of the interim final regulations under subsection (l), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of care and services under this section that includes the following:

(A) The total number of eligible veterans who have received care and services under this section, disaggregated by—

(i) eligible veterans described in subsection (b)(2)(A); and

(ii) eligible veterans described in subsection (b)(2)(B).

(B) A description of the type of care and services furnished to eligible veterans under this section.

(C) An accounting of the total cost of furnishing care and services to eligible veterans under this section.

(D) The results of a survey of eligible veterans who have received care or services under this section on the satisfaction of such eligible veterans with the care or services received by such eligible veterans under this section.

(E) An assessment of the effect of furnishing care and services under this section on wait

times for an appointment for the receipt of hospital care and medical services from the Department.

(F) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of continuing furnishing care and services under this section after the termination date specified in subsection (n).

(p) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) NO MODIFICATION OF CONTRACTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary to renegotiate contracts for the furnishing of hospital care or medical services to veterans entered into by the Department before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) FILLING AND PAYING FOR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the process of the Department for filling and paying for prescription medications.

SEC. 302. TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY FOR PAYMENTS FOR HOSPITAL CARE, MEDICAL SERVICES, AND OTHER HEALTH CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT PROVIDERS TO THE CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICE OF THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective on October 1, 2014, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transfer the authority to pay for hospital care, medical services, and other health care through non-Department providers to the Chief Business Office of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs from the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) MANNER OF CARE.—The Chief Business Office shall work in consultation with the Office of Clinical Operations and Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that care and services described in paragraph (1) are provided in a manner that is clinically appropriate and effective.

(3) NO DELAY IN PAYMENT.—The transfer of authority under paragraph (1) shall be carried out in a manner that does not delay or impede any payment by the Department for hospital care, medical services, or other health care provided through a non-Department provider under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) BUDGETARY EFFECT.—The Secretary shall, for each fiscal year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(1) include in the budget for the Chief Business Office of the Veterans Health Administration amounts to pay for hospital care, medical services, and other health care provided through non-Department providers, including any amounts necessary to carry out the transfer of authority to pay for such care and services under subsection (a), including any increase in staff; and

(2) not include in the budget of each Veterans Integrated Service Network and medical center of the Department amounts to pay for such care and services.

SEC. 303. ENHANCEMENT OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.

(a) OUTREACH TO TRIBAL-RUN MEDICAL FACILITIES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Director of the Indian Health Service, conduct outreach to each medical facility operated by an Indian tribe or tribal organization through a contract or compact with the Indian Health Service under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) to raise awareness of the ability of such facilities, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations to enter into agreements with the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary reimburses such facilities, Indian tribes, or tribal organizations, as the case may be, for health care provided to veterans eligible for health care at such facilities.

(b) METRICS FOR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement performance metrics for assessing the performance by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service under the memorandum of understanding entitled ''Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS)'' in increasing access to health care, improving quality and coordination of health care, promoting effective patient-centered collaboration and partnerships between the Department and the Service, and ensuring health-promotion and disease-prevention services are appropriately funded and available for beneficiaries under both health care systems.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Indian Health Service shall jointly submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of the following:

(1) Entering into agreements for the reimbursement by the Secretary of the costs of direct care services provided through organizations receiving amounts pursuant to grants made or contracts entered into under section 503 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1653) to veterans who are otherwise eligible to receive health care from such organizations.

(2) Including the reimbursement of the costs of direct care services provided to veterans who are not Indians in agreements between the Department and the following:

(A) The Indian Health Service.

(B) An Indian tribe or tribal organization operating a medical facility through a contract or compact with the Indian Health Service under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(C) A medical facility of the Indian Health Service.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INDIAN.—The terms ''Indian'' and ''Indian tribe'' have the meanings given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

(2) MEDICAL FACILITY OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.—The term ''medical facility of the Indian Health Service'' includes a facility operated by an Indian tribe or tribal organization through a contract or compact with the Indian Health Service under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(3) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ''tribal organization'' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

SEC. 304. ENHANCEMENT OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with Papa Ola Lokahi and such other organizations involved in the delivery of health care to Native Hawaiians as the Secretary considers appropriate, enter into contracts or agreements with Native Hawaiian health care systems that are in receipt of funds from the Secretary of Health and Human Services pursuant to grants awarded or contracts entered into under section 6(a) of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. 11705(a)) for the reimbursement of direct care services provided to eligible veterans as specified in such contracts or agreements.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ''Native Hawaiian'', ''Native Hawaiian health care system'', and ''Papa Ola Lokahi'' have the meanings given those terms in section 12 of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. 11711).

SEC. 305. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PROMPT PAYMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall comply with section 1315 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly known as the ''prompt payment rule''), or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling, in paying for health care pursuant to contracts entered into with non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers to provide health care under the laws administered by the Secretary.

TITLE IV—HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

SEC. 401. IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS OF VETERANS TO MOBILE VET CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall improve the access of veterans to telemedicine and other health care through the use of mobile vet centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing standardized requirements for the operation of such centers.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The standardized requirements required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of days each mobile vet center of the Department is expected to travel per year.

(B) The number of locations each center is expected to visit per year.

(C) The number of appointments each center is expected to conduct per year.

(D) The method and timing of notifications given by each center to individuals in the area to which such center is traveling, including notifications informing veterans of the availability to schedule appointments at the center.

(3) USE OF TELEMEDICINE.—The Secretary shall ensure that each mobile vet center of the Department has the capability to provide telemedicine services.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than September 30 each year thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the following:

(1) The use of mobile vet centers to provide telemedicine services to veterans during the year preceding the submittal of the report, including the following:

(A) The number of days each mobile vet center was open to provide such services.

(B) The number of days each mobile vet center traveled to a location other than the headquarters of the mobile vet center to provide such services.

(C) The number of appointments each center conducted to provide such services on average per month and in total during such year.

(2) An analysis of the effectiveness of using mobile vet centers to provide health care services to veterans through the use of telemedicine.

(3) Any recommendations for an increase in the number of mobile vet centers of the Department.

(4) Any recommendations for an increase in the telemedicine capabilities of each mobile vet center.

(5) The feasibility and advisability of using temporary health care providers, including locum tenens, to provide direct health care services to veterans at mobile vet centers.

(6) Such other recommendations on improvement of the use of mobile vet centers by the Department as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 402. COMMISSION ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an Independent Commission on Department of Veterans Affairs Construction Projects (in this section referred to as the ''Commission'').

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be composed of 10 voting members as follows:

(i) Three members to be appointed by the President from among members of the National Academy of Engineering who are nominated under subparagraph (B).

(ii) Three members to be appointed by the President from among members of the National Institute of Building Sciences who are nominated under subparagraph (B).

(iii) Four members to be appointed by the President from among veterans enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, who are nominated under subparagraph (B).

(B) NOMINATION OF VOTING MEMBERS.—The majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives shall jointly nominate not less than 24 individuals to be considered by the President for appointment under subparagraph (A).

(C) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be composed of the following nonvoting members:

(i) The Comptroller General of the United States, or designee.

(ii) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee.

(iii) The Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or designee.

(D) DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.—The appointments of the members of the Commission under subparagraph (A) shall be made not later than 14 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than five days after the date on which all members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairperson.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

(1) REVIEW.—The Commission shall review current construction and maintenance projects and the medical facility leasing program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify any problems experienced by the Department in carrying out such projects and program.

(2) REPORTS.—

(A) COMMISSION REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth recommendations, if any, for improving the manner in which the Secretary carries out the projects and program specified in paragraph (1).

(B) DEPARTMENT REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the submittal of the report under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility and advisability of implementing the recommendations of the Commission, if any, included in the report submitted under such subparagraph, including a timeline for the implementation of such recommendations.

(c) POWERS OF COMMISSION.—

(1) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this section. Upon request of the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of such agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(d) COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(3) STAFF.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(B) COMPENSATION.—The Chairperson of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals that do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(e) TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.—The Commission shall terminate 30 days after the date on which the Commission submits its report under subsection (b)(2)(A).

SEC. 403. COMMISSION ON ACCESS TO CARE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established the Commission on Access to Care (in this section referred to as the ''Commission'') to examine the access of veterans to health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs and strategically examine how best to organize the Veterans Health Administration, locate health care resources, and deliver health care to veterans during the 10- to 20-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be composed of 10 voting members who are appointed by the President as follows:

(i) At least two members who represent an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(ii) At least one member from among persons who have experience as senior management for a private integrated health care system with an annual gross revenue of more than $50,000,000.

(iii) At least one member from among persons who are familiar with government health care systems, including those systems of the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service, and Federally-qualified health centers (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

(iv) At least two members from among persons who are familiar with the Veterans Health Administration but are not current employees of the Veterans Health Administration.

(v) At least two members from among persons who are veterans or eligible for hospital care, medical services, or other health care under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(B) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In addition to members appointed under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall be composed of 10 nonvoting members who are appointed by the President as follows:

(I) At least two members who represent an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(II) At least one member from among persons who have experience as senior management for a private integrated health care system with an annual gross revenue of more than $50,000,000.

(III) At least one member from among persons who are familiar with government health care systems, including those systems of the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service, and Federally-qualified health centers (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

(IV) At least two members from among persons who are familiar with the Veterans Health Administration but are not current employees of the Veterans Health Administration.

(V) At least two members from among persons who are veterans or eligible for hospital care, medical services, or other health care under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(ii) ADDITIONAL NONVOTING MEMBERS.—In addition to members appointed under subparagraph (A) and clause (i), the Commission shall be composed of the following nonvoting members:

(I) The Comptroller General of the United States, or designee.

(II) The Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or designee.

(C) DATE.—The appointments of members of the Commission shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which seven voting members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairperson.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

(1) EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.—The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of access to health care at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) MATTERS EVALUATED AND ASSESSED.—The matters evaluated and assessed by the Commission shall include the following:

(A) The appropriateness of current standards of the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning access to health care.

(B) The measurement of such standards.

(C) The appropriateness of performance standards and incentives in relation to standards described in subparagraph (A).

(D) Staffing levels throughout the Veterans Health Administration and whether they are sufficient to meet current demand for health care from the Administration.

(E) The results of the assessment conducted by an independent third party under section 101(a), including any data or recommendations included in such assessment.

(3) REPORTS.—The Commission shall submit to the President, through the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, reports as follows:

(A) Not later than 90 days after the date of the initial meeting of the Commission, an interim report on—

(i) the findings of the Commission with respect to the evaluation and assessment required by this subsection; and

(ii) such recommendations as the Commission may have for legislative or administrative action to improve access to health care through the Veterans Health Administration.

(B) Not later than 180 days after the date of the initial meeting of the Commission, a final report on—

(i) the findings of the Commission with respect to the evaluation and assessment required by this subsection; and

(ii) such recommendations as the Commission may have for legislative or administrative action to improve access to health care through the Veterans Health Administration.

(c) POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.—

(1) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this section. Upon request of the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(d) COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(3) STAFF.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(B) COMPENSATION.—The Chairperson of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals that do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(e) TERMINATION OF THE COMMISSION.—The Commission shall terminate 30 days after the date on which the Commission submits its report under subsection (b)(3)(B).

(f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available to the Commission from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary such amounts as the Secretary and the Chairperson of the Commission jointly consider appropriate for the Commission to perform its duties under this section.

(g) EXECUTIVE ACTION.—

(1) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.—The President shall require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and such other heads of relevant Federal departments and agencies to implement each recommendation set forth in a report submitted under subsection (b)(3) that the President—

(A) considers feasible and advisable; and

(B) determines can be implemented without further legislative action.

(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the President receives a report under subsection (b)(3), the President shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and such other committees of Congress as the President considers appropriate a report setting forth the following:

(A) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of each recommendation contained in the report received by the President.

(B) For each recommendation assessed as feasible and advisable under subparagraph (A) the following:

(i) Whether such recommendation requires legislative action.

(ii) If such recommendation requires legislative action, a recommendation concerning such legislative action.

(iii) A description of any administrative action already taken to carry out such recommendation.

(iv) A description of any administrative action the President intends to be taken to carry out such recommendation and by whom.

SEC. 404. IMPROVED PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PROHIBITION ON USE OF SCHEDULING AND WAIT-TIME METRICS IN DETERMINATION OF PERFORMANCE AWARDS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that scheduling and wait-time metrics or goals are not used as factors in determining the performance of the following employees for purposes of determining whether to pay performance awards to such employees:

(1) Directors, associate directors, assistant directors, deputy directors, chiefs of staff, and clinical leads of medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) Directors, assistant directors, and quality management officers of Veterans Integrated Service Networks of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) MODIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE PLANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall modify the performance plans of the directors of the medical centers of the Department and the directors of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks to ensure that such plans are based on the quality of care received by veterans at the health care facilities under the jurisdictions of such directors.

(2) FACTORS.—In modifying performance plans under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ensure that assessment of the quality of care provided at health care facilities under the jurisdiction of a director described in paragraph (1) includes consideration of the following:

(A) Recent reviews by the Joint Commission (formerly known as the ''Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations'') of such facilities.

(B) The number and nature of recommendations concerning such facilities by the Inspector General of the Department in reviews conducted through the Combined Assessment Program (CAP), in the reviews by the Inspector General of community based outpatient clinics and primary care clinics, and in reviews conducted through the Office of Healthcare Inspections during the two most recently completed fiscal years.

(C) The number of recommendations described in subparagraph (B) that the Inspector General of the Department determines have not been carried out satisfactorily with respect to such facilities.

(D) Reviews of such facilities by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

(E) The number and outcomes of administrative investigation boards, root cause analysis, and peer reviews conducted at such facilities during the fiscal year for which the assessment is being conducted.

(F) The effectiveness of any remedial actions or plans resulting from any Inspector General recommendations in the reviews and analyses described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(3) ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.—To the degree practicable, the Secretary shall assess the performance of other employees of the Department in leadership positions at Department medical centers, including associate directors, assistant directors, deputy directors, chiefs of staff, and clinical leads, and in Veterans Integrated Service Networks, including assistant directors and quality management officers, using factors and criteria similar to those used in the performance plans modified under paragraph (1).

(c) REMOVAL OF CERTAIN PERFORMANCE GOALS.—For each fiscal year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall not include in the performance goals of any employee of a Veterans Integrated Service Network or medical center of the Department any performance goal that might disincentivize the payment of Department amounts to provide hospital care, medical services, or other health care through a non-Department provider.

SEC. 405. IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY CONCERNING HEALTH CARE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PUBLICATION OF WAIT TIMES.—

(1) GOALS.—

(A) INITIAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register, and on an Internet website accessible to the public of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the wait-time goals of the Department for the scheduling of an appointment by a veteran for the receipt of health care from the Department.

(B) SUBSEQUENT CHANGES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary modifies the wait-time goals described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall publish the new wait-times goals—

(I) on an Internet website accessible to the public of each medical center of the Department not later than 30 days after such modification; and

(II) in the Federal Register not later than 90 days after such modification.

(ii) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Any modification under clause (i) shall take effect on the date of publication in the Federal Register.

(C) GOALS DESCRIBED.—Wait-time goals published under this paragraph shall include goals for primary care appointments, specialty care appointments, and appointments based on the general severity of the condition of the veteran.

(2) WAIT TIMES AT MEDICAL CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish on an Internet website accessible to the public of each medical center of the Department the current wait time for an appointment for primary care and specialty care at the medical center.

(b) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATABASE OF PATIENT SAFETY, QUALITY OF CARE, AND OUTCOME MEASURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop and make available to the public a comprehensive database containing all applicable patient safety, quality of care, and outcome measures for health care provided by the Department that are tracked by the Secretary.

(2) UPDATE FREQUENCY.—The Secretary shall update the database required by paragraph (1) not less frequently than once each year.

(3) UNAVAILABLE MEASURES.—For all measures that the Secretary would otherwise publish in the database required by paragraph (1) but has not done so because such measures are not available, the Secretary shall publish notice in the database of the reason for such unavailability and a timeline for making such measures available in the database.

(4) ACCESSIBILITY.—The Secretary shall ensure that the database required by paragraph (1) is accessible to the public through the primary Internet website of the Department and through each primary Internet website of a Department medical center.

(c) HOSPITAL COMPARE WEBSITE OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—

(1) AGREEMENT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the provision by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require to report and make publicly available patient quality and outcome information concerning Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers through the Hospital Compare Internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services or any successor Internet website.

(2) INFORMATION PROVIDED.—The information provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Secretary of Health and Human Services under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Measures of timely and effective health care.

(B) Measures of readmissions, complications of death, including with respect to 30-day mortality rates and 30-day readmission rates, surgical complication measures, and health care related infection measures.

(C) Survey data of patient experiences, including the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems or any similar successor survey developed by the Department of Health and Human Services.

(D) Any other measures required of or reported with respect to hospitals participating in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

(3) UNAVAILABLE INFORMATION.—For any applicable metric collected by the Department of Veterans Affairs or required to be provided under paragraph (2) and withheld from or unavailable in the Hospital Compare Internet website, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish a notice in the Federal Register stating the reason why such metric was withheld from public disclosure and a timeline for making such metric available, if applicable.

(d) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE SAFETY AND QUALITY METRICS.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review of the safety and quality metrics made publicly available by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under this section to assess the degree to which the Secretary is complying with the provisions of this section.

SEC. 406. INFORMATION FOR VETERANS ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PHYSICIANS.

(a) IMPROVEMENT OF ''OUR PROVIDERS'' INTERNET WEBSITE LINKS.—

(1) AVAILABILITY THROUGH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOMEPAGE.—A link to the ''Our Providers'' health care providers database of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or any successor database, shall be available on and through the homepage of the Internet website of the Department that is accessible to the public.

(2) INFORMATION ON LOCATION OF RESIDENCY TRAINING.—The Internet website of the Department that is accessible to the public shall include under the link to the ''Our Providers'' health care providers database of the Department, or any successor database, the location of residency training of each licensed physician of the Department.

(3) INFORMATION ON PHYSICIANS AT PARTICULAR FACILITIES.—The ''Our Providers'' health care providers database of the Department, or any successor database, shall identify whether each licensed physician of the Department is a physician in residency.

(b) INFORMATION ON CREDENTIALS OF PHYSICIANS FOR VETERANS UNDERGOING SURGICAL PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each veteran who is undergoing a surgical procedure by or through the Department shall be provided information on the credentials of the surgeon to be performing such procedure at such time in advance of the procedure as is appropriate to permit such veteran to evaluate such information.

(2) OTHER INDIVIDUALS.—If a veteran is unable to evaluate the information provided under paragraph (1) due to the health or mental competence of the veteran, such information shall be provided to an individual acting on behalf of the veteran.

(c) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT AND PLAN.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth an assessment by the Comptroller General of the following:

(A) The manner in which contractors under the Patient-Centered Community Care initiative of the Department perform oversight of the credentials of physicians within the networks of such contractors under the initiative.

(B) The oversight by the Department of the contracts under the Patient-Centered Community Care initiative.

(C) The verification by the Department of the credentials and licenses of health care providers furnishing hospital care and medical services under section 301.

(2) PLAN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the submittal of the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(i) submit to the Comptroller General, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a plan to address any findings and recommendations of the Comptroller General included in such report; and

(ii) submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a request for additional amounts, if any, that may be necessary to carry out such plan.

(B) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90 days after the submittal of the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall carry out such plan.

SEC. 407. INFORMATION IN ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE PRESIDENT ON HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES FURNISHED THROUGH EXPANDED USE OF CONTRACTS FOR SUCH CARE.

The materials on the Department of Veterans Affairs in the budget of the President for a fiscal year, as submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, shall set forth the following:

(1) The number of veterans who received hospital care and medical services under section 301 during the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year in which such budget is submitted.

(2) The amount expended by the Department on furnishing care and services under such section during the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year in which such budget is submitted.

(3) The amount requested in such budget for the costs of furnishing care and services under such section during the fiscal year covered by such budget, set forth in aggregate and by amounts for each account for which amounts are so requested.

(4) The number of veterans that the Department estimates will receive hospital care and medical services under such section during the fiscal years covered by the budget submission.

(5) The number of employees of the Department on paid administrative leave at any point during the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year in which such budget is submitted.

SEC. 408. PROHIBITION ON FALSIFICATION OF DATA CONCERNING WAIT TIMES AND QUALITY MEASURES AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and in accordance with title 5, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish policies whereby any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs who knowingly submits false data concerning wait times for health care or quality measures with respect to health care to another employee of the Department or knowingly requires another employee of the Department to submit false data concerning such wait times or quality measures to another employee of the Department is subject to a penalty the Secretary considers appropriate after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, including civil penalties, unpaid suspensions, or termination.

SEC. 409. REMOVAL OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PERFORMANCE.

(a) REMOVAL OR TRANSFER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may remove any individual from the Senior Executive Service if the Secretary determines the performance of the individual warrants such removal. If the Secretary so removes such an individual, the Secretary may—

''(1) remove the individual from the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5); or

''(2) transfer the individual to a General Schedule position at any grade of the General Schedule for which the individual is qualified and that the Secretary determines is appropriate.

''(b) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after removing or transferring an individual from the Senior Executive Service under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the

Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives notice in writing of such removal or transfer and the reason for such removal or transfer.

''(c) PROCEDURE.—(1) The procedures under section 7543 of title 5 shall not apply to a removal or transfer under this section.

''(2)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), any removal or transfer under subsection (a) may be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701 of title 5.

''(B) An appeal under subparagraph (A) of a removal or transfer may only be made if such appeal is made not later than 7 days after the date of such removal or transfer.

''(d) EXPEDITED REVIEW BY MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD.—(1) The Merit Systems Protection Board shall expedite any appeal under section 7701 of title 5 of a removal or transfer under subsection (a) and, in any such case, shall issue a decision not later than 21 days after the date of the appeal.

''(2) In any case in which the Merit Systems Protection Board determines that it cannot issue a decision in accordance with the 21-day requirement under paragraph (1), the Merit Systems Protection Board shall submit to Congress a report that explains the reason why the Merit Systems Protection Board is unable to issue a decision in accordance with such requirement in such case.

''(3) There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the Merit Systems Protection Board to expedite appeals under paragraph (1).

''(4) The Merit Systems Protection Board may not stay any personnel action taken under this section.

''(5) A person who appeals under section 7701 of title 5 a removal under subsection (a)(1) may not receive any pay, awards, bonuses, incentives, allowances, differentials, student loan repayments, special payments, or benefits from the Secretary until the Merit Systems Protection Board has made a final decision on such appeal.

''(6) A decision made by the Merit Systems Protection Board with respect to a removal or transfer under subsection (a) shall not be subject to any further appeal.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance.''.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF EXPEDITED REVIEW PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Merit Systems Protection Board shall establish and put into effect a process to conduct expedited reviews in accordance with section 713(d) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN REGULATIONS.—Section 1201.22 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, shall not apply to expedited reviews carried out under section 713(d) of title 38, United States Code.

(3) REPORT BY MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Merit Systems Protection Board shall submit to Congress a report on the actions the Board plans to take to conduct expedited reviews under section 713(d) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a). Such report shall include a description of the resources the Board determines will be necessary to conduct such reviews and a description of whether any resources will be necessary to conduct such reviews that were not available to the Board on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN LIMITATION ON INITIATION OF REMOVAL FROM SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE.—During the 120-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, an action to remove an individual from the Senior Executive Service at the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to section 713 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), or section 7543 of title 5, United States Code, may be initiated, notwithstanding section 3592(b) of title 5, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or section 713 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall be construed to apply to an appeal of a removal, transfer, or other personnel action that was pending before the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE V—HEALTH CARE RELATED TO SEXUAL TRAUMA

SEC. 501. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VETERANS ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.

Section 1720D(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or active duty for training'' and inserting '', active duty for training, or inactive duty training''.

SEC. 502. PROVISION OF COUNSELING AND TREATMENT FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—Subsection (a) of section 1720D of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

''(2)(A) In operating the program required by paragraph (1), the Secretary may, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, provide counseling and care and services to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty to overcome psychological trauma described in that paragraph.

''(B) A member described in subparagraph (A) shall not be required to obtain a referral before receiving counseling and care and services under this paragraph.''; and

(3) in paragraph (3), as predesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''a veteran'' and inserting ''an individual''; and

(B) by striking ''that veteran'' each place it appears and inserting ''that individual''.

(b) INFORMATION TO MEMBERS ON AVAILABILITY OF COUNSELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking ''to veterans'' each place it appears; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by inserting ''members of the Armed Forces and'' before ''individuals''.

(c) INCLUSION OF MEMBERS IN REPORTS ON COUNSELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''to veterans'';

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''women veterans'' and inserting ''individuals''; and

(B) by striking ''training under subsection (d).'' and inserting ''training under subsection (d), desegregated by—

''(A) veterans;

''(B) members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty; and

''(C) for each of subparagraphs (A) and (B)—

''(i) men; and

''(ii) women.'';

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking ''veterans'' and inserting ''individuals''; and

(4) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking ''women veterans'' and inserting ''individuals'' ; and

(B) by inserting '', including specific recommendations for individuals specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (2)'' before the period at the end.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 503. REPORTS ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) REPORT ON SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the treatment and services available from the Department of Veterans Affairs for male veterans who experience military sexual trauma compared to such treatment and services available to female veterans who experience military sexual trauma.

(b) REPORTS ON TRANSITION OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA TREATMENT FROM DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for five years, the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on military sexual trauma that includes the following:

(1) The processes and procedures utilized by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate transition of treatment of individuals who have experienced military sexual trauma from treatment provided by the Department of Defense to treatment provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) A description and assessment of the collaboration between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense in assisting veterans in filing claims for disabilities related to military sexual trauma, including permitting veterans access to information and evidence necessary to develop or support such claims.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term ''military sexual trauma'' means psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a mental health professional employed by the Department, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.

(3) SEXUAL HARASSMENT.—The term ''sexual harassment'' means repeated, unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening in character.

(4) SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term ''sexual trauma'' shall have the meaning given that term by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for purposes of this section.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES

SEC. 601. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility leases at the locations specified, and in an amount for each lease not to exceed the amount shown for such location (not including any estimated cancellation costs):

(1) For a clinical research and pharmacy coordinating center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, an amount not to exceed $9,560,000.

(2) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Brick, New Jersey, an amount not to exceed $7,280,000.

(3) For a new primary care and dental clinic annex, Charleston, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed $7,070,250.

(4) For the Cobb County community-based Outpatient Clinic, Cobb County, Georgia, an amount not to exceed $6,409,000.

(5) For the Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, including a co-located clinic with the Department of Defense and the co-location of the Honolulu Regional Office of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Capel Vet Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, an amount not to exceed $15,887,370.

(6) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Johnson County, Kansas, an amount not to exceed $2,263,000.

(7) For a replacement community-based outpatient clinic, Lafayette, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed $2,996,000.

(8) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lake Charles, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed $2,626,000.

(9) For outpatient clinic consolidation, New Port Riche, Florida, an amount not to exceed $11,927,000.

(10) For an outpatient clinic, Pence, Puerto Rico, an amount not to exceed $11,535,000.

(11) For lease consolidation, San Antonio, Texas, an amount not to exceed $19,426,000.

(12) For a community-based outpatient clinic, San Diego, California, an amount not to exceed $11,946,100.

(13) For an outpatient clinic, Tyler, Texas, an amount not to exceed $4,327,000.

(14) For the Arere Community Care Center, West Haven, Connecticut, an amount not to exceed $4,883,000.

(15) For the Worcester community-based Outpatient Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, an amount not to exceed $4,855,000.

(16) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, an amount not to exceed $4,232,060.

(17) For a multi specialty clinic, Chattanooga, Tennessee, an amount not to exceed $7,069,000.

(18) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Chico, California, an amount not to exceed $4,534,000.

(19) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Chula Vista, California, an amount not to exceed $3,714,000.

(20) For a new research lease, Haines, Illinois, an amount not to exceed $22,032,000.

(21) For a replacement research lease, Houston, Texas, an amount not to exceed $6,142,000.

(22) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lincoln, Nebraska, an amount not to exceed $7,178,400.

(23) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lubbock, Texas, an amount not to exceed $8,554,000.

(24) For a community-based outpatient clinic consolidation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed $8,022,000.

(25) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Phoenix, Arizona, an amount not to exceed $20,757,000.

(26) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Redding, California, an amount not to exceed $8,154,000.

SEC. 602. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES LEASES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Title 31, United States Code, requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record the full cost of its contractual obligation against funds available at the time a contract is executed.

(2) Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11 provides guidance to agencies in meeting the statutory requirements under title 31, United States Code, with respect to leases.

(3) For operating leases, Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record up-front budget authority in an ''amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease or [an] amount sufficient to cover first year lease payments plus cancellation costs''.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATION OF FULL COST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations provided in advance, in exercising the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into leases provided in this Act, the Secretary shall record, pursuant to section 1501 of title 31, United States Code, as the full cost of the contractual obligation at the time a contract is executed either—

(A) an amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease; or

(B) if the lease specifies payments to be made in the event the lease is terminated before its full term, an amount sufficient to cover the first year lease payments plus the specified cancellation costs.

(2) SELF-INSURING AUTHORITY.—The requirements of paragraph (1) may be satisfied through the use of a self-insuring authority consistent with Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11.

(c) TRANSPARENCY.—

(1) COMPLIANCE.—Subsection (b) of section 8104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) In the case of a prospectus proposing funding for a major medical facility lease, a detailed analysis of how the lease is expected to comply with Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11 and section 1341 of title 31 (commonly referred to as the 'Anti-Deficiency Act'). Any such analysis shall include—

''(A) an analysis of the classification of the lease as a 'lease-purchase', 'capital lease', or 'operating lease' as those terms are defined in Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11;

''(B) an analysis of the obligation of budgetary resources associated with the lease; and

''(C) an analysis of the methodology used in determining the asset cost, fair market value, and cancellation costs of the lease.''.

(2) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Such section 8104 is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h)(1) Not less than 30 days before entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives—

''(A) notice of the Secretary's intention to enter into the lease;

''(B) a detailed summary of the proposed lease;

''(C) a description and analysis of any differences between the prospectus submitted pursuant to subsection (b) and the proposed lease; and

''(D) a scoring analysis demonstrating that the proposed lease fully complies with Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11.

''(2) Each committee described in paragraph (1) shall ensure that any information submitted to the committee under such paragraph is treated by the committee with the same level of confidentiality as is required by law of the Secretary and subject to the same statutory penalties for unauthorized disclosure or use as the Secretary.

''(3) Not more than 30 days after entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to each committee described in paragraph (1) a report on any material differences between the lease that was entered into and the proposed lease described under such paragraph, including how the lease that was entered into changes the previously submitted scoring analysis described in subparagraph (D) of such paragraph.''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, shall be construed to in any way relieve the Department of Veterans Affairs from any statutory or regulatory obligations or requirements existing prior to the enactment of this section and such amendments.

TITLE VII—VETERANS BENEFITS MATTERS

SEC. 701. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) EXPANSION OF ENTITLEMENT.—Subsection (b)(9) of section 3311 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''or spouse'' after ''child''.

(b) LIMITATION AND ELECTION ON CERTAIN BENEFITS.—Subsection (f) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

''(2) LIMITATION.—The entitlement of an individual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the individual was a spouse of a person described in such paragraph shall expire on the earlier of—

''(A) the date that is 15 years after the date on which the person died; and

''(B) the date on which the individual remarries.

''(3) ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENEFITS.—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) who is also entitled to educational assistance under chapter 35 of this title may not receive assistance under both this section and such chapter, but shall make an irrevocable election (in such form and manner as the Secretary may prescribe) under which section or chapter to receive educational assistance.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3321(b)(4) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking ''an individual'' and inserting ''a child''; and

(2) by striking ''such individual's'' each time it appears and inserting ''such child's''.

SEC. 702. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3679 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided by a public institution of higher learning to a covered individual pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living in the State in which the public institution of higher learning is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for that course for the covered individual at a rate that is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State in which the institution is located, regardless of the covered individual's State of residence.

''(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is any individual as follows:

''(A) A veteran who was discharged or released from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in the active military, naval, or air service less than three years before the date of enrollment in the course concerned.

''(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by virtue of such individual's relationship to a veteran described in subparagraph (A).

''(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason of paragraph (2)(A) or

(2)(B) a covered individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same public institution of higher learning while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher learning, any course so pursued by the covered individual at that institution of higher learning while so continuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under paragraph (1).

''(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.

''(5) The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

''(6) Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (c) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015, through courses of education that commence on or after that date.

TITLE VIII—APPROPRIATION AND EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS

SEC. 801. APPROPRIATION OF EMERGENCY AMOUNTS.

There is authorized to be appropriated, and is appropriated, to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 802. EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(b) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

Amend the title so as to read: ''To improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.''

MOTION OFFERED BY MR. MILLER OF FLORIDA

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the motion.

The text of the motion is as follows:

Mr. Miller of Florida moves that the House concur in the Senate amendment to the title of H.R. 3230 and concur in the Senate amendment to the text of H.R. 3230 with the amendment printed in House Report 113–475.

The text of the amendment to the Senate amendment to the text is as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Veteran Access to Care Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. PROVISION OF HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES AT NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PATIENTS WITH EXTENDED WAITING TIMES FOR APPOINTMENTS AT DEPARTMENT FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As authorized by section 1710 of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (in this Act referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall enter into contracts with such non-Department facilities as may be necessary in order to furnish hospital care and medical services to covered veterans who are eligible for such care and services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code. To the greatest extent possible, the Secretary shall carry out this section using contracts entered into before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, the term ''covered veteran'' means a veteran—

(1) who is enrolled in the patient enrollment system under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

(2) who—

(A) has waited longer than the wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration (as of June 1, 2014) for an appointment for hospital care or medical services in a facility of the Department;

(B) has been notified by a facility of the Department that an appointment for hospital care or medical services is not available within such wait-time goals; or

(C) resides more than 40 miles from the medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including a community-based outpatient clinic, that is closest to the residence of the veteran; and

(3) who makes an election to receive such care or services in a non-Department facility.

(c) FOLLOW-UP CARE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall ensure that, at the election of a covered veteran who receives hospital care or medical services at a non-Department facility in an episode of care under this section, the veteran receives such hospital care and medical services at such non-Department facility through the completion of the episode of care (but for a period not exceeding 60 days), including all specialty and ancillary services deemed necessary as part of the treatment recommended in the course of such hospital care or medical services.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to Congress a quarterly report on hospital care and medical services furnished pursuant to this section. Such report shall include information, for the quarter covered by the report, regarding—

(1) the number of veterans who received care or services at non-Department facilities pursuant to this section;

(2) the number of veterans who were eligible to receive care or services pursuant to this section but who elected to continue waiting for an appointment at a Department facility;

(3) the purchase methods used to provide the care and services at non-Department facilities, including the rate of payment for individual authorizations for such care and services; and

(4) any other matters the Secretary determines appropriate.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the terms ''facilities of the Department'', ''non-Department facilities'', ''hospital care'', and ''medical services'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(f) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall begin implementing this section on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(g) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize payment for care or services not otherwise covered under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(h) TERMINATION.—The authority of the Secretary under this section shall terminate with respect to any hospital care or medical services furnished after the end of the 2-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, except that in the case of an episode of care for which hospital care or medical services is furnished in a non-Department facility pursuant to this section before the end of such period, such termination shall not apply to such care and services furnished during the remainder of such episode of care but not to exceed a period of 60 days.

SEC. 3. EXPANDED ACCESS TO HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that appropriations are available for the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical services, to the extent that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is unable to provide access, within the wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration (as of June 1, 2014), to hospital care or medical services to a covered veteran who is eligible for such care or services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, under contracts described in section 2, the Secretary shall reimburse any non-Department facility with which the Secretary has not entered into a contract to furnish hospital care or medical services for furnishing such hospital care or medical services to such veteran, if the veteran elects to receive such care or services from the non-Department facility. The Secretary shall reimburse the facility for the care or services furnished to the veteran at the greatest of the following rates:

(1) VA PAYMENT RATE.—The rate of reimbursement for such care or services established by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) MEDICARE PAYMENT RATE.—The payment rate for such care or services or comparable care or services under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

(3) TRICARE PAYMENT RATE.—The reimbursement rate for such care or services furnished to a member of the Armed Forces under chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, the term ''covered veteran'' means a veteran—

(1) who is enrolled in the patient enrollment system under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code; and

(2) who—

(A) has waited longer than the wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration (as of June 1, 2014) for an appointment for hospital care or medical services in a facility of the Department;

(B) has been notified by a facility of the Department that an appointment for hospital care or medical services is not available within such wait-time goals after the date for which the veteran requests the appointment; or

(C) who resides more than 40 miles from the medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including a community-based outpatient clinic, that is closest to the residence of the veteran.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the terms ''facilities of the Department'', ''non-Department facilities'', ''hospital care'', and ''medical services'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall begin implementing this section on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize payment for care or services not otherwise covered under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(f) TERMINATION.—The authority of the Secretary under this section shall terminate with respect to care or services furnished after the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PERFORMANCE.

(a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract or contracts with a private sector entity or entities with experience in the delivery systems of the Veterans Health Administration and the private sector and in health care management to conduct an independent assessment of hospital care and medical services furnished in medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Such assessment shall address each of the following:

(1) The current and projected demographics and unique care needs of the patient population served by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) The current and projected health care capabilities and resources of the Department, including hospital care and medical services furnished by non-Department facilities under contract with the Department, to provide timely and accessible care to eligible veterans.

(3) The authorities and mechanisms under which the Secretary may furnish hospital care and medical services at non-Department facilities, including an assessment of whether the Secretary should have the authority to furnish such care and services at such facilities through the completion of episodes of care.

(4) The appropriate system-wide access standard applicable to hospital care and medical services furnished by and through the Department of Veterans Affairs and recommendations relating to access standards specific to individual specialties and standards for post-care rehabilitation.

(5) The current organization, processes, and tools used to support clinical staffing and documentation.

(6) The staffing levels and productivity standards, including a comparison with industry performance percentiles.

(7) Information technology strategies of the Veterans Health Administration, including an identification of technology weaknesses and opportunities, especially as they apply to clinical documentation of hospital care and medical services provided in non-Department facilities.

(8) Business processes of the Veterans Health Administration, including non-Department care, insurance identification, third-party revenue collection, and vendor reimbursement.

(b) ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES.—The assessment conducted pursuant to subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of improvement areas outlined both qualitatively and quantitatively, taking into consideration Department of Veterans Affairs directives and industry benchmarks from outside the Federal Government.

(2) Recommendations for how to address the improvement areas identified under paragraph (1) relating to structure, accountability, process changes, technology, and other relevant drivers of performance.

(3) The business case associated with making the improvements and recommendations identified in paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) Findings and supporting analysis on how credible conclusions were established.

(c) PROGRAM INTEGRATOR.—If the Secretary enters into contracts with more than one private sector entity under subsection (a), the Secretary shall designate one such entity as the program integrator. The program integrator shall be responsible for coordinating the outcomes of the assessments conducted by the private entities pursuant to such contracts.

(d) SUBMITTAL OF REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) REPORT ON INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 10 months after entering into the contract under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the findings and recommendations of the independent assessment required by such subsection.

(2) REPORT ON VA ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS IN ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of submission of the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to such Committees on the Secretary's response to the findings of the assessment and shall include an action plan, including a timeline, for fully implementing the recommendations of the assessment.

SEC. 5. LIMITATION ON AWARDS AND BONUSES TO EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not pay awards or bonuses under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other awards or bonuses authorized under such title.

SEC. 6. OMB ESTIMATE OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS AND NEEDED TRANSFER AUTHORITY.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall transmit to the Committees on Appropriations, the Budget, and Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and of the Senate—

(1) an estimate of the budgetary effects of sections 2 and 3;

(2) any transfer authority needed to utilize the savings from section 5 to satisfy such budgetary effects; and

(3) if necessary, a request for any additional budgetary resources, or transfers or reprogramming of existing budgetary resources, necessary to provide funding for sections 2 and 3.

SEC. 7. REMOVAL OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PERFORMANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may remove any individual from the Senior Executive Service if the Secretary determines the performance of the individual warrants such removal. If the Secretary so removes such an individual, the Secretary may—

"(1) remove the individual from Federal service; or

"(2) transfer the individual to a General Schedule position at any grade of the General Schedule the Secretary determines appropriate.

"(b) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after removing an individual from the Senior Executive Service under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives notice in writing of such removal and the reason for such removal.

"(c) MANNER OF REMOVAL.—A removal under this section shall be done in the same manner as the removal of a professional staff member employed by a Member of Congress.".

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance.".

SEC. 8. BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF ACT.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the motion shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is to help us go to conference and to quickly work out the differences between the House and Senate bills that would provide meaningful reform to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

This motion also ensures that the House has a position from which to begin negotiations with the Senate in a conference.

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

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I support the motion to concur in the Senate amendments, and a further amendment, and I support the motion to go to conference.

The crisis within the VA is of national interest and must be a congressional priority. America's veterans deserve timely access to the care and benefits they have earned. They fought for us. Now is the time that we fight for them.

But our fight should not be just about the failures in Phoenix and other facilities. The House has worked hard to develop important and much-needed legislation to address other failures within the VA. Enhanced programs ensure the VA is working on behalf of the veterans.

I am disappointed that we have not included in this amendment all relevant bills that have passed the House to ensure that these important matters are included. I am disappointed that we are not moving forward with a more comprehensive package of reforms.

I am also disappointed that the House amendment is limited to two measures we have recently passed, H.R. 4031 and H.R. 4810. Limiting ourselves

to just Republican-sponsored legislation, no matter how widely supported, runs counter to the bipartisan spirit of the committee and fails to recognize the great work of all committee Members. Republicans and Democrats have worked together to improve programs for the VA.

Finally, I am disappointed that H.R. 4399 was not included in the House amendment to H.R. 3230. Without it, we are falling short of our responsibility to hold all VA executives—I want to emphasize all VA executives—accountable for the grave failures lately.

□ 1330

I will work with Chairman MILLER and my Senate colleagues to ensure that the final agreement we reach regarding the accountability provisions of H.R. 3230 are as comprehensive and effective as possible.

I urge all conferees, once appointed, to adopt the spirit of bipartisanship that is the tradition of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

When our servicemembers do their jobs to earn these veterans benefits, they work together in a spirit of cooperation toward a national goal. We should do no less as we move forward with legislation to address reforms within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the motion to concur with the Senate amendments with a further amendment and the motion to go to conference.

Let us work together quickly and effectively to begin to address the problems facing the VA.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

Pursuant to House resolution 628, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida.

The motion was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 628, I offer a motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Miller of Florida moves that the House insist on its amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3230 and request a conference with the Senate thereon.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this motion is to authorize a conference to combine our two bills into something that is focused on the access and accountability crisis that exists at VA.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the motion.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida.

The motion was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Sinema moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 3230 (an Act to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes) be instructed to recede from the House amendment and concur in the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I offer this motion to instruct because veterans in Arizona and across the country need action from Congress and from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Our motion instructs House conferees to accept the bipartisan bill, drafted by Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Senator BERNIE SANDERS and overwhelmingly approved by the Senate, so that we can immediately send a bill to the President's desk that will provide relief for our Nation's veterans.

The revelations that veterans at the Phoenix VA and veterans at other VA facilities across the country were placed on secret lists and had to wait months before seeing a doctor are immoral, irresponsible, and un-American. That veterans who served our country honorably may have died while waiting for care is unconscionable.

Ongoing audits by the VA and the VA Office of Inspector General revealed systemic problems with wait times, with the scheduling process, and with the honesty and integrity of the system. Those responsible for this disaster must be held accountable.

Many dedicated VA employees, many of them veterans themselves, work tirelessly to provide the best care to our veterans, but they are limited by this broken system, which is failing millions of our veterans.

The first priority of the VA and Congress must be to provide our veterans the care they need. This challenge does not need a Democratic or a Republican response. It demands an American response, and I appreciate the bipartisan leadership and work of Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MICHAUD. In fact, I cosponsored and voted for both of Chairman MILLER's bills.

I supported bipartisan legislation to give the Secretary of the VA a greater ability to hold underperforming senior executives accountable and to fire managers, like those in Phoenix who manipulated wait times and put veterans at risk.

I also supported bipartisan legislation directing the VA to use non-VA community providers to cut those wait times and increase the capacity and capabilities of the VA health care system.

In Phoenix, we have established a working group of community providers, veterans service organizations, and the local VA to work together to improve access to services.

We joined with the American Legion to establish a veterans crisis center to provide service to our veterans, and I would say thank you to the American Legion for moving so quickly and working with our community.

We have also started to fully utilize programs, like the Patient-Centered Community Care contract, which cuts into wait times for specialty and mental health care at the Phoenix VA. A new contract for primary care should be in place by the end of this month, but more action is required.

This conference should move quickly to accept the Senate language, which passed 93–3.

In addition to the good provisions in the House bill to improve access and accountability, the Senate language directs the VA to hire more doctors and nurses. It invests in 26 new VA facilities.

It provides for instate tuition for veterans, regardless of their home concept, a concept that the House overwhelmingly supported earlier this year. It extends post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits to surviving spouses of veterans who died in the line of duty. It improves access to health care for military sexual assault survivors. It was scored as costing less than the House bill.

Both Republicans and Democrats want to provide the best possible care for our veterans and their families, and we want to move quickly to provide this care. That is why I urge my colleagues to accept this motion to instruct, so we can move a bill to the President's desk quickly, and we can provide the care and services our veterans have earned and deserve.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to instruct.

As our committee works in a bipartisan fashion in an ongoing investigation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, we have continued to work and will continue to work in that bipartisan manner through legislation and aggressive oversight.

Veterans are not a partisan issue and must remain as such. That is why I am a little bit confused about the motion to instruct that has been offered by my colleagues across the aisle today.

With the vote that was just held to authorize us to go to conference, it would really not be prudent to prematurely direct our conferees to already recede to the Senate position before we even sit down and discuss whatever the matter that we may have with the Senate is.

The House amendment contains the text of H.R. 4810 and H.R. 4031, which have both passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan majorities and could be taken up right now by the Senate and sent to the President today.

Since it is clear that the Senate doesn't intend to do that, our only option is to go to conference so that both Chambers—the House and the Senate—can work together to smooth out the differences.

I want to caution my colleagues that what we are dealing with right now is a very technical provision, a provision that will have a long-lasting effect on VA and the manner in which veterans throughout the country receive the needed care that they have earned.

The gravity of the issues before us and the differences in how we solve them does require that the House Members be given an opportunity to sit down face to face with our Senate colleagues, so that we might make sure that we get this right for our veterans and their families.

I agree with a lot of the intent of many of the provisions in the legislation, but I do have some concerns. First, as the Senate bill is currently written, it provides an expedited appeal right for Senior Executive Service employees at VA who are fired by the new removal authority that is authorized by this bill.

The House has already passed similar provisions in H.R. 4031, with appeal rights that follow exactly what we, as Members of Congress, have in regards to our congressional staff. While I am open to discussing appeal rights, I am concerned that the Senate bill really doesn't change the status quo and could, in fact, limit the Secretary's authority to remove poor-performing employees. In short, without accountability, reform will not be possible.

Secondly, another major provision of the Senate bill would be to provide the authority for VA to hire additional doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel to provide and improve access.

The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs has heard multiple times, during the course of our investigation, that one issue with VA's current policy on capacity and scheduling is that VA doctors do not see nearly enough patients in one day compared to doctors in the private sector.

We need to ensure that VA health care staff and technology are used efficiently first, then address new hiring. Therefore, before Congress authorizes new funding for a whole new slew of medical personnel, I believe that VA managers must reexamine their current policies and see if they can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the personnel that are already in place.

Finally, the Senate bill essentially gives the VA a blank check to fund the requirements of this bill. Again, in hearing after hearing, the committee heard from VA about their wasteful spending on IT programs, poorly managed contracts, large bonuses, extravagant conferences, and bloated bureaucracy.

In short, this is not an agency for which Congress should be cutting a no-strings-attached blank check. It is imperative that Congress follow a more methodical, yet quick approach to funding new requirements which preserves Congress' oversight responsibility to protect taxpayer resources provided on behalf of America's veterans. This is the House position, and we ought to fight for it.

Now, look, I don't doubt my colleague's sincerity to quickly and efficiently pass legislation to help address the countless issues that are facing the Department of Veterans Affairs today. However, the best way to do this and to ensure that all of the issues are on the table to work out our differences with the Senate is with a conference committee.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the motion to instruct, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my colleague from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK).

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the motion to instruct the conferees and ask that the conferees agree to the Senate amendments to H.R. 3230, the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014.

I also ask that the conferees work with urgency to resolve the differences between the House and Senate bills. Veterans cannot continue to wait. They have already waited too long. We have a duty to do our job and act now.

I introduced H.R. 4841, the companion legislation to the Senate-passed legislation, because it addresses several of the issues that currently plague the VA health care system.

This bill, sponsored by Senators SANDERS and MCCAIN, is good for veterans in my district, in Arizona, and veterans across this country. It contains provisions that are nearly identical to the House-passed legislation that I supported, including the expansion of non-VA care to veterans that cannot get timely appointment and granting the VA Secretary the authority to immediately fire high-level officials who are not doing their jobs.

H.R. 4841 does more. It will provide for an expedited hiring of more doctors, nurses, and medical staff at understaffed VA medical hospitals and clinics across the country. It will allow the VA to lease 26 new medical facilities.

It calls for an independent commission that will work to improve appointment scheduling, and it will improve access to health care for military sexual assault survivors. These additional measures are vital to address the access to care crisis in the VA health care system.

In addition to addressing the VA's access to care crisis, Sanders-McCain ensures that veterans using their post-9/11 GI Bill benefits receive instate tuition at public colleges and universities, and it extends post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to surviving spouses.

Comprehensive legislation is needed to help our veterans. I think we can all agree that we must do everything we can to help those who have fought and sacrificed for us. Let's work together to get this legislation to the President as soon as possible.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART), a veteran colleague.

□ 1345

Mr ENYART. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a veteran and 35-year military member in support of swift action to remedy our veterans' health care concerns.

As former commanding general of the Illinois National Guard, I have seen firsthand the sacrifices our men and women in uniform make each day, sacrifices that affect not only themselves, but their families, as well. That is why it didn't come as a surprise to me to see so many family members standing beside their veterans at the Marion, Illinois, VA hospital 2 weeks ago.

I stopped by two facilities—one scheduled and one a complete surprise to the staff and administrators, a lesson learned from my days in the military. I wanted to see the true nature of the problem for myself. I didn't want to speak to administrators or to managers. More importantly, I wanted to speak to patients and to frontline workers.

Although most of the veterans I spoke to received quality care, far too many spoke of burdensome paperwork and of delays. Although the southern Illinois facilities I visited have better-than-average wait times for patients, even one patient on a waiting list is too many. And although most of the staff that report daily to our Nation's VA facilities are competent, caring individuals, there are some who are not.

That is why I support the two main goals of H.R. 3230, the Veterans Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014. This act will ensure that administrators at VA facilities can be removed from power in a timely and swift manner if they are not doing their jobs. It will also provide veterans the opportunity to seek care at private health care facilities as needed.

Join me in support of our veterans and the dire need to reform our VA health care system.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS), my colleague on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. TITUS. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Democratic motion to instruct conferees. As a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am working hard to ensure that veterans in Las Vegas and around the country have access to high-quality health care in a timely fashion.

I believe the Sanders-McCain compromise bill that passed the Senate 93–3 makes great strides towards meeting this goal. Specifically, I would like to highlight two provisions of the Sanders-McCain compromise that should be passed as soon as possible. Both pieces are legislation that I have introduced to help veterans and their families.

The first is H.R. 3441, the Spouses of Heroes Education Act. This legislation amends the post-9/11 GI Bill to expand the Fry Scholarship by making surviving spouses of members of the armed services eligible for the benefit program. This scholarship provides full in-State tuition, fees, a monthly living stipend, and a book allowance to children of servicemembers who have died in the line of duty. And for the first time, this change would extend to spouses the same benefit.

The second is H.R. 2527, the National Guard Military Sexual Trauma Parity Act, which would include extended counseling and treatment to servicemembers who have suffered sexual trauma while serving on inactive duty training. This legislation recently passed the House with unanimous bipartisan support.

Other provisions addressing the claims backlog, access to non-VA health care, and reform of scheduling and personnel problems are also critical to include.

So, as the conferees begin their work, it is important that we continue to keep the best interests of our Nation's heroes and their families in mind, that we put aside partisan differences, and that we work expeditiously to try and solve the problems that we have discovered at the VA.

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

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congresswoman.

Mr. Speaker, my time is short, and so I want to cut to the chase. The United States of America should honor its veterans and stand up for them in the same way that they stood up for us during their time of service.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance, as have many other Members of Congress, to visit with the Acting Secretary of the VA about a week ago in San Antonio and also to meet with some of the veterans who were being served there at Audie Murphy. These are folks who served during the Vietnam war, Korea, and other times of conflict. These are folks who are very proud people who don't ask a lot from their country but who are there for care.

Too often in Congress, we have been Monday morning quarterbacks rather than leaders on this issue. It was mentioned a bit earlier that veterans are not a partisan issue, and I agree with that. The problem in Washington these days is too often only partisan issues are the ones that get talked about. We have to take action as soon as we can to support our veterans and to make sure that the VA has the funding that it needs to do its job properly.

There was a story that the Acting Secretary told about his visit to Phoenix. If I recall it right, he said that there was a neurosurgeon in the meeting that he had with staff who mentioned that, as he was about to go into the room for surgery, there were two X-ray machines that were not working in Phoenix, and those were the conditions that these folks were trying to work under and to serve our veterans. We need to make sure that small government inefficiency is not an excuse for doing right by our veterans. And so I support this legislation.

I want to commend not only Chairman MILLER on that committee, but also the Senators, Senators MCCAIN and SANDERS, who have come together to put aside party politics, and also thank my Democratic colleagues, BETO O'ROURKE in Texas, and many fine people here in Congress who are working on this issue.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think the question that needs to be asked is why in the world, with an almost $160 billion budget, would there be two nonfunctioning machines inside a VA medical center? It just goes to show the incapability for the current bureaucracy that exists out there to do what they need to do.

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

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA).

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona.

As a nation, we have a debt of gratitude to our veterans, a debt that will be very difficult to repay; but, nonetheless, we must make every effort to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I spent the last few weeks meeting with veterans in my district and getting firsthand accounts of their experiences at the hospital as well as its supporting clinics in south Florida.

While secret wait lists and months-long waits are inexcusable, it has become clear that the problems are much deeper than that. So many of my veterans felt that their concerns weren't being heard—and they were absolutely right. On top of the long waits for appointments with doctors, we heard about the need for better transportation, greater use of technology, reduced wait times and more convenient hours.

Just this week, we held our first working group meeting in my district with local veterans as well as the director of the hospital and his administrative staff. It is an important step to a dialogue that is sorely needed.

While we in Washington can wait and bicker about this issue and the ongoing relationship between us and the hospital system and the Veterans Administration, what there is no question about is that the time has come to solve this problem. We as a nation must renew our commitment to serve our veterans with the same dignity and respect with which they served us. It is the absolute least we can do. By instructing House conferees to accept the McCain-Sanders compromise, we can quickly get the bill to the President and get on with the business of ensuring every veteran gets the care and need they deserve.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think what is very curious is that if people would look at the bill that they are referring to today, that 80 percent of the text in that bill is already House-passed language. The Senate could pass that—could have passed that some time ago—and they have refused to do so. And now, all of a sudden, because it is wrapped up with a tiny little bow, it is the perfect piece of legislation.

I don't believe that my colleagues are trying to imply that the bickering that takes place is not supporting the veterans. The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs has held 90 hearings in the 113th Congress. Over 50 of those are oversight hearings. The Senate has only held six oversight hearings. The House has been doing their job and has been doing it in a bipartisan fashion.

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

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, Mr. MILLER, just know that folks on both sides of the aisle are very, very grateful for his leadership, in particular the research that was done to uncover the tragedy that occurred in the Phoenix VA in my district. So know that folks on both sides of the aisle here in the House are very, very grateful for the bipartisan nature in which the Veterans' Affairs Committee has conducted its affairs during his tenure, and we appreciate his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), my colleague who serves on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. TAKANO. I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to give praise to the gentleman from Florida, Chairman MILLER, for the way in which he has conducted the hearings and conducted the business of the Veterans'

Affairs Committee. In no way do we wish to imply that the House has not done its due diligence.

As my colleagues have mentioned, the motion before us to instruct the House conferees to accept the bipartisan McCain-Sanders bill—and I want to emphasize it is a bipartisan bill—that passed the Senate by 93 votes, would allow veterans to seek care outside the VA health care system if they face long wait times or if they live far from a VA medical facility. It also allows the VA to hire more doctors and nurses and authorizes leases for 26 new major VA facilities, which I do not believe the House language contains. It improves access to health care for military and sexual assault providers. Finally, it includes several nonhealth-related provisions, such as the provision of in-State tuition for all veterans at public colleges and universities. This is a provision that was authored by my friend, Mr. MILLER.

The revelation that numerous VA facilities manipulated data with respect to wait times is disturbing. It is even more disturbing to learn that those practices may have resulted in the deaths of dozens of our veterans.

Our veterans have sacrificed so much, and we owe it to them to make sure that they receive the best possible care from a system that is accountable and transparent. I urge my colleagues to support the motion to instruct conferees.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to remind the Members here on the floor that H.R. 357, the in-State tuition and bonus elimination bill, passed the House by 390–0; H.R. 4031, the VA accountability bill, passed this House in a wide, bipartisan fashion, 390–33; H.R. 4810, the access to care bill, passed this House unanimously, 400—we are hearing about 93–3? How about 426–0? Why don't we fight for what the House believes in once in a while around here instead of giving up to the Senate? H.R. 3521, the VA clinics—27 clinics are authorized in our bill. That was a 347–1 vote.

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

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY), my colleague who serves on the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the ranking member on the Health Subcommittee.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, thank you to the gentlewoman from Arizona.

I rise to support the motion to instruct conferees. I grew up in a military home. I personally understand the sacrifices our servicemembers and their families make in service to our Nation. My father was the proudest marine, my brother was a P–3 pilot for 20 years in the Navy, and my uncle served in both World War II and Vietnam.

When I was elected to Congress, I asked to serve on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to represent our future veterans at Naval Base Ventura County and throughout our country to represent our current veterans that live in Ventura County and throughout the country, and to represent our military families who also commit to serve our Nation.

One of the greatest pleasures of working on the Veterans' Affairs Committee is addressing the issues at hand in a bipartisan way, and I want to thank Chairman MILLER for his leadership and Ranking Member MICHAUD because this committee has remained in a bipartisan mode to address these issues. Every week, we discuss innovative ways to improve access to good-paying jobs, how to strengthen education opportunities for our veterans, to reduce wait times for critical and fundamental health care, and much, much more.

I was deeply honored when my colleagues elected me to serve as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Health to ensure our veterans' health needs are properly addressed, including improving access to traditional and mental health care.

As my colleagues know, there is a lot of improvement that needs to take place at the VA. We have a sacred responsibility to those who serve our country in uniform. Just as the military leaves no one behind on the battlefield, we must leave no veteran behind when they come home.

□ 1400

The motion to instruct is the best path to completing a conference agreement to fix the long-term problems at the VA. Let's ensure we are serving our veterans as well as they have served us.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I remind my fellow colleagues in the Chamber today that there are 12 pieces of legislation that have passed our committee and this full House that await action in the United States Senate, and they continue to languish.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN), who serves on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the first words of the first President of the United States, George Washington, whose words are worth repeating at this time:

> The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country.

I want to thank the chairman for his leadership. Those 90 hearings, I was at most of them. I know the House has done their work, whether it was here in Washington, D.C., or in the field and around the country. I am the senior member on the committee, having served on the committee for over 22 years.

I have to remind the committee and this House that the problems with the veterans did not start today. They are long-term problems. I am pleased with the fact that I was on the committee when we passed the largest VA budget in the history of the United States.

In addition to that, forward budgeting—which I thought would never happen, but the veterans have not caught up with the whims of the House, not passing this appropriation or not passing this authorization, so we know today what kind of veterans benefits that we are going to get.

Many other veterans—in fact, over 99 percent of them say that they are very satisfied with the system. They love their VA system, but the key is that there are some problems, and we need to work in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion with the Senate to make sure that we address these challenges.

I really do believe to whom God has given much, much is expected, and we have to make sure that the veterans get the care that we have promised them.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I remind my friends here that the whims of the Congress to not pass appropriation bills blows very strong over on the Senate side because the House passes its Military Construction-VA bill year in and year out. It was the Senate that chose not to pass any appropriation bills last year.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). The gentlewoman from Arizona has 9½ minutes remaining.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank all Members who have come to speak on this very important matter. This should be a bipartisan matter, and it has been in our committee and certainly in this entire House.

I am still wondering why in the world we would just now vote to go to conference with the Senate on 80 percent of the bills that have already passed the House, and then we would turn around, and we would have a motion to instruct the conferees to just forget what the House said, take up the Senate bill.

It doesn't make sense that we would do that. In a normal course of legislative business, this is the way the process works: the House, the Senate get together, and we work out the issues that concern all of us.

I would ask the minority—or I would request the minority to not use this motion to instruct in one single political ad. I hope that I don't see this vote used in any political ads because our committee does things in a bipartisan fashion. Congressman MICHAUD and I have worked together diligently to keep the votes from becoming partisan.

I cannot see any other reason to have the vote today on the motion to instruct conferees to accept the Senate-

passed legislation after we have done the same thing in the House, passed the same bills in the House that they could take up on our side, yet we are going to cede to the Senate position.

With that, I urge defeat of the motion to instruct.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MICHAUD for their tremendous leadership and the work that they have done over the years to provide veterans with the best possible care, holding multiple hearings and passing a multitude of bipartisan bills. By working together, I know we can address this crisis and create a VA system that our veterans deserve.

I urge our colleagues to support this motion to instruct, so we get a bill to the President's desk quickly. This is not the end of our work, but it is an important step forward to meet the needs of our veterans.

I trust that Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member MICHAUD, and the members of the conference committee will represent the interests of veterans very well in our conference committee.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 198, nays 220, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 316]

YEAS—198

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Richmond
Rooney
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stockman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—220

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—13

Crawford
Goodlatte
Hanna
Kelly (IL)
Lankford
McHenry
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Nunnelee
Poe (TX)
Rangel
Ryan (OH)
Waxman

□ 1441

Messrs. LUCAS, JORDAN, BUCSHON, LATTA, UPTON, LAMALFA, TERRY, POSEY, SIMPSON, SESSIONS, ROSKAM, and FLEMING changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California and Mrs. BEATTY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to instruct was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 18, 2014, I was absent and missed rollcall votes Nos. 315 and 316. Had I been present, I would have voted: rollcall 315—''yea,'' rollcall 316—''nay.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER of Florida). Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees on H.R. 3230:

For consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

Messrs. MILLER of Florida, LAMBORN, ROE of Tennessee, FLORES, BENISHEK, COFFMAN, WENSTRUP, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. WALZ.

There was no objection.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4870, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 628 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. 4870.

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

□ 1443

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. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with Mr. COLLINS of New York 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 New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

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

Mr. Chairman, as we begin consideration of this important legislation, all of us in this Chamber want to pay tribute to the men and women of our Armed Forces—all volunteers. They deserve our heartfelt thanks for their incredible service and sacrifices, and that of their families. Everything we do over the next few days should be dedicated to them.

□ 1445

My colleagues, the fiscal year 2015 Department of Defense Appropriations bill was reported out unanimously by the full Appropriations Committee on June 10. This recommendation is a product of countless staff hours, 10 official briefings, and 13 hearings.

Most of our hearings related to assuring success and reducing risk for our warfighters in their mission. It is worth noting that one of these hearings was exclusively dedicated to taking testimony from Members of the House on their views, opinions, and priorities for this year's Defense Appropriations bill.

I want to thank those Members who took time to inform and educate the committee, as well as other Members who made specific requests.

At the outset, I would also like to thank Chairman HAL ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY for their support of our committee's work. As they know, this bill is a product of a bipartisan and cooperative effort, for which I thank my good friend, the ranking member, PETE VISCLOSKY. He has been a valuable partner throughout this whole process. Thanks to all members of the committee and to our incredible staff.

The base funding recommendation is $491 billion, which is $202 million above the President's request and $4.1 billion above last year's enacted level.

As many Members are aware, the committee has not yet received the President's recommendation for overseas contingency operations—the OCO budget, as it is known—so we are forced to include a $79.4 billion placeholder in our legislation.

Our committee operates in a completely transparent and accountable manner, so clearly, this is not the way we wanted to proceed to the floor—with no details, with no context, with no facts for those accounts.

We have pressed the administration at every opportunity to get us the OCO plan. The administration has told us for months that it is finalizing its plan for the enduring U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, which will have a serious impact on the size of that funding request.

Three weeks ago, the President announced his plans for U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan beyond this year. The Army and Marines have already closed down bases and removed tons of equipment. Still, we have no request and are forced to debate a placeholder of nearly $80 billion.

While the Afghan Presidential elections are still unsettled, the leading candidates support the bilateral security agreement, supposedly the anchor for this funding request.

What is the holdup? We need to get on with it. I have to say that many people find it just a bit bizarre that the administration has proclaimed its opposition to the bill yesterday, when they have failed to do their job and lay out their game plan for overseas operations.

Whatever the recommendation we ultimately receive, we will closely examine their request because we still have troops and civilians on the ground, and no matter the number, they need to be protected.

Of course, we will also consider the deepening war and conflict in Iraq, the continuing disintegration of Syria, the aggressiveness of Russia in Eastern Europe and China in the Pacific, and the growing influence of Iran, increased terrorist attacks around the globe, especially in Africa.

While the administration feels the pending OCO request will have a great deal to do with our enduring U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, in reality, their request will have a great deal to do with our enduring role in the fight to protect Americans and our homeland from a growing list of global threats.

Even though we have returned to regular order this year, the committee faced many challenges in crafting this year's defense bill, but we have held firm to two guiding principles: ensuring that our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to defend our Nation and support their families; and, secondly, ensuring that the Department of Defense and our intelligence community have the resources they need to carry out their mission in the most efficient and effective manner.

Our goal throughout this bill is to support our warfighters, now and in the future, whenever the next crisis arises.

At the same time, our committee clearly recognizes the Nation's debt crisis. We found areas and programs where reductions were possible without adverse impact. Finally, it is important to note that we make every dollar count, without harming readiness or increasing risk incurred by our warfighters.

The bill before you attempts to meet those responsibilities within current fiscal restraints, while leaving no question for our allies and adversaries about our will and our ability to defend ourselves and our interests around the world. America must continue to lead, and this bipartisan bill enables that.

Let me highlight, briefly, just a few items included in this fiscal year 2015 Defense Appropriations request. It includes an additional $1.2 billion to fill readiness shortfalls; $534 million to fully fund the authorized 1.8 percent pay raise for our troops; $789 million to begin the refueling of the USS George Washington—a vital power projection platform; $5.8 billion for a total of 38 Joint Strike Fighters; $975 million to buy 12 additional electronic attack Growlers; $120 million to upgrade M1 Abrams tanks; $351 million for the very important Israeli Cooperative Program; and an additional $39 million for suicide prevention activities—$19 million of it targeted specifically to our Special Forces.

These are but a few examples of our commitment to the U.S. military dominance across the air, land, and sea, our commitment to our allies and partners, and our commitment to our servicemembers—all volunteers—and their families.

Mr. Chairman, I understand all—all of us do—that Americans are weary after 13 years of war. Despite the proclamations of some that al Qaeda and its followers have been decimated, the American people must understand the reality that terrorism is actually spreading worldwide.

Yes, our enemies have sustained serious damage, inflicted by the most skillful and powerful military intelligence organization on the globe, but in many cases, these enemies have adapted and grown to become even more dangerous.

We are witnessing an alarming collapse in Iraq. The central government now controls less than half of its sovereign territory, as it reels before a full-blown insurgency. The concept of an autonomous jihadi state or caliphate determined to attack the West is an unacceptable development that demands a response. We pivot elsewhere at our peril.

National defense is the priority job of the Federal Government. Our Constitution grants Congress the full range of authorities for establishing the defense of our Nation.

Our task in this House is to ensure that our military is ready to respond when the Commander in Chief calls. This legislation moves us towards a state of current and future military readiness that will protect America, and I urge its passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I					
MILITARY PERSONNEL					
Military Personnel, Army	40,787,967	41,225,339	41,183,729	+395,762	-41,610
Military Personnel, Navy	27,231,512	27,489,440	27,387,344	+155,832	-102,096
Military Personnel, Marine Corps	12,766,099	12,919,103	12,785,431	+19,332	-133,672
Military Personnel, Air Force	28,519,993	27,815,926	27,564,362	-955,631	-251,564
Reserve Personnel, Army	4,377,563	4,459,130	4,304,159	-73,404	-154,971
Reserve Personnel, Navy	1,843,966	1,863,034	1,836,024	-7,942	-27,010
Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps	655,109	670,754	659,224	+4,115	-11,530
Reserve Personnel, Air Force	1,723,159	1,675,518	1,652,148	-71,011	-23,370
National Guard Personnel, Army	7,776,498	7,682,892	7,644,632	-131,866	-38,260
National Guard Personnel, Air Force	3,114,421	3,156,457	3,110,587	-3,834	-45,870
Total, Title I, Military Personnel	128,796,287	128,957,593	128,127,640	-668,647	-829,953
TITLE II					
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE					
Operation and Maintenance, Army	30,768,069	33,240,148	32,671,980	+1,903,911	-568,168
Operation and Maintenance, Navy	36,311,160	39,316,857	39,073,543	+2,762,383	-243,314
Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps	5,397,605	5,909,487	5,984,680	+587,075	+75,193
Operation and Maintenance, Air Force	33,248,618	35,331,193	35,024,160	+1,775,542	-307,033
Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide	31,450,068	31,198,232	30,896,741	-553,327	-301,491
Operation and Maintenance, Army Reserve	2,940,936	2,490,569	2,535,606	-405,330	+45,037
Operation and Maintenance, Navy Reserve	1,158,382	1,007,100	1,011,827	-146,555	+4,727
Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve	255,317	268,582	270,485	+15,168	+1,903
Operation and Maintenance, Air Force Reserve	3,062,207	3,015,842	2,989,214	-72,993	-26,628
Operation and Maintenance, Army National Guard	6,857,530	6,030,773	6,116,307	-741,223	+85,534
Operation and Maintenance, Air National Guard	6,392,304	6,392,859	6,393,919	+1,615	+1,060
Overseas Contingency Operations Transfer Account	---	5,000	---	---	-5,000
United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces	13,606	13,723	13,723	+117	---
Environmental Restoration, Army	298,815	201,560	201,560	-97,255	---
Environmental Restoration, Navy	316,103	277,294	277,294	-38,809	---
Environmental Restoration, Air Force	439,820	408,716	408,716	-31,104	---
Environmental Restoration, Defense-Wide	10,757	8,547	8,547	-2,210	---
Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites	287,443	208,353	233,353	-54,090	+25,000
Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid	109,500	100,000	103,000	-6,500	+3,000
Cooperative Threat Reduction Account	500,455	365,108	365,108	-135,347	---
Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund	51,031	212,875	51,875	+844	-161,000
Total, Title II, Operation and maintenance	159,869,726	166,002,818	164,631,638	+4,761,912	-1,371,180

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE III					
PROCUREMENT					
Aircraft Procurement, Army	4,844,891	5,102,685	5,295,957	+451,066	+193,272
Missile Procurement, Army	1,549,491	1,017,483	1,217,483	-332,008	+200,000
Procurement of Weapons and Tracked Combat Vehicles, Army	1,610,811	1,471,438	1,703,736	+92,925	+232,298
Procurement of Ammunition, Army	1,444,067	1,031,477	1,011,477	-432,590	-20,000
Other Procurement, Army	4,936,908	4,893,634	4,812,234	-124,674	-81,400
Aircraft Procurement, Navy	16,442,794	13,074,317	14,054,523	-2,388,271	+980,206
Weapons Procurement, Navy	3,009,157	3,217,945	3,111,931	+102,774	-106,014
Procurement of Ammunition, Navy and Marine Corps	549,316	771,945	629,372	+80,056	-142,573
Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy	15,231,364	14,400,625	14,256,361	-975,003	-144,264
Other Procurement, Navy	5,572,618	5,975,828	5,923,379	+350,761	-52,449
Procurement, Marine Corps	1,240,958	983,352	927,232	-313,726	-56,120
Aircraft Procurement, Air Force	10,379,180	11,542,571	12,046,941	+1,667,761	+504,370
Missile Procurement, Air Force	4,446,763	4,690,506	4,546,211	+99,448	-144,295
Procurement of Ammunition, Air Force	729,677	677,400	648,200	-81,477	-29,200
Other Procurement, Air Force	16,572,754	16,566,018	16,633,023	+60,269	+67,005
Procurement, Defense-Wide	4,240,416	4,221,437	4,358,121	+117,705	+136,684
Defense Production Act Purchases	60,135	21,638	51,638	-8,497	+30,000
Total, Title III, Procurement	92,861,300	89,660,299	91,227,819	-1,633,481	+1,567,520
TITLE IV					
RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION					
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Army	7,126,318	6,593,898	6,720,000	-406,318	+126,102
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Navy	14,949,919	16,266,335	15,877,770	+927,851	-388,565
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force	23,585,292	23,739,892	23,438,982	-146,310	-300,910
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide	17,086,412	16,766,084	17,077,900	-8,512	+311,816
Operational Test and Evaluation, Defense	246,800	167,738	248,238	+1,438	+80,500
Total, Title IV, Research, Development, Test and Evaluation	62,994,741	63,533,947	63,362,890	+368,149	-171,057
TITLE V					
REVOLVING AND MANAGEMENT FUNDS					
Defense Working Capital Funds	1,649,214	1,234,468	1,334,468	-314,746	+100,000
National Defense Sealift Fund	597,213	---	---	-597,213	---
Total, Title V, Revolving and Management Funds	2,246,427	1,234,468	1,334,468	-911,959	+100,000

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE VI					
OTHER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS					
Defense Health Program					
Operation and maintenance	30,704,995	31,031,911	30,080,563	-624,432	-951,348
Procurement	441,764	308,413	308,413	-133,351	---
Research, development, test and evaluation	1,552,399	654,594	1,245,894	-306,505	+591,300
Total, Defense Health Program 1/	32,699,158	31,994,918	31,634,870	-1,064,288	-360,048
Chemical Agents and Munitions Destruction, Defense:					
Operation and maintenance	398,572	222,728	222,728	-175,844	---
Procurement	1,368	10,227	10,227	+8,859	---
Research, development, test and evaluation	604,183	595,913	595,913	-8,270	---
Total, Chemical Agents 2/	1,004,123	828,868	828,868	-175,255	---
Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Defense	1,015,885	---	---	-1,015,885	---
Counter-narcotics support	---	719,096	669,631	+669,631	-49,465
Drug demand reduction program	---	101,591	105,591	+105,591	+4,000
National Guard counter-drug program	---	---	169,465	+169,465	+169,465
Total, Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Defense	1,015,885	820,687	944,687	-71,198	+124,000
Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Fund	---	115,058	65,464	+65,464	-49,594
Joint Urgent Operational Needs Fund	---	20,000	---	---	-20,000
Support for International Sporting Competitions 1/	---	10,000	10,000	+10,000	---
Office of the Inspector General 1/	316,000	311,830	311,830	-4,170	---
Total, Title VI, Other Department of Defense Programs	35,035,166	34,101,361	33,795,719	-1,239,447	-305,642
TITLE VII					
RELATED AGENCIES					
Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System Fund	514,000	514,000	514,000	---	---
Intelligence Community Management Account (ICMA)	528,229	510,194	501,194	-27,035	-9,000
Total, Title VII, Related agencies	1,042,229	1,024,194	1,015,194	-27,035	-9,000

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE VIII					
GENERAL PROVISIONS					
Additional transfer authority (Sec.8005)	(5,000,000)	(5,000,000)	(5,000,000)	---	---
Indian Financing Act incentives (Sec.8019)	15,000	---	---	-15,000	---
FFRDC (Sec.8023)	-40,000	---	-40,000	---	-40,000
Rescissions (Sec.8039)	-1,906,089	-265,685	-964,648	+941,441	-698,963
O&M, Defense-wide transfer authority (Sec.8050)	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)	---	---
Global Security Contingency Fund (O&M, Defense-wide transfer) (Sec.8067)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	---	---
Fisher House Foundation (Sec.8068)	4,000	---	4,000	---	+4,000
National grants (Sec.8076)	44,000	---	44,000	---	+44,000
Shipbuilding & conversion funds, Navy (Sec.8080)	8,000	5,000	5,000	-3,000	---
ICMA transfer authority (Sec.8087)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	---	---
Fisher House transfer authority (Sec.8092)	(11,000)	(11,000)	(11,000)	---	---
Defense Health O&M transfer authority (Sec.8096)	(143,087)	(146,857)	(146,857)	(+3,770)	---
Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide (Sec.8100) (transfer authority)	(119,400)	(80,596)	(80,596)	(-38,804)	---
Ship Modernization, Operations and Sustainment Fund (Sec.8105)	2,244,400	---	540,000	-1,704,400	+540,000
Rescission	-1,920,000	---	---	+1,920,000	---
Superintendents review	1,000	---	---	-1,000	---
Revised econonmic assumptions (Sec. 8106)	-380,000	---	-545,100	-165,100	-545,100
Special Victims Program implementation	25,000	---	---	-25,000	---
General/Flag Officers	-8,000	---	---	+8,000	---
Working Capital Fund excess cash balances	-866,500	---	---	+866,500	---
National Defense Reserve Fleet (O&M, Navy transfer authority) (Sec.8128)	---	(291,000)	(291,000)	(+291,000)	---
John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Training and Development Fund (O&M, Navy transfer authority)(Sec.8129)	---	(1,000)	(1,000)	(+1,000)	---
Military pay raise (Sec.8130)	---	---	533,500	+533,500	+533,500
Basic allowance for housing (Sec.8131)	---	---	244,700	+244,700	+244,700
Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide (Sec.8135)	---	---	139,000	+139,000	+139,000
Readiness (Sec.8137)	---	---	1,000,000	+1,000,000	+1,000,000
Total, Title VIII, General Provisions	-2,779,189	-260,685	960,452	+3,739,641	+1,221,137

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE IX					
OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (OCO) 3/					
Military Personnel					
Military Personnel, Army (OCO)	5,449,726	---	---	-5,449,726	---
Military Personnel, Navy (OCO)	558,344	---	---	-558,344	---
Military Personnel, Marine Corps (OCO)	777,922	---	---	-777,922	---
Military Personnel, Air Force (OCO)	832,862	---	---	-832,862	---
Reserve Personnel, Army (OCO)	33,352	---	---	-33,352	---
Reserve Personnel, Navy (OCO)	20,238	---	---	-20,238	---
Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps (OCO)	15,134	---	---	-15,134	---
Reserve Personnel, Air Force (OCO)	20,432	---	---	-20,432	---
National Guard Personnel, Army (OCO)	257,064	---	---	-257,064	---
National Guard Personnel, Air Force (OCO)	6,919	---	---	-6,919	---
Military Personnel (OCO)	---	---	5,100,000	+5,100,000	+5,100,000
Total, Military Personnel	7,971,993	---	5,100,000	-2,871,993	+5,100,000
Operation and Maintenance					
Operation & Maintenance, Army (OCO)	32,369,249	---	---	-32,369,249	---
Operation & Maintenance, Navy (OCO)	8,470,808	---	---	-8,470,808	---
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps (OCO)	3,369,815	---	---	-3,369,815	---
Operation & Maintenance, Air Force (OCO)	12,746,424	---	---	-12,746,424	---
Operation & Maintenance, Defense-Wide (OCO)	6,226,678	---	---	-6,226,678	---
Coalition support funds (OCO)	(1,257,000)	---	---	(-1,257,000)	---
Operation & Maintenance, Army Reserve (OCO)	34,674	---	---	-34,674	---
Operation & Maintenance, Navy Reserve (OCO)	55,700	---	---	-55,700	---
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve (OCO)	12,534	---	---	-12,534	---
Operation & Maintenance, Air Force Reserve (OCO)	32,849	---	---	-32,849	---
Operation & Maintenance, Army National Guard (OCO)	130,471	---	---	-130,471	---
Operation & Maintenance, Air National Guard (OCO)	22,200	---	---	-22,200	---
Operation and Maintenance (OCO)	---	---	58,675,000	+58,675,000	+58,675,000
Subtotal, Operation and Maintenance	63,471,402	---	58,675,000	-4,796,402	+58,675,000
Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund (OCO)	199,000	---	---	-199,000	---
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (OCO)	4,726,720	---	---	-4,726,720	---
Total, Operation and Maintenance	68,397,122	---	58,675,000	-9,722,122	+58,675,000

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Procurement					
Aircraft Procurement, Army (OCO)	669,000	---	---	-669,000	---
Missile Procurement, Army (OCO)	128,645	---	---	-128,645	---
Procurement of Ammunition, Army (OCO)	190,900	---	---	-190,900	---
Other Procurement, Army (OCO)	653,902	---	---	-653,902	---
Aircraft Procurement, Navy (OCO)	211,176	---	---	-211,176	---
Weapons Procurement, Navy (OCO)	86,500	---	---	-86,500	---
Procurement of Ammunition, Navy and Marine Corps (OCO)	169,362	---	---	-169,362	---
Procurement, Marine Corps (OCO)	125,984	---	---	-125,984	---
Aircraft Procurement, Air Force (OCO)	188,868	---	---	-188,868	---
Missile Procurement, Air Force (OCO)	24,200	---	---	-24,200	---
Procurement of Ammunition, Air Force (OCO)	137,826	---	---	-137,826	---
Other Procurement, Air Force (OCO)	2,517,846	---	---	-2,517,846	---
Procurement, Defense-Wide (OCO)	128,947	---	---	-128,947	---
National Guard and Reserve Equipment (OCO)	1,000,000	---	---	-1,000,000	---
Procurement (OCO)	---	---	12,220,000	+12,220,000	+12,220,000
Total, Procurement	6,233,156	---	12,220,000	+5,986,844	+12,220,000
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation					
Research, Development, Test & Evaluation, Army (OCO)	13,500	---	---	-13,500	---
Research, Development, Test & Evaluation, Navy (OCO)	34,426	---	---	-34,426	---
Research, Development, Test & Evaluation, Air Force (OCO)	9,000	---	---	-9,000	---
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide (OCO)	78,208	---	---	-78,208	---
Total, Research, Development, Test and Evaluation	135,134	---	---	-135,134	---
Revolving and Management Funds					
Defense Working Capital Funds (OCO)	264,910	---	---	-264,910	---

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
National Guard and Reserve Equipment					
National Guard and Reserve Equipment (OCO)	---	---	2,000,000	+2,000,000	+2,000,000
Other Department of Defense Programs					
Defense Health Program:					
Operation and maintenance (OCO)	898,701	---	---	-898,701	---
Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Defense (OCO)	376,305	---	---	-376,305	---
Joint IED Defeat Fund (OCO) 2/	879,225	---	---	-879,225	---
Office of the Inspector General (OCO)	10,766	---	---	-10,766	---
Other (OCO)	---	---	1,450,000	+1,450,000	+1,450,000
Total, Other Department of Defense Programs	2,164,997	---	1,450,000	-714,997	+1,450,000
TITLE IX General Provisions					
Additional transfer authority (OCO) (Sec.9002)	(4,000,000)	---	(4,000,000)	---	(+4,000,000)
Rescissions (OCO) (Sec.9013)	-140,370	---	---	+140,370	---
OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (OCO)	---	79,445,000	---	---	-79,445,000
Total, Title IX	85,026,942	79,445,000	79,445,000	-5,581,942	---
Net Grand Total	565,093,629	563,698,995	563,900,820	-1,192,809	+201,825
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RECAP					
Scorekeeping adjustments:					
Lease of defense real property (permanent)	30,000	31,000	31,000	+1,000	---
Disposal of defense real property (permanent)	10,000	8,000	8,000	-2,000	---
DHP, O&M to DOD-VA Joint Incentive Fund:					
Defense function	-15,000	-15,000	-15,000	---	---
Non-defense function	15,000	15,000	15,000	---	---
DHP, O&M to Joint DOD-VA Medical Facility Demonstration Fund:					
Defense function	-143,087	-146,857	-146,857	-3,770	---
Non-defense function	143,087	146,857	146,857	+3,770	---
O&M, Defense-wide transfer to Department of State:					
Defense function	-50,000	-30,000	-30,000	+20,000	---
Non-defense function	50,000	30,000	30,000	-20,000	---
Tricare accrual (permanent, indefinite auth.) 4/	7,258,000	6,963,000	6,963,000	-295,000	---
(OCO) 3/	164,000	---	---	-164,000	---
Total, scorekeeping adjustments	7,462,000	7,002,000	7,002,000	-460,000	---
Adjusted total (includ. scorekeeping adjustments)	572,555,629	570,700,995	570,902,820	-1,652,809	+201,825
Appropriations	(576,381,718)	(570,966,680)	(571,867,468)	(-4,514,250)	(+900,788)
Rescissions	(-3,826,089)	(-265,685)	(-964,648)	(+2,861,441)	(-698,963)
Total mandatory and discretionary	572,555,629	570,700,995	570,902,820	-1,652,809	+201,825

Department of Defense Appropriations Act - FY 2015 (H.R. 4870)
(Amounts in Thousands)

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
RECAPITULATION					
Title I - Military Personnel	128,796,287	128,957,593	128,127,640	-668,647	-829,953
Title II - Operation and Maintenance	159,869,726	166,002,818	164,631,638	+4,761,912	-1,371,180
Title III - Procurement	92,861,300	89,660,299	91,227,819	-1,633,481	+1,567,520
Title IV - Research, Development, Test and Evaluation	62,994,741	63,533,947	63,362,890	+368,149	-171,057
Title V - Revolving and Management Funds	2,246,427	1,234,468	1,334,468	-911,959	+100,000
Title VI - Other Department of Defense Programs	35,035,166	34,101,361	33,795,719	-1,239,447	-305,642
Title VII - Related Agencies	1,042,229	1,024,194	1,015,194	-27,035	-9,000
Title VIII - General Provisions (net)	-2,779,189	-260,685	960,452	+3,739,641	+1,221,137
Title IX - Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO)	85,026,942	79,445,000	79,445,000	-5,581,942	---
Total, Department of Defense	565,093,629	563,698,995	563,900,820	-1,192,809	+201,825
Scorekeeping adjustments	7,462,000	7,002,000	7,002,000	-460,000	---
Total mandatory and discretionary	572,555,629	570,700,995	570,902,820	-1,652,809	+201,825

1/ Included in Budget under Operation and Maintenance
2/ Included in Budget under Procurement
3/ Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)
4/ Contributions to Department of Defense Retiree
Health Care Fund (Sec. 725, P.L. 108-375)(CBO est)

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

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation as well to Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and congratulate him on the collegial and transparent manner in which he crafted H.R. 4870, the fiscal year 2015 Defense Appropriations Act. I also want to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts of Chairman HAL ROGERS and Ranking Member NITA LOWEY and all of the members of the Defense Subcommittee.

Also, as I think all of my colleagues know, this bill could not have been written without the dedication, long hours, and discerning and thoughtful input by our committee staff and our associate and personal staffs. I want to thank each one of them.

I would like to begin by saying a few words about the overseas contingency operations title that the chairman referred to.

The committee has been placed in a very difficult position of having to provide $79.4 billion as a placeholder. Recent decisions on the post-2014 troop levels in Afghanistan clear up the major policy issue that held back a detailed budget request.

Unfortunately, the clarity gained was quickly muddled by the proposed $5 billion counterterrorism partnerships fund and the $1 billion European reassurance initiative.

At a time when many in Congress are rightfully looking to limit what is an eligible expense in OCO and shift activities to the base budget, these new proposals further complicate the issue. Clarity must be brought to the opaque nature of OCO, and I look forward to the debate on this during the consideration of amendments.

I support the bill we are marking up today and believe it provides for our national security and the protection of U.S. interests at home and abroad. Put simply, the bill provides stability for our military personnel, maintains readiness, and preserves the industrial base.

I am pleased by the subcommittee's continued efforts on sexual assault prevention and response. Specifically, the bill fully funds the budget request for the Special Victims' Counsel, continuing last year's initiative.

The bill increases funding relative to the President's budget request for traumatic brain injury and psychological health research, suicide prevention outreach programs, and several other invaluable medical programs.

Further, the bill and report carry strong language aimed at increasing cooperation between the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs in their ongoing efforts to develop interoperable electronic health records.

Specific to readiness, the bill includes an increase of $1 billion to fill gaps in key programs to prepare our troops, including $135 million for the Army Reserve and Army National Guard. The bill makes investments in programs that are vital to the rebuilding and resetting of the force after 13 years of conflict.

In particular, it increases funding by $720 million for facility sustainment and modernization and provides each military service with additional funding for depot maintenance.

I especially appreciate the chairman's focus on encouraging DOD to meet the FY 2017 deadline for achieving fully auditable financial statements. The measure provides $8 million above the request for the Comptroller's office to improve business and financial systems throughout the Department.

Continuing problems in DOD's strategic forces are also addressed in the bill, and funding is provided to address issues directly impacting intercontinental ballistic missile crews.

With regard to the industrial base, I was dismayed that, in its FY 2015 budget request, the administration proposed the elimination of several longstanding general provisions ensuring that contracts followed Buy America requirements and support domestic manufacturing.

I am pleased to note that the committee chose to reject the administration's inexplicable proposal to jettison these Buy America proposals.

The bill also contains several other provisions and initiatives aimed at securing our industrial base, including $220 million to establish a program for the domestic development of a next-generation liquid-fueled rocket engine. Hopefully, this program will swiftly fill a very troubling void in the U.S. space launch industry.

One other area of the bill I would like to highlight is the funding increase for the Humanitarian Mine Action Program. Albeit a small program, I believe its mission is of immense value.

All too often, innocent civilians are the victims of explosive remnants of war. It is only right to share our military's expertise with host nations on the detection, clearance, disposal, and demilitarization of explosive ordnance. I thank the chairman in particular for his special efforts in this area.

However, I would point out that there are certain aspects of the bill that give me pause. Fundamentally, these concerns have little to do with the detailed work of the subcommittee, which I believe did its very best under the constraints in which it operated; rather, the concerns stem from Congress' continued failure to confront our long-term fiscal challenges.

In its fiscal year 2015 budget request, the Department of Defense proposed some significant initiatives, including military pay adjustments, restructuring TRICARE, and the retirement of several weapons system—such as the A–10 and the Kiowa Warrior—in order to stay under the fiscal year 2015 budget cap, provide for future flexibility, and to meet the national security strategy.

Having said this, one could easily point out that the administration then undercut its own efforts by planning for higher spending in fiscal years 2016 through 2019 and by submitting the disingenuously named ''Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative,'' and subsequently also submitting unfunded priority lists.

Regardless, a number of the proposals the Department put forth for fiscal year 2015 do possess merit. With few exceptions, these proposals have gained no traction within Congress. Most were excluded or had language prohibiting or postponing their support in the recently passed National Defense Authorization Act.

I do not suggest that the administration is uniformly correct, nor do I dismiss the resultant impacts of many of these initiatives, but the alternative of staying the course and hoping for some relief in fiscal year 2016 is very wishful thinking.

The sooner Congress reaches the consensus required to make the difficult decisions that are essential to deal with the reality of finite resources, the better we can provide for our national defense.

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In closing, I want to reiterate my appreciation to the chairman for his cooperation, his friendship and diligence. He and his staff have ensured that the Defense Subcommittee continues its tradition of operating collaboratively and effectively. I am pleased to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), the chairman of the full Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, I urge our colleagues to support this Defense spending bill for 2015.

This bipartisan legislation provides $491 billion in discretionary funding for our Nation's highest duty, and that is the security of country, the sustainment of our military operations, and the well-being of the brave men and women of our Armed Forces.

The bill before you today, Mr. Chairman, will help meet the most pressing needs of our military as we address current and arising threats to the safety of our Nation in an ever-changing global landscape. It also takes into account the ongoing challenges of our current fiscal situation, finding ways to trim excess spending and reduce lower priority programs without negatively affecting our troops or the success of our military missions.

Providing our military with the highest standard of readiness is a top priority in this bill. This includes procuring important equipment and resources, supporting troop training and flight time, and maintaining our bases and facilities. The bill marks investments in important defense technology R&D to help advance the safety and success of our military operations now and into the future. Investments like

these will help to preserve our military's status as the most effective and capable in the world.

The backbone of our military is, of course, the brave men and women who lay their lives on the line in defense of this Nation. With that in mind, the bill fully funds the authorized 1.8 percent pay raise for our military personnel instead of the 1 percent as requested by the President. Troop housing costs are also fully funded as authorized. This ensures that our more than 1.3 million Active Duty troops and 820,000 Guard and Reserve troops have the quality of life they deserve during their service. $31.6 billion is included for the Defense Health Program, to ensure a consistent and strong quality of care for our troops, their families, and retirees. Within this total, the bill includes increases above the President's request for cancer research, traumatic brain injury research, psychological health research, and suicide prevention outreach programs. The bill also provides an increase of $50 million above last year for sexual assault prevention and response programs, helping to address this growing challenge within our forces.

Lastly, the bill provides $79.4 billion in overseas contingency operations funding to support our troops in Afghanistan. As we have yet to receive an official budget request that reflects the most current and anticipated status of our troops in the field, this OCO funding will undoubtedly require further evaluation, particularly with the developing situations in Iraq and the Middle East.

By prioritizing these vital programs, closely scrutinizing the budget request and assessing the most current needs, the fiscal '15 Defense Appropriations bill ensures the best use of our limited Federal dollars. We made careful, targeted reductions wherever possible without adversely affecting the safety of our troops or the ongoing success of our military missions.

Mr. Chairman, as of today, we have completed 10 appropriations bills of the 12 through subcommittee. Eight have gone through full committee, and we have begun or we have completed the consideration of six bills on the floor. So, when we finish this bill and the ag bill, we will be half through the 12 bills. That has not happened in many years. We are moving at a remarkable pace, and if our colleagues in the other body continue their good work as well, we stand a great chance of completing this important work on time.

This is an even greater achievement because we have done so under regular order, with open rules that have allowed every Member to have his or her voice heard. Over the five bills we have considered on this floor so far, we have had more than 200 amendments, and I am sure we will add to that tally today. We have taken great care to weed out waste and excess and to terminate duplicative programs. In this year alone, we have found savings in every bill, and we have done all of this while abiding by the Ryan-Murray budget agreement.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I am pleased to yield to the chairman an additional minute.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Before I finish, Mr. Chairman, I can't help but compliment the new chairman of this subcommittee. This is his maiden voyage after becoming chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. I think he has steered the ship properly so far, and we look forward to the complete work that he is doing.

So congratulations to Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and to Ranking Member VISCLOSKY. They have done a great job. It is a bipartisan bill, and I urge the Members to support it.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mrs. LOWEY. I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member. The Defense Subcommittee has a long tradition of working closely together, and I sincerely appreciate these bipartisan efforts.

Mr. Chairman, this is an extremely important and timely bill as the Department is tasked with drawing down forces in Afghanistan, is appropriately responding to the upheaval in Iraq, and is facing other challenges across the globe. Totaling $490.7 billion, the base portion of the bill is approximately $200 million above the President's request. However, after accounting for appropriate increases in Active Duty pay and housing costs, the remainder of the bill is actually below the President's proposed level. Budget caps and sequestration force difficult decisions, many of which will be debated this week.

Before we begin that discussion, I want to again thank the chairman and ranking member and recognize the constraints under which they assembled the bill.

The bill includes a number of provisions I strongly support: additional investments to address the epidemic of sexual assault plaguing our military; substantial funds for health services and suicide prevention as my colleague just informed me that, in March, there were zero combat fatalities, but there were 700 suicides; a 1.8 percent increase for Active Duty pay; support for the National Guard and Reserves as well as family support programs; significant funding for cybersecurity to protect our critical infrastructure from cyber attacks; and continued support for the Israeli Cooperative missile defense programs.

I applaud the inclusion of language that fences 75 percent of funds for the Defense Healthcare Management System Modernization, requiring a report from the Secretary of Defense on acquisition and the cost of the program, plus the status of efforts to achieve interoperability with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This system is critical to the health of our servicemembers, and expeditious interoperability between the DOD and the VA is essential to ensuring quality of care as they become veterans. Through continued oversight, this committee will make sure that the DOD stays on course and delivers the promised objectives.

I remain concerned about the lack of a formal budget for the overseas contingency operations funds. With continued uncertainty about future U.S. actions in Afghanistan, work remains on this account.

Again, I appreciate the professionalism and collegiality of the process, and I look forward to further cooperation as we work toward passing this bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), a member of our Defense Subcommittee.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for yielding the time, and thank you for the work that you have done, along with Mr. VISCLOSKY, to present what I consider to be a very strong bill.

Mr. Chairman, when you look at the world today, it certainly hasn't gotten any smaller, and it certainly hasn't gotten any safer, but I think this bill balances the priorities that we need to balance and focuses on being able to meet the many, many challenges that we face in terms of our national security.

I consider it an honor to serve on this subcommittee because, when I read the Constitution, it teaches me that the number one responsibility of the Federal Government is to protect American lives. The best way to keep America safe is to keep America strong, and I think this bill does that.

We make sure that we are not making any short-term, budget-driven decisions that would be easy to make in these difficult economic times. The Navy decided that it would like to deactivate 11 ships. That is one half of our cruiser fleet. We don't need fewer ships—we need more ships—and I am proud that the subcommittee has worked out a compromise by which these ships will be modernized and their lives will be extended, and they will continue to do the work that they need to do around the globe. The people I represent back in Jacksonville, Florida, care greatly about national security. They care about the men and women in uniform, and they care about the men and women who work so hard to make sure the ships are repaired and the planes are flying in the sky.

The other thing that I wanted to point out in terms of shortsighted, budget-driven decisions is that there was an effort to say there is not enough

money to refuel the USS George Washington. That is one of our nuclear carriers. It has 25 years left of useful life if we spend the money to refuel that, and we are going to do that. That will also help us comply with the law that I helped write 8 years ago that says you have to have 11 aircraft carriers unless Congress says otherwise.

Finally, when I look at the airplanes—the new E–2D Advanced Hawkeye—these planes are relatively new, but they are incredibly important to our national security. Again, the P–8 Poseidon surveillance planes are relatively new but are critical to our national defense.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for putting together such a strong bill, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, this appropriations bill will ensure that all of the men and women of our Armed Forces have the resources they need to keep our country safe and secure.

I want to commend Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for their working together in order to craft a good bill under difficult budgetary conditions and with the uncertainty surrounding the OCO account.

Thank you to all of the members of the subcommittee for working together in a bipartisan and collaborative manner to put this bill together.

This legislation supports our troops and our military families. It strengthens the health care services available to our servicemembers, and it provides the essential support that our industrial base needs.

One issue I am very concerned about is the epidemic of sexual assault in the military. Sexual assault will not be tolerated and must be both prevented and prosecuted. There are resources in this bill to do that, and Congress must hold military leaders accountable to make sure that this progress is made.

I am also very concerned about the complete lack of oversight by this Congress in the armed drone program, which is funded under this bill.

□ 1515

The lack of transparency surrounding drone strikes hinders our ability to evaluate their impact on innocent civilians.

There are other challenges and other tough choices made in this bill, and our hearings highlighted the fact there are tougher choices to make in the coming years.

With sequestration on the horizon for FY16 and beyond, Congress needs to act responsibly to balance the need for military readiness with the many nondefense challenges domestically that the American people face.

Congress needs to stop spending billions of dollars on excess bases and obsolete weapon systems that the Department of Defense does not want, and this bill starts that process by retiring the A–10 aircraft.

I believe this bill is responsible, and an important step forward.

Again, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership and doing what we need to do together as a country to maintain our military superiority in the 21st century.

Mr. Chairman, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK), a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. VISCLOSKY, for their terrific leadership and the great work, tough work that has taken place in crafting this Defense Appropriations bill.

I also would like to thank the overall chairman and the ranking member, Mr. ROGERS and Mrs. LOWEY, for their leadership as well.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation on which our men and women in uniform, our intelligence community, and our futures depend.

America is at war, and we face continued uncertainty and new threats daily. Now is not the time to weaken our military. This bill equips the Department of Defense with the funding necessary to keep our Nation safe while making the tough decisions necessary to ensure we stay within our spending limits.

With $491 billion provided in discretionary spending, and another $80 billion as a placeholder in overseas contingency, the DOD will be able to maintain readiness at levels that protect our military's standing, support our ongoing war efforts abroad, and, most importantly, ensure that the health and well-being of our men and women in uniform and their ability to support their families is protected.

Our subcommittee, and our committee as a whole, is keenly aware of our Nation's deficits and debt. We are committed to thoroughly evaluating our spending to ensure our defense officials, both military and civilian, are accountable for smart policy objectives that responsibly steward taxpayer dollars.

We have had months of hearings, classified briefings, and bipartisan cooperation, and I believe we have successfully accomplished a bill, a good bipartisan bill, that is worthy of support.

Mr. Chairman, as I was thinking about my remarks today, I thought about that famous verse in ''America the Beautiful'' that says: ''Oh beautiful, for heroes proved, in liberating strife, who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life.''

Mr. Chairman, we have an enormous obligation, a constitutional obligation, to protect the homeland. But we have an obligation to ensure that we protect those heroes referenced in that great patriotic song.

So the least we can do today is put our partisan differences aside and join collectively to send our collective appreciation to those who serve us in uniform by passing this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding, and for your very hard work on this Department of Defense Appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, as the daughter of a veteran, I know how important it is to fully fund and support our troops. I strongly support these provisions of this legislation.

With that said, though, there are many provisions in this bill which I cannot support. These include nearly $500 billion in discretionary funding, with an increase of $4 billion above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level, which we have not seen for any other appropriations bill this year.

This inflated level of spending fails to account, mind you, for the waste, fraud, and abuse that continue at the Pentagon. We must audit the Pentagon and reduce unnecessary Pentagon spending.

This bill also includes nearly $80 billion for the overseas contingency operations slush fund, which is what it is, at a time when the President has not even made a specific request about how much is needed. This is outrageous, and this slush fund should be eliminated.

Now I will be offering several amendments to this bill, one to limit operations in Afghanistan after 2014, as well as to repeal the 2001 blank check authorization.

The farm bill, transportation bill, other bills, other authorizations have end dates. We need to end this. Come back to Congress, debate what we are going to do in Iraq, if anything, in terms of military strikes and, in fact, repeal the authorization on Afghanistan passed in 2001.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. LOBIONDO. I thank you, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, and also want to thank Ranking Member PETER VISCLOSKY for setting an example of how to take care of our Nation's dramatic needs and do it in an inclusive, bipartisan fashion.

Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN has shown great leadership in providing the resources our warfighters need to successfully defend our Nation, both here and abroad. He and I have often worked together on issues of shared interest, and I thank him for engaging with me on this very important issue.

Currently, the aircraft that are meant to protect our Nation's sovereign air space from both domestic and foreign threats, and also are routinely deployed, with the big Air Force, into war theaters overseas have gone without much-needed upgrades.

The F–16 Block 30 aircraft are tasked with a mission that absolutely cannot fail. The 177th Fighter Wing out of Atlantic City, New Jersey, along with other Air National Guard wings throughout the country, are assigned this critically important task of ensuring our home defense and, again, being able to integrate fully with the big Air Force into conflicts overseas, as they have done multiple times and, in fact, they are doing right now as we speak.

Due to the reduction of modernization programs, these F–16 Block 30 aircraft are without key combat avionic upgrades, such as the Scalable Agile Beam Radar.

Threats to our Nation continue to grow all over the world, from sovereign countries and terrorist organizations alike. The diversity of threats means that these aircraft must have the latest capability to make split-second decisions to protect our Nation here and abroad.

I ask that the chairman work with me to ensure that our Nation's airspace is properly defended, and that these F–16 aircraft are properly fitted for the threats of the 21st century.

With that, I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, my colleague, for yielding on this important issue. I agree that upgrading these legacy aircraft is vital to our Nation's defense. It is our job, as elected officials, to protect our citizens, and the mission of the Aerospace Control Alert aircraft does just that.

I will work to ensure that we include report language in conference, or take other appropriate steps regarding this issue, as we work through the appropriations process.

I thank my colleague and friend from New Jersey for bringing this vital concern to my attention.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise to discuss H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act.

I want to thank the committee for fully funding the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Student Initiative. The $34.4 million allocation supports the educational development of a growing number of minority scholars in science, technology, engineering, and math, also known as STEM.

I was proud when the House Armed Services Committee, and then the full House, approved my amendment to increase funding for this initiative by $10 million in the National Defense Authorization Act. By providing the full $34.4 million today, the Appropriations Committee and the full House will, once again, demonstrate our commitment to these outstanding scholars.

HBCUs produce one-fifth of the Nation's undergraduate science graduates and 20 percent of Black undergraduate engineers. This funding, through the NDAA, emphasizes our support for these students and encourages more minorities to take the STEM path.

In the long run, producing more qualified minority STEM graduates ensures a strong and diversified workforce, which is essential to our Nation's long-term well-being.

I have serious concerns about this bill. I wanted to use this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation for the work of the House Appropriations Committee in support of this initiative.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage in a colloquy with Ranking Member VISCLOSKY and Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN. But first I would like to commend the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership on this bill.

I am here today to address the importance of delivering the utmost care to our brave servicemen and -women who suffer from mental health disorders, and the benefits that public-private partnerships between the Department of Defense and teaching hospitals can provide, specifically to members of the National Guard and Reserve components who return from tours of duty and transition into civilian life far from a military base and without easy access to the care that they need.

I am pleased that the Department recognizes the benefits of these public-private partnerships and created a pilot program to improve efforts to treat members of the National Guard and Reserve components and their families who suffer from mental health disorders. But we must not stop there.

It is heartbreaking that preliminary readouts of suicide data for 2013 show that the Active component rate has come down about 18 percent, but the Reserve rates rose slightly. This problem is not going away.

That is why I am so pleased that the defense bill included language in the bill's report, recommended by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and me, that encourages the Secretary of Defense to expand this initial pilot to include additional community partners through a competitive and merit-based process.

There are a number of teaching and clinical hospitals around the country that specialize in mental health treatment and can make a real difference in addressing the soaring demand for mental health treatment.

I would like to work with the chairman and the ranking member to ensure that the Department has the necessary funding to expand this vital pilot program so more of our Nation's brave servicemembers are able to receive the best care possible.

Mr. Chairman, at this time I am honored to yield to Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman from New York's kind words.

The committee recognized that suicide remains a very serious problem in the military, particularly among National Guard and Reserve troops.

I am proud to say that our bill strongly supports the efforts of the services to address this crisis. The report includes language which speaks directly to the gentleman's interest in the pilot program that was created to treat servicemembers suffering from mental health disorders in the National Guard and Reserve components through community partnerships.

In addition, the bill provides $158 million in requested funding for suicide prevention, mental health, and risk resiliency programs for the services. This includes an extra $39 million for suicide prevention programs, including the $19 million specifically for our special operators.

All the military services have taken significant steps to make suicide prevention a top priority and to improve the resiliency and health of our servicemembers.

We support those efforts, and I will continue to work with the gentleman from New York and his colleague, Mr. KING, to address these important issues.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would echo the sentiments about the importance of public-private partnerships and including teaching and clinical hospitals in finding ways to provide the best care possible to our servicemembers.

Mental health disorders are a growing trend in our military, and we must use all resources at our disposal to address the demand for treatment.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his interest and for the colloquy.

□ 1530

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the ranking member for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman from New Jersey, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN.

First, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the ranking member for your efforts in putting together this legislation. In particular, I appreciate that this bill provides funding for the support for international sporting competition fund.

This account is crucial for ensuring the safety and security of countless Americans who participate in different Olympic initiatives, including the preparations for the Olympics, Paralympics, and Special Olympics.

The United States has a rich tradition of supporting the Special Olympics, both in the United States and abroad. These unique events empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, while promoting acceptance for all and fostering communities of understanding on a global scale.

Approximately 1,000 athletes participated in the first Special Olympics World Games in 1968. By comparison, there has been a sevenfold increase, with 7,000 athletes expected to participate in the 2015 Special Olympic World Games, which will be held in Los Angeles, California.

With this substantial growth, there has come an increased need for security. It is important for this legislation to match as best possible our country's previous funding commitments. This critical funding need could be addressed either through additional funding for the support for international sporting competition fund or unobligated funds at the Department of Defense.

I asked for and look forward to the opportunity to work with the chairman, ranking member, and all of our colleagues who wish to continue our country's support for the Special Olympics through any available funds in this legislation.

At this point, I yield to the chairman for his response.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. The committee has a long history of support for international sporting competitions. Ranking Member VISCLOSKY and I will work with you to ensure that the remaining prior year balances appropriated for this purpose are spent for their intended purpose.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the chairman and the ranking member.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, at this point, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Chairman, as the ranking member may be aware, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs are conducted at schools throughout our great Nation.

They are traditionally led by retired military officers and enlisted personnel, and the program prepares high school students for leadership roles. JROTC teaches the young men and women the kind of discipline and self-confidence required to succeed outside the classroom.

In my congressional district is Shelton High School, which successfully operated their Navy JROTC program for 35 years. One year, they dropped three students below the minimum threshold, were placed on probation, and yet, despite the subsequent year exceeding the enrollment threshold, they were required to get to the end of the line, notwithstanding the 35 years of successful operation.

I don't think Shelton High School ought to have to do that. I don't think any high school in the United States ought to have to do that.

The Shelton High School Navy JROTC program provided unmatched leadership opportunities for students, and it instilled exactly the kind of values we want to instill in young people: patriotism, national service, and a sense of accomplishment and responsibility.

Additionally, this JROTC program, in its community, served as the color guard at community events and helped provide volunteers for community organizations. Its absence is now being acutely felt throughout all of the county.

So I respectfully request that we somehow find a way to work together to ensure the Navy has the necessary funds to support these programs at Shelton High School and throughout the Nation.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I certainly understand the gentleman's concerns and appreciate him making the committee aware of this issue.

I know that the Junior ROTC program has made a difference in the lives of many students, as well as our country. I would be happy to work with the gentleman on providing funding for this important program.

Mr. HECK of Washington. I thank the gentleman for agreeing to work with us, and I thank you and the chairman for your excellent work on this legislation, which I look forward to supporting.

I also want you to know that, when you tell me you will work with me, I know it to be the case because both of you are men of your word.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I thank the gentleman and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I thank you, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, for yielding for the purpose of a colloquy.

I want to thank you for your tireless efforts for our Nation's brave servicemen and -women and, just as importantly, for those who served and never made it home. This legislation fully funds the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Personnel Office account. The hardworking staff over at the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, or JPAC, work tirelessly to track, locate, and recover these fallen heroes, and I thank them for their continued efforts.

I would like to have a moment to discuss a hero of the Vietnam war. Major Lewis P. Smith III majored in music at Penn State and graduated in 1964. He planned to teach music after his obligation to the Air Force was over.

Upon graduation from Penn State, Smith was trained on the T–38 and C–130 aircraft for the next 3 years, sent to Vietnam, and was assigned to the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron in Pleiku, South Vietnam.

On May 30, 1968, Smith piloted a Cessna O–2A Skymaster aircraft in Saravane Province, Laos. During the mission, Smith encountered enemy fire, resulting in the crash of his plane.

Electronic signals were heard at the scene, indicating that he had survived the crash, but he was not rescued. Major Smith was listed as missing in action and is honored on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, panel 62W, line 2.

Major Smith's family has been working with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command to recover his remains. The excavation site in Laos has been on the list for over 2 years, and the trip to excavate the crash site has been postponed twice due to budget pressures and sequestration.

Major Smith's family has reached out to me to help with their efforts to bring Lewis home. While I understand the budget-constrained times, the recovery of fallen servicemembers will bring closure to the families after such a loss.

Mr. Chairman, I ask for your support and urge the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command to schedule the recovery trip to Laos and to bring home Major Lewis Smith's remains to his family and his country.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I understand the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office's mission is to provide the families of servicemembers lost in battle or taken as prisoners of war with information and, in applicable cases, to recover personnel from World War II, the Korean war, the cold war, the Vietnam war, and the Iraqi theater of operations.

I fully support the office and the work they do in searching and reuniting lost soldiers with their families. Returning the fallen servicemembers to their families is a priority, and I support your strong efforts and advocacy on behalf of Major Smith and his family. It is commendable. We honor it, and I thank you for bringing this to our attention.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to engage in a colloquy with the distinguished ranking member of the subcommittee.

As many of our colleagues know, thousands of men and women from our Armed Forces have returned from Iraq

and Afghanistan with a variety of service-connected illnesses and complications caused by exposure to the noxious fumes of open-air burn pits and other airborne hazards.

There is a growing body of research about the disabling effects of burn pit exposure that confirms that such exposure is the cause of serious illnesses, including various cancers that have killed veterans and have left countless others seriously ill.

Leading researchers in this area, including Dr. Anthony Szema of Stony Brook University's School of Medicine in my district, are discovering clear evidence that fumes from burn pits have sickened the personnel deployed in their vicinity.

While their precise numbers remain unknown, it is estimated that up to 30,000 Active Duty servicemembers and veterans might be suffering as a result of their exposure to burn pits. We must learn from past mistakes to stop open-air burn pit exposure before such exposure becomes the agent orange for this generation of veterans.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I certainly understand the gentleman's concerns and appreciate him making the committee aware of this issue. I would be happy to work with him to provide attention and resources to this issue.

I am very pleased that he brought this to our attention today on the floor.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. I thank the gentleman for his response and his leadership. I also thank the chairman of the subcommittee for his leadership, and I look forward to working with them on this issue.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would be delighted to yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member and the chairman for including language supporting continued work on lithium ion battery research.

However, in reviewing the underlying bill, I am concerned about the possible interpretation by the Office of Naval Research with respect to this effort. I believe it is important that the Office of Naval Research emphasize battery safety as a part of this work.

I would also request the opportunity to continue to work with the chairman and the ranking member to allocate research and development funding to promote battery safety and to retain such funding through conference on the underlying bill.

I hope to make it clear that this Chamber encourages investment in battery safety research.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I would want to make it clear to all of my colleagues, first of all, that my good friend from Wisconsin has been working on this issue for a number of years. I remember a meeting we had about a year ago on this issue, and he continues to press ahead, which I appreciate.

I certainly will continue to work with him on the development of lithium ion battery technology and promote battery safety as an important part of this research, and I appreciate the gentleman's concern, as well as his good work.

Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

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

During consideration of the bill for amendment, each amendment shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment. No pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, or their respective designees, may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD designated for that purpose. Amendments so printed shall be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4870

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, for military functions administered by the Department of Defense and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

MILITARY PERSONNEL

MILITARY PERSONNEL, ARMY

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Army on active duty, (except members of reserve components provided for elsewhere), cadets, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97–377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $41,183,729,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, NAVY

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Navy on active duty (except members of the Reserve provided for elsewhere), midshipmen, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97–377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $27,387,344,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, MARINE CORPS

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Marine Corps on active duty (except members of the Reserve provided for elsewhere); and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97–377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $12,785,431,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, AIR FORCE

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Air Force on active duty (except members of reserve components provided for elsewhere), cadets, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97–377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $27,564,362,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, ARMY

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Army Reserve on active duty under sections 10211, 10302, and 3038 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty or other duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $4,304,159,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, NAVY

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Navy Reserve on active duty under section 10211 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $1,836,024,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, MARINE CORPS

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Marine Corps Reserve on active duty under section 10211 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty, and for members of the Marine Corps platoon leaders class, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $659,224,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, AIR FORCE

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for

personnel of the Air Force Reserve on active duty under sections 10211, 10305, and 8038 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty or other duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $1,652,148,000.

NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL, ARMY

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Army National Guard while on duty under section 10211, 10302, or 12402 of title 10 or section 708 of title 32, United States Code, or while serving on duty under section 12301(d) of title 10 or section 502(f) of title 32, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty or other duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $7,644,632,000.

□ 1545

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOHMERT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 7, line 2, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $41,492,000)''.

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $41,492,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, right now, as I speak, there are thousands of unaccompanied minors, many of whom are 15, 16, and 17 years of age, but nonetheless, they are classified as minors, under 18, and our Border Patrol is being overwhelmed.

Our ICE agents, who are supposed to deport people improperly here, are being overwhelmed. As one ICE agent said yesterday, Chris Crane, that is the union president for the ICE agents, he said, basically:

We are having to change diapers, and so there is no criminal interdiction going on. We are not able to do our jobs because of the thousands of children that are coming.

I saw a report today from CBP, the Border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection, and they were saying the interviews they are doing yield results from the children saying that they are coming to America now because of a new law that the President has that allows children to come in and stay here if they just get here quick enough.

It has caused a national emergency. So what $41,492,000 does is provide for 1,000 National Guard troops. We know in the amendment we cannot legislate, but in order for the money to be available for the National Guard troops to assist on the border, the money needs to be available, and, therefore, we are asking that the money be moved from one account over into an account that could be utilized for National Guard troops to help with what has been termed by so many people as a humanitarian crisis.

Why is it a crisis? Because people in the administration are refusing, and failing to refuse, to do the job and faithfully execute the laws of this Nation. They have done a terrible job, and it is a great injustice to all those children who have been sent by aunts and uncles, by parents, and by others. Just get to the border, and if their parents are sending them, we get reports that the parents are hoping once they get in then they can bring the parents in in order to take care of them.

There are other reports, as we have seen from a Federal judge in south Texas, that the Department of Homeland Security is now engaging in human trafficking. It is part of the lure of these thousands and thousands of children every week coming in, that if they get to the border and either one of their parents or any relative is in the country, then DHS will engage in human trafficking and try to take them wherever in the country they think their parents might be, even though they may be here illegally.

So this money is to help with a Federal problem that should not be costing the States. It is a Federal problem, as the Department of Justice has indicated through our Attorney General's suing States like Arizona and saying that you can't deal with this problem, this is a Federal issue, you must have hands off.

Well, the locals need help. This will provide help. And that is why I am asking to move $41,492,000 over in the DOD budget so that we can help with National Guard troops when and where they are needed.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I insist on my point of order.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment proposes to amend portions of the bill not yet read.

The amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of outlays in the bill.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I do.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, it is only the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, accounting that would say moving $41,492,000 from one account by that same amount into another account is having more in outlays than is being taken from one account. I think it is fuzzy math that the CBO is engaged in. To most of us, if you move $41,492,000 out of one account and you put that same amount in another account, it is not causing more outlays than we were removing from the account.

But I will leave that to the ruling of the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the relevant Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOHMERT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 7, line 2, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $41,492,000)''.

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $57,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, anticipating the fuzzy math from CBO that taking $41,492,000 from one account and putting that same amount in another account would not be considered equal, I went ahead and have another amendment that reduces the one account by $57 million, over $15 million more than we are transferring into the account that could be used for National Guard troops, so that, according to the fuzzy CBO math, the reduction will equal the increase.

But with that said, no matter how fuzzy the accounting is here in Washington, there is a massive problem on our border, and for this body to turn away when we can force the President's hand—he is not faithfully executing the laws of his office, he is not enforcing the immigration laws, and he is not enforcing the border. We can force his hand by making the proceeds available, the $41,492,000, to get the National Guard, make them available for this purpose, and then we think the outcry from America will force the President's

hand to get these people there, and the Governors will have a stake in this claim, but it is a Federal problem.

I continue to insist on this. Americans across the country are watching what we are doing. We need to be responsible and faithfully execute the laws of this country, and that is without regard to whether or not the President does. We have an obligation to get this money where it is needed. We believe this will do that, and so, Mr. Chairman, we move this amendment.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I insist on my point of order.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment proposes to amend portions of the bill not yet read.

The amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of outlays in the bill.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I certainly do.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized.

Mr. GOHMERT. Because under the math of CBO, as fuzzy as it is, by reducing one account by $57 million, even CBO says, yes, that takes care of equalizing the outlay of $41,492,000 in the account to increase that for the National Guard. So it should have been addressed with the first amendment that I made. But this second one certainly addresses the fuzzy math that CBO provides. This does not increase the amount of expenditures over what is being taken from another account.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Seeing none, the Chair is prepared to rule.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the relevant Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chair, parliamentary inquiry.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. GOHMERT. My inquiry is this, Mr. Chairman.

Can the Chair tell me how reducing one account by $57 million is not adequate to cover a $41,492,000 increase in another account? It is $15.5 million more we are reducing than the amount we are increasing.

So my inquiry is, please, Mr. Chairman, explain how the increase of $41,492,000 is more than the $57 million reduction.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair based the ruling on the fact that the amendment increased budget outlays.

Mr. GOHMERT. The rates are addressed, Mr. Chairman, by this $15.5 million amount. That is covered. Even CBO admits that. So I don't know where the chairman is getting his numbers. They are certainly not supported even by the fuzziest of math of our CBO.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair has ruled that the amendment increases the amount of outlays in the bill and is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL, AIR FORCE

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Air National Guard on duty under section 10211, 10305, or 12402 of title 10 or section 708 of title 32, United States Code, or while serving on duty under section 12301(d) of title 10 or section 502(f) of title 32, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty or other duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, $3,110,587,000.

TITLE II

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance of the Army, as authorized by law, $32,671,980,000: *Provided*, That not to exceed $12,478,000 can be used for emergencies and extraordinary expenses, to be expended on the approval or authority of the Secretary of the Army, and payments may be made on his certificate of necessity for confidential military purposes.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance of the Navy and the Marine Corps, as authorized by law, $39,073,543,000: *Provided*, That not to exceed $15,055,000 can be used for emergencies and extraordinary expenses, to be expended on the approval or authority of the Secretary of the Navy, and payments may be made on his certificate of necessity for confidential military purposes.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance of the Marine Corps, as authorized by law, $5,984,680,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance of the Air Force, as authorized by law, $35,024,160,000: *Provided*, That not to exceed $7,699,000 can be used for emergencies and extraordinary expenses, to be expended on the approval or authority of the Secretary of the Air Force, and payments may be made on his certificate of necessity for confidential military purposes.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance of activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), as authorized by law, $30,896,741,000: *Provided*, That not more than $15,000,000 may be used for the Combatant Commander Initiative Fund authorized under section 166a of title 10, United States Code: *Provided further*, That not to exceed $36,000,000 can be used for emergencies and extraordinary expenses, to be expended on the approval or authority of the Secretary of Defense, and payments may be made on his certificate of necessity for confidential military purposes: *Provided further*, That of the funds provided under this heading, not less than $36,262,000 shall be made available for the Procurement Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program, of which not less than $3,600,000 shall be available for centers defined in 10 U.S.C. 2411(1)(D): *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to plan or implement the consolidation of a budget or appropriations liaison office of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the office of the Secretary of a military department, or the service headquarters of one of the Armed Forces into a legislative affairs or legislative liaison office: *Provided further*, That $8,881,000, to remain available until expended, is available only for expenses relating to certain classified activities, and may be transferred as necessary by the Secretary of Defense to operation and maintenance appropriations or research, development, test and evaluation appropriations, to be merged with and to be available for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That any ceiling on the investment item unit cost of items that may be purchased with operation and maintenance funds shall not apply to the funds described in the preceding proviso: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

□ 1600

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentlewoman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for working with me on this very important amendment. This is a very simple amendment that would provide a $5 million increase to available funds for research, development, testing, and evaluation related to multiple sclerosis under the Defense Health Program.

These funds would increase funding for multiple sclerosis research under DOD to $10 million. This amendment fulfills the request of $10 million for MS research that was included in a bipartisan letter signed by 78 Members of Congress earlier this year, including cochairs of the Congressional MS Caucus, Representative MICHAEL BURGESS and Representative VAN HOLLEN, and I will include the Dear Colleague letter for the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, March 28, 2014.

Hon. RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. PETE VISCLOSKY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Defense Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN FRELINGHUYSEN AND RANKING MEMBER VISCLOSKY: On behalf of all people living with multiple sclerosis (MS), we would like to thank you for your past support for funding MS research through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP). As you know, MS is a chronic, unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. MS is generally diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, during the prime of an individual's life. Sadly, the cause of MS is still unknown and there is no cure. While we recognize the fiscal constraints the country faces, it is critical that we continue to fund this important research, which holds great promise for our military service members and all those who are affected by MS. We respectfully ask that you direct $10 million to fund the MS research program for Fiscal Year 2015.

MS interrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. Every hour in the United States, someone is newly diagnosed with the disease. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research are improving the possibility of a world free of MS.

Currently, the FDA-approved treatments that are available to treat MS only slow the progression of the disease for a subset of the MS population. Of these available medical treatments, many are not effective for patients and cannot be tolerated by many others. Additionally, the cost of treating and living with MS is costly—approximately $69,000 annually.

Many U.S. veterans have stories and symptoms of multiple sclerosis. Preliminary evidence suggests that some combat veterans could have an increased risk of developing MS.

Over 23,000 veterans are being treated for MS through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

A study in the Annals of Neurology identified 5,345 cases of ''service-connected'' MS among U.S. veterans.

An epidemiologic study found a two-fold increase in MS between 1993 and 2000 in Kuwait, which suggests a potential environmental trigger for MS.

The VA is currently funding two MS Centers of Excellence to provide clinical care and education for these veterans, but now physicians at these institutions are seeking funding to explore a potential link between MS and combat service.

MS research has the potential to help all those living with MS, including our veterans. We ask that you support MS research by including $10 million in funding for the MS program within the, CDMRP in the Fiscal Year 2015 Defense Appropriations. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Burgess, M.D., Henry C. ''Hank'' Johnson, Jr., André Carson, Daniel W. Lipinski, James R. Langevin, Charles B. Rangel, Chris Van Hollen, Eliot L. Engel, Sander Levin, Yvette D. Clarke, John Yarmuth, Frederica S. Wilson.

Peter DeFazio, Sheila Jackson Lee, Tony Cardenas, Christopher H. Smith, Mike Michaud, Ron Kind, Brad Schneider, Lloyd Doggett, Joe Courtney, Peter King, Jon Runyan, Alcee L. Hastings, Rick Larsen, Barbara Lee, Donald M. Payne, Jr., Danny K. Davis, Ann MacLane Kuster, C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger.

Jan Schakowsky, Steve Israel, Michael Grimm, Carolyn McCarthy, Steve Cohen, Luis V. Gutiérrez, Tim Bishop, Gerald E. Connolly, Tim Murphy, Carol Shea-Porter, Stephen F. Lynch, Rush Holt, Chellie Pingree, David N. Cicilline, Bill Foster, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Jim McDermott, Elijah E. Cummings.

John F. Tierney, Chaka Fattah, Dave Loebsack, Matt Cartwright, Juan Vargas, John Delaney, David Price, Jim Himes, Julia Brownley, Lois Frankel, Collin C. Peterson, Alan Grayson, Gregory W. Meeks, Spencer Bachus, John Garamendi, Robert A. Brady, Marc Veasey, Cheri Bustos.

Mark Pocan, Elizabeth H. Esty, Ann Kirkpatrick, Susan A. Davis, Dan Kildee, Dan Benishek, M.D., Ben Ray Luján, Ron Barber, Grace Meng, Tim Walz, John Conyers, Jr., Mike Thompson.

Ms. LEE of California. There are 2 million people worldwide living with MS. This complicated and unpredictable neurological disease interrupts the flow of information within the brain and between the brain and the body.

MS is a chronic disease that can often be debilitating for those living with it, and the symptoms of MS are as diverse as the people it impacts.

I am pleased to introduce this amendment to the Defense Appropriations bill, since MS has a significant impact on our armed services. Some 23,000 veterans are currently being treated for MS, with more than 5,000 cases having been identified as service connected.

Because of increased research funding in MS, the first disease-modifying drugs became available for people living with MS 20 years ago. However, these drugs only work for a subset of the population, and many people living with MS still have no viable treatment options.

Increased research funding could give scientists a better understanding of the disease, which could potentially unveil new therapies.

I will close by adding that I understand, on a very personal level, the impact of this disease. My sister, Mildred, shows me every day what life is like to live with the disease, and I am consistently amazed by her strength and her bravery. She and the millions of people around the world living with MS are really a testament to the importance of making stronger investments to find a cure.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of my sister Mildred and on behalf of all of those living with MS, on behalf of the families and caregivers, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LEE of California. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. First, I commend you on your amendment, and I withdraw my reservation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The reservation of the point of order is withdrawn.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, and I urge a ''yes'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000) (increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, there is an important program to help our Special Forces troops and families. It is called the Preservation of the Force and Family program.

Admiral McRaven, who is the commander of Special Operations Command, has told the Armed Services Committee that this is his highest priority. It combines several kinds of help and assistance to wounded warriors and to their families in a holistic way. For those who are in it and have benefited from it, it has been a tremendous, tremendous program.

What I am proposing in this amendment is to take $5 million from the Special Operation Command's budget request for flying hours, which in my understanding was increased by the Appropriations Committee, which is normally an excellent thing to fund, but they even gave, in my understanding, Mr. Chairman, above and beyond what the command had asked for.

So based on that, I am asking for a transfer back of $5 million from the flying hours budget to the Preservation of the Force and Family Program.

This aligns with what the Armed Services Committee had put in the NDAA after their deliberations in committee. I would ask that the House adopt this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition. The subcommittee

has always done everything we can to take care of our special operators, and that is reflected in the mark.

I do believe the gentleman's amendment is philosophically inconsistent with the underlying bill. I cannot justify devoting significant resources to SOCOM's $1 billion proposal to establish their own separate contractor-staffed facilities, when our services are undergoing tremendous downsizing pressures. It runs contrary to what we are trying to do in the bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, the committee chair.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Further, SOCOM has provided no information or data to support this costly new endeavor, and Congress has raised questions in both the authorization bill and the appropriations bill about the affordability and efficacy of this program.

As our mark reflects, we have also raised serious concerns regarding SOCOM's prioritization of its requirements. Again this year, SOCOM proposed to fund their flying hour readiness programs at only 67 percent of their requirement, so they could fund these new contractors and facilities. They then made restoration of flying hours their number one unfunded priority.

I believe it is ill-advised to provide a 50 percent increase to hire personal trainers, sports nutritionists, and sports psychologists for special operators at an average cost in excess of $200,000.

With all due respect, all those who serve in our military—men and women, whether they be Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve or whether they are special operators—deserve the type of equipment and programs that keep them healthy and steadfast.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks and would also point out that the committee has raised significant questions regarding duplication with service-related facilities and services by the Special Forces.

More importantly—and I think this is key—we must be careful not to create or give the perception that we are treating Special Forces differently than anyone else who serves this country in uniform.

Anyone who puts the uniform of the United States military on, they are all special. I strongly oppose the gentleman's amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I would agree with the assertion that every single fighting man and woman is special. The Special Operations Forces do have some tremendous stresses that they can undergo, especially in the kind of combat missions that they perform.

I believe that this is a program that has been successful in preventing suicide, so for that reason, I think it is timely. It is appropriate.

There are different programs to treat our wounded warriors who have PTSD, and every program does not work for every soldier, sailor, airman, or marine; but for those who do get the treatment they need, it is literally a lifesaver.

For that reason, I think it is a priority to address the aftereffects of PTSD, and this would be a very good program. I do appreciate the Appropriations Committee work that they do and the tough choices that they are constantly making, and I respect that, but I think this is a good choice, so I offer the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would simply close by saying that all members of the military are equal and that this amendment is unwarranted, and I do oppose it.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey if he has anything to add.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, we have $19 million specifically to address the high incidence of suicide among our special operators, so it is not only servicewide, but we recognize the special burdens that special operators bear through their incredible work.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $500,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $500,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $500,000)''.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentlewoman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, this is a daunting time to be on the floor of the House during Defense Appropriations, and I add my appreciation to the chairman and to the ranking member for the bipartisan approach with which they have treated our men and women.

As we speak, there are soldiers who have left our soil, and they are in Iraq protecting our men and women at our embassy. There is never a time that we do not call upon our soldiers to stand and to defend our Nation or our citizens. My amendment recognizes that.

My amendment is a budget-neutral amendment. It adds $500,000 by reducing another account by $500,000 for an emphasis on PTSD, for outreach toward hard-to-reach veterans, especially those who are homeless or reside in underserved urban and rural areas.

Let me congratulate the committee for its hard work in recognition of the crisis of PTSD, but let me also cite that Houston is the third largest military retirement community in the United States, exceeded only by San Antonio and San Diego, California.

□ 1615

Houston is the second highest military recruiting district in the United States for all Armed Forces, to include the Coast Guard, and many return back to Houston. Twenty-three percent of the Houston adult homeless population are veterans, and nearly 2,500 men and women. I see them every day in my district. I have several homeless facilities that are particularly for veterans. As I interact with them, I see the clear signs of PTSD.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with this committee in establishing a PTSD center in one of our hospitals that was not a veteran facility. An estimated 7.8 percent of Americans will experience PTSD at some point in their lives, with women 10.4 percent and men 5 percent to develop PTSD; as well, estimates of PTSD from the gulf war as high as 10 percent; estimates from the war in Afghanistan are between 6 percent and 11 percent; and current estimates of PTSD in military personnel who served in Iraq range from 12 percent to 20 percent.

Posttraumatic stress disorder is of course something of great concern, and many times I have seen, again, these individuals who are in these very facilities. My amendment will help to ensure that no soldier is left behind and the urgent need for more outreach toward hard-to-reach veterans suffering from PTSD, especially those who are homeless and reside in underserved areas.

Mr. Chairman, I have been to what we call stand-downs. We have a number of them in our community. I started going to stand-downs way before I came to the United States Congress. These are street events that soldiers, retirees, or veterans come together, and particularly those who are homeless. I would say to you they are the most moving experiences that I have ever seen. The soldiers, the veterans are glad to see people who care. Many of them are suffering, but many of them—all of them—put on that uniform and served us.

Joe, for example, saw a good deal of active combat during his time in the

military. Some incidents in particular have never left his mind, like the horrifying sight of Gary, a close comrade and friend, being blown up by a land mine. Even when he returned to civilian life, those images haunted him. Scenes from the battle would run repeatedly through his mind and disrupt his focus on work. Filling up at the gas station, for example, the smell of diesel immediately rekindled certain horrific memories. At other times, he had difficulty remembering the past, as if some events were too painful to allow back into his mind. He found himself avoiding socializing with old military buddies, as this would inevitably trigger a new round of memories. His girlfriend complained that he was always pent up and irritable, as if he were on guard, and Joe noticed that at night he had difficulty relaxing. When he heard loud noises, such as a truck backfiring, he literally jumped as if he were readying himself for combat. He began to drink heavily.

I am glad that this committee has recognized the importance of providing these services for our soldiers, no matter the long range of time that they have been out, that they are now veterans, that they are still important and they still were willing to put on the uniform.

In light of our crisis with the Veterans Affairs, I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment providing extra outreach to those veterans who did not think for one moment to put on that uniform and defend their Nation. Let's now provide them with that extra comfort.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I withdraw my reservation.

We on the committee commend the gentlewoman for her concern for the health and well-being of all of our brave men and women in uniform. Taking care of the health and welfare of our servicemembers is of paramount importance and a concern to all of us.

I can assure you that both Mr. VISCLOSKY and I will work with you as well as the money we put in our bill to address the concerns you have rightly raised.

I thank you for yielding.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, I don't know if you heard, I thanked you for your caring response, along with the ranking member, putting together a bill that really recognizes service to our veterans.

With that, let me conclude and ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment. I indicate that Mr. CONYERS of Michigan joins me in this amendment.

I thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for shepherding this legislation to the floor and for their devotion to the men and women of the Armed Forces who risk their lives to keep our nation safe.

Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to explain my amendment, which is virtually identical to an amendment that I offered and was adopted in last year's Defense Appropriations Act (H.R. 2397).

My amendment increases funding for the PTSD by $500,000. These funds should be used toward outreach activities targeting hard to reach veterans, especially those who are homeless or reside in underserved urban and rural areas, who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Mr. Chair, along with traumatic brain injury, PTSD is the signature wound suffered by the brave men and women fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq, and far off lands to defend the values and freedom we hold dear.

For those of us whose daily existence is not lived in harm's way, it is difficult to imagine the horrific images that American servicemen and women deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters of war see on a daily basis.

In an instant a suicide bomber, an IED, or an insurgent can obliterate your best friend and right in front of your face. Yet, you are trained and expected to continue on with the mission, and you do, even though you may not even have reached your 20th birthday.

But there always comes a reckoning. And it usually comes after the stress and trauma of battle is over and you are alone with your thoughts and memories.

And the horror of those desperate and dangerous encounters with the enemy and your own mortality come flooding back.

PTSD was first brought to public attention in relation to war veterans, but it can result from a variety of traumatic incidents, such as torture, being kidnapped or held captive, bombings, or natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes.

People with PTSD may startle easily, become emotionally numb (especially in relation to people with whom they used to be close), lose interest in things they used to enjoy, have trouble feeling affectionate, be irritable, become more aggressive, or even become violent.

They avoid situations that remind them of the original incident, and anniversaries of the incident are often very difficult.

Most people with PTSD repeatedly relive the trauma in their thoughts during the day and in nightmares when they sleep. These are called flashbacks. A person having a flashback may lose touch with reality and believe that the traumatic incident is happening all over again.

Mr. Chair, the fact of the matter is that most veterans with PTSD also have other psychiatric disorders, which are a consequence of PTSD. These veterans have co-occurring disorders, which include depression, alcohol and/or drug abuse problems, panic, and/or other anxiety disorders.

My amendment recognizes that these soldiers are first and foremost, human. They carry their experiences with them.

Ask a veteran of Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan about the frequency of nightmares they experience, and one will realize that serving in the Armed Forces leaves a lasting impression, whether good or bad.

My amendment will help ensure that "no soldier is left behind" by addressing the urgent need for more outreach toward hard to reach veterans suffering from PTSD, especially those who are homeless or reside in underserved urban and rural areas of our country.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment.

PTSD ANECDOTES

ANECDOTE #1: (VETERAN)

Joe saw a good deal of active combat during his time in the military. Some incidents in particular had never left his mind—like the horrifying sight of Gary, a close comrade and friend, being blown-up by a land mine.

Even when he returned from to civilian life, these images haunted him. Scenes repeatedly through his mind and disrupt his focus on work.

Filing up at the gas station, for example, the smell of diesel immediately rekindled certain horrific memories. At other times, he had difficulty remembering the past—as if some events were too painful to allow back in his mind. He found himself avoiding himself socializing with old military buddies, as this would inevitably trigger a new round of memories.

His girlfriend complained that he was always pent-up and irritable—as if he were on guard, and Joe noticed that at night he had difficulty falling asleep.

When he heard loud noises, such as a truck back-firing he literally jumped, as if here were readying himself for combat. He began to drink heavily.

ANECDOTE #2: (AS TOLD BY A MILITARY SPOUSE)

My husband's PTS manifested itself in different ways. I remember Fourth of July at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., when we were all standing outside listening to the band, enjoying the picnic and listening to fireworks.

The fireworks bothered Adrian because they sounded so much like gunfire.

It made other soldiers upset too, and we all went inside. I thought it was ironic because the celebration was supposed to be for the American soldiers; they couldn't even enjoy it.

He'd see a can on the side of the road and swerve, thinking it was an improvised explosive device.

When he'd go out to dinner with other soldiers, I'd say it looked like a ''The Last Supper'' painting because they'd all sit there with their backs against the wall.

If a room became too busy, he'd want to leave. He'd suddenly become unfriendly or unapproachable.

At first, I confused his behavior with depression, or I thought maybe he was just tired. I also couldn't help but think it had to do with me; I'm only human.

I was fortunate that Adrian was willing to get help once he got back. Once he was diagnosed, I knew we'd know better how to deal with his symptoms. I educated myself on PTSD; I went to his group therapist and reached out to the Real Warriors Campaign for information. But the most important thing I did was listen to Adrian.

ANECDOTE #3: (TEEN-AGED GIRL)

Maria was only 15 when she was attacked by a group of men on the way home from school. They took turns screaming abuse at her and then they each raped her. Finally, they tried to stab her to death and would almost certainly have succeeded had the police not arrived on the scene.

For months after this horrifying event, Maria was not herself. She was unable to keep the memories of the attack out of her mind. At night she would have terrible dreams of rape, and would wake up screaming.

She had difficulty walking back from school because the route took her past the site of the attack, so she would have to go

the long way home. She felt as though her emotions were numbed, and as though she had no real future. At home she was anxious, tense, and easily startled. She felt ''dirty'' and somehow shamed by the event, and she resolved not to tell close friends about the event, in case they too rejected her.

ANECDOTE #4: (CIVILIAN WOMAN)

A 35-year-old lady was riding a bicycle in a carpark when she was hit from behind by a car.

Six months after the accident, she still had frequent vivid and intrusive memories of the incident.

She described seeing the car's wheels stopping just in front of her face and hearing the screeching sound of the brakes.

It felt as if it were happening again each time she recalled it. She jumped whenever she heard loud traffic noises and especially when she heard car brakes screeching.

She stayed in her room much more than usual, avoided using the bicycles at all and avoided travelling in any vehicle as much as she could.

She felt helpless and useless to overcome her symptoms even though her family were warm and encouraging to her.

Houston is the 3rd largest military retirement community in the United States (exceeded by San Antonio, TX and San Diego, CA).

Houston is the 2nd largest Veterans Community in the United States in terms of resident Veterans.

Houston is the 2nd largest Military Recruiting District in the United States for all Armed Forces Services, to include the U.S. Coast Guard.

23% of the Houston adult homeless population are veterans, nearly 2,500 men and women.

The Acting CHAIR. The reservation of a point of order is withdrawn.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chair, I am offering the second Lamborn amendment, 052.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 12, line 17, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, when you look at press accounts on what is happening at our southwest border, we are being overwhelmed. This amendment would take $5 million and give it to the Army National Guard out of the Department of Defense's administration operations account so that the National Guard is better able to get people and station them at our southwest border. They do not have dedicated funding or the additional funding they need for this border protection mission, yet they are involved in trying to establish order at the border.

The primary role of the Federal Government is to provide for our national security, and securing our borders is part of that national security mission. Mr. Chairman, I believe that this $5 million would be better spent on securing our border than adding more people to the Secretary of Defense's staff.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I appreciate the gentleman's interest in defending our borders, appreciate your raising this important issue, and we support your amendment.

Thank you for yielding.

Mr. LAMBORN. Reclaiming my time, I appreciate the chairman's hard work and for his support of this amendment.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. JEFFRIES

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from New York and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Chair, let me first thank the distinguished chairman as well as the distinguished ranking member for their great work with respect to this legislation.

This amendment makes a modest adjustment to the bill that would increase funding for the Defense Health Program by $10 million. It is budget neutral by reducing the Department of Defense's departmentwide operation and maintenance funds by a corresponding amount.

Let me first take this opportunity to express my strong support for the critical work of the Defense Department overall. The adjustment made by this amendment will still leave the Department with an extremely robust amount of operation and maintenance funding while ensuring that necessary resources are available for vital research and development that will aid both servicemembers and civilians alike.

The Defense Health Program oversees all medical and health care programs for the Defense Department. DHP's research and development activities help advance medical research to provide innovative solutions for servicemembers and their families facing medical trauma as well as advance the state of medical science in areas that benefit our broader society.

Over the last 10 years, there has been a significant increase in the amount of reported cases of PTSD in servicemembers. These increases are seen in both those deployed overseas as well as in nondeployed servicemembers. For those servicemembers who are deployed, the number of incidents of PTSD has increased twelvefold over the last 10 years. For those not deployed, the number of reported incident cases has nearly doubled. The annual total for reported PTSD cases has remained at unprecedentedly high levels over the last 5 years.

While we are currently winding down the war in Afghanistan, American troops continue to see action on the battlefield. With more of these troops returning from deployments over the next several years, it is likely that the number of PTSD cases will hold steady, if not increase. Furthermore, increased international unrest and uncertainty may result in future troop deployments to other parts of world, making it likely that the number of reported PTSD cases will remain at a high level. This amendment will invest resources to help inform health professionals on how best to treat our military personnel moving forward.

Furthermore, the need for increased research concerning PTSD is not limited to our military. High levels of violence in many communities throughout America have induced PTSD-like conditions for some trapped in these unfortunate circumstances. Research undertaken by the Department of Defense can benefit families and community health professionals in treating our children and others impacted in this way. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to support additional medical research to help the military victims of PTSD and our broader society.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. We on the committee thank the gentleman from New York for his concern regarding funding levels for traumatic brain injury, posttraumatic stress disorder, and psychological health research.

Just for the record, you should know that our bill does include $414 million, including a plus-up of $125 million above the request level of $289 million for all of those important issues.

We appreciate his work and his willingness to work with us, and we accept his amendment.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the Chair for his work on this issue as well as the ranking member.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $21,000,000) (increased by $21,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from West Virginia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, earlier this year the Office of Management and Budget admitted that they made a mistake when they presented the President's budget request for the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program. Since then, they have expressed that they intend to correct this mistake by offering a supplemental appropriation, because you and I know supplemental appropriations don't happen very often around here.

Congresswoman NAPOLITANO and I have a two-part approach to solve this mistake that has been created by OMB. First, Congress already has unanimously passed our amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act by increasing the authorization by $55 million to take care of this mistake. Under this amendment—this amendment—this bipartisan approach is we are willing to compromise to lower that amount to $21 million and restore the program, keep it intact.

Mr. Chairman, we shouldn't perpetuate the mistake that has been created by OMB by rejecting this amendment. Two mistakes don't make it right.

Mr. Chairman, this program addresses some serious needs and a dropout epidemic among our youth. These are real people with real problems. They need our help. Society may have given up on them, but we in Congress shouldn't.

Ms. NAPOLITANO. Will the gentleman yield?

Ms. MCKINLEY. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. NAPOLITANO. I rise to address this amendment, Mr. Chairman.

I thank my cochairman, Mr. MCKINLEY, on the National Guard ChalleNGe Program.

□ 1630

Thank you for your great help in the outreach to all of our Members of Congress.

We have been working in a bipartisan manner to help our Nation's throwaway children, those who have fallen through the cracks.

For 2015, Defense Appropriations will fund the program at $114 million. The current funding is $135 million, so it would be short.

This amendment increases by, as he mentioned, $21 million to have the same funding as 2014, increasing it to the same level of $135 million. It would prevent cuts to critical programs that are helping our youth integrate back into society. It reduces the budget line in operation and maintenance by the same amount.

It is critical for hundreds of our young people who drop out yearly to have an opportunity to be accepted into the program. The ChalleNGe Program has already educated 120,000 young people nationally. It also is a volunteer program free for 16- to 18-year-olds at no cost to the child or the family; 22½-week residential boot camp-like program led by the State's National Guard cadre; prepares them, educates them, instills discipline, builds employment potential, and returns them to school.

The 2012 RAND Corporation study finds that for every dollar spent, in return is $2.66, a yield of 166 percent return on investment—the best youth program in the Nation.

It effectively addresses part of our Nation's dropout epidemic on a very small level. America needs more of these programs, not less.

It is beneficial to our local businesses, to our communities, and to our Nation's ability to compete, to our future economy.

According to the 2009 National Labor Market study, California alone has 714,000 dropouts yearly, the sixth-worst State.

Our graduates are 800 a year. Basically, we need more funding to expand it to more qualified individuals who are on a waiting list. Our best retention rate is in California. It is educating, training, and retaining more than 90 percent.

There is very much a need for these programs. Please support this amendment.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, this is a mistake caused by OMB. We can correct it right here today. Again, as I said, these are real people with real problems, and they are trying to get on with their lives. The program has worked all across America. Let's not perpetuate this problem by reducing their funds. It was a mistake by OMB, and we can correct it here today.

I ask that my colleagues support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $3,500,000)'',

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $3,000,000)'',

Page 33, line 12, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $3,000,000).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Representatives JONES, SHEA-PORTER, TSONGAS, BORDALLO, and MOORE for joining me today in offering this amendment. They are leaders and champions in support of the benefits that service dogs provide to our servicemen and -women on and off the battlefield.

This amendment establishes a $3 million competitive grants pilot program for qualified nonprofit organizations whose mission is to address the physical and mental health needs of veterans and servicemembers with the assistance from trained service dogs. This is a very modest amount of money when we consider the need of our veterans and the number of organizations around the country dedicated to addressing this need.

Many of our servicemembers return home from the battlefield suffering from traumatic brain injury, PTSD, blindness or impaired vision, the loss of a limb, paralysis, impaired mobility, loss of hearing, and other mental and physical disabilities. Too many struggle with suicidal thoughts or find themselves unable to reintegrate back into family life or their communities.

Working with a trained service dog is a proven aid for these wounded warriors, the merits of which have been documented in decades of programs for civilians with similar mental or physical challenges. Providing grant opportunities for groups professionally engaged in this field is critical to ensuring that our military and our veterans receive the care that they deserve.

In December, I held a briefing that brought together experts to look more closely at the impact service dogs have on veterans' care. Medical experts, nonprofits, and veterans with trained service dogs participated, including retired Navy Lieutenant Bradley Snyder, who lost his eyesight to an IED while serving in Afghanistan. He was accompanied by this Fidelco-trained guide dog, Gizzy. Fidelco is a nonprofit guide dog training organization in Connecticut. Lieutenant Snyder has since gone on to compete in the 2012 London Paralympics Games, where he won two gold medals and one silver medal in swimming.

John Moon and service dog Rainbow represented the National Education for Assistance Dog Services, a nonprofit accredited service dog provider founded in 1976. Based in Massachusetts, NEADS has trained more than 1,400 assistance dogs. Since 2005, it has been actively working to bring service dogs to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Brett Simon is a veteran handler for police canines. Twice deployed to Iraq as an explosives detector canine handler, he described his work as a dog training specialist at K9s for Warriors Academy in Florida.

We also heard from Rick Yount, founder of the Warrior Canine Connection. The WCC Service Dog Training

Therapy Program has operated at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda since October 2011. I am very pleased to see that this bill continues to provide funds for this very special program.

Mr. Chairman, there are scores of similar organizations across the Nation. A modest grant pilot program will ensure that they reach even more of our wounded warriors with the assistance of a service dog.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Two weeks ago, I went to Walter Reed Hospital. I was told that two of my marines from Camp Lejeune had been severely wounded in Afghanistan. The first marine I saw was 23 years of age. He had lost both legs and an arm. His father was there from Louisiana, and I saw pain, I saw worry, I saw sadness in his eyes. The second marine I saw had stepped on a 40-pound IED and lost both legs. He was telling me about his little 8-month-old daughter and his wife. They were not there, but I heard that.

I know that these service dogs are making a difference in the life of the wounded, whether it be mental or it might be physical. This $3 million, when we are spending billions in Afghanistan, it would be a sin and a shame if we cannot find the $3 million to put into this program to make sure that those who have given so much have a little bit of support and a little bit of pleasure in having a loving animal that has been trained to give support to that person that has given so much for this country.

I hope that this amendment will be accepted.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. The committee would like to thank you, the gentleman from Massachusetts, the gentleman from North Carolina, and your colleagues for sponsoring this amendment.

The $3 million would be added to the $3 million which the committee, Mr. VISCLOSKY and I, put into our bill for similar purposes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I thank both gentlemen for raising this issue and offering the amendment. I strongly support it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BENISHEK

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of a very simple amendment, in which I am joined and sponsored by Mr. LOWENTHAL of California. I believe strongly that there is an epidemic, commonly referred to as Alzheimer's disease, that is sweeping our country.

My amendment would increase funding for the Defense Health Program by $2 million, with the intent of providing more peer-reviewed research to fight this devastating disease.

As a doctor who served at the Iron Mountain VA for 20 years, I know how important the health research programs at the Department of Defense are. These programs provide groundbreaking research into the health challenges that our veterans face.

These health research programs help us to provide better quality of care to those who have served our country and frequently lead to advances in treatment that benefit the rest of the population.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, over 5 million Americans are currently living with this disease. This number is expected to continue to rise, resulting in increased suffering for patients and their families and a dramatic rise in health care costs.

As a representative for a district with a large population of veterans and a large population of seniors, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects of Alzheimer's. We must do more to combat this terrible disease.

This amendment will cut $2 million in funding for the Secretary of Defense's general operation and maintenance fund, an account which I believe can take a small cut, and applies those funds to the Defense Health Program for medical research.

By voting for this amendment, you will be supporting more research and development on the ground, rather than the salaries of bureaucrats in Washington.

I believe this amendment is a good, commonsense effort, and I hope my colleagues will support me in this effort to increase research into treating and eventually curing Alzheimer's.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. We on the committee thank you for this amendment. Understanding your professional background and many of our constituents suffering under Alzheimer's, we are supportive of it.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. If supplied with a copy of his amendment, I would appreciate it very much.

Mr. BENISHEK. Absolutely.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. KILDEE

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 22, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $50,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would appropriate $10 million to fund an amendment passed unanimously in the 2015 NDAA that allocates additional financial literacy training programs for incoming and transitioning servicemembers. This $10 million will be spread equally among the service's operation and maintenance accounts.

This increased financial literacy training would be funded by allocating $10 million from the Navy's $14 billion aircraft procurement account, which includes nearly $1 billion in funding over the Navy's request to purchase 12 EA–18G Growler aircraft. The Navy actually requested none of these 12 aircraft.

The problem we have is that far too often servicemembers have inadequate training or experience. We are often talking about young people who have yet to really fully have their feet underneath them. When a servicemember has financial difficulty, often they are preyed upon by unscrupulous lenders, payday lenders, often.

□ 1645

In fact, in some cases—this was reported widely recently—offering and executing loans at up to 400 percent interest rates, often targeting these young servicemembers.

While this has an effect clearly on the financial condition of servicemembers, it also can have an effect on readiness, in that many servicemembers require a security

clearance to perform their duties, and financial difficulties and the loss of a clearance can have an enormous impact on readiness.

All that being said, I will be withdrawing my amendment. The offset that we offered, according to CBO, would require a $50 million offsetting cut to raise $10 million, and I will certainly yield to anybody who would like to explain to me the mathematics behind some of the scoring that comes up.

Hearing none, I will move on.

This is an important area. It is an important question. The House has already unanimously acted in the NDAA to support this program.

While it is my intention to withdraw this amendment, what I would ask, if the chairman and ranking member would engage and work with us on this—and certainly engage the Department of Defense—to find the financial resources to support this expanded literacy program, it would be of great benefit to our servicemembers, and it would be of tremendous value in terms of our readiness.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I am sure the ranking member and I would be pleased to work with you on this issue

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOHMERT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $35,956,000)''.

Page 36, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $35,956,000)''.

Page 36, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $35,956,000)''.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would point out to the Chair that we do not have a copy of the gentleman's amendment.

I would also point out to the Chair, if I would be given permission to, that this is the second time in the first hour of debate we have not been supplied with an amendment offered on the floor.

I would certainly appreciate the courtesy of making sure that we are noticed as far as the content of these very important amendments, so we can give them the appropriate consideration that they are due.

I appreciate the Chair's indulgence.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will distribute copies of the amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, as read, this would transfer $35.956 million into an account under the bill that specifies, ''shall be for National Guard counterdrug program.''

We have spoken with people on the border. They know the problems they are having. They need equipment.

This amount would allow eight UH–72 helicopters to help with drug interdiction on the border. It is not like there are not enough helicopters to go around. There are 100 National Guard helicopters. This would only be utilizing eight of them, putting them in a place where they could be used on the border to help with the problem.

Mr. Chairman, right now, with so many of our ICE agents and so many of our Border Patrol engaged, as ICE agents said yesterday, in changing diapers instead of being involved in interdicting, as they should be, they need this equipment. This would be National Guard equipment that would allow them to participate in stopping the drugs that are flowing.

It is very apparent, from what is going on, that we even have drug cartels that are taking advantage of the situation. As ICE agents have explained, they are using this time—with all of the attention toward the children and the humanitarian crisis on the border—to step up their game in getting drugs into the United States.

According to the figures from CBO and from the figures we have gotten from the committee, this will not create an increase in outlays and should be in order in that regard.

I would like to point out that, since 2012, aircentric operations have resulted in an almost 70 percent increase in detection and interdiction, compared to the ground-based operations.

So this could make a real difference in providing for the common defense, which is our duty here in Congress, as well as the duty of the executive branch. This would make their job easier.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate the gentleman's concern, but would make three points to our colleagues.

The first is that the committee is absolutely aware of the problem that is taking place along the borders of our country.

Both relative to the problem that the gentleman has highlighted, as well as for this Nation's defense, I would point out to my colleagues that, in the underlying bill, we provide $1.356,227 billion for the procurement of 87 UH–60 Black Hawk helicopters, which is an increase of $119.226 million and eight aircraft above the President's request, so there is a recognition by the committee and in the bill that there is a need, and we filled that bill.

I would also point out that, relative to drug interdiction, the committee recommendation is for $944.687 million to deal with this problem; and I would, again, point out the gentleman's concern, that that is an increase of $124 million above the administration's request.

The last point is that the gentleman is taking it out of operation and maintenance, departmentwide.

I spoke in my opening remarks about the increases we have tried to provide to make sure our troops are prepared, maintained, trained, and ready. It is a mistake to take over $35 million away from our troops, who need that money for training.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Let me associate myself with the ranking member's comments earlier. We need to see the amendments. We are not seeing the amendments on a timely basis. As a basic courtesy, it would be helpful if both sides were provided with amendments by our colleagues.

Relative to this amendment, for the last several years, the National Guard has not even been able to spend the amount of money we have provided for counternarcotics, but instead has actually chosen to return funds to the Treasury; hence, the adjustment this year to actually re-source the National Guard.

Also, for the record, Mr. Chairman, the intent of the gentleman's request is to purchase equipment. This account does not provide resources to buy helicopters. This account provides funds for the National Guard's States' plan, operational funding, it is not money that can be used to buy helicopters.

I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks.

Again, I would point out to my colleagues that I think $1.356 million is enough, and I strongly oppose the gentleman's amendment, given the 5 minutes we were allowed to review it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the attention that the committee has given to the issue and that, in the past, the National Guard may have had extra funds that were moved and able to be used elsewhere, but these are recent developments that have been going on even since our Appropriations Committee has been having hearings, and so this is such a dramatic problem that it is escalating every day.

I would like to correct the record. Actually, this proposal will not purchase any new helicopters. There are

100 National Guard helicopters. This would just pay for the use and the crew and the maintenance and upkeep of eight of those they already have. It won't purchase any more. I wish we could get helicopters that cheaply.

It will keep eight of them in use with the drug interdiction on our border right now because there is an invasion going on at our southern border. It is an invasion, and it is increasing, as I say, every day.

With that request, I don't think it is asking too much to have eight helicopters that have already been purchased—they just need crews, equipment, and upkeep—to help in the interdiction of the invasion in which drugs are being brought across our border in the south.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

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

Mr. GOHMERT. 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 Texas will be postponed.

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

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COFFMAN) having assumed the chair, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, 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. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4413, CUSTOMER PROTECTION AND END-USER RELIEF ACT

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–476) on the resolution (H. Res. 629) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4413) to reauthorize the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to better protect futures customers, to provide end users with market certainty, to make basic reforms to ensure transparency and accountability at the Commission, to help farmers, ranchers, and end users manage risks to help keep consumer costs low, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 628 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4870.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1659

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole House rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) had been postponed, and the bill had been read through page 10, line 15.

□ 1700

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ELLISON

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000) (increased by $10,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Minnesota and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this amendment is very simple. It is to help American workers as defense-related factories wind down production. The intent of the amendment is to allocate an additional $10 million to the Office of Economic Adjustment from the general operations and maintenance funds.

The Office of Economic Adjustment helps communities across America when a factory shuts down. Over the last decade of war, middle class factory workers have stepped up to the plate to make sure our troops on the battlefield have had the weapons and equipment they have needed. As we transition away from two long wars and as defense production lines slow down, we cannot leave these workers with only pink slips in their hands. That is where the Office of Economic Adjustment comes in.

This little known but very important office in the Pentagon helps communities that would otherwise be devastated when a factory shuts its doors for the last time. The Office of Economic Adjustment provides grants and technical assistance to communities so that they can develop their own strategies to transition to a postwar economy. Just this month, the Office of Economic Adjustment provided grants to Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. Nearly 4,000 defense workers have lost their jobs in these States since 2012, but thanks to a grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment, a regional Defense Manufacturing Assistance Program is underway to help them find new areas of livelihood.

Simply put, the Office of Economic Adjustment helps hardworking Americans keep their jobs, so I urge my colleagues to support this modest amendment to create jobs and help the Americans who keep our men and women in uniform equipped with what they need.

I would also like to submit for the RECORD a good article from Roll Call which carefully details this issue of slowing down the wartime economy. The title of it reads, ''Don't Cut Programs that Help Communities Adjust to Pentagon Spending Reductions.'' It is dated June 9, 2014, and it is written by Miriam Pemberton and William Hartung.

[From Roll Call, June 9, 2014]

DON'T CUT PROGRAMS THAT HELP COMMUNITIES ADJUST TO PENTAGON SPENDING REDUCTIONS—COMMENTARY

(By Miriam Pemberton and William D. Hartung)

Spring budget season is almost over, and the House and Senate have once again placed parochial politics above budget discipline in their consideration of the Pentagon budget. The most extreme example came in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act, which rejected virtually every cost-cutting measure put forward by the Pentagon, from base closings to retiring unneeded weapons systems. If the House's actions aren't reversed, they would bust the current budget caps to the tune of $50 billion over the next five years.

There was one place the House authorizers were willing to cut way back: a program designed to help communities adjust to defense downsizings. This is particularly ill-advised at a time when the Pentagon budget has been set on a path to come down from a wartime buildup that brought it to its highest levels since World War II.

While modest by historical terms, the defense build-down that is now underway will demand adjustments in the unrealistic spending plans Congress continues to authorize for the Pentagon. And the cuts that are coming will have impacts in scores of communities across the country.

Since the 1970s a small office within the Pentagon, the Office of Economic Adjustment, has offered planning grants and technical assistance to help these communities develop their own strategies to capitalize on existing economic strengths and adjust to postwar economic conditions. Once these strategies are in place, the OEA serves as a point of contact for impacted communities in accessing resources from other federal agencies to help with implementation of their plans. Just this week Ohio, Michigan and Indiana received a grant of more than $2.4 million to fund a regional Defense Manufacturing Assistance Program to address the loss of 3,900 defense-related jobs in those three states since 2012.

Most members of Congress want to base their judgments on Pentagon spending on what is needed to defend the country. But they also need to show defense-dependent communities, businesses and workers in their states and districts that they are watching out for their interests. The OEA's programs give them a way to judge procurement spending accounts on their merits,

while attending to the economic needs of their constituents.

Supporting the OEA does not mean that members of Congress don't care about the existing jobs base. It just means that they want in addition to have a Plan B in place in the event of decisions that reduce Pentagon-related activities in their areas.

It's troubling to watch the House voting to slash the OEA, while standing firm in supporting costly, unneeded sacred cows like the F–35 combat aircraft. Even slightly slowing the pace of the F–35 program would pay for the OEA's programs many times over.

The F–35—the Pentagon's most expensive weapons program ever undertaken is—a poster child of waste. Current cost estimates for building and maintaining the plane: roughly $1.4 trillion over its lifetime. It has more than doubled in price since it went into development, and it has had numerous high profile failures, from cracked wings to unresolved software problems. It is likely to perform many of its assigned tasks less effectively than current generation aircraft. An Air Force far superior to any other should be in no rush to build over 2,400 F–35s.

The F–35 merely tops the House's list of unnecessary expenditures. It rejected plans to delay the refueling of an aircraft carrier at a savings of over $800 million—more than ten times the cut proposed for the OEA. It attempts to block the closure of excess military bases, stop the administration from reducing the size of the Army, and prevent the Air Force from retiring the U–2 spy plane, even as it funds Global Hawk drones to do the same job. And the list goes on.

The common thread in all of these actions is a state of denial about the trends in Pentagon spending. It will come down this year, and under current law it will stabilize at levels considerably lower than what the Pentagon's overly ambitious plans will cost.

Funding programs that will help communities make the transition to more diversified economies that can weather reductions in Pentagon spending will make it easier to craft budgets that put security concerns above pork barrel politics. When the House and Senate put together a final Pentagon budget proposal later this year, funding for OEA's crucial programs should be restored.

Mr. ELLISON. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. RUNYAN

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $6,000,000)''.

Page 29, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $6,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from New Jersey and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Chairman, my amendment moves $6 million to Air Force Other Procurement to provide for a much-needed joint training platform and for facility upgrades. More specifically, the funding is aimed at supporting upgrades to joint training and training development facilities at Air Force installations. The offset for this amendment reduces the amount allocated for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Over the last decade, many of the service branches have procured various training systems and infrastructure that are in desperate need of repair. These are not expensive upgrades, and they will preserve the shelf life of some of the most state-of-the-art training systems in the United States military. My amendment seeks to increase the Air Force procurement funding to provide for critical upgrades for these underfunded systems, technologies, and training infrastructure.

We have made great investments in our joint training aids and support systems to ensure our servicemembers are combat ready and proficient at a low cost for high value to the taxpayer. It would be a shame to see these assets atrophy from the withholding of what is a relatively small amount in comparison to our initial investments in these programs.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this commonsense amendment and support our warfighters.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. RUNYAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. DELANEY

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $24,000,000)''.

Page 88, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $16,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Maryland and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 3 minutes.

We have all been very disturbed by the recent allegations of negligence and of the falsification of information at some of the VA medical centers across the country. We must work together to better serve our servicemembers, veterans, and their families, who have served us all with such great distinction.

My amendment works to solve one specific but very important problem facing military families.

When our warfighters and veterans need medical care, their families are often faced with a very difficult dilemma: either to stay home because it is too expensive to travel in order to be with their families or to travel and bear the burden of the costs associated with being with their loved ones at this great time of need.

Unfortunately, too many families are staying home without having the opportunity to be with their loved ones who have served our country when those loved ones are receiving care at a military hospital. Others make the trip, but they often sleep in their cars or sleep in tents that they have set up in parking lots around these hospitals. Our veterans and servicemen and -women and their families deserve much better than this.

My amendment increases the funding for Fisher Houses by $16 million. This additional funding has the potential to provide more free housing for the families of patients receiving care at military and VA hospitals. In order to pay for this increased funding, this amendment reduces funding for the defense-wide operations and maintenance account, and my amendment is outlay neutral as a result.

Since 1990, over 180,000 families have been served by Fisher Houses—more than 22,000 families in the last year alone. The services offered by Fisher Houses have saved military families almost $240 million in out-of-pocket expenses since the program's inception. Families do not have to make these tough financial choices to visit and care for their loved ones. This amendment has the potential of funding the construction of at least four new Fisher homes next year. Four new homes mean the lodging for 2,000 military family members.

So many men and women have served us with such distinction, and for those who return home and who need medical care, Fisher Houses can make a stay in a military hospital or in a clinic a little bit easier and a little bit kinder for our soldiers and their families. No veteran or no servicemember should do without his loved ones at this time of need.

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment. Last year, the House came together to support this same amendment, and I hope they will do the same this year.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELANEY. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana, the ranking member.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the gentleman for offering the amendment. I do not oppose it. I would simply mention a concern I have, which is not with the intent of the gentleman's but, rather, with the amount.

I just want my colleagues to know that the underlying bill already provides $11 million from the operations and maintenance funds of the Army, Navy, and Air Force for the construction and furnishing of additional Fisher Houses, a total not to exceed $33 million. This amendment, obviously, would add $20 million to that amount. I am concerned that the rapid increase in construction funding in a single fiscal year would be very difficult for the foundation to utilize.

Mr. DELANEY. My response to the ranking member is that I have great confidence in the Fisher House team's ability to handle the funds. I think this is an example of where we need to get

ahead of the need and not be behind some of the needs, but I appreciate the ranking member's support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. DELANEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LOWENTHAL

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,000,000) (increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY, thank you for providing me this time to speak on the floor today.

Mr. Chairman, as we all know, providing science, technology, engineering, and math education to America's youth is critical to the global competitiveness of our Nation. The STARBASE program engages local fifth grade elementary students by exposing them to STEM subjects through an inquiry-based curriculum that is currently active in 56 congressional districts throughout the country. We need to be committed to ensuring the United States remains competitive globally by strengthening the pipeline of American graduates with degrees in STEM fields.

That is why I am offering STARBASE amendment No. 32 to H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act. My bipartisan amendment, with Congressman BENISHEK, increases funding to the STARBASE Youth Program by $5 million. The STARBASE program is carried out by the military because the lack of STEM-educated youth in America has been identified as a future national security issue by the Department of Defense.

Last year, both the House and the Senate rejected the Office of Management and Budget's proposal to terminate this critical program. As a Member of Congress, I appreciate the OMB's desire to consolidate the STEM programs across the spectrum into one funding line. However, this is a national defense issue, and it has been identified by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as such.

STARBASE was created under the auspices of the Department of Defense to meet its critical needs in STEM-related fields. Regrettably, the funding uncertainty caused by last year's OMB action has resulted in the elimination of all of the programs operated by the Navy, and it has reduced the fiscal year 2014 number of DOD STARBASE programs from 79 down to 56 sites. Despite the funding issues, the DOD currently has 25 sites on a waiting list for a program, and that is why we need a small increase in the number of STARBASE programs.

I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their strong leadership in reestablishing the funding for the program, and I respectfully request an additional $5 million to help expand the program. It is one of the most cost-effective programs, and it is also reported by the Department of Defense as being one of the most effective of the STEM programs.

My amendment makes a significant step towards providing and engaging America's youth with the tools they need to pursue careers in STEM—fields in which jobs are available and in which there is a significant lack of trained workers. STARBASE inspires America's youth to discover technical fields that are imperative for our future national security challenges. During this time of economic recovery, we cannot lose this battle and concede our technical edge to the rest of the world.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

□ 1715

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. The committee wants to commend the gentleman for his support of this program. As you know, this program currently operates, I think, at 65 military installations and facilities around the country. This would increase that amount. And what is good about it is military volunteers are, in their own free time and volunteer capacity, doing some remarkable things with these young people.

So we commend you for your efforts. I know I share similar views to Ranking Member VISCLOSKY, if you would yield to him.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I also want to join the chairman and thank you for offering the amendment. You raise a number of good points, and it is a very good program. I appreciate your attention to it. Thank you so much.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, Grayson Number 8.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Mr. GRAYSON (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be waived.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, could we have it read so we know which amendment we are working on? Otherwise, I will reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued to read.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, this amendment increases the Defense Health Program account by $10 million in order to help find a cure for Gulf War illness. Currently, there is no cure for Gulf War illness, and it affects over a third of the veterans who served in the first Gulf War.

This amendment is identical to an amendment offered last year that passed this body by a voice vote. I respectfully urge the same today.

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY RESERVE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance, including training, organization, and administration, of the Army Reserve; repair of facilities and equipment; hire of passenger motor vehicles; travel and transportation; care of the dead; recruiting; procurement of services, supplies, and equipment; and communications, $2,535,606,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY RESERVE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance, including training, organization, and administration, of the Navy Reserve; repair of facilities and equipment; hire of passenger motor vehicles; travel and transportation; care of the dead; recruiting; procurement of services, supplies, and equipment; and communications, $1,011,827,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance, including training, organization, and administration, of the Marine Corps Reserve; repair of facilities and equipment; hire of passenger motor vehicles; travel and transportation; care of the dead; recruiting; procurement of services, supplies, and equipment; and communications, $270,485,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the operation and maintenance, including training, organization, and administration, of the Air Force Reserve; repair of facilities and equipment; hire of passenger motor vehicles; travel and transportation; care of the dead; recruiting; procurement of services, supplies, and equipment; and communications, $2,989,214,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses of training, organizing, and administering the Army National Guard, including medical and hospital treatment and related expenses in non-Federal hospitals; maintenance, operation, and repairs to structures and facilities; hire of passenger motor vehicles; personnel services in the National Guard Bureau; travel expenses (other than mileage), as authorized by law for Army personnel on active duty, for Army National Guard division, regimental, and battalion commanders while inspecting units in compliance with National Guard Bureau regulations when specifically authorized by the Chief, National Guard Bureau; supplying and equipping the Army National Guard as authorized by law; and expenses of repair, modification, maintenance, and issue of supplies and equipment (including aircraft), $6,116,307,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses of training, organizing, and administering the Air National Guard, including medical and hospital treatment and related expenses in non-Federal hospitals; maintenance, operation, and repairs to structures and facilities; transportation of things, hire of passenger motor vehicles; supplying and equipping the Air National Guard, as authorized by law; expenses for repair, modification, maintenance, and issue of supplies and equipment, including those furnished from stocks under the control of agencies of the Department of Defense; travel expenses (other than mileage) on the same basis as authorized by law for Air National Guard personnel on active Federal duty, for Air National Guard commanders while inspecting units in compliance with National Guard Bureau regulations when specifically authorized by the Chief, National Guard Bureau, $6,393,919,000.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE ARMED FORCES

For salaries and expenses necessary for the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, $13,723,000, of which not to exceed $5,000 may be used for official representation purposes.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, ARMY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, $201,560,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Army, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, NAVY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Navy, $277,294,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Navy, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Navy, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, AIR FORCE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Air Force, $408,716,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Air Force shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Air Force, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Air Force, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MURPHY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 15, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $37,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman and I also thank the chairman and the ranking member of the committee.

I should say that, in addition to being a Member Congress, I am also a member of the Navy Reserve as a psychologist, but I want to make it clear I am not here representing the Navy or Navy psychology, but talking about those things which I see in our military.

We have the best military in the world. We are strong, we are filled with strong servicemen and servicewomen, but our country has a crisis on its hands.

On average, 22 military servicemembers and veterans die each day by their own hands. Nearly 1 in 5 suicides nationally is a veteran, even though veterans only make up 10 percent of the population, or about a million or so overall, 2 million overall.

The suicide rate for veterans increased an average of 2.6 percent a year from 2005 to 2011, more than double the rate of increase for civilian suicide.

Let me tell you what I hear from servicemembers: that those who are in high-tempo work, such as those in SOCOM, those who are Active Duty, those who have come back from Guard and Reserve, they have a very difficult time accessing mental health care.

Whether it is family problems, financial crisis, or adapting from the stress of combat or post-traumatic stress, and preventing it from becoming post-traumatic stress disorder, we know that treatment early and identification early can be effective.

But, quite frankly, there are just too few providers. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and clinical social workers and therapists are burdened with paperwork and screening duties, and oftentimes have too little time to counsel.

We hear, time and time again, where someone has sought help off base, only to find there people who may not themselves understand all the needs of someone in the military.

Plus, many times, those in the military dealing with classified missions, particularly those in SOCOM, need to have folks that they can talk to and deal with these problems so they do not become worse. Or if they transfer to Guard and Reserve, many times they have no one they can go to. The purpose of this amendment is to help make sure we are providing more of those services.

A survey by the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America showed that 30 percent of servicemembers have considered taking their own life; 45 percent say they know an Iraq or Afghanistan veteran who has attempted suicide.

While DOD has done many things, and should be complimented for the work that they have done, we still have a serious, serious problem on our hands. The reason we are offering this amendment today is to do all we can to help provide more providers.

Granted, I do not believe this will be anywhere near enough, but it does give us a surge of providers at a time when it is needed, at a time when the suicide rate has climbed, at a time when many servicemembers continue to need help. So I am offering this, and I hope it will be accepted.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I can say, and I am sure my colleagues would agree, your service in the Congress has been enormously beneficial because you have been perhaps one of the strongest advocates on behalf of those with mental illness. And certainly, your service in the Navy Reserve as a psychologist is one of the reasons when you get up to talk, people listen.

So we are certainly accepting of your amendment and acknowledge your very, very strong and well-reasoned advocacy.

Our bill, of course, does make investments. This will make more investments, and we look forward to working with you and relying on your expertise and your advocacy.

I thank you for yielding.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, let me just close with this. In this, I know for example those who come back from SOCOM, from being the tip of the spear, a very important part of their return are such things as Third Location Decompression. They come back, they meet with psychologists, with detailed review.

What we also have to make sure is, for so many others who come back, whether they have been on a combat mission or even a training mission that can have its own stress associated with that, we want to prevent these from accelerating to the level where later on they will need VA services, where we have so many families deteriorate.

I thank the chairman, I thank the ranking member, et cetera, and I ask my colleagues to support this amendment so we can get help to our military in need.

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. MURPHY).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of Defense, $8,547,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of Defense, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of Defense, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, $233,353,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris at sites formerly used by the Department of Defense, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

Mr. BLUMENAUER. 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 16, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $3,400,000)''.

Page 31, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $3,400,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Oregon and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 4 minutes.

This is a simple amendment that would cut $3.4 million for a new nuclear-armed, air-launched cruise missile and redirect the funding towards the cleanup and removal of unexploded ordnance that litters most congressional districts in every State of the Union.

It would save the taxpayers from footing the bill for a program whose rationale remains ill-defined.

First, the United States currently has a robust arsenal of air-launched cruise missiles, and with the life extension program, they are expected to be in service well past 2030.

These existing cruise missiles are also compatible with the Air Force's greatest procurement priority, the long-range strike bomber.

Now the Pentagon has not yet made a final decision on how or when it will replace its existing nuclear air-launched cruise missile, so it seems ill-advised to spend money before we know what our long-term plans are.

We no longer need a bomber with standoff nuclear weapons like the ALCM. The new Air Force bomber that will be designed to penetrate air defenses, it needs bombs that can be dropped, not a new cruise missile.

The procurement of the new cruise missile will also have a destabilizing effect in our efforts to control nuclear proliferation. A mass deployment of cruise missiles probably would trigger, potentially could trigger a new arms race that we have already agreed to begin to end.

Currently, only the United States, France, and Russia have such weapons. But are we going to be more secure if this sets off an effort for other countries to develop them?

Are we going to be more secure if China has them, if Pakistan develops them? I think certainly not.

Now, maybe this amendment looks modest, only directing $3.4 million. But allowing this seed money to go forward could potentially mean billions down the road if we don't have a reason, a rationale, a commitment to do it.

The new ALCM does not yet have an official pricetag, but the research we have done suggests it is in the range of 20 to $30 billion. And a rebuilt nuclear warhead to go on it would cost another $12 billion, according to the National Nuclear Security Administration.

So a potential of over $40 billion, and based on our past experience with weapons developments and the nuclear area, it is very likely that that is going to increase over time.

Remember, we recently had a debate on the floor of the House that highlighted that the costs of the current nuclear program were understated by the Pentagon by $150 billion.

□ 1730

This program, whose true utility remains a mystery, even to those requesting money for it, will directly compete with other priorities.

Let me repeat that. This is not free money. If we launch this program, it is going to directly compete with other priorities. The Navy, as we all know—which the committee has been wrestling with—is looking for $100 billion to build 12 new nuclear-armed submarines.

The Air Force is coming up short looking for the $70 billion it needs to buy up to 100 new long-range bombers. A down payment on a cruise missile today that we don't need means cuts to other programs tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest that, instead of launching us down this path of unnecessary spending and potentially huge outyear costs, that we, instead, spend this money on Formerly Used Defense Sites that have been contaminated by our activities over the better part of the last century in the United States. It is better use for the money.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, the President's budget requested $208.4 million for these Formerly Used Defense Sites. It is important to clean up these properties that have been used by the Department of Defense.

May I say, our bill already provides $25 million for the cleanup of such sites over the President's request, so the administration isn't looking for any more money.

While I sympathize with the gentleman's amendment, I cannot support his offset. I understand that his amendment intends to eliminate funding for the long-range standoff weapon, this cruise missile.

This program will provide a new air-launched cruise missile to replace a rapidly aging AGM–86. This is essential to our strategic deterrent and our ability to hold enemy targets at risk from standoff distances.

The Air Force requested $4.9 million for the program in fiscal year 2015 to continue studies and analysis in preparation for a formal acquisition program. This bill already takes a fiscally responsible $1.5 million cut from that amount.

In a year of tight budget, the additional funding the committee has already provided for the cleanup of Formerly Used Defense Sites will accelerate the cleanup of the sites and reduce the long-term government liability, which is important.

While I appreciate the gentleman's intent, I cannot support a cut that would eliminate a critical element of our military's future arsenal, so I oppose the amendment and urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, first let me point out that this is a minuscule sum. I have pointed out that we have the capacity with the current plans to be able to deal past 2030, so this is not an urgent effect. We have a chance to sort it out and see if it truly is a priority.

I respect the gentleman's point about—I think he is sincere in wanting to clear up these Formerly Used Defense Sites, but the amount in the budget is $50 million less than we had in fiscal year 2014 and is less than we enacted in fiscal year 2013.

At the current rate of funding, the Pentagon estimates that it will take 250 years to clean up the backlog of dealing with the military contamination and unexploded ordnance. That is unacceptable.

In a defense budget of this magnitude, we can and should be doing more. I appreciate what the gentleman is saying. It is not nearly adequate, and we certainly don't need to launch down this other path that may lead to dramatic unnecessary spending in the future.

I respectfully urge adoption of this amendment and yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OVERSEAS HUMANITARIAN, DISASTER, AND CIVIC AID

For expenses relating to the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid programs of the Department of Defense (consisting of the programs provided under sections 401, 402, 404, 407, 2557, and 2561 of title 10, United States Code), $103,000,000 to remain available until September 30, 2016.

COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION ACCOUNT

For assistance to the republics of the former Soviet Union and, with appropriate authorization by the Department of Defense and Department of State, to countries outside of the former Soviet Union, including assistance provided by contract or by grants, for facilitating the elimination and the safe and secure transportation and storage of nuclear, chemical and other weapons; for establishing programs to prevent the proliferation of weapons, weapons components, and weapon-related technology and expertise; for programs relating to the training and support of defense and military personnel for demilitarization and protection of weapons, weapons components and weapons technology and expertise, and for defense and military contacts, $365,108,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

For the Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund, $51,875,000.

TITLE III

PROCUREMENT

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, ARMY

For construction, procurement, production, modification, and modernization of aircraft, equipment, including ordnance, ground handling equipment, spare parts, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $5,295,957,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

MISSILE PROCUREMENT, ARMY

For construction, procurement, production, modification, and modernization of missiles, equipment, including ordnance, ground handling equipment, spare parts, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $1,217,483,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT OF WEAPONS AND TRACKED COMBAT VEHICLES, ARMY

For construction, procurement, production, and modification of weapons and tracked combat vehicles, equipment, including ordnance, spare parts, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $1,703,736,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, ARMY

For construction, procurement, production, and modification of ammunition, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including ammunition facilities, authorized by section 2854 of title 10, United States Code, and the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $1,011,477,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, ARMY

For construction, procurement, production, and modification of vehicles, including tactical, support, and non-tracked combat vehicles; the purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only; communications and electronic equipment; other support equipment; spare parts, ordnance, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $4,812,234,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, NAVY

For construction, procurement, production, modification, and modernization of aircraft, equipment, including ordnance, spare parts, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway, $14,054,523,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. KILDEE

Mr. KILDEE. I have an amendment at the desk, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 22, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Michigan and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, much like the VA, the Department of Defense is confronting significant challenges regarding its care and transition of wounded warriors.

In fact, following the recent death of two individuals at the Army's Fort Bragg hospital, the Secretary of Defense ordered his own comprehensive review of DOD health care. Simply, it is obvious and is becoming increasingly more obvious that wounded warriors are still failing to receive the care that they need and that they clearly deserve.

We know that the DOD has undertaken countless studies and has appointed numerous working groups to identify ways to improve wounded warrior care. Moreover, Congress has rightfully engaged and has held a multitude of hearings and initiatives. There has been a lot of review internally and a lot of conversation.

I believe, though, that we need to engage some of the brightest minds in our country to gain a new and objective perspective on improving care for wounded warriors.

So this amendment appropriates $20 million to fund an amendment that, again, was passed in the FY15 NDAA to provide for an outside, independent study to identify challenges confronting the DOD's care of wounded warriors and offer specific recommendations to improve that.

This study, passed in the NDAA, will only be awarded to an entity that has received a small percentage—at the very most—of its revenue from contracts with the DOD, essentially an outside organization with little or no contact or relationship with the DOD or the VA. We are really trying to get a fresh set of eyes on this question.

This study of the Department of Defense's health care for wounded warriors is almost identical to the independent study of the VA, mandated by H.R. 4810, Chairman MILLER's Veteran Access to Care Act, which just passed the House last week; so the same set of fresh eyes that will be looking at VA care, I believe, need to be focused on the Department of Defense care as well.

This amendment is funded by allocating $20 million from the Navy's $14 billion aircraft procurement account, which includes nearly $1 billion in funding over the Navy's request to purchase 12 EA–18G Growler aircraft.

The Navy requested none of these aircraft in its budget request, and it would seem to me that, out of the $14 billion in that procurement, with nearly $1 billion in new money for something that wasn't requested, we could find $20 million to make sure that the billions of dollars that we are spending in DOD health care—particularly for our wounded warriors—is spent in the most efficient way and provides the absolute best care in the timeliest fashion available.

That is what this amendment would do. I urge its passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, while I recognize the gentleman's concerns that the wounded warrior care program is effectively and efficiently monitored—and perhaps an outside group taking a look at it would not be a bad idea in and of itself—but removing $20 million from the aircraft procurement account, specifically that Navy account for Growlers, is excessive to fund a study that is really unrelated to the purpose of that aircraft. There are better ways to fund studies.

We can request the Government Accountability Office—and our committee would be happy to do that—to do a study, one that will certainly cost less than $20 million.

Additionally, the loss of funding for the Growler program will result in the loss of an airframe which is critical for the Nation's airborne electronic attack mission. We probably need more of these Growlers, rather than less.

So I would be happy to work with the gentleman on finding another source for an outside study, and I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY), the ranking member, for any comments that he may care to make.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the chairman yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I would reluctantly add my voice to the chair. I certainly appreciate the gentleman's concern for wounded warriors, his sensitivity, and the fact that he is asking for, if you would, a fresh set of eyes.

The chairman talked about his concerns about the offset. I would simply inform my colleagues that we have had a number of studies. The Office of Inspector General has completed seven different studies, but perhaps more importantly, to the gentleman's point about an independent study, is that the Government Accountability Office has also done two.

I would remind our colleagues that the GAO is a creature of the legislative branch and is not captive to the Department of Defense.

Perhaps the emphasis here—and, again, I appreciate the gentleman's concern and what he is trying to get at—is to implement some of the findings in these nine studies, particularly the findings from the Government Accountability Office on behalf of the legislative branch and see that they are implemented.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their comments.

I will say that, when I speak of a set of fresh eyes—I understand the studies that have been done by the GAO and other internal studies, and I will acknowledge a certain irony in making the comment because it is so often that we hear that we can't be continually looking for answers to these difficult questions only from those of us in government, that we ought to be taking a look at it from a fresh set of eyes that come from outside, from the private sector. I think that that would be a great advantage in this case.

Regarding the offset, I understand and wholly support all of the work that we need to do and the investments that we need to make to ensure that our military is fully capable.

I just believe that the same commitment that we have to our own protection ought to extend to protecting those who put on the uniform of the country and suffer as a result. They ought to get the best care.

Out of the $970 million increase from what was requested, it would seem to me that finding $20 million from that would not be a bridge too far.

I appreciate the comments, and I hope that we can work together on finding solutions on this.

I think Chairman MILLER was right in his approach with the VA, and I think the same could be said for the DOD, and that is what my amendment would do.

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

The amendment was rejected.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

WEAPONS PROCUREMENT, NAVY

For construction, procurement, production, modification, and modernization of missiles, torpedoes, other weapons, and related support equipment including spare parts, and accessories therefor; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway, $3,111,931,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For construction, procurement, production, and modification of ammunition, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including ammunition facilities, authorized by section 2854 of title 10, United States Code, and the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing

purposes, $629,372,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

SHIPBUILDING AND CONVERSION, NAVY

For expenses necessary for the construction, acquisition, or conversion of vessels as authorized by law, including armor and armament thereof, plant equipment, appliances, and machine tools and installation thereof in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; procurement of critical, long lead time components and designs for vessels to be constructed or converted in the future; and expansion of public and private plants, including land necessary therefor, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title, as follows:

Carrier Replacement Program, $1,289,425,000;

Virginia Class Submarine, $3,507,175,000;

Virginia Class Submarine (AP), $2,301,825,000;

CVN Refueling Overhauls (AP), $491,100,000;

DDG–1000 Program, $419,532,000;

DDG–51 Destroyer, $2,655,785,000;

DDG–51 Destroyer (AP), $134,039,000;

Littoral Combat Ship, $951,366,000;

LPD-17 Amphibious Transport Dock, $12,565,000;

LHA replacement (AP), $29,093,000;

Moored Training Ship, $737,268,000;

Moored Training Ship (AP), $64,388,000;

LCAC Service Life Extension Program, $40,485,000;

Outfitting, post delivery, conversions, and first destination transportation, $491,797,000; and

Ship to Shore Connector, $123,233,000;

For completion of Prior Year Shipbuilding Programs, $1,007,285,000.

In all: $14,256,361,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2019: *Provided*, That additional obligations may be incurred after September 30, 2019, for engineering services, tests, evaluations, and other such budgeted work that must be performed in the final stage of ship construction: *Provided further*, That none of the funds provided under this heading for the construction or conversion of any naval vessel to be constructed in shipyards in the United States shall be expended in foreign facilities for the construction of major components of such vessel: *Provided further*, That none of the funds provided under this heading shall be used for the construction of any naval vessel in foreign shipyards.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, NAVY

For procurement, production, and modernization of support equipment and materials not otherwise provided for, Navy ordnance (except ordnance for new aircraft, new ships, and ships authorized for conversion); the purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only; expansion of public and private plants, including the land necessary therefor, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway, $5,923,379,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT, MARINE CORPS

For expenses necessary for the procurement, manufacture, and modification of missiles, armament, military equipment, spare parts, and accessories therefor; plant equipment, appliances, and machine tools, and installation thereof in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; vehicles for the Marine Corps, including the purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only; and expansion of public and private plants, including land necessary therefor, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title, $927,232,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

For construction, procurement, and modification of aircraft and equipment, including armor and armament, specialized ground handling equipment, and training devices, spare parts, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment; expansion of public and private plants, Government-owned equipment and installation thereof in such plants, erection of structures, and acquisition of land, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes including rents and transportation of things, $12,046,941,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

MISSILE PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

For construction, procurement, and modification of missiles, spacecraft, rockets, and related equipment, including spare parts and accessories therefor, ground handling equipment, and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, Government-owned equipment and installation thereof in such plants, erection of structures, and acquisition of land, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes including rents and transportation of things, $4,546,211,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, AIR FORCE

For construction, procurement, production, and modification of ammunition, and accessories therefor; specialized equipment and training devices; expansion of public and private plants, including ammunition facilities, authorized by section 2854 of title 10, United States Code, and the land necessary therefor, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; and procurement and installation of equipment, appliances, and machine tools in public and private plants; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway; and other expenses necessary for the foregoing purposes, $648,200,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

For procurement and modification of equipment (including ground guidance and electronic control equipment, and ground electronic and communication equipment), and supplies, materials, and spare parts therefor, not otherwise provided for; the purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only; lease of passenger motor vehicles; and expansion of public and private plants, Government-owned equipment and installation thereof in such plants, erection of structures, and acquisition of land, for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon, prior to approval of title; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway, $16,633,023,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

PROCUREMENT, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses of activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) necessary for procurement, production, and modification of equipment, supplies, materials, and spare parts therefor, not otherwise provided for; the purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only; expansion of public and private plants, equipment, and installation thereof in such plants, erection of structures, and acquisition of land for the foregoing purposes, and such lands and interests therein, may be acquired, and construction prosecuted thereon prior to approval of title; reserve plant and Government and contractor-owned equipment layaway, $4,358,121,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017.

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AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 29, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentlewoman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I, again, add my appreciation of the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee and add my appreciation of their concern for the health and welfare of the men and women of the United States military. Their appropriations bill evidences that.

I thank them again for working with me and their staff for working with me on this amendment dealing with increasing the funding for breast cancer research by $5 million, offset by a reduction of like amount in funding for procurement. Equally important is that this amendment has been supported by this committee.

I would say that my fellow survivors and those in the United States military would appreciate the emphasis that we are making on addressing this phenomenon of breast cancer. My amendment, as indicated, increases the opportunity for research. The American Cancer Society calls several strains of breast cancer particularly aggressive subtypes associated with a lower survival rate. In this instance, it is called a triple negative. But I raise an article that says: ''Fighting a Different Battle; Breast Cancer and the Military.''

This triple negative strain has killed many individuals in a very quick manner.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I would be happy to express my support for the amendment

and certainly believe there is no objection on behalf of the committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the ranking member very much. I would like to conclude, but I thank you for this support and make this statement as I conclude.

Breast cancer has been just about as brutal on women in the military as combat. More than 800 women have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the Army Times, and 874 military women were diagnosed with breast cancer between 2000 and 2011. According to that same study, more are expected as it goes.

So, in conclusion, let me thank the chairman and the ranking member for their focus on this amendment. I will conclude by saying that breast cancer is striking relatively young military women at an alarming rate, but male servicemembers, veterans, and their dependents, are at risk, as well.

So I ask my colleagues to support this amendment. Again, those of us who are survivors recognize that the more research and the more intervention, the more lives we can save.

With that, I ask the committee to support the Jackson Lee amendment, and I thank the ranking member and chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for shepherding this legislation to the floor and for their devotion to the men and women of the Armed Forces who risk their lives to keep our nation safe.

Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to explain my amendment, which is identical to an amendment that I offered and was adopted in last year's Defense Appropriations Act (H.R. 2397).

My amendment increases funding for the Defense Health Program's research and development by $5 million. These funds will address the question of breast cancer in the United States military.

The American Cancer Society calls several strains of breast cancer as a particularly aggressive subtype associated with lower survival rates; in this instance, it's a triple negative. But I raise an article that says: "Fighting a Different Battle; Breast Cancer and the Military."

We all know, by the way, that breast cancer can affect both men and women. The bad news is breast cancer has been just about as brutal on women in the military as combat.

Let me say that sentence again. Breast cancer has been just about as brutal on women in the military as combat. More than 800 women have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the Army Times; 874 military women were diagnosed with breast cancer just between 2000 and 2011. And according to that same study, more are suspected. It grows.

The good news is that we have been working on it, and I want to add my appreciation to the military.

The Jackson Lee Amendment, however, will allow for the additional research.

That research is particularly needed since women are joining the Armed Services in increasing numbers and serving longer, ascending to leadership. With increased age comes increased risk and incidence of breast cancer.

Not only is breast cancer striking relatively young military women at an alarming rate, but male service members, veterans and their dependents are at risk as well.

With a younger and generally healthier population, those in the military tend to have a lower risk for most cancers than civilians—including significantly lower colorectal, lung and cervical—but breast cancer is a different story.

Military people in general, and in some cases very specifically, are at a significantly greater risk for contracting breast cancer, accrording to Dr. Richard Clapp, a top cancer expert at Boston University who works at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on military breast cancer issues.

Dr. Clapp notes that life in the military can mean exposure to a witch's brew of risk factors directly linked to greater chances of getting breast cancer.

So, I am asking that we do the right thing. We are on the right track, we're on the right road.

But with the expansion of women in the military, I can assure you, for long life, a vital service that these men and women give, it is extremely important to move forward with this amendment.

Researchers point to a high use of oral contraception that's linked to breast cancer among women that would ensure that this particular amendment would be a positive step forward.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT PURCHASES

For activities by the Department of Defense pursuant to sections 108, 301, 302, and 303 of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. App. 2078, 2091, 2092, and 2093), $51,638,000, to remain available until expended.

TITLE IV

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, ARMY

For expenses necessary for basic and applied scientific research, development, test and evaluation, including maintenance, rehabilitation, lease, and operation of facilities and equipment, $6,720,000,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, NAVY

For expenses necessary for basic and applied scientific research, development, test and evaluation, including maintenance, rehabilitation, lease, and operation of facilities and equipment, $15,877,770,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016: *Provided*, That funds appropriated in this paragraph which are available for the V–22 may be used to meet unique operational requirements of the Special Operations Forces.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, AIR FORCE

For expenses necessary for basic and applied scientific research, development, test and evaluation, including maintenance, rehabilitation, lease, and operation of facilities and equipment, $23,438,982,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GARAMENDI

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 31, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by $15,600,000)".

Page 141, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by $15,600,000)".

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, this amendment deals with a profoundly important issue that will be before the House of Representatives and this Nation for the next three decades at least. This is an amendment that deals with the Joint Strike Fighter, the F–35, and the dual capability of that fighter, basically meaning how to retrofit or make that fighter capable of handling the B–61 nuclear weapon.

This is a weapon that is principally designed for our allies, to be used in Europe. It is a weapon that is now in the process of being life-extended at a cost of several billion dollars over the next decade.

The question is, Do we need to revamp the F–35 in such a way as to be able to handle both conventional as well as nuclear weapons? This is the question before us. It is a question that involves our allies, and it is a very, very expensive issue that we must deal with.

If we just continue on, we will spend billions upon billions of dollars on a system that may or may not be desired by our allies around the world. We are just pushing our way forward here without really considering all of the issues involved.

This amendment that I brought forth on the floor today is really the wake up to this larger issue and the extraordinary expense and the ramifications that it has with not only our allies but with potential adversaries around the world.

What I really would like to do is to expand upon a study that has already been put into this legislation, a study that Mr. QUIGLEY has successfully brought in, and expand upon it so that the report that comes back to us be more full, providing more information. We need that information in order to make a wise decision here about how we are going to proceed.

This is an issue that the Armed Services Committee is wrestling with, as well as, I am certain, the Appropriations Committee. Later in this process,

when we get to the end of this bill, I will have another amendment that I will put forward that will fence off this $15 million until such time as that report comes in, and I would recommend that that report be more full and more complete.

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation and seek the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. It is my understanding the gentleman is going to withdraw his amendment. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. That is true. I intend to withdraw my amendment in hopes that we could, at the end of the bill, undertake a more full report and fence off the $15 million until that comes forward. I am not asking for a commitment now, but as we proceed through this bill, if the members of the Appropriations Committee, the chair and the ranking member specifically, would consider that language, it would be much appreciated.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Thank you for talking about this very important issue. I appreciate it and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. COFFMAN

Mr. COFFMAN. 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 31, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $15,722,000)''.

Page 141, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $15,722,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, this amendment seeks to take $15.7 million out of the Air Force research, development, test and evaluation account, equal to the amount the Air Force has budgeted for sixth-generation fighter development, and places those funds into the spending reduction account for debt relief.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is not about capabilities; it is quite simply about priorities. I could understand the need for sixth-generation fighter development funding had the administration not attempted to scrap our military's only dedicated close air support platform, the A–10, citing budgetary concerns.

I could understand the need for sixth-generation fighter development funding had the administration not attempted to scrap the U–2, an aging but capable aircraft that continues to provide the warfighter with actionable intelligence in some of the world's most dangerous areas, citing budgetary concerns.

I could understand the need for sixth-generation fighter development funding had the administration not capped America's premier air dominance fighter, the fifth-generation F–22 Raptor, at 187 aircraft, citing, once again, budgetary concerns.

And I could understand the need for sixth-generation fighter development funding if the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter, a fifth-generation program I do support, was not admittedly over budget and behind schedule.

Mr. Chairman, our Nation is over $17 trillion in debt and is running a budget deficit of over half a billion dollars. As a result, it has become almost a cliche to quote Admiral Mullen's warning of our national debt as America's greatest threat. That is why I cannot support millions of dollars in funding for the Department of Defense to begin developing the follow-on to the F–35 when the F–35 itself is years away from being operational.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my fellow Members to support this commonsense amendment. By supporting my amendment you will be sending a message to the Department of Defense to get its current programs under control and its fiscal house in order before asking the American taxpayer to foot the bill for any future programs.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WOODALL). The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would point out that while we are at the beginning, so to speak, of the production of the F–35, it has always inured to the benefit of this country to look to the future, to look at the next generation. And when it comes to an examination of technology and how it can be used in the defense of this Nation in the future, I don't think we should close that door.

We have a resurgence in China. We have a resurgence in Russia. We have problems in the Middle East. We ought not to be taking our oar, if you would, out of the water. And so we ought to continue down this road. We are not, by doing this initial research, instituting a billion or multibillion-dollar procurement program.

So I am opposed and would be happy to yield to the chairman of the subcommittee.

□ 1800

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It is a small investment which this amendment would eliminate. We want to have air superiority for decades to come. It is money that I think needs to be kept in there. It would be a great mistake to move it. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the chairman's remarks.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NUGENT

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 31, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000) (increased by $10,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Chairman, the Counter-electronics High Power Microwave Missile Project, better known as CHAMP, is an Air Force program to disrupt or eliminate an adversary's electronics without causing physical damage to facilities or people.

My amendment would transfer $10 million within the Air Force R&D budget from directed energy technology to advanced weapons technology. This will move duplicative funds from laboratory development of high-power microwave technology to integration on a delivery vehicle for actual use on the battlefield a decade ahead of schedule.

The Air Force intends to develop CHAMP for use on a reusable delivery vehicle that will be available to combatant commanders in 2025. For a small investment of $10 million this year, the Air Force can get CHAMP to the combatant commanders on a cruise missile delivery system 18 months after enactment of this bill, almost a decade ahead of schedule.

The reason we can do this so quickly and at such a low cost is by utilizing unused cruise missiles, just like the ones the Air Force used to test CHAMP recently. There is an existing stockpile of cruise missiles that have been removed from their original mission and can be cost-effectively repurposed as a delivery vehicle for CHAMP. Over the next few years, the Air Force has an opportunity to fit CHAMP on a proven delivery vehicle already in stock.

In this window, it is very cheap to make a cruise missile-delivered CHAMP system and very expensive for adversaries to defend. The $10 million my amendment allocates to advanced weapons technology will improve the size and weight of the weapon to optimize its performance on a cruise missile.

It is important to note this amendment will ensure that sufficient funds

exist to develop both the short-term cruise missile system and the long-term reusable delivery system.

The offset for this amendment pulls from an increase in another directed energy program in the Air Force that is doing duplicative work to reduce the size and weight of high-power microwave.

Instead of just doing lab work, we can do the lab work and get it out into the field. As I said, these two programs are doing duplicative work, and one is closer to the finish line than the other.

This is a bipartisan bill. I am happy to have support of the ranking member of the Armed Services subcommittee of jurisdiction and cochair of the Directed Energy Caucus, Mr. LANGEVIN. The authorization for this program increase has been in the National Defense Authorization Act since the chairman's mark and was in the bill the House passed earlier this year.

In the Armed Services Committee, we have heard the desire of this game-changing technology in testimony from combatant commanders and from the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.

Let's get the warfighter this capability in 18 months by passing this simple amendment today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate what the gentleman from Florida is putting forth and the position he has taken. I certainly believe there is merit, if you would, in the technology.

As you may know, we have included some very encouraging language in the report for this bill, noting our pleasure with the Air Force incorporating this type of technology into their nonkinetic counterelectronics analysis of alternatives.

However, we have carefully refrained from prejudicing the Air Force's analysis of alternatives by adding funds from one program to another.

I would like to work with the gentleman further to ensure, again, that the technology is given consideration, without prejudicing the study undertaken by the Air Force. I do think we ought to give them a full breadth of options, so that the best choice can be made on behalf of this country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his consideration. What I would like to add to this is that the Air Force tested CHAMP on that delivery vehicle—a successful test, as it may be—and the testimony from those combatant commanders, the guys in the field that actually need it, are saying: hey, I would rather have it in 18 months than in 2025.

It is just that simple. We heard testimony with regards to China and about Russia. Wouldn't it be better to use these limited funds that we have already spent millions of dollars on to develop the process, develop the technology, wouldn't it be better today to spend $10 million to actually get it in the field to support our troops and our warfighters? That is our argument.

While I respect the Air Force, I think what the Air Force has—and they are looking at a long-term solution, a reusable vehicle, which I support, but I also support those who are out on the front line today. I have three kids out on the front line.

This helps those soldiers, airmen, marines, and sailors with more protection. We can do it cheap, and we can do it today, and we can have it done in 18 months.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses of activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), necessary for basic and applied scientific research, development, test and evaluation; advanced research projects as may be designated and determined by the Secretary of Defense, pursuant to law; maintenance, rehabilitation, lease, and operation of facilities and equipment, $17,077,900,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016: *Provided*, That of the funds made available in this paragraph, $250,000,000 for the Defense Rapid Innovation Program shall only be available for expenses, not otherwise provided for, to include program management and oversight, to conduct research, development, test and evaluation to include proof of concept demonstration; engineering, testing, and validation; and transition to full-scale production: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may transfer funds provided herein for the Defense Rapid Innovation Program to appropriations for research, development, test and evaluation to accomplish the purpose provided herein: *Provided further*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 30 days prior to making transfers from this appropriation, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such transfer.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 31, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would increase funding for prostate cancer research under the Defense Health Program by $10 million.

This increase would result in a total funding level of $90 million, which is still $10 million below what this account was funded at in 2001, more than a decade ago.

This amendment passed the House as part of an en bloc amendment last year. I hope we will all agree on its passage again this year.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. We commend you on your focus on prostate cancer and appreciate your limited remarks.

Mr. GRAYSON. I thank the chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION, DEFENSE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the independent activities of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, in the direction and supervision of operational test and evaluation, including initial operational test and evaluation which is conducted prior to, and in support of, production decisions; joint operational testing and evaluation; and administrative expenses in connection therewith, $248,238,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016.

TITLE V

REVOLVING AND MANAGEMENT FUNDS

DEFENSE WORKING CAPITAL FUNDS

For the Defense Working Capital Funds, $1,334,468,000.

TITLE VI

OTHER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS

DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, for medical and health care programs of the Department of Defense as authorized by law, $31,634,870,000; of which $30,080,563,000 shall be for operation and maintenance, of which not to exceed one percent shall remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016, and of which up to $14,582,044,000 may be available for contracts entered into under the TRICARE program; of which $308,413,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017, shall be for procurement; and of which $1,245,894,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2016, shall be for research, development, test and evaluation: *Provided*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, of the amount made available under this heading for research, development, test and evaluation, not less than $8,000,000 shall be available for HIV prevention educational activities undertaken in connection with United States military

training, exercises, and humanitarian assistance activities conducted primarily in African nations: *Provided further*, That of the funds provided under this heading for operation and maintenance, procurement, and research, development, test and evaluation for the Interagency Program Office, the Defense Healthcare Management Systems Modernization (DHMSM) program, and the Defense Medical Information Exchange, not more than 25 percent may be obligated until the Secretary of Defense submits to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and such Committees approve, a plan for expenditure that describes: (1) the status of the final request for proposal for DHMSM and how the program office used comments received from industry from draft requests for proposal to refine the final request for proposal; (2) any changes to the deployment timeline, including benchmarks, for full operating capability; (3) any refinements to the cost estimate for full operating capability and the total life cycle cost of the project; (4) an assurance that the acquisition strategy will comply with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the Federal Government; (5) the status of the effort to achieve interoperability between the electronic health record systems of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the scope, cost, schedule, mapping to health data standards, and performance benchmarks of the interoperable record; and (6) the progress toward developing, implementing, and fielding the interoperable electronic health record throughout the two Departments' medical facilities.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,000,000) (increased by $1,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,000,000) (increased by $1,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from New Jersey and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to address another facet of a national tragedy, the epidemic of suicide among our soldiers and veterans.

In March of this year, zero U.S. troops died in combat. In that same month, almost 700 soldiers and veterans died at their own hand.

This bill, the bill that is before us today, takes enormous strides to treat mental health problems underlying this epidemic. It provides tens of millions of dollars for therapy, outreach, and peer-to-peer support. For that, the chairman and the ranking member and all of the committee members have my sincere praise and gratitude.

Suicide and the decision to take one's own life is complex and often mysterious, but we err if we think suicide is only a mental health problem. In truth, suicide is often the desperate act of a soldier or veteran in a desperate situation. One important component of that desperation is financial stress.

My amendment has been endorsed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and would set aside $1 million to study these issues to improve our understanding of the links between financial stress, financial abuse, and military suicide and to generate recommendations to fix these interlinked problems.

A few years ago, Army Sergeant Angelo Stevens was living with $100,000 of debt. He had just been told that, because of his deteriorating finances, he was at risk of losing his security clearance. If he lost his clearance, he would lose his job, which would make his debt even more unmanageable.

Sergeant Stevens met with a military financial planner. He left feeling hopeless and humiliated. He told a reporter:

I walked out thinking, ''If I'm dead, my family can get $500,000 in life insurance, but I have to kill myself.''

Sergeant Stevens ultimately found help and survived, but he was far from alone in his desperation.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOLT. I am happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the gentleman's concern and his focus, as far as the problems that financial stress causes, and the additional $1 million and certainly believe it would be a good addition to the bill. I think I speak on behalf of the committee, as far as accepting the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. HOLT. I appreciate the gentleman's comments, and I can certainly sum up quickly to say that I think it is important that we understand how effectively suicide prevention programs at the Department of Defense, the VA, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau are working together and how they can work together better.

This is a serious national problem. This is one component of that problem, and I thank the gentleman. Again, I commend everyone on the subcommittee for the attention they are paying this year to this important problem.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $30,000,000) (increased by $30,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $30,000,000) (increased by $30,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Rhode Island and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

□ 1815

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I rise to offer a very simple amendment to direct the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs to increase individual grant amounts issued through the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program.

I would like to begin, of course, by thanking Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN as well as Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for their work on the underlying bill and for their continued commitment to funding the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program.

As someone who has suffered a spinal cord injury at the age of 16, I am acutely aware of how important this research is to the millions of servicemembers and civilians who suffer from various forms of paralysis and other conditions related to spinal cord injury. They simply want to know whether they will ever again be able to move, be able to walk, or even be able to breathe on their own.

I am thrilled to say that we are beginning to see meaningful answers in a positive way to these questions. Research into spinal cord injuries is producing, right now, a wealth of groundbreaking discoveries that are making treatment protocols never before envisioned an actual achievable goal. However, if we want these advancements to continue, particularly in the areas of translational research, then we must make sure that we are providing higher grant award levels to the researchers funded by the Spinal Cord Injury Program.

I say this because we have heard from researchers in the field of spinal cord injury research that the current grant awards, though meaningful, the ones that are issued to the program are not yet really large enough to make an appreciable difference, given the promise that the research shows right now.

So in the fiscal year 2013 appropriations measure, I was proud to work with the Defense Appropriations Committee to double the funding for the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program from $15 to $30 million; and thanks to the hard work of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN as well as Ranking Member VISCLOSKY, we have been able to maintain that funding level in this bill. I am incredibly grateful.

With twice the amount of funding allocated since 2013, it is time to increase the amount of individual grants provided to the program's recipients. Remarkable advancements are now ripe for further development, but these next steps will only be achieved if the grant awards keep pace with the growing complexities and costs of this research.

With that, I thank, again, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN as well as Ranking Member VISCLOSKY. I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I know all members of our committee appreciate your advocacy and obviously your special knowledge and view of spinal cord injuries. We don't get involved in the process of funding grants, but when you brought to our attention the fact that maybe larger sums within the grants might expedite some of the exciting things that are happening, it seemed to make sense to us, so I very much am in line with the amendment that you put forward.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LANGEVIN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I would add my voice to the chairman's, and what I found most heartening is the hope that there is going to be success. Because often we want to see the success, but you certainly have made me hopeful that if we made the proper investment and have the appropriate levels of funding for the grants, we can see improvement, and for that I thank you very much.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the ranking member. I thank both the gentlemen for their comments, their support of this research.

When I was injured 34 years ago, I was told that I would never walk again, that spinal cord injury repair was just too difficult, it would never happen. We know now, because of research that is happening over the years by dedicated researchers and where we are right now, that it is no longer a question of if but when people with spinal cord injuries will walk again, be able to breathe on their own again, and be able to move again.

The support you have given to this amendment is going to help millions of people. I thank both the chairman and, again, the ranking member as well as the members of the committee.

Mr. Chair, with that, I again just want to express my deep appreciation for the hard work that went into this bill. Of course maintaining the current funding level at $30 million in this program and the support of both JIM FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY encouraging larger grant awards, I know that this will make a difference. Just hearing from the researchers in the field explaining why and how the larger awards would make this difference, I know that we will be seeing results very soon.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CHEMICAL AGENTS AND MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION, DEFENSE

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the destruction of the United States stockpile of lethal chemical agents and munitions in accordance with the provisions of section 1412 of the Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1986 (50 U.S.C. 1521), and for the destruction of other chemical warfare materials that are not in the chemical weapon stockpile, $828,868,000, of which $222,728,000 shall be for operation and maintenance, of which no less than $52,102,000 shall be for the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program, consisting of $21,016,000 for activities on military installations and $31,086,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016, to assist State and local governments; $10,227,000 shall be for procurement, to remain available until September 30, 2017, of which $3,225,000 shall be for the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program to assist State and local governments; and $595,913,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016, shall be for research, development, test and evaluation, of which $575,808,000 shall only be for the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program.

DRUG INTERDICTION AND COUNTER-DRUG ACTIVITIES, DEFENSE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For drug interdiction and counter-drug activities of the Department of Defense, for transfer to appropriations available to the Department of Defense for military personnel of the reserve components serving under the provisions of title 10 and title 32, United States Code; for operation and maintenance; for procurement; and for research, development, test and evaluation, $944,687,000, of which $669,631,000 shall be for counter-narcotics support; $105,591,000 shall be for the drug demand reduction program; and $169,465,000 shall be for the National Guard counter-drug program: *Provided*, That the funds appropriated under this heading shall be available for obligation for the same time period and for the same purpose as the appropriation to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority contained elsewhere in this Act.

JOINT IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE DEFEAT FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the ''Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Fund'', $65,464,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That such funds shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purpose of allowing the Director of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization to investigate, develop and provide equipment, supplies, services, training, facilities, personnel and funds to assist United States forces in the defeat of improvised explosive devices: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may transfer funds provided herein to appropriations for military personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation; and defense working capital funds to accomplish the purpose provided herein: *Provided further*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 15 days prior to making transfers from this appropriation, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such transfer.

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

For expenses and activities of the Office of the Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $311,830,000, of which $310,830,000 shall be for operation and maintenance, of which not to exceed $700,000 is available for emergencies and extraordinary expenses to be expended on the approval or authority of the Inspector General, and payments may be made on the Inspector General's certificate of necessity for confidential military purposes; and of which $1,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017, shall be for procurement.

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL SPORTING COMPETITIONS

For logistical and security support for international sporting competitions (including pay and non-travel related allowances only for members of the Reserve Components of the Armed Forces of the United States called or ordered to active duty in connection with providing such support), $10,000,000, to remain available until expended.

TITLE VII

RELATED AGENCIES

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM FUND

For payment to the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System Fund, to maintain the proper funding level for continuing the operation of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, $514,000,000.

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT

For necessary expenses of the Intelligence Community Management Account, $501,194,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 39, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000) (increased by $2,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from New Jersey and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by thanking Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKY for their cooperation in preparing this commonsense amendment.

My amendment would carve out $2 million within the $504 million intelligence community management account and allocate it to the intelligence community whistleblowing and source protection directorate, which is a component of the Office of the Inspector General of the intelligence community.

Currently, this directorate is literally a one-man operation. Now, the intelligence community is a closed, secretive community. It is different from almost all other agencies this Congress deals with. Only from workers within these programs are we likely to learn about improprieties. Given the fact

that there are tens of thousands of Federal employees and contractors who work for the intelligence community elements, it is not realistic to expect the IC inspector general to be able to receive and investigate effectively any and all valid complaints from conscientious internal whistleblowers through a single investigator, no matter how talented that investigator may be. This $2 million reallocation of funds will help the community whistleblowing and source protection directorate hire more needed additional investigators and support staff and will fund outreach and education efforts across the intelligence community.

For our system of oversight of the intelligence community to work properly, it is vital that all employees and contractors know where and how they can report lawfully potential incidents of waste, fraud, abuse, criminal conduct, or whistleblower retaliation. So this directorate can truly become that place only if it has sufficient resources. I see this as a step in that direction. This amendment will ensure that they have resources to respond to legitimate concerns.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOLT. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I am always cautious about people who have suggested in the past that we would balance the budget if we eliminated waste, fraud, and abuse. But the gentleman is correct; there are occurrences of waste, fraud, abuse, or inefficiencies.

The investment the gentleman is talking about I think is a wise one, to make sure that we do protect the taxpayer's dollar, ferret out those monies that are ill spent to make sure it doesn't happen again, and to make sure that those who are doing the right thing are protected in the performance of their duty on behalf of the Government of the United States.

So I appreciate the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. HOLT. I thank the gentleman.

If I may make one comment in response to the ranking member and then yield to the chairman, there has been a lot of concern in this House about people going public with concerns about activities in the intelligence community, and we should want them to have a reliable channel through which they can lawfully express their concerns about criminal activity, about whistleblower retaliation or waste, fraud, and abuse. This office, underfunded as it currently is, is the official place for them to go, and we should make it more accessible.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOLT. I would be pleased to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Thank you for yielding.

Our committee has long supported whistleblower protections. May I commend you on your two amendments today. You have got two in the win column and none in the loss column.

Mr. HOLT. I thank the gentleman, and 2 and 0 in this soccer day is probably a pretty good score.

So with that, I yield back the balance of my time with thanks to the chair and ranking member.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE VIII

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 8001. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall be used for publicity or propaganda purposes not authorized by the Congress.

SEC. 8002. During the current fiscal year, provisions of law prohibiting the payment of compensation to, or employment of, any person not a citizen of the United States shall not apply to personnel of the Department of Defense: *Provided*, That salary increases granted to direct and indirect hire foreign national employees of the Department of Defense funded by this Act shall not be at a rate in excess of the percentage increase authorized by law for civilian employees of the Department of Defense whose pay is computed under the provisions of section 5332 of title 5, United States Code, or at a rate in excess of the percentage increase provided by the appropriate host nation to its own employees, whichever is higher: *Provided further*, That this section shall not apply to Department of Defense foreign service national employees serving at United States diplomatic missions whose pay is set by the Department of State under the Foreign Service Act of 1980: *Provided further*, That the limitations of this provision shall not apply to foreign national employees of the Department of Defense in the Republic of Turkey.

SEC. 8003. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year, unless expressly so provided herein.

SEC. 8004. No more than 20 percent of the appropriations in this Act which are limited for obligation during the current fiscal year shall be obligated during the last 2 months of the fiscal year: *Provided*, That this section shall not apply to obligations for support of active duty training of reserve components or summer camp training of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8005. Upon determination by the Secretary of Defense that such action is necessary in the national interest, he may, with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget, transfer not to exceed $5,000,000,000 of working capital funds of the Department of Defense or funds made available in this Act to the Department of Defense for military functions (except military construction) between such appropriations or funds or any subdivision thereof, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation or fund to which transferred: *Provided*, That such authority to transfer may not be used unless for higher priority items, based on unforeseen military requirements, than those for which originally appropriated and in no case where the item for which funds are requested has been denied by the Congress: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall notify the Congress promptly of all transfers made pursuant to this authority or any other authority in this Act: *Provided further*, That no part of the funds in this Act shall be available to prepare or present a request to the Committees on Appropriations for reprogramming of funds, unless for higher priority items, based on unforeseen military requirements, than those for which originally appropriated and in no case where the item for which reprogramming is requested has been denied by the Congress: *Provided further*, That a request for multiple reprogrammings of funds using authority provided in this section shall be made prior to June 30, 2015: *Provided further*, That transfers among military personnel appropriations shall not be taken into account for purposes of the limitation on the amount of funds that may be transferred under this section.

SEC. 8006. (a) With regard to the list of specific programs, projects, and activities (and the dollar amounts and adjustments to budget activities corresponding to such programs, projects, and activities) contained in the tables titled "Explanation of Project Level Adjustments" in the explanatory statement regarding this Act, the obligation and expenditure of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act for those programs, projects, and activities for which the amounts appropriated exceed or are less than the amounts requested are hereby required by law to be carried out in the manner provided by such tables to the same extent as if the tables were included in the text of this Act.

(b) Amounts specified in the referenced tables described in subsection (a) shall not be treated as subdivisions of appropriations for purposes of section 8005 of this Act: *Provided*, That section 8005 shall apply when transfers of the amounts described in subsection (a) occur between appropriation accounts.

SEC. 8007. (a) Not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, the Department of Defense shall submit a report to the congressional defense committees to establish the baseline for application of reprogramming and transfer authorities for fiscal year 2015: *Provided*, That the report shall include—

(1) a table for each appropriation with a separate column to display the President's budget request, adjustments made by Congress, adjustments due to enacted rescissions, if appropriate, and the fiscal year enacted level;

(2) a delineation in the table for each appropriation both by budget activity and program, project, and activity as detailed in the Budget Appendix; and

(3) an identification of items of special congressional interest.

(b) Notwithstanding section 8005 of this Act, none of the funds provided in this Act shall be available for reprogramming or transfer until the report identified in subsection (a) is submitted to the congressional defense committees, unless the Secretary of Defense certifies in writing to the congressional defense committees that such reprogramming or transfer is necessary as an emergency requirement.

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8008. During the current fiscal year, cash balances in working capital funds of the Department of Defense established pursuant to section 2208 of title 10, United States Code, may be maintained in only such amounts as are necessary at any time for cash disbursements to be made from such funds: *Provided*, That transfers may be made between such funds: *Provided further*, That transfers may be made between working capital funds and the "Foreign Currency Fluctuations, Defense" appropriation and the

''Operation and Maintenance'' appropriation accounts in such amounts as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense, with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget, except that such transfers may not be made unless the Secretary of Defense has notified the Congress of the proposed transfer. Except in amounts equal to the amounts appropriated to working capital funds in this Act, no obligations may be made against a working capital fund to procure or increase the value of war reserve material inventory, unless the Secretary of Defense has notified the Congress prior to any such obligation.

SEC. 8009. Funds appropriated by this Act may not be used to initiate a special access program without prior notification 30 calendar days in advance to the congressional defense committees.

SEC. 8010. None of the funds provided in this Act shall be available to initiate: (1) a multiyear contract that employs economic order quantity procurement in excess of $20,000,000 in any one year of the contract or that includes an unfunded contingent liability in excess of $20,000,000; or (2) a contract for advance procurement leading to a multiyear contract that employs economic order quantity procurement in excess of $20,000,000 in any one year, unless the congressional defense committees have been notified at least 30 days in advance of the proposed contract award: *Provided*, That no part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall be available to initiate a multiyear contract for which the economic order quantity advance procurement is not funded at least to the limits of the Government's liability: *Provided further*, That no part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall be available to initiate multiyear procurement contracts for any systems or component thereof if the value of the multiyear contract would exceed $500,000,000 unless specifically provided in this Act: *Provided further*, That no multiyear procurement contract can be terminated without 10-day prior notification to the congressional defense committees: *Provided further*, That the execution of multiyear authority shall require the use of a present value analysis to determine lowest cost compared to an annual procurement: *Provided further*, That none of the funds provided in this Act may be used for a multiyear contract executed after the date of the enactment of this Act unless in the case of any such contract—

(1) the Secretary of Defense has submitted to Congress a budget request for full funding of units to be procured through the contract and, in the case of a contract for procurement of aircraft, that includes, for any aircraft unit to be procured through the contract for which procurement funds are requested in that budget request for production beyond advance procurement activities in the fiscal year covered by the budget, full funding of procurement of such unit in that fiscal year;

(2) cancellation provisions in the contract do not include consideration of recurring manufacturing costs of the contractor associated with the production of unfunded units to be delivered under the contract;

(3) the contract provides that payments to the contractor under the contract shall not be made in advance of incurred costs on funded units; and

(4) the contract does not provide for a price adjustment based on a failure to award a follow-on contract.

SEC. 8011. Within the funds appropriated for the operation and maintenance of the Armed Forces, funds are hereby appropriated pursuant to section 401 of title 10, United States Code, for humanitarian and civic assistance costs under chapter 20 of title 10, United States Code. Such funds may also be obligated for humanitarian and civic assistance costs incidental to authorized operations and pursuant to authority granted in section 401 of chapter 20 of title 10, United States Code, and these obligations shall be reported as required by section 401(d) of title 10, United States Code: *Provided*, That funds available for operation and maintenance shall be available for providing humanitarian and similar assistance by using Civic Action Teams in the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands and freely associated states of Micronesia, pursuant to the Compact of Free Association as authorized by Public Law 99–239: *Provided further*, That upon a determination by the Secretary of the Army that such action is beneficial for graduate medical education programs conducted at Army medical facilities located in Hawaii, the Secretary of the Army may authorize the provision of medical services at such facilities and transportation to such facilities, on a nonreimbursable basis, for civilian patients from American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and Guam.

SEC. 8012. (a) During fiscal year 2015, the civilian personnel of the Department of Defense may not be managed on the basis of any end-strength, and the management of such personnel during that fiscal year shall not be subject to any constraint or limitation (known as an end-strength) on the number of such personnel who may be employed on the last day of such fiscal year.

(b) The fiscal year 2016 budget request for the Department of Defense as well as all justification material and other documentation supporting the fiscal year 2016 Department of Defense budget request shall be prepared and submitted to the Congress as if subsections (a) and (b) of this provision were effective with regard to fiscal year 2016.

(c) As required by section 1107 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 10 U.S.C. 2358 note) civilian personnel at the Department of Army Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories may not be managed on the basis of the Table of Distribution and Allowances, and the management of the workforce strength shall be done in a manner consistent with the budget available with respect to such Laboratories.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to military (civilian) technicians.

SEC. 8013. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used in any way, directly or indirectly, to influence congressional action on any legislation or appropriation matters pending before the Congress.

SEC. 8014. None of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be available for the basic pay and allowances of any member of the Army participating as a full-time student and receiving benefits paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from the Department of Defense Education Benefits Fund when time spent as a full-time student is credited toward completion of a service commitment: *Provided*, That this section shall not apply to those members who have reenlisted with this option prior to October 1, 1987: *Provided further*, That this section applies only to active components of the Army.

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8015. Funds appropriated in title III of this Act for the Department of Defense Pilot Mentor-Protege Program may be transferred to any other appropriation contained in this Act solely for the purpose of implementing a Mentor-Protege Program developmental assistance agreement pursuant to section 831 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991 (Public Law 101–510; 10 U.S.C. 2302 note), as amended, under the authority of this provision or any other transfer authority contained in this Act.

SEC. 8016. None of the funds in this Act may be available for the purchase by the Department of Defense (and its departments and agencies) of welded shipboard anchor and mooring chain 4 inches in diameter and under unless the anchor and mooring chain are manufactured in the United States from components which are substantially manufactured in the United States: *Provided*, That for the purpose of this section, the term ''manufactured'' shall include cutting, heat treating, quality control, testing of chain and welding (including the forging and shot blasting process): *Provided further*, That for the purpose of this section substantially all of the components of anchor and mooring chain shall be considered to be produced or manufactured in the United States if the aggregate cost of the components produced or manufactured in the United States exceeds the aggregate cost of the components produced or manufactured outside the United States: *Provided further*, That when adequate domestic supplies are not available to meet Department of Defense requirements on a timely basis, the Secretary of the service responsible for the procurement may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations that such an acquisition must be made in order to acquire capability for national security purposes.

SEC. 8017. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense in the current fiscal year or any fiscal year hereafter may be used to demilitarize or dispose of M–1 Carbines, M–1 Garand rifles, M–14 rifles, .22 caliber rifles, .30 caliber rifles, or M–1911 pistols, or to demilitarize or destroy small arms ammunition or ammunition components that are not otherwise prohibited from commercial sale under Federal law, unless the small arms ammunition or ammunition components are certified by the Secretary of the Army or designee as unserviceable or unsafe for further use.

SEC. 8018. No more than $500,000 of the funds appropriated or made available in this Act shall be used during a single fiscal year for any single relocation of an organization, unit, activity or function of the Department of Defense into or within the National Capital Region: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the congressional defense committees that such a relocation is required in the best interest of the Government.

SEC. 8019. Of the funds made available in this Act, $15,000,000 shall be available for incentive payments authorized by section 504 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1544): *Provided*, That a prime contractor or a subcontractor at any tier that makes a subcontract award to any subcontractor or supplier as defined in section 1544 of title 25, United States Code, or a small business owned and controlled by an individual or individuals defined under section 4221(9) of title 25, United States Code, shall be considered a contractor for the purposes of being allowed additional compensation under section 504 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1544) whenever the prime contract or subcontract amount is over $500,000 and involves the expenditure of funds appropriated by an Act making appropriations for the Department of Defense with respect to any fiscal year: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 1906 of title 41, United States Code, this section shall be applicable to any Department of Defense acquisition of supplies or services, including any contract

and any subcontract at any tier for acquisition of commercial items produced or manufactured, in whole or in part, by any subcontractor or supplier defined in section 1544 of title 25, United States Code, or a small business owned and controlled by an individual or individuals defined under section 4221(9) of title 25, United States Code.

SEC. 8020. Funds appropriated by this Act for the Defense Media Activity shall not be used for any national or international political or psychological activities.

SEC. 8021. During the current fiscal year, the Department of Defense is authorized to incur obligations of not to exceed $350,000,000 for purposes specified in section 2350j(c) of title 10, United States Code, in anticipation of receipt of contributions, only from the Government of Kuwait, under that section: *Provided*, That upon receipt, such contributions from the Government of Kuwait shall be credited to the appropriations or fund which incurred such obligations.

SEC. 8022. (a) Of the funds made available in this Act, not less than $39,500,000 shall be available for the Civil Air Patrol Corporation, of which—

(1) $27,400,000 shall be available from ''Operation and Maintenance, Air Force'' to support Civil Air Patrol Corporation operation and maintenance, readiness, counter-drug activities, and drug demand reduction activities involving youth programs;

(2) $10,400,000 shall be available from ''Aircraft Procurement, Air Force''; and

(3) $1,700,000 shall be available from ''Other Procurement, Air Force'' for vehicle procurement.

(b) The Secretary of the Air Force should waive reimbursement for any funds used by the Civil Air Patrol for counter-drug activities in support of Federal, State, and local government agencies.

SEC. 8023. (a) None of the funds appropriated in this Act are available to establish a new Department of Defense (department) federally funded research and development center (FFRDC), either as a new entity, or as a separate entity administrated by an organization managing another FFRDC, or as a nonprofit membership corporation consisting of a consortium of other FFRDCs and other nonprofit entities.

(b) No member of a Board of Directors, Trustees, Overseers, Advisory Group, Special Issues Panel, Visiting Committee, or any similar entity of a defense FFRDC, and no paid consultant to any defense FFRDC, except when acting in a technical advisory capacity, may be compensated for his or her services as a member of such entity, or as a paid consultant by more than one FFRDC in a fiscal year: *Provided*, That a member of any such entity referred to previously in this subsection shall be allowed travel expenses and per diem as authorized under the Federal Joint Travel Regulations, when engaged in the performance of membership duties.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds available to the department from any source during fiscal year 2015 may be used by a defense FFRDC, through a fee or other payment mechanism, for construction of new buildings, for payment of cost sharing for projects funded by Government grants, for absorption of contract overruns, or for certain charitable contributions, not to include employee participation in community service and/or development.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, of the funds available to the department during fiscal year 2015, not more than 5,750 staff years of technical effort (staff years) may be funded for defense FFRDCs: *Provided*, That of the specific amount referred to previously in this subsection, not more than 1,125 staff years may be funded for the defense studies and analysis FFRDCs: *Provided further*, That this subsection shall not apply to staff years funded in the National Intelligence Program (NIP) and the Military Intelligence Program (MIP).

(e) The Secretary of Defense shall, with the submission of the department's fiscal year 2016 budget request, submit a report presenting the specific amounts of staff years of technical effort to be allocated for each defense FFRDC during that fiscal year and the associated budget estimates.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the total amount appropriated in this Act for FFRDCs is hereby reduced by $40,000,000.

SEC. 8024. None of the funds appropriated or made available in this Act shall be used to procure carbon, alloy, or armor steel plate for use in any Government-owned facility or property under the control of the Department of Defense which were not melted and rolled in the United States or Canada: *Provided*, That these procurement restrictions shall apply to any and all Federal Supply Class 9515, American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) or American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) specifications of carbon, alloy or armor steel plate: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the military department responsible for the procurement may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate that adequate domestic supplies are not available to meet Department of Defense requirements on a timely basis and that such an acquisition must be made in order to acquire capability for national security purposes: *Provided further*, That these restrictions shall not apply to contracts which are in being as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8025. For the purposes of this Act, the term ''congressional defense committees'' means the Armed Services Committee of the House of Representatives, the Armed Services Committee of the Senate, the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 8026. During the current fiscal year, the Department of Defense may acquire the modification, depot maintenance and repair of aircraft, vehicles and vessels as well as the production of components and other Defense-related articles, through competition between Department of Defense depot maintenance activities and private firms: *Provided*, That the Senior Acquisition Executive of the military department or Defense Agency concerned, with power of delegation, shall certify that successful bids include comparable estimates of all direct and indirect costs for both public and private bids: *Provided further*, That Office of Management and Budget Circular A–76 shall not apply to competitions conducted under this section.

SEC. 8027. (a)(1) If the Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the United States Trade Representative, determines that a foreign country which is party to an agreement described in paragraph (2) has violated the terms of the agreement by discriminating against certain types of products produced in the United States that are covered by the agreement, the Secretary of Defense shall rescind the Secretary's blanket waiver of the Buy American Act with respect to such types of products produced in that foreign country.

(2) An agreement referred to in paragraph (1) is any reciprocal defense procurement memorandum of understanding, between the United States and a foreign country pursuant to which the Secretary of Defense has prospectively waived the Buy American Act for certain products in that country.

(b) The Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Congress a report on the amount of Department of Defense purchases from foreign entities in fiscal year 2015. Such report shall separately indicate the dollar value of items for which the Buy American Act was waived pursuant to any agreement described in subsection (a)(2), the Trade Agreement Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), or any international agreement to which the United States is a party.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term ''Buy American Act'' means chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code.

SEC. 8028. During the current fiscal year, amounts contained in the Department of Defense Overseas Military Facility Investment Recovery Account established by section 2921(c)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1991 (Public Law 101–510; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note) shall be available until expended for the payments specified by section 2921(c)(2) of that Act.

SEC. 8029. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Air Force may convey at no cost to the Air Force, without consideration, to Indian tribes located in the States of Nevada, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Oregon, Minnesota, and Washington relocatable military housing units located at Grand Forks Air Force Base, Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Ellsworth Air Force Base, and Minot Air Force Base that are excess to the needs of the Air Force.

(b) The Secretary of the Air Force shall convey, at no cost to the Air Force, military housing units under subsection (a) in accordance with the request for such units that are submitted to the Secretary by the Operation Walking Shield Program on behalf of Indian tribes located in the States of Nevada, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Oregon, Minnesota, and Washington. Any such conveyance shall be subject to the condition that the housing units shall be removed within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) The Operation Walking Shield Program shall resolve any conflicts among requests of Indian tribes for housing units under subsection (a) before submitting requests to the Secretary of the Air Force under subsection (b).

(d) In this section, the term ''Indian tribe'' means any recognized Indian tribe included on the current list published by the Secretary of the Interior under section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–454; 108 Stat. 4792; 25 U.S.C. 479a-1).

SEC. 8030. During the current fiscal year, appropriations which are available to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance may be used to purchase items having an investment item unit cost of not more than $250,000.

SEC. 8031. (a) During the current fiscal year, none of the appropriations or funds available to the Department of Defense Working Capital Funds shall be used for the purchase of an investment item for the purpose of acquiring a new inventory item for sale or anticipated sale during the current fiscal year or a subsequent fiscal year to customers of the Department of Defense Working Capital Funds if such an item would not have been chargeable to the Department of Defense Business Operations Fund during fiscal year 1994 and if the purchase of such an investment item would be chargeable during the current fiscal year to appropriations made to the Department of Defense for procurement.

(b) The fiscal year 2016 budget request for the Department of Defense as well as all justification material and other documentation

supporting the fiscal year 2016 Department of Defense budget shall be prepared and submitted to the Congress on the basis that any equipment which was classified as an end item and funded in a procurement appropriation contained in this Act shall be budgeted for in a proposed fiscal year 2016 procurement appropriation and not in the supply management business area or any other area or category of the Department of Defense Working Capital Funds.

SEC. 8032. None of the funds appropriated by this Act for programs of the Central Intelligence Agency shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year, except for funds appropriated for the Reserve for Contingencies, which shall remain available until September 30, 2016: *Provided*, That funds appropriated, transferred, or otherwise credited to the Central Intelligence Agency Central Services Working Capital Fund during this or any prior or subsequent fiscal year shall remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That any funds appropriated or transferred to the Central Intelligence Agency for advanced research and development acquisition, for agent operations, and for covert action programs authorized by the President under section 503 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3093) shall remain available until September 30, 2016.

SEC. 8033. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds made available in this Act for the Defense Intelligence Agency may be used for the design, development, and deployment of General Defense Intelligence Program intelligence communications and intelligence information systems for the Services, the Unified and Specified Commands, and the component commands.

SEC. 8034. Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Defense under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'', not less than $12,000,000 shall be made available only for the mitigation of environmental impacts, including training and technical assistance to tribes, related administrative support, the gathering of information, documenting of environmental damage, and developing a system for prioritization of mitigation and cost to complete estimates for mitigation, on Indian lands resulting from Department of Defense activities.

SEC. 8035. (a) None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be expended by an entity of the Department of Defense unless the entity, in expending the funds, complies with the Buy American Act. For purposes of this subsection, the term ''Buy American Act'' means chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code.

(b) If the Secretary of Defense determines that a person has been convicted of intentionally affixing a label bearing a ''Made in America'' inscription to any product sold in or shipped to the United States that is not made in America, the Secretary shall determine, in accordance with section 2410f of title 10, United States Code, whether the person should be debarred from contracting with the Department of Defense.

(c) In the case of any equipment or products purchased with appropriations provided under this Act, it is the sense of the Congress that any entity of the Department of Defense, in expending the appropriation, purchase only American-made equipment and products, provided that American-made equipment and products are cost-competitive, quality competitive, and available in a timely fashion.

SEC. 8036. None of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be available for a contract for studies, analysis, or consulting services entered into without competition on the basis of an unsolicited proposal unless the head of the activity responsible for the procurement determines—

(1) as a result of thorough technical evaluation, only one source is found fully qualified to perform the proposed work;

(2) the purpose of the contract is to explore an unsolicited proposal which offers significant scientific or technological promise, represents the product of original thinking, and was submitted in confidence by one source; or

(3) the purpose of the contract is to take advantage of unique and significant industrial accomplishment by a specific concern, or to insure that a new product or idea of a specific concern is given financial support: *Provided*, That this limitation shall not apply to contracts in an amount of less than $25,000, contracts related to improvements of equipment that is in development or production, or contracts as to which a civilian official of the Department of Defense, who has been confirmed by the Senate, determines that the award of such contract is in the interest of the national defense.

SEC. 8037. (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), none of the funds made available by this Act may be used—

(1) to establish a field operating agency; or

(2) to pay the basic pay of a member of the Armed Forces or civilian employee of the department who is transferred or reassigned from a headquarters activity if the member or employee's place of duty remains at the location of that headquarters.

(b) The Secretary of Defense or Secretary of a military department may waive the limitations in subsection (a), on a case-by-case basis, if the Secretary determines, and certifies to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate that the granting of the waiver will reduce the personnel requirements or the financial requirements of the department.

(c) This section does not apply to—

(1) field operating agencies funded within the National Intelligence Program;

(2) an Army field operating agency established to eliminate, mitigate, or counter the effects of improvised explosive devices, and, as determined by the Secretary of the Army, other similar threats;

(3) an Army field operating agency established to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of biometric activities and to integrate common biometric technologies throughout the Department of Defense; or

(4) an Air Force field operating agency established to administer the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Program and Mortuary Operations for the Department of Defense and authorized Federal entities.

SEC. 8038. (a) None of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be available to convert to contractor performance an activity or function of the Department of Defense that, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, is performed by Department of Defense civilian employees unless—

(1) the conversion is based on the result of a public-private competition that includes a most efficient and cost effective organization plan developed by such activity or function;

(2) the Competitive Sourcing Official determines that, over all performance periods stated in the solicitation of offers for performance of the activity or function, the cost of performance of the activity or function by a contractor would be less costly to the Department of Defense by an amount that equals or exceeds the lesser of—

(A) 10 percent of the most efficient organization's personnel-related costs for performance of that activity or function by Federal employees; or

(B) $10,000,000; and

(3) the contractor does not receive an advantage for a proposal that would reduce costs for the Department of Defense by—

(A) not making an employer-sponsored health insurance plan available to the workers who are to be employed in the performance of that activity or function under the contract; or

(B) offering to such workers an employer-sponsored health benefits plan that requires the employer to contribute less towards the premium or subscription share than the amount that is paid by the Department of Defense for health benefits for civilian employees under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code.

(b)(1) The Department of Defense, without regard to subsection (a) of this section or subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 2461 of title 10, United States Code, and notwithstanding any administrative regulation, requirement, or policy to the contrary shall have full authority to enter into a contract for the performance of any commercial or industrial type function of the Department of Defense that—

(A) is included on the procurement list established pursuant to section 2 of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (section 8503 of title 41, United States Code);

(B) is planned to be converted to performance by a qualified nonprofit agency for the blind or by a qualified nonprofit agency for other severely handicapped individuals in accordance with that Act; or

(C) is planned to be converted to performance by a qualified firm under at least 51 percent ownership by an Indian tribe, as defined in section 4(e) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(e)), or a Native Hawaiian Organization, as defined in section 8(a)(15) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)(15)).

(2) This section shall not apply to depot contracts or contracts for depot maintenance as provided in sections 2469 and 2474 of title 10, United States Code.

(c) The conversion of any activity or function of the Department of Defense under the authority provided by this section shall be credited toward any competitive or outsourcing goal, target, or measurement that may be established by statute, regulation, or policy and is deemed to be awarded under the authority of, and in compliance with, subsection (h) of section 2304 of title 10, United States Code, for the competition or outsourcing of commercial activities.

(RESCISSIONS)

SEC. 8039. Of the funds appropriated in Department of Defense Appropriations Acts, the following funds are hereby rescinded from the following accounts and programs in the specified amounts:

''Aircraft Procurement, Army'', 2013/2015, $27,000,000;

''Weapons and Tracked Combat Vehicles, Army'', 2013/2015, $5,000,000;

''Other Procurement, Army'', 2013/2015, $30,000,000;

''Aircraft Procurement, Navy'', 2013/2015, $47,200,000;

''Weapons Procurement, Navy'', 2013/2015, $27,000,000;

''Aircraft Procurement, Air Force'', 2013/2015, $71,100,000;

''Missile Procurement, Air Force'', 2013/2015, $13,800,000;

''Other Procurement, Army'', 2014/2016, $200,000,000;

''Aircraft Procurement, Navy'', 2014/2016, $171,622,000;

''Weapons Procurement, Navy'', 2014/2016, $91,436,000;

''Other Procurement, Navy'', 2014/2016, $1,505,000;

''Aircraft Procurement, Air Force'', 2014/2016, $47,400,000;

''Missile Procurement, Air Force'', 2014/2016, $121,185,000;

''Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Army'', 2014/2015, $5,000,000; and

''Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Navy'', 2014/2015, $105,400,000:

Provided, That no amounts may be canceled from amounts that were designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism or as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget or the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

SEC. 8040. None of the funds available in this Act may be used to reduce the authorized positions for military technicians (dual status) of the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve for the purpose of applying any administratively imposed civilian personnel ceiling, freeze, or reduction on military technicians (dual status), unless such reductions are a direct result of a reduction in military force structure.

SEC. 8041. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act may be obligated or expended for assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea unless specifically appropriated for that purpose.

SEC. 8042. Funds appropriated in this Act for operation and maintenance of the Military Departments, Combatant Commands and Defense Agencies shall be available for reimbursement of pay, allowances and other expenses which would otherwise be incurred against appropriations for the National Guard and Reserve when members of the National Guard and Reserve provide intelligence or counterintelligence support to Combatant Commands, Defense Agencies and Joint Intelligence Activities, including the activities and programs included within the National Intelligence Program and the Military Intelligence Program: *Provided*, That nothing in this section authorizes deviation from established Reserve and National Guard personnel and training procedures.

SEC. 8043. During the current fiscal year, none of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to reduce the civilian medical and medical support personnel assigned to military treatment facilities below the September 30, 2003, level: *Provided*, That the Service Surgeons General may waive this section by certifying to the congressional defense committees that the beneficiary population is declining in some catchment areas and civilian strength reductions may be consistent with responsible resource stewardship and capitation-based budgeting.

SEC. 8044. (a) None of the funds available to the Department of Defense for any fiscal year for drug interdiction or counter-drug activities may be transferred to any other department or agency of the United States except as specifically provided in an appropriations law.

(b) None of the funds available to the Central Intelligence Agency for any fiscal year for drug interdiction or counter-drug activities may be transferred to any other department or agency of the United States except as specifically provided in an appropriations law.

SEC. 8045. None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be used for the procurement of ball and roller bearings other than those produced by a domestic source and of domestic origin: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the military department responsible for such procurement may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, that adequate domestic supplies are not available to meet Department of Defense requirements on a timely basis and that such an acquisition must be made in order to acquire capability for national security purposes: *Provided further*, That this restriction shall not apply to the purchase of ''commercial items'', as defined by section 4(12) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, except that the restriction shall apply to ball or roller bearings purchased as end items.

SEC. 8046. None of the funds in this Act may be used to purchase any supercomputer which is not manufactured in the United States, unless the Secretary of Defense certifies to the congressional defense committees that such an acquisition must be made in order to acquire capability for national security purposes that is not available from United States manufacturers.

SEC. 8047. None of the funds made available in this or any other Act may be used to pay the salary of any officer or employee of the Department of Defense who approves or implements the transfer of administrative responsibilities or budgetary resources of any program, project, or activity financed by this Act to the jurisdiction of another Federal agency not financed by this Act without the express authorization of Congress: *Provided*, That this limitation shall not apply to transfers of funds expressly provided for in Defense Appropriations Acts, or provisions of Acts providing supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense.

SEC. 8048. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds available to the Department of Defense for the current fiscal year may be obligated or expended to transfer to another nation or an international organization any defense articles or services (other than intelligence services) for use in the activities described in subsection (b) unless the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate are notified 15 days in advance of such transfer.

(b) This section applies to—

(1) any international peacekeeping or peace-enforcement operation under the authority of chapter VI or chapter VII of the United Nations Charter under the authority of a United Nations Security Council resolution; and

(2) any other international peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, or humanitarian assistance operation.

(c) A notice under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the equipment, supplies, or services to be transferred.

(2) A statement of the value of the equipment, supplies, or services to be transferred.

(3) In the case of a proposed transfer of equipment or supplies—

(A) a statement of whether the inventory requirements of all elements of the Armed Forces (including the reserve components) for the type of equipment or supplies to be transferred have been met; and

(B) a statement of whether the items proposed to be transferred will have to be replaced and, if so, how the President proposes to provide funds for such replacement.

SEC. 8049. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense under this Act shall be obligated or expended to pay a contractor under a contract with the Department of Defense for costs of any amount paid by the contractor to an employee when—

(1) such costs are for a bonus or otherwise in excess of the normal salary paid by the contractor to the employee; and

(2) such bonus is part of restructuring costs associated with a business combination.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8050. During the current fiscal year, no more than $30,000,000 of appropriations made in this Act under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'' may be transferred to appropriations available for the pay of military personnel, to be merged with, and to be available for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred, to be used in support of such personnel in connection with support and services for eligible organizations and activities outside the Department of Defense pursuant to section 2012 of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. 8051. During the current fiscal year, in the case of an appropriation account of the Department of Defense for which the period of availability for obligation has expired or which has closed under the provisions of section 1552 of title 31, United States Code, and which has a negative unliquidated or unexpended balance, an obligation or an adjustment of an obligation may be charged to any current appropriation account for the same purpose as the expired or closed account if—

(1) the obligation would have been properly chargeable (except as to amount) to the expired or closed account before the end of the period of availability or closing of that account;

(2) the obligation is not otherwise properly chargeable to any current appropriation account of the Department of Defense; and

(3) in the case of an expired account, the obligation is not chargeable to a current appropriation of the Department of Defense under the provisions of section 1405(b)(8) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991, Public Law 101–510, as amended (31 U.S.C. 1551 note): *Provided*, That in the case of an expired account, if subsequent review or investigation discloses that there was not in fact a negative unliquidated or unexpended balance in the account, any charge to a current account under the authority of this section shall be reversed and recorded against the expired account: *Provided further*, That the total amount charged to a current appropriation under this section may not exceed an amount equal to 1 percent of the total appropriation for that account.

SEC. 8052. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau may permit the use of equipment of the National Guard Distance Learning Project by any person or entity on a space-available, reimbursable basis. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall establish the amount of reimbursement for such use on a case-by-case basis.

(b) Amounts collected under subsection (a) shall be credited to funds available for the National Guard Distance Learning Project and be available to defray the costs associated with the use of equipment of the project under that subsection. Such funds shall be available for such purposes without fiscal year limitation.

SEC. 8053. Using funds made available by this Act or any other Act, the Secretary of the Air Force, pursuant to a determination under section 2690 of title 10, United States Code, may implement cost-effective agreements for required heating facility modernization in the Kaiserslautern Military Community in the Federal Republic of Germany: *Provided*, That in the City of Kaiserslautern and at the Rhine Ordnance Barracks area, such agreements will include the use of United States anthracite as the base load energy for municipal district heat to the United States Defense installations: *Provided further*, That at Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center and Ramstein Air Base, furnished heat may be obtained from private, regional or municipal services, if provisions are included for the consideration of United States coal as an energy source.

SEC. 8054. None of the funds appropriated in title IV of this Act may be used to procure

end-items for delivery to military forces for operational training, operational use or inventory requirements: *Provided*, That this restriction does not apply to end-items used in development, prototyping, and test activities preceding and leading to acceptance for operational use: *Provided further*, That this restriction does not apply to programs funded within the National Intelligence Program: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate that it is in the national security interest to do so.

SEC. 8055. (a) The Secretary of Defense may, on a case-by-case basis, waive with respect to a foreign country each limitation on the procurement of defense items from foreign sources provided in law if the Secretary determines that the application of the limitation with respect to that country would invalidate cooperative programs entered into between the Department of Defense and the foreign country, or would invalidate reciprocal trade agreements for the procurement of defense items entered into under section 2531 of title 10, United States Code, and the country does not discriminate against the same or similar defense items produced in the United States for that country.

(b) Subsection (a) applies with respect to—

(1) contracts and subcontracts entered into on or after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) options for the procurement of items that are exercised after such date under contracts that are entered into before such date if the option prices are adjusted for any reason other than the application of a waiver granted under subsection (a).

(c) Subsection (a) does not apply to a limitation regarding construction of public vessels, ball and roller bearings, food, and clothing or textile materials as defined by section 11 (chapters 50–65) of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule and products classified under headings 4010, 4202, 4203, 6401 through 6406, 6505, 7019, 7218 through 7229, 7304.41 through 7304.49, 7306.40, 7502 through 7508, 8105, 8108, 8109, 8211, 8215, and 9404.

SEC. 8056. (a) IN GENERAL.—(1) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for any training, equipment, or other assistance for the members of a unit of a foreign security force if the Secretary of Defense has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights.

(2) The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall ensure that prior to a decision to provide any training, equipment, or other assistance to a unit of a foreign security force full consideration is given to any credible information available to the Department of State relating to human rights violations by such unit.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The prohibition in subsection (a)(1) shall not apply if the Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the Secretary of State, determines that the government of such country has taken all necessary corrective steps, or if the equipment or other assistance is necessary to assist in disaster relief operations or other humanitarian or national security emergencies.

(c) WAIVER.—The Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the Secretary of State, may waive the prohibition in subsection (a)(1) if the Secretary of Defense determines that such waiver is required by extraordinary circumstances.

(d) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish, and periodically update, procedures to ensure that any information in the possession of the Department of Defense about gross violations of human rights by units of foreign security forces is shared on a timely basis with the Department of State.

(e) REPORT.—Not more than 15 days after the application of any exception under subsection (b) or the exercise of any waiver under subsection (c), the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report—

(1) in the case of an exception under subsection (b), providing notice of the use of the exception and stating the grounds for the exception; and

(2) in the case of a waiver under subsection (c), describing the information relating to the gross violation of human rights; the extraordinary or other circumstances that necessitate the waiver; the purpose and duration of the training, equipment, or other assistance; and the United States forces and the foreign security force unit involved.

(f) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the congressional defense committees and the Committees on Appropriations.

SEC. 8057. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or other Department of Defense Appropriations Acts may be obligated or expended for the purpose of performing repairs or maintenance to military family housing units of the Department of Defense, including areas in such military family housing units that may be used for the purpose of conducting official Department of Defense business.

SEC. 8058. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds appropriated in this Act under the heading ''Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide'' for any new start advanced concept technology demonstration project or joint capability demonstration project may only be obligated 45 days after a report, including a description of the project, the planned acquisition and transition strategy and its estimated annual and total cost, has been provided in writing to the congressional defense committees: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying to the congressional defense committees that it is in the national interest to do so.

SEC. 8059. The Secretary of Defense shall provide a classified quarterly report beginning 30 days after enactment of this Act, to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Subcommittees on Defense on certain matters as directed in the classified annex accompanying this Act.

SEC. 8060. During the current fiscal year, none of the funds available to the Department of Defense may be used to provide support to another department or agency of the United States if such department or agency is more than 90 days in arrears in making payment to the Department of Defense for goods or services previously provided to such department or agency on a reimbursable basis: *Provided*, That this restriction shall not apply if the department is authorized by law to provide support to such department or agency on a nonreimbursable basis, and is providing the requested support pursuant to such authority: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may waive this restriction on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate that it is in the national security interest to do so.

SEC. 8061. Notwithstanding section 12310(b) of title 10, United States Code, a Reserve who is a member of the National Guard serving on full-time National Guard duty under section 502(f) of title 32, United States Code, may perform duties in support of the ground-based elements of the National Ballistic Missile Defense System.

SEC. 8062. None of the funds provided in this Act may be used to transfer to any non-governmental entity ammunition held by the Department of Defense that has a center-fire cartridge and a United States military nomenclature designation of ''armor penetrator'', ''armor piercing (AP)'', ''armor piercing incendiary (API)'', or ''armor-piercing incendiary tracer (API-T)'', except to an entity performing demilitarization services for the Department of Defense under a contract that requires the entity to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Department of Defense that armor piercing projectiles are either: (1) rendered incapable of reuse by the demilitarization process; or (2) used to manufacture ammunition pursuant to a contract with the Department of Defense or the manufacture of ammunition for export pursuant to a License for Permanent Export of Unclassified Military Articles issued by the Department of State.

SEC. 8063. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, or his designee, may waive payment of all or part of the consideration that otherwise would be required under section 2667 of title 10, United States Code, in the case of a lease of personal property for a period not in excess of 1 year to any organization specified in section 508(d) of title 32, United States Code, or any other youth, social, or fraternal nonprofit organization as may be approved by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, or his designee, on a case-by-case basis.

SEC. 8064. None of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be used for the support of any nonappropriated funds activity of the Department of Defense that procures malt beverages and wine with nonappropriated funds for resale (including such alcoholic beverages sold by the drink) on a military installation located in the United States unless such malt beverages and wine are procured within that State, or in the case of the District of Columbia, within the District of Columbia, in which the military installation is located: *Provided*, That in a case in which the military installation is located in more than one State, purchases may be made in any State in which the installation is located: *Provided further*, That such local procurement requirements for malt beverages and wine shall apply to all alcoholic beverages only for military installations in States which are not contiguous with another State: *Provided further*, That alcoholic beverages other than wine and malt beverages, in contiguous States and the District of Columbia shall be procured from the most competitive source, price and other factors considered.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8065. Of the amounts appropriated in this Act under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Army'', $106,189,900 shall remain available until expended: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to transfer such funds to other activities of the Federal Government: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense is authorized to enter into and carry out contracts for the acquisition of real property, construction, personal services, and operations related to projects carrying out the purposes of this section: *Provided further*, That contracts entered into under the authority of this section may provide for such indemnification as the Secretary determines to be necessary: *Provided further*, That projects authorized by this section shall comply with applicable Federal, State, and local law to the maximum extent consistent with the national security, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 8066. Section 8106 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1997 (titles I

through VIII of the matter under subsection 101(b) of Public Law 104–208; 110 Stat. 3009–111; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) shall continue in effect to apply to disbursements that are made by the Department of Defense in fiscal year 2015.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8067. During the current fiscal year, not to exceed $200,000,000 from funds available under ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'' may be transferred to the Department of State ''Global Security Contingency Fund'': *Provided*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 30 days prior to making transfers to the Department of State ''Global Security Contingency Fund'', notify the congressional defense committees in writing with the source of funds and a detailed justification, execution plan, and timeline for each proposed project.

SEC. 8068. In addition to amounts provided elsewhere in this Act, $4,000,000 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Defense, to remain available for obligation until expended: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, that upon the determination of the Secretary of Defense that it shall serve the national interest, these funds shall be available only for a grant to the Fisher House Foundation, Inc., only for the construction and furnishing of additional Fisher Houses to meet the needs of military family members when confronted with the illness or hospitalization of an eligible military beneficiary.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8069. Of the amounts appropriated in this Act under the headings ''Procurement, Defense-Wide'' and ''Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide'', $619,814,000 shall be for the Israeli Cooperative Programs: *Provided*, That of this amount, $350,972,000 shall be for the Secretary of Defense to provide to the Government of Israel for the procurement of the Iron Dome defense system to counter short-range rocket threats; $137,934,000 shall be for the Short Range Ballistic Missile Defense (SRBMD) program, including cruise missile defense research and development under the SRBMD program; $74,707,000 shall be for an upper-tier component to the Israeli Missile Defense Architecture; and $56,201,000 shall be for the Arrow System Improvement Program including development of a long range, ground and airborne, detection suite: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this provision for production of missiles and missile components may be transferred to appropriations available for the procurement of weapons and equipment, to be merged with and to be available for the same time period and the same purposes as the appropriation to which transferred: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this provision is in addition to any other transfer authority contained in this Act.

SEC. 8070. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense may be obligated to modify command and control relationships to give Fleet Forces Command operational and administrative control of U.S. Navy forces assigned to the Pacific fleet: *Provided*, That the command and control relationships which existed on October 1, 2004, shall remain in force unless changes are specifically authorized in a subsequent Act: *Provided further*, That this section does not apply to administrative control of Navy Air and Missile Defense Command.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8071. Of the amounts appropriated in this Act under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', $1,007,285,000 shall be available until September 30, 2015, to fund prior year shipbuilding cost increases: *Provided*, That upon enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Navy shall transfer funds to the following appropriations in the amounts specified: *Provided further*, That the amounts transferred shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes as the appropriations to which transferred to:

(1) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2008/2015: Carrier Replacement Program $663,000,000;

(2) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2009/2015: LPD-17 Amphibious Transport Dock Program $54,096,000;

(3) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2010/2015: DDG-51 Destroyer $65,771,000;

(4) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2010/2015: Littoral Combat Ship $51,345,000;

(5) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2011/2015: DDG-51 Destroyer $63,373,000;

(6) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2011/2015: Littoral Combat Ship $41,700,000;

(7) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2011/2015: Joint High Speed Vessel $9,340,000;

(8) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2012/2015: CVN Refueling Overhauls Program $54,000,000;

(9) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2012/2015: Joint High Speed Vessel $2,620,000; and

(10) Under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'', 2013/2015: Joint High Speed Vessel $2,040,000.

SEC. 8072. Funds appropriated by this Act, or made available by the transfer of funds in this Act, for intelligence activities are deemed to be specifically authorized by the Congress for purposes of section 504 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3094) during fiscal year 2015 until the enactment of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.

SEC. 8073. None of the funds provided in this Act shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming of funds that creates or initiates a new program, project, or activity unless such program, project, or activity must be undertaken immediately in the interest of national security and only after written prior notification to the congressional defense committees.

SEC. 8074. The budget of the President for fiscal year 2016 submitted to the Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, shall include separate budget justification documents for costs of United States Armed Forces' participation in contingency operations for the Military Personnel accounts, the Operation and Maintenance accounts, the Procurement accounts, and the Research, Development, Test and Evaluation accounts: *Provided*, That these documents shall include a description of the funding requested for each contingency operation, for each military service, to include all Active and Reserve components, and for each appropriations account: *Provided further*, That these documents shall include estimated costs for each element of expense or object class, a reconciliation of increases and decreases for each contingency operation, and programmatic data including, but not limited to, troop strength for each Active and Reserve component, and estimates of the major weapons systems deployed in support of each contingency: *Provided further*, That these documents shall include budget exhibits OP–5 and OP–32 (as defined in the Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation) for all contingency operations for the budget year and the two preceding fiscal years.

SEC. 8075. None of the funds in this Act may be used for research, development, test, evaluation, procurement, or deployment of nuclear armed interceptors of a missile defense system.

SEC. 8076. In addition to the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available elsewhere in this Act, $44,000,000 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Defense: *Provided*, That upon the determination of the Secretary of Defense that it shall serve the national interest, the Secretary shall make grants in the amounts specified as follows: $20,000,000 to the United Service Organizations and $24,000,000 to the Red Cross.

SEC. 8077. None of the funds appropriated or made available in this Act shall be used to reduce or disestablish the operation of the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron of the Air Force Reserve, if such action would reduce the WC–130 Weather Reconnaissance mission below the levels funded in this Act: *Provided*, That the Air Force shall allow the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron to perform other missions in support of national defense requirements during the non-hurricane season.

SEC. 8078. None of the funds provided in this Act shall be available for integration of foreign intelligence information unless the information has been lawfully collected and processed during the conduct of authorized foreign intelligence activities: *Provided*, That information pertaining to United States persons shall only be handled in accordance with protections provided in the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution as implemented through Executive Order No. 12333.

SEC. 8079. (a) At the time members of reserve components of the Armed Forces are called or ordered to active duty under section 12302(a) of title 10, United States Code, each member shall be notified in writing of the expected period during which the member will be mobilized.

(b) The Secretary of Defense may waive the requirements of subsection (a) in any case in which the Secretary determines that it is necessary to do so to respond to a national security emergency or to meet dire operational requirements of the Armed Forces.

SEC. 8080. For purposes of section 7108 of title 41, United States Code, any subdivision of appropriations made under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'' that is not closed at the time reimbursement is made shall be available to reimburse the Judgment Fund and shall be considered for the same purposes as any subdivision under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'' appropriations in the current fiscal year or any prior fiscal year.

SEC. 8081. (a) None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be used to transfer research and development, acquisition, or other program authority relating to current tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (TUAVs) from the Army.

(b) The Army shall retain responsibility for and operational control of the MQ–1C Gray Eagle Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) in order to support the Secretary of Defense in matters relating to the employment of unmanned aerial vehicles.

SEC. 8082. Up to $15,000,000 of the funds appropriated under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy'' may be made available for the Asia Pacific Regional Initiative Program for the purpose of enabling the Pacific Command to execute Theater Security Cooperation activities such as humanitarian assistance, and payment of incremental and personnel costs of training and exercising with foreign security forces: *Provided*, That

funds made available for this purpose may be used, notwithstanding any other funding authorities for humanitarian assistance, security assistance or combined exercise expenses: *Provided further*, That funds may not be obligated to provide assistance to any foreign country that is otherwise prohibited from receiving such type of assistance under any other provision of law.

SEC. 8083. None of the funds appropriated by this Act for programs of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year, except for funds appropriated for research and technology, which shall remain available until September 30, 2016.

SEC. 8084. For purposes of section 1553(b) of title 31, United States Code, any subdivision of appropriations made in this Act under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'' shall be considered to be for the same purpose as any subdivision under the heading ''Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy'' appropriations in any prior fiscal year, and the 1 percent limitation shall apply to the total amount of the appropriation.

SEC. 8085. (a) Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence shall submit a report to the congressional intelligence committees to establish the baseline for application of reprogramming and transfer authorities for fiscal year 2015: *Provided*, That the report shall include—

(1) a table for each appropriation with a separate column to display the President's budget request, adjustments made by Congress, adjustments due to enacted rescissions, if appropriate, and the fiscal year enacted level;

(2) a delineation in the table for each appropriation by Expenditure Center and project; and

(3) an identification of items of special congressional interest.

SEC. 8086. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to eliminate, restructure or realign Army Contracting Command–New Jersey or make disproportionate personnel reductions at any Army Contracting Command–New Jersey sites without 30-day prior notification to the congressional defense committees.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8087. Of the funds appropriated in the Intelligence Community Management Account for the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment, $20,000,000 is available for transfer by the Director of National Intelligence to other departments and agencies for purposes of Government-wide information sharing activities: *Provided*, That funds transferred under this provision are to be merged with and available for the same purposes and time period as the appropriation to which transferred: *Provided further*, That the Office of Management and Budget must approve any transfers made under this provision.

SEC. 8088. (a) None of the funds provided for the National Intelligence Program in this or any prior appropriations Act shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming or transfer of funds in accordance with section 102A(d) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3024(d)) that—

(1) creates a new start effort;

(2) terminates a program with appropriated funding of $10,000,000 or more;

(3) transfers funding into or out of the National Intelligence Program; or

(4) transfers funding between appropriations,

unless the congressional intelligence committees are notified 30 days in advance of such reprogramming of funds; this notification period may be reduced for urgent national security requirements.

(b) None of the funds provided for the National Intelligence Program in this or any prior appropriations Act shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming or transfer of funds in accordance with section 102A(d) or the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3024(d)) that results in a cumulative increase or decrease of the levels specified in the classified annex accompanying the Act unless the congressional intelligence committees are notified 30 days in advance of such reprogramming of funds; this notification period may be reduced for urgent national security requirements.

SEC. 8089. The Director of National Intelligence shall submit to Congress each year, at or about the time that the President's budget is submitted to Congress that year under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, a future-years intelligence program (including associated annexes) reflecting the estimated expenditures and proposed appropriations included in that budget. Any such future-years intelligence program shall cover the fiscal year with respect to which the budget is submitted and at least the four succeeding fiscal years.

SEC. 8090. For the purposes of this Act, the term ''congressional intelligence committees'' means the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives, the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

SEC. 8091. The Department of Defense shall continue to report incremental contingency operations costs for Operation Enduring Freedom on a monthly basis and any other operation designated and identified by the Secretary of Defense for the purposes of section 127a of title 10, United States Code, on a semi-annual basis in the Cost of War Execution Report as prescribed in the Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation Department of Defense Instruction 7000.14, Volume 12, Chapter 23 ''Contingency Operations'', Annex 1, dated September 2005.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8092. During the current fiscal year, not to exceed $11,000,000 from each of the appropriations made in title II of this Act for ''Operation and Maintenance, Army'', ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy'', and ''Operation and Maintenance, Air Force'' may be transferred by the military department concerned to its central fund established for Fisher Houses and Suites pursuant to section 2493(d) of title 10, United States Code.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8093. Funds appropriated by this Act for operation and maintenance may be available for the purpose of making remittances and transfers to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund in accordance with section 1705 of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. 8094. (a) Any agency receiving funds made available in this Act, shall, subject to subsections (b) and (c), post on the public website of that agency any report required to be submitted by the Congress in this or any other Act, upon the determination by the head of the agency that it shall serve the national interest.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to a report if—

(1) the public posting of the report compromises national security; or

(2) the report contains proprietary information.

(c) The head of the agency posting such report shall do so only after such report has been made available to the requesting Committee or Committees of Congress for no less than 45 days.

SEC. 8095. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be expended for any Federal contract for an amount in excess of $1,000,000, unless the contractor agrees not to—

(1) enter into any agreement with any of its employees or independent contractors that requires, as a condition of employment, that the employee or independent contractor agree to resolve through arbitration any claim under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or any tort related to or arising out of sexual assault or harassment, including assault and battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress, false imprisonment, or negligent hiring, supervision, or retention; or

(2) take any action to enforce any provision of an existing agreement with an employee or independent contractor that mandates that the employee or independent contractor resolve through arbitration any claim under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or any tort related to or arising out of sexual assault or harassment, including assault and battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress, false imprisonment, or negligent hiring, supervision, or retention.

(b) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be expended for any Federal contract unless the contractor certifies that it requires each covered subcontractor to agree not to enter into, and not to take any action to enforce any provision of, any agreement as described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), with respect to any employee or independent contractor performing work related to such subcontract. For purposes of this subsection, a ''covered subcontractor'' is an entity that has a subcontract in excess of $1,000,000 on a contract subject to subsection (a).

(c) The prohibitions in this section do not apply with respect to a contractor's or subcontractor's agreements with employees or independent contractors that may not be enforced in a court of the United States.

(d) The Secretary of Defense may waive the application of subsection (a) or (b) to a particular contractor or subcontractor for the purposes of a particular contract or subcontract if the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary personally determines that the waiver is necessary to avoid harm to national security interests of the United States, and that the term of the contract or subcontract is not longer than necessary to avoid such harm. The determination shall set forth with specificity the grounds for the waiver and for the contract or subcontract term selected, and shall state any alternatives considered in lieu of a waiver and the reasons each such alternative would not avoid harm to national security interests of the United States. The Secretary of Defense shall transmit to Congress, and simultaneously make public, any determination under this subsection not less than 15 business days before the contract or subcontract addressed in the determination may be awarded.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8096. From within the funds appropriated for operation and maintenance for the Defense Health Program in this Act, up to $146,857,000, shall be available for transfer to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund in accordance with the provisions of section 1704 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, Public Law 111–84: *Provided*, That for purposes of section 1704(b), the facility operations funded are operations of the integrated Captain James A. Lovell Federal

Health Care Center, consisting of the North Chicago Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Navy Ambulatory Care Center, and supporting facilities designated as a combined Federal medical facility as described by section 706 of Public Law 110–417: *Provided further*, That additional funds may be transferred from funds appropriated for operation and maintenance for the Defense Health Program to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund upon written notification by the Secretary of Defense to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

SEC. 8097. The Office of the Director of National Intelligence shall not employ more Senior Executive employees than are specified in the classified annex.

SEC. 8098. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be obligated or expended to pay a retired general or flag officer to serve as a senior mentor advising the Department of Defense unless such retired officer files a Standard Form 278 (or successor form concerning public financial disclosure under part 2634 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations) to the Office of Government Ethics.

SEC. 8099. Appropriations available to the Department of Defense may be used for the purchase of heavy and light armored vehicles for the physical security of personnel or for force protection purposes up to a limit of $250,000 per vehicle, notwithstanding price or other limitations applicable to the purchase of passenger carrying vehicles.

SEC. 8100. Of the amounts appropriated for ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'' the following amounts shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, for the following authorized purposes, notwithstanding any other provision of law, acting through the Office of Economic Adjustment of the Department of Defense, to make grants, conclude cooperative agreements, and supplement other Federal funds, to remain available until expended, to support critical existing and enduring military installations and missions on Guam, as well as any potential Department of Defense growth, $80,596,000 for addressing the need for civilian water and wastewater improvements: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 15 days prior to obligating funds for the forgoing purposes, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such obligation.

SEC. 8101. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Defense to take beneficial occupancy of more than 3,000 parking spaces (other than handicap-reserved spaces) to be provided by the BRAC 133 project: *Provided*, That this limitation may be waived in part if: (1) the Secretary of Defense certifies to Congress that levels of service at existing intersections in the vicinity of the project have not experienced failing levels of service as defined by the Transportation Research Board Highway Capacity Manual over a consecutive 90-day period; (2) the Department of Defense and the Virginia Department of Transportation agree on the number of additional parking spaces that may be made available to employees of the facility subject to continued 90-day traffic monitoring; and (3) the Secretary of Defense notifies the congressional defense committees in writing at least 14 days prior to exercising this waiver of the number of additional parking spaces to be made available.

SEC. 8102. The Secretary of Defense shall report quarterly the numbers of civilian personnel end strength by appropriation account for each and every appropriation account used to finance Federal civilian personnel salaries to the congressional defense committees within 15 days after the end of each fiscal quarter.

SEC. 8103. (a) None of the funds appropriated in this or any other Act may be used to take any action to modify—

(1) the appropriations account structure for the National Intelligence Program budget, including through the creation of a new appropriation or new appropriations account;

(2) how the National Intelligence Program budget request is presented, organized, and managed within the Department of Defense budget;

(3) how the National Intelligence Program appropriations are apportioned to the executing agencies; or

(4) how the National Intelligence Program appropriations are allotted, obligated and disbursed.

(b) The Director of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense may jointly, only for the purposes of achieving auditable financial statements and improving fiscal reporting, study and develop detailed proposals for alternative financial management processes. Such study shall include a comprehensive counterintelligence risk assessment to ensure that none of the alternative processes will adversely affect counterintelligence.

(c) Upon development of the detailed proposals defined under subsection (b), the Director of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) provide the proposed alternatives to all affected agencies;

(2) receive certification from all affected agencies attesting that the proposed alternatives will help achieve auditability, improve fiscal reporting, and will not adversely affect counterintelligence; and

(3) not later than 30 days after receiving all necessary certifications under paragraph (2), present the proposed alternatives and certifications to the congressional defense and intelligence committees.

(d) This section shall not be construed to alter or affect the application of section 924 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 to the amounts made available by this Act.

(e) The Director of National Intelligence shall carry out a merger of the Foreign Counterintelligence Program into the General Defense Intelligence Program: *Provided*, That such merger shall not go into effect until 30 days after the Director submits to the congressional intelligence committees a written notification of such merger.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8104. Upon a determination by the Director of National Intelligence that such action is necessary and in the national interest, the Director may, with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget, transfer not to exceed $2,000,000,000 of the funds made available in this Act for the National Intelligence Program: *Provided*, That such authority to transfer may not be used unless for higher priority items, based on unforeseen intelligence requirements, than those for which originally appropriated and in no case where the item for which funds are requested has been denied by the Congress: *Provided further*, That a request for multiple reprogrammings of funds using authority provided in this section shall be made prior to June 30, 2015.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8105. There is appropriated $540,000,000 for the ''Ship Modernization, Operations and Sustainment Fund'', to remain available until September 30, 2021: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall transfer funds from the ''Ship Modernization, Operations and Sustainment Fund'' to appropriations for military personnel; operation and maintenance; research, development, test and evaluation; and procurement, only for the purposes of manning, operating, sustaining, equipping and modernizing the Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruisers CG–63, CG–64, CG–65, CG–66, CG–67, CG–68, CG–69, CG–70, CG–71, CG–72, CG–73, and the Whidbey Island-class dock landing ships LSD–41, LSD–42, and LSD–46: *Provided further*, That funds transferred shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriation to which they are transferred: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided herein shall be in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall, not less than 30 days prior to making any transfer from the ''Ship Modernization, Operations and Sustainment Fund'', notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of such transfer: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall transfer and obligate funds from the ''Ship Modernization, Operations and Sustainment Fund'' for modernization of not more than two Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruisers as detailed above in fiscal year 2015: *Provided further*, That no more than six Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruisers shall be in a phased modernization at any time: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall contract for the required modernization equipment in the year prior to inducting a Ticonderoga-class cruiser for modernization: *Provided further*, That the prohibition in section 2244a(a) of title 10, United States Code, shall not apply to the use of any funds transferred pursuant to this section.

SEC. 8106. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, to reflect savings due to favorable foreign exchange rates, the total amount appropriated in this Act is hereby reduced by $545,100,000.

SEC. 8107. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this or any other Act may be used to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release to or within the United States, its territories, or possessions Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or any other detainee who—

(1) is not a United States citizen or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(2) is or was held on or after June 24, 2009, at the United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by the Department of Defense.

SEC. 8108. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this or any other Act may be used to construct, acquire, or modify any facility in the United States, its territories, or possessions to house any individual described in subsection (c) for the purposes of detention or imprisonment in the custody or under the effective control of the Department of Defense.

(b) The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to any modification of facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

(c) An individual described in this subsection is any individual who, as of June 24, 2009, is located at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and who—

(1) is not a citizen of the United States or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(2) is—

(A) in the custody or under the effective control of the Department of Defense; or

(B) otherwise under detention at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

SEC. 8109. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to,

or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

SEC. 8110. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

SEC. 8111. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of section 1590 or 1591 of title 18, United States Code, or in contravention of the requirements of section 106(g) or (h) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7104(g) or (h)).

SEC. 8112. None of the funds made available by this Act for excess defense articles, assistance under section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109–163; 119 Stat. 3456), or peacekeeping operations for the countries designated in 2013 to be in violation of the standards of the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 may be used to support any military training or operation that includes child soldiers, as defined by the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–457; 22 U.S.C. 2370c–1), unless such assistance is otherwise permitted under section 404 of the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008.

SEC. 8113. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.).

SEC. 8114. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Defense or any other Federal agency to lease or purchase new light duty vehicles, for any executive fleet, or for an agency's fleet inventory, except in accordance with Presidential Memorandum-Federal Fleet Performance, dated May 24, 2011.

SEC. 8115. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any person or other entity listed in the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS)/System for Award Management (SAM) as having been convicted of fraud against the Federal Government.

SEC. 8116. (a) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract (or subcontract at any tier under such a contract), memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, to make a grant to, or to provide a loan or loan guarantee to Rosoboronexport.

(b) The Secretary of Defense may waive the limitation in subsection (a) if the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, certifies in writing to the congressional defense committees, to the best of the Secretary's knowledge, the following:

(1) Rosoboronexport has ceased the transfer of lethal military equipment to, and the maintenance of existing lethal military equipment for, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

(2) The armed forces of the Russian Federation have withdrawn from Crimea, other than armed forces present on military bases subject to agreements in force between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Ukraine.

(3) The Government of the Russian Federation has withdrawn substantially all of the armed forces of the Russian Federation from the immediate vicinity of the eastern border of Ukraine.

(4) Agents of the Russian Federation have ceased taking active measures to destabilize the control of the Government of Ukraine over eastern Ukraine.

(c)(1) The Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall conduct a review of any action involving Rosoboronexport with respect to which a waiver is issued by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to subsection (b).

(2) A review conducted under paragraph (1) shall assess the accuracy of the factual and legal conclusions made by the Secretary of Defense in the waiver covered by the review, including—

(A) whether there is any viable alternative to Rosoboronexport for carrying out the functions for which funds will be obligated;

(B) whether the Secretary has previously used an alternative vendor for carrying out the same functions regarding the military equipment in question, and what vendor was previously used;

(C) whether other explanations for the issuance of the waiver are supportable; and

(D) any other matter with respect to the waiver the Inspector General considers appropriate.

(3) Not later than 90 days after the date on which a waiver is issued by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to subsection (b), the Inspector General shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report containing the results of the review conducted under paragraph (1) with respect to such waiver.

SEC. 8117. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for the purchase or manufacture of a flag of the United States unless such flags are treated as covered items under section 2533a(b) of title 10, United States Code.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8118. Of the amounts appropriated in this Act under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'', up to $5,709,000 shall be available for transfer to the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, including Reserve and National Guard, to support high priority Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program requirements and activities, including the training and funding of personnel: *Provided*, That funds transferred under this provision are to be merged with and available for the same purposes and time period as the appropriation to which transferred: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

SEC. 8119. None of the funds appropriated in this, or any other Act, may be obligated or expended by the United States Government for the direct personal benefit of the President of Afghanistan.

SEC. 8120. (a) Of the funds appropriated in this Act for the Department of Defense, amounts may be made available, under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, to local military commanders appointed by the Secretary of Defense, or by an officer or employee designated by the Secretary, to provide at their discretion ex gratia payments in amounts consistent with subsection (d) of this section for damage, personal injury, or death that is incident to combat operations of the Armed Forces in a foreign country.

(b) An ex gratia payment under this section may be provided only if—

(1) the prospective foreign civilian recipient is determined by the local military commander to be friendly to the United States;

(2) a claim for damages would not be compensable under chapter 163 of title 10, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Foreign Claims Act''); and

(3) the property damage, personal injury, or death was not caused by action by an enemy.

(c) NATURE OF PAYMENTS.—Any payments provided under a program under subsection (a) shall not be considered an admission or acknowledgement of any legal obligation to compensate for any damage, personal injury, or death.

(d) AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS.—If the Secretary of Defense determines a program under subsection (a) to be appropriate in a particular setting, the amounts of payments, if any, to be provided to civilians determined to have suffered harm incident to combat operations of the Armed Forces under the program should be determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary and based on an assessment, which should include such factors as cultural appropriateness and prevailing economic conditions.

(e) LEGAL ADVICE.—Local military commanders shall receive legal advice before making ex gratia payments under this subsection. The legal advisor, under regulations of the Department of Defense, shall advise on whether an ex gratia payment is proper under this section and applicable Department of Defense regulations.

(f) WRITTEN RECORD.—A written record of any ex gratia payment offered or denied shall be kept by the local commander and on a timely basis submitted to the appropriate office in the Department of Defense as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(g) REPORT.—The Secretary of Defense shall report to the congressional defense committees on an annual basis the efficacy of the ex gratia payment program including the number of types of cases considered, amounts offered, the response from ex gratia payment recipients, and any recommended modifications to the program.

(h) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be deemed to provide any new authority to the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 8121. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense shall be used to conduct any environmental impact study, environmental assessment, or other environmental study related to Minuteman III silos that contain a missile as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8122. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to cancel the avionics modernization program of record for C–130 aircraft.

SEC. 8123. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of the Air Force to reduce the force structure at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal, below the force structure at such Air Force Base as of October 1, 2013, except in accordance with section 1048 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.

SEC. 8124. None of the Operation and Maintenance funds made available in this Act may be used in contravention of section 41106 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 8125. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to fund the performance of a flight demonstration team at a location outside of the United States: *Provided*, That this prohibition applies only if a performance of a flight demonstration team at a location within the United States was canceled during the current fiscal year due to insufficient funding.

SEC. 8126. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act may be used by the Department of Defense or a component thereof in contravention of section 1246(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, relating to limitations on providing certain missile defense information to the Russian Federation.

SEC. 8127. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the National Security Agency to—

(1) conduct an acquisition pursuant to section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 for the purpose of targeting a United States person; or

(2) acquire, monitor, or store the contents (as such term is defined in section 2510(8) of title 18, United States Code) of any electronic communication of a United States person from a provider of electronic communication services to the public pursuant to section 501 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8128. From amounts appropriated in this Act for ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy'', up to $291,000,000 may be transferred to the Ready Reserve Force, Maritime Administration account of the United States Department of Transportation, to be merged with, and to be available for the same purposes and the same time period as such account, for expenses related to the National Defense Reserve Fleet established under section 11 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 (50 U.S.C. App. 1744): *Provided*, That the transfer authority provided under this provision is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8129. Of the amounts appropriated for ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy'', up to $1,000,000 shall be available for transfer to the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Development Trust Fund established under section 116 of the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Training and Development Act (2 U.S.C. 1105).

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8130. In addition to amounts provided elsewhere in this Act for pay for military personnel, including active duty, reserve and National Guard personnel, $533,500,000 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Defense and made available for transfer only to military personnel accounts: *Provided*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8131. In addition to amounts provided elsewhere in this Act for basic allowance for housing for military personnel, including active duty, reserve and National Guard personnel, $244,700,000 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Defense and made available for transfer only to military personnel accounts: *Provided*, That the transfer authority provided under this heading is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

SEC. 8132. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to reduce, convert, decommission, or otherwise move to nondeployed status (except warm status), or prepare to reduce, convert, decommission, or otherwise move to nondeployed status (except warm status), any Minuteman III ballistic missile silo that contains a deployed missile as of the date of the enactment of this Act: *Provided*, That ''warm status'' means a status that enables any such silo to remain a fully functioning element of the interconnected and redundant command and control system of a missile field and be made fully operational with a deployed missile: *Provided further*, That this section shall continue in effect through the date of enactment of an Act authorizing appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense.

□ 1845

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. DAINES

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 124, beginning line 8, strike '': *Provided further*'' and all that follows through ''Department of Defense''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Montana and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana.

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

Mr. Chairman, our Nation's nuclear triad is an essential aspect of our national defense and makes the world safer by deterring our rivals and reassuring our allies. Every leg of the triad is critical and protects our Nation on a daily basis.

The Defense Department recently put forward a nuclear force structure plan under the New START Treaty. It is committed to maintaining 450 nuclear launchers in at least a warm status. In doing so, the Pentagon recognized the strategic value of preserving our robust nuclear deterrent capability. Just last month, the House of Representatives reaffirmed its support for the triad and for maintaining the current ICBM force.

Unfortunately, the base bill includes language that could open the door for the premature decommissioning of our Nation's missile silos. I believe this would be unwise.

My amendment ensures the United States has maximum flexibility to respond to nuclear threats and makes it more difficult for adversaries to target our nuclear assets. Maintaining our nuclear launchers provides our commanders with the tools necessary to respond to potential nuclear threats against the American people and, importantly, our allies.

Recently, I visited Montana's Malmstrom Air Force Base and heard firsthand from missileers about their very critical mission.

In fact, I have in my hand today the Malmstrom commander coin, which expresses why the nuclear deterrence they help operate still works. It simply says this:

Scaring the hell out of America's enemies since 1962.

I urge House passage of my amendment to help protect this critically important capability.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, we have no objection to the gentleman's amendment. Personally, I believe in the nuclear triad. We have checked with the Armed Services Committee, which is the authorizing committee, and they have no problem with the language.

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

□ 1900

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

What he is doing is locking in our strategic force levels, and the fact is that the armed services bill is not yet done as far as authorization, and, essentially, the gentleman is saying that we should have 430 silos. The gentleman may be correct. Maybe we need 425 silos or maybe we need 218 silos. I don't think we should prejudge that final figure until the authorization legislation is completed.

I certainly think, again, that it is limiting our options. I think any time we limit our defense options going forward that it is not good policy, and, therefore, I strongly object to the gentleman's amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAINES. While I appreciate the gentleman's comments, we have the strong support of HASC, and this is just ensuring that we don't have a decommissioning moving forward here as we reconcile both the appropriations with the NDAA.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 123, beginning line 22, strike section 8132.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from New York and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would strike a legislative rider that was put in the bill to prevent the Department of Defense from decommissioning nuclear missile silos.

As you know, the Defense Appropriations bill requires the administration to keep 50 soon-to-be-empty silos—silos with no missiles—on warm standby. The missiles in these silos will be eliminated under the New START arms control agreement, and the administration was hoping to be able to destroy

the silos eventually and save some money, but this bill will keep them in warm standby forever.

This is not without costs. Under New START, those extra empty silos will have to be counted against our launcher totals, meaning we will have fewer permissible bombers or submarine-based missiles because we have, instead, empty ICBM silos. These silos have been precisely targeted by the Russians for decades. While it is important that we have an appropriate, flexible, and survivable nuclear deterrent, these land-based missiles are the least survivable leg of our deterrent, and, of course, empty silos deter no one. What this rider says is that we should have 50 empty silos and 50 fewer submarine-launched ballistic missiles or bombers.

While it is true that, as an offer of support to Senators whose States have missile bases, the administration proposed to keep these silos warm temporarily, there is absolutely no reason to do so forever. This provision is not about security but about pork and political favoritism. Is it any wonder that the most ardent defenders of this provision are from the States of Montana, Colorado, North Dakota, and Wyoming and is not the chairman of the Armed Forces Committee? is not the ranking member of the Armed Forces Committee? In fact, they had worked out a sunset at one point.

Mr. Chairman, micromanaging our Nation's nuclear defenses is really not in the best interest of our country. Remember, we have some 450 Minuteman III missile silos. My amendment would change the status of 50 empty silos and only if our national security experts determined they wanted to do so. It would not affect any silos with actual missiles in them, and, therefore, it would not affect our deterrent.

I would encourage my colleagues to support this amendment, which would allow the President to remove those silos from warm standby at a time of his choosing, when the military tells him it is appropriate to do so and to avoid the cost of keeping open empty silos without any function or usefulness to the national defense.

But I want to make a broader point about our broader nuclear strategy. I want to call attention to the obsolescence of the concept of the nuclear triad. Something that has been accepted as gospel for many years no longer makes sense. Our nuclear arsenal is designed to serve as a deterrent to prevent anyone from even considering attacking the United States. In order to deter an attack, any potential adversary needs to know that we have enough nuclear weapons that will survive an initial assault and will retaliate with overwhelming force.

As part of the triad, we have ICBMs, which are very vulnerable to an enemy strike; we have bombers, which can be made less vulnerable; and we have submarine-launched missiles, which are not vulnerable. The ICBMs, because they are fixed targets and are vulnerable to attack, need to be launched immediately and are, therefore, at the greatest risk of being launched by mistake or by accident. There is almost no time to verify that a radar contact is actually a flock of incoming missiles and not a flock of seagulls or a sounding rocket.

So why do we even need the ICBMs, which are not only vulnerable but dangerous because you have to use them or lose them, especially when we have the subs and the bombers?

That debate is for another day. Today, all we are saying is that our generals should have the discretion to spend money on nuclear weapons that best protect the interests of the United States. They should not be forced to waste taxpayer dollars to keep empty missile silos warm when they have limited real utility and are not in our strategic best interests. They should not be used to keep these empty silos warm when it means, under the treaty, we can have 50 fewer submarine-launched missiles—real missiles—as opposed to empty silos. It simply makes no sense.

I urge my colleagues to adopt the amendment, which would restore to the President and to the military the flexibility to determine whether we want to keep empty silos or real missiles.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NADLER. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the gentleman's yielding.

Using the same rationale as to my opposition for the previous amendment, I would support the gentleman's because what he would do is remove the limitation, if it is making sense, to allow us to reduce, convert, decommission, or otherwise move to nondeployed status these silos. I don't suggest, while standing here on the floor today, what we should or should not do, but we should allow the administration of this country those options.

I appreciate the gentleman's offering his amendment.

Mr. NADLER. In reclaiming my time, I am not suggesting what we should do other than that we should leave the administration and the military with the discretion. They may decide they would rather have more submarine-based missiles rather than empty silos or they may not decide that, but that should be a decision for them. Personally, I think I would rather have more missiles than empty silos or maybe save money, but that is my personal preference. We should leave the decision to the administration.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The gentleman from Montana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Chairman, this amendment strikes section 8132, which prohibits the use of funds to reduce or decommission Minuteman III ICBM silos or to put these silos into a nondeployed status other than warm status. A warm silo is one that can be made fully operational with the reintroduction of a missile.

Let me remind those who are listening tonight that anybody who says, ''Thank God we have never had to use our ICBMs,'' I would argue they are used every day to ensure that we maintain peace and stability in the world. This section is modeled after language that was included in the House-passed NDAA to maximize the readiness of the land-based leg of the nuclear triad.

I rise in opposition to this amendment. The language in this section is essentially the same as the language that was included in the House-passed National Defense Authorization Act. This section says that, if the Department of Defense takes a silo down to nondeployed status, it must keep it warm. That means it must be kept in a state that would allow it to become fully operational if a missile is reintroduced. This section would ensure that we maximize the readiness of the land-based leg of the nuclear triad and inhibit the administration from making unilateral cuts to our strategic deterrent.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

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

Mr. NADLER. 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 New York will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SEC. 8133. None of the funds made available by this Act may be obligated or expended to divest E–3 airborne warning and control system aircraft, or disestablish any units of the active or reserve component associated with such aircraft: *Provided*, That not later than 90 days following the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report providing a detailed explanation of how the Secretary will meet the priority requirements of the commanders of the combatant commands related to airborne warning and control with a fleet of fewer than 31 E–3 aircraft.

SEC. 8134. None of the funds made available by this Act may be obligated or expended to implement the Arms Trade Treaty until the Senate approves a resolution of ratification for the Treaty.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8135. In addition to amounts provided elsewhere in this Act, there is appropriated $139,000,000, for an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'', to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such funds shall only be available to the Secretary of Defense, acting

through the Office of Economic Adjustment of the Department of Defense, or for transfer to the Secretary of Education, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to make grants, conclude cooperative agreements, or supplement other Federal funds to construct, renovate, repair, or expand elementary and secondary public schools on military installations in order to address capacity or facility condition deficiencies at such schools: *Provided further*, That in making such funds available, the Office of Economic Adjustment or the Secretary of Education shall give priority consideration to those military installations with schools having the most serious capacity or facility condition deficiencies as determined by the Secretary of Defense: *Provided further*, That funds may not be made available for a school unless its enrollment of Department of Defense-connected children is greater than 50 percent.

SEC. 8136. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to transfer AH–64 Attack helicopters from the Army National Guard to the active Army: *Provided*, That this section shall continue in effect through the date of enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 8137. In addition to amounts appropriated in title II or otherwise made available elsewhere in this Act, $1,000,000,000 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Defense and made available for transfer to the operation and maintenance accounts of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force (including National Guard and reserve) for purposes of improving military readiness: *Provided*, That the transfer authority provided under this provision is in addition to any other transfer authority provided elsewhere in this Act.

SEC. 8138. Of the amounts made available under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'' in title II and ''Operation and Maintenance'' in title IX of this Act, not to exceed $50,000,000 may be obligated for activities authorized under section 1208 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 112–81; 125 Stat. 1621): *Provided*, That none of the funds made available in this Act may be used under such section 1208 to initiate support for, or expand support to, foreign forces, irregular forces, groups, or individuals unless the congressional defense committees are notified in accordance with the direction contained in the classified annex accompanying this Act, not less than 15 days before initiating such support: *Provided further*, That, none of the funds made available in this Act may be used under such section 1208 for any activity that is not in support of an ongoing military operation being conducted by United States Special Operations Forces to combat terrorism: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may waive the prohibitions in the preceding provisos if the Secretary determines that such waiver is required by extraordinary circumstances and, by not later than 72 hours after making such waiver, notifies the congressional defense committees of such waiver.

SEC. 8139. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act may be used in contravention of Sec. 1035 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

SEC. 8140. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement the changes to hair standards and grooming policies for female members of the Armed Forces, as contained in paragraph 3–2 of Army Regulation 670–1, issued on March 31, 2014.

TITLE IX—OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

MILITARY PERSONNEL

For an additional amount for ''Military Personnel'', $5,100,000,000: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance'', $58,675,000,000: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

PROCUREMENT

For an additional amount for ''Procurement'', $12,220,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE EQUIPMENT

For procurement of aircraft, missiles, tracked combat vehicles, ammunition, other weapons, and other procurement for the reserve components of the Armed Forces, $2,000,000,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That the Chiefs of the National Guard and Reserve components shall, not later than 30 days after the enactment of this Act, individually submit to the congressional defense committees the modernization priority assessment for their respective National Guard or Reserve component: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

OTHER APPROPRIATIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for ''Other Appropriations'', $1,450,000,000: *Provided*, That ''Other Appropriations'' means the Defense Health Program, Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Fund, Office of the Inspector General, and Defense Working Capital Funds: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

SEC. 9001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds made available in this title are in addition to amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2015.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 9002. Upon the determination of the Secretary of Defense that such action is necessary in the national interest, the Secretary may, with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget, transfer up to $4,000,000,000 between the appropriations or funds made available to the Department of Defense in this title: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall notify the Congress promptly of each transfer made pursuant to the authority in this section: *Provided further*, That the authority provided in this section is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense and is subject to the same terms and conditions as the authority provided in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015.

SEC. 9003. Supervision and administration costs and costs for design during construction associated with a construction project funded with appropriations available for operation and maintenance, ''Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund'', or the ''Afghanistan Security Forces Fund'' provided in this Act and executed in direct support of overseas contingency operations in Afghanistan, may be obligated at the time a construction contract is awarded: *Provided*, That for the purpose of this section, supervision and administration costs and costs for design during construction include all in-house Government costs.

SEC. 9004. From funds made available in this title, the Secretary of Defense may purchase for use by military and civilian employees of the Department of Defense in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility: (a) passenger motor vehicles up to a limit of $75,000 per vehicle; and (b) heavy and light armored vehicles for the physical security of personnel or for force protection purposes up to a limit of $250,000 per vehicle, notwithstanding price or other limitations applicable to the purchase of passenger carrying vehicles.

SEC. 9005. Not to exceed $15,000,000 of the amount appropriated in this title under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance'' may be used, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to fund the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), for the purpose of enabling military commanders in Afghanistan to respond to urgent, small-scale, humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their areas of responsibility: *Provided*, That each project (including any ancillary or related elements in connection with such project) executed under this authority shall not exceed $10,000,000: *Provided further*, That not later than 45 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report regarding the source of funds and the allocation and use of funds during that quarter that were made available pursuant to the authority provided in this section or under any other provision of law for the purposes described herein: *Provided further*, That, not later than 30 days after the end of each month, the Army shall submit to the congressional defense committees monthly commitment, obligation, and expenditure data for the Commander's Emergency Response Program in Afghanistan: *Provided further*, That not less than 15 days before making funds available pursuant to the authority provided in this section or under any other provision of law for the purposes described herein for a project with a total anticipated cost for completion of $5,000,000 or more, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a written notice containing each of the following:

(1) The location, nature and purpose of the proposed project, including how the project is intended to advance the military campaign plan for the country in which it is to be carried out.

(2) The budget, implementation timeline with milestones, and completion date for the proposed project, including any other CERP funding that has been or is anticipated to be contributed to the completion of the project.

(3) A plan for the sustainment of the proposed project, including the agreement with either the host nation, a non-Department of Defense agency of the United States Government or a third-party contributor to finance the sustainment of the activities and maintenance of any equipment or facilities to be provided through the proposed project.

SEC. 9006. Funds available to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance may be used, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to provide supplies, services, transportation, including airlift and sealift, and other logistical support to coalition forces supporting military and stability operations in Afghanistan: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall provide quarterly reports to the congressional defense committees regarding support provided under this section.

SEC. 9007. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act shall be obligated or expended by the United States Government for a purpose as follows:

(1) To establish any military installation or base for the purpose of providing for the permanent stationing of United States Armed Forces in Iraq.

(2) To exercise United States control over any oil resource of Iraq.

(3) To establish any military installation or base for the purpose of providing for the permanent stationing of United States Armed Forces in Afghanistan.

SEC. 9008. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used in contravention of the following laws enacted or regulations promulgated to implement the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (done at New York on December 10, 1984):

(1) Section 2340A of title 18, United States Code.

(2) Section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (division G of Public Law 105–277; 112 Stat. 2681–822; 8 U.S.C. 1231 note) and regulations prescribed thereto, including regulations under part 208 of title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, and part 95 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) Sections 1002 and 1003 of the Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–148).

SEC. 9009. None of the funds provided for the ''Afghanistan Security Forces Fund'' (ASFF) may be obligated prior to the approval of a financial and activity plan by the Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council (AROC) of the Department of Defense: *Provided*, That the AROC must approve the requirement and acquisition plan for any service requirements in excess of $50,000,000 annually and any non-standard equipment requirements in excess of $100,000,000 using ASFF: *Provided further*, That the AROC must approve all projects and the execution plan under the ''Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund'' (AIF) and any project in excess of $5,000,000 from the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP): *Provided further*, That the Department of Defense must certify to the congressional defense committees that the AROC has convened and approved a process for ensuring compliance with the requirements in the preceding provisos and accompanying report language for the ASFF, AIF, and CERP.

SEC. 9010. Funds made available in this title to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance may be used to purchase items having an investment unit cost of not more than $250,000: *Provided*, That, upon determination by the Secretary of Defense that such action is necessary to meet the operational requirements of a Commander of a Combatant Command engaged in contingency operations overseas, such funds may be used to purchase items having an investment item unit cost of not more than $500,000.

SEC. 9011. From funds made available to the Department of Defense in this title under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance'' up to $150,000,000 may be used by the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to support United States Government transition activities in Iraq by funding the operations and activities of the Office of Security Cooperation in Iraq and security assistance teams, including life support, transportation and personal security, and facilities renovation and construction, and site closeout activities prior to returning sites to the Government of Iraq: *Provided*, That to the extent authorized under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015, the operations and activities that may be carried out by the Office of Security Cooperation in Iraq may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, include non-operational training activities in support of Iraqi Minister of Defense and Counter Terrorism Service personnel in an institutional environment to address capability gaps, integrate processes relating to intelligence, air sovereignty, combined arms, logistics and maintenance, and to manage and integrate defense-related institutions: *Provided further*, That not later than 30 days following the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan for transitioning any such training activities that they determine are needed after the end of fiscal year 2015, to existing or new contracts for the sale of defense articles or defense services consistent with the provisions of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.): *Provided further*, That not less than 15 days before making funds available pursuant to the authority provided in this section, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a written notification containing a detailed justification and timeline for the operations and activities of the Office of Security Cooperation in Iraq at each site where such operations and activities will be conducted during fiscal year 2015.

SEC. 9012. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance'' for payments under section 1233 of Public Law 110–181 for reimbursement to the Government of Pakistan may be made available unless the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, certifies to the Committees on Appropriations that the Government of Pakistan is—

(1) cooperating with the United States in counterterrorism efforts against the Haqqani Network, the Quetta Shura Taliban, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Al Qaeda, and other domestic and foreign terrorist organizations, including taking steps to end support for such groups and prevent them from basing and operating in Pakistan and carrying out cross border attacks into neighboring countries;

(2) not supporting terrorist activities against United States or coalition forces in Afghanistan, and Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies are not intervening extra-judicially into political and judicial processes in Pakistan;

(3) dismantling improvised explosive device (IED) networks and interdicting precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of IEDs;

(4) preventing the proliferation of nuclear-related material and expertise;

(5) implementing policies to protect judicial independence and due process of law;

(6) issuing visas in a timely manner for United States visitors engaged in counterterrorism efforts and assistance programs in Pakistan; and

(7) providing humanitarian organizations access to detainees, internally displaced persons, and other Pakistani civilians affected by the conflict.

(b) The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, may waive the restriction in paragraph (a) on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate that it is in the national security interest to do so: *Provided*, That if the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, exercises the authority of the previous proviso, the Secretaries shall report to the Committees on Appropriations on both the justification for the waiver and on the requirements of this section that the Government of Pakistan was not able to meet: *Provided further*, That such report may be submitted in classified form if necessary.

SEC. 9013. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used with respect to Syria in contravention of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.), including for the introduction of United States armed or military forces into hostilities in Syria, into situations in Syria where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, or into Syrian territory, airspace, or waters while equipped for combat, in contravention of the congressional consultation and reporting requirements of sections 3 and 4 of that law (50 U.S.C. 1542 and 1543).

SEC. 9014. None of the funds made available by this Act for the ''Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund'' may be used to plan, develop, or construct any project for which construction has not commenced before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 9015. No more than 15 percent of the funds made available in Title IX may be obligated, until the Secretary of Defense provides the congressional defense and intelligence committees with a detailed spend plan for the funds provided, including an assurance that no funds will be used in contravention of Sec. 1035 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

TITLE X—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SPENDING REDUCTION ACCOUNT

SEC. 10001. The amount by which the applicable allocation of new budget authority made by the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 exceeds the amount of proposed new budget authority is $0.

□ 1915

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) for a colloquy.

Mr. MICA. First of all, I want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, also the ranking member and the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee staff, for your efforts in bringing this important measure to the floor for our military.

Mr. Chairman, in working with you and your staff, I know, firsthand, of your dedication to our armed services and the importance you place on ensuring the readiness of our troops.

As you well know, modeling and simulation tools are cost-effective and highly successful components in ensuring that our troops have the absolute best training available.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his support, and also for the inclusion of specific language in the FY

2015 Appropriations Defense Subcommittee report specifically emphasizing the benefits of modeling and simulation.

Also, as the House considers this vital appropriations bill, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you, the committee, and my colleagues, a concern of mine affecting the modeling and simulation and training community.

As you know, part of the continuation of the Warfighter FOCUS program was expected to be the TEACH program. It is my understanding that the TEACH program has been put on hold.

It is also my understanding that the Army will continue this program under a different name and format. It is my hope that the funds allocated are used to fulfill the requirements needed for this portion of the Warfighter program.

Mr. Chairman, again, I appreciate your support for this vital tool—simulation saves taxpayers dollars and assists in training our defense personnel—and also its inclusion in the Defense Appropriations bill.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman bringing this important issue to my attention. A month or two ago you brought me together with some national leaders that are involved in modeling and simulation, and it was a real education for me.

So like you, I do place a great importance on ensuring our troops have the best training and support available, and that is a very good way to educate them.

I look forward to working with the gentleman to ensure our troops receive the training and equipment they need, and that our Nation's defense needs are met in a fiscally responsible manner.

Mr. MICA. I thank you, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, and the ranking member.

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

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GARAMENDI

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used on research, development, test, or evaluation for the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter to modify the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter in a manner that provides B–61 delivery capability until the date on which the report described under the heading ''Cost Sharing of Forward-Deployed Nuclear Weapons'' in the report of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives accompanying this Act has been delivered to the congressional defense committees and such report includes, among other matters, the total anticipated cost to make the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter nuclear capable, the number of aircraft expected to have such capability, and the total number of tactical B–61s expected to undergo the Life Extension Program, including the total anticipated program cost, specific to tactical B–61s.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, earlier today I took up this issue by attempting to strike the $15 million that is appropriated in this bill for the initial phases of figuring out how to make the F–35 dual-capable, that is, capable of handling both conventional as well as nuclear weapons.

This is the opening of a very, very expensive process. Probably well over somewhere between 10 and $20 billion will be spent on this entire program.

The F–35 is our plane of the future. It is extremely important for the defense of this Nation. However, the issue of whether that plane should be dual-capable or not really revolves around the role that the F–35 dual-capable plane will play in the European theater.

Presently, we are deploying in Europe the B–61 bomb. That bomb is now being life-extended, rebuilt for the purposes of doing what it has done before, that is, to sit there basically unused. It will be both a tactical as well as a strategic weapon.

There is a major cost factor that will affect this budget and future budgets for years to come with this initial decision that we are now making.

What this amendment does is to simply build off a portion of the bill that is already in place. It does call for a report. This amendment fences off the $15 million, says you can't use it until such time as the details that I add to the existing language of the bill before us—those details were read by the reader a moment ago.

Let me just quickly go through them:

Until the House of Representatives has delivered—that is, until the military has delivered to the House of Representatives defense committees a report, among other matters, on the total anticipated cost of making the F–35 joint fighter nuclear-capable;

Next, the number of aircraft expected to have such capability;

Next, the total number of tactical B–61s expected to undergo the life-extension program, including the total anticipated cost specific to the tactical B–61.

This is critical information that we have. The language in the bill is okay, but it doesn't give us the specificity that we need to make the decision, and frankly, I don't think we ought to start down this path until we really have some better notion of where we are going with the expenses of this.

We also know that the European community is, at best, ambivalent about what to do with this issue, and they certainly are ambivalent about whether they are going to pay their share of the costs of the airplanes that they will eventually acquire that will have this dual capability.

So big questions out there. This is an amendment attempting to gather the specific information that we should have to make a wise and informed decision in the future.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation, with the understanding the gentleman from California will be withdrawing his amendment.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I would much prefer if you could say this is really wise and information that we need and that we would add this to the bill somewhere along the process.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Well, I am a strong supporter of the Joint Strike Fighter and, indeed, the B–61. We are doing things to make sure that it is everything that we anticipate it should be.

I think the issue is worth discussing, but it was my understanding that you were planning to withdraw your amendment. Otherwise, I will make a point of order.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, what I would prefer to do, sir, is to proceed and to continue the discussion. I think this is an important matter.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, perhaps I will just wrap, and then we will take up your point of order and see where that goes with it.

This is an extremely important issue. It has to do with our relationships with NATO. It has to do with cost-sharing by the NATO community, who will eventually acquire these planes, and it also has to do with the B–61 bomb, which is an extraordinarily expensive program that may or may not fit into the future for NATO or even for us.

So this amendment is designed to give us the information that we need and, until we have it, it prevents the use of the $15 million.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I make a point order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill. Therefore, it violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states, in pertinent part:

''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.''

The amendment requires a new determination.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. GARAMENDI. I ask to be heard on the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, at the subcommittee, with great respect, I respectfully disagree with you. This does not change law. It simply writes into the law an extension of what is already in this bill, and that is, it calls for a report.

It also fences off a certain amount of money, in this case $15 million. That is really the ante, the beginning of a very expensive process. It fences it off until we have that information report from the Pentagon. I think that is the wise thing to do.

In fact, the appropriation bill in many, many respects changes laws, and I think we are all aware of that.

I am also aware that I have yet to overcome a point of order, but there is always the first time, and we can be hopeful that this might be the first.

But I draw the attention of the chair, the ranking members, and anybody else that cares to listen, be prepared to spend somewhere between $15- and $20 billion if we go forward with both the B–61 and the retrofitting to the F–35 so that it will be dual-capable—capable of both conventional as well as nuclear weapons.

I think we better know where we are going, have a good sense of the total cost, and also have a very good sense of where our European allies want this to be, and I think they ought to also pay for it.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule.

The Chair finds that this amendment imposes new duties on the officials funded in the bill.

The amendment, therefore, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. COLE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to provide housing on a military installation to an alien (as defined in section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)) who—

(1) is an unaccompanied minor; and

(2) is not a dependent of a member of the Armed Forces.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Oklahoma and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I want to be the first to acknowledge that this legislation may not indeed be the appropriate place in which to address the issue raised in the amendment. But I do believe the amendment is an appropriate way to highlight a problem that simply must be addressed by the President and by the Congress.

In recent weeks, there have been many news accounts reporting that we have had an explosion of unaccompanied juveniles coming and crossing our borders, largely from Central America, from the countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

This population has overwhelmed facilities that we normally use to house people that have entered our country illegally, and military facilities have now been used, pressed into service, to deal with this population.

In full disclosure, one of those facilities happens to be in my district, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the home of the Field Artillery School.

But other facilities have also been used, at Ventura, at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, and the State of Washington, and still others are being considered.

I am concerned about this for three reasons. First, these military facilities are absolutely inappropriate places to house this particular population. They are not designed for that purpose. They are not equipped for it. They have gotten very little notification of it. It is simply the wrong place to put folks.

You don't bring outsiders onto a military installation who have no business being there and, in addition, also their caretakers.

□ 1930

Second, while much of the expense will be picked up by other various departments of government, it will inevitably cause some expense and some inconvenience to the Department of Defense at a time when we have a very strained military budget.

Lastly, while we are told that these facilities are going to be used only on a temporary emergency basis, there is, indeed, the risk that they could become permanent, something I think that would create a confusion of missions on military bases, not to be avoided.

We need to address the cause of the flow, not simply manage the flow better, and we shouldn't use military facilities in that process.

The administration says that this flow of unaccompanied juveniles—which, by the way, was 6,000 2 years ago, is 66,000 now, and is projected to reach 120,000 to 150,000 within the next couple of years—is the result of a humanitarian crisis.

I would submit it is actually the result of a policy failure. We are essentially incentivizing the flow of this population by not returning the unaccompanied juveniles to their countries of origins quickly.

Indeed, once they arrive in the United States, we try to find sponsors for them in this country, and they effectively stay here permanently.

That is not what we do, by the way, with Mexican juveniles. If you are a 16-year-old illegal immigrant from Mexico, we return you immediately, and we have had no similar spike in that particular population coming across the border.

What we are doing may appear to be humane to the juveniles in question. It is actually not. First, we are disrupting the countries from which they come. We are destabilizing those countries by incentivizing this flow.

Second, these young people don't just walk across Mexico. They are transported by cartels, by criminals. It is the same people who bring drugs into our country, and they are making an enormous amount of money, and we are strengthening them by incentivizing this flow.

Finally, the young people themselves are at an enormous risk during the process of transportation. They are being brought across the length of a country—Mexico—in the company of criminal elements, very unsavory elements, and they are very much at risk.

I think we need to stop using military facilities for this purpose and to, frankly, begin to return people to their countries of origin. In my view, that would actually stop the flow and remove the incentive to come.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COLE. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the gentleman from Oklahoma, the author, if it is the gentleman's intent to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I respect my friend from Indiana pressing the point of order. I suspect he will prevail, and I am prepared to withdraw.

I want to serve notice that I am going to eventually find the appropriate vehicle, so that we can address this. I think it is a real issue, but I respect my friend's concerns that this may not be the appropriate vehicle.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. If the gentleman from Oklahoma would, again, yield a moment of his time, I would just suggest to the membership that I was not fully aware of the problems that existed and that have now been exacerbated until the gentleman raised it in committee.

As a member of the subcommittee, I appreciate that happening, and the fact that you have now raised it on two significant occasions, I think, is going to compel the administration, as well as our colleagues, to find a solution to this very serious problem.

So raising the point of order was simply to preserve that right, but I appreciate what the gentleman is doing.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I have one additional comment. It is interesting that many of the press reports on this crisis situation—at least on the east coast—don't point out that many of these children are in military installations.

I want to commend the gentleman for pointing out that, while they are well kept and looked after in those installations, it is totally inappropriate that children be put in that situation and that the Department of Health and Human Services and the administration need to do a better job of finding housing alternatives.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman from Oklahoma yielding, and I will withdraw my point of order.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chair, I appreciate what my colleagues had to say, and I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC.____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if the offeror certifies, pursuant to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, that the offeror or any of its principals—

(1) within a three-year period preceding this offer has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or

(2) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1); or

(3) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied.

Mr. GRAYSON (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that the balance of the reading be waived.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, this amendment is identical to other amendments that have been inserted by voice vote into every appropriations bill that has been considered under an open rule during this Congress.

My amendment would expand the list of parties with whom the Federal Government is prohibited from contracting because of serious misconduct on the part of those contractors. It is my hope that this amendment will remain noncontroversial and that it will, again, be passed unanimously by this House.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GRAYSON. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I will suggest that I would find the amendment acceptable. I do believe it is largely duplicative of the general provision of section 8110 that is already found in the bill. Again, I understand the gentleman's intent and would agree with it and do believe it is acceptable to the subcommittee.

Mr. GRAYSON. Reclaiming my time, I thank the ranking member for making that notation.

We have compared that language to this language. We respectfully believe that this language is broader and covers more situations, more contractors who have committed wrongdoing, but I appreciate the ranking member pointing that out, and I certainly support the provision that he cited.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC.____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by an (officer, employee, or contractor of the intelligence community to subvert or interfere with the integrity of any cryptographic standard that is proposed, developed, or adopted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, in the interest of brevity, I respectfully ask unanimous consent to have the point of order, if any, heard now in advance of my argument.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order has been reserved. Does the gentleman from New Jersey wish to make a point of order at this time?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill and, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part:

''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.''

The amendment requires a new determination.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I respectfully am willing to yield my time to the gentleman from New Jersey if the gentleman will explain to me what part of this provision offends——

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair will hear each Member on their own.

The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. GRAYSON. I will reiterate what I just said, Mr. Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I did ask that I wanted to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey to specify.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair will hear argument offered by each Member separately.

The gentleman from Florida is recognized to make his argument.

Mr. GRAYSON. I understand that, Mr. Chair.

I am asking if the gentleman from New Jersey would provide additional information as part of my argument.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair has heard the argument in favor of the point of order.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida if he wishes to make an argument.

Mr. GRAYSON. Yes, Mr. Chair. I will say it again.

I am offering to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey if the gentleman from New Jersey will identify any part of this amendment that offends the relevant rule.

The Acting CHAIR. At this point in time, the Chair will hear argument by the gentleman from Florida.

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I think it is clear that there is no part of this amendment that offends the relevant rule.

I yielded to the gentleman from New Jersey who raised the point of order. I am still willing to yield to the gentleman who raised a point of order.

If there is no part of this amendment that can be identified as offending the relevant rule, clearly it does not offend the relevant rule.

This, in fact, does not in any way legislate. I invite any Member of this body here today who can identify any part of this amendment that constitutes legislation on the relevant rule.

Since no one can, it follows that the point of order must be overruled.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule.

The Chair finds that this amendment includes language requiring a new determination as to what constitutes subversion or interference with integrity of a standard.

The amendment, therefore, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. WALORSKI

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to transfer or release to the Republic of Yemen (or any entity within Yemen) a detainee who is or was held, detained, or otherwise in the custody of the Department of Defense on or after June 24, 2009, at the United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentlewoman from Indiana and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, the recent release of the Taliban Five was a potent reminder to Congress, as well as the American people, of the risk involved in detainee transfer decisions.

The rising rate of terrorism reengagement, the unstable security situation in Yemen, and the continuing threat posed by al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula have prompted me to introduce this amendment again this year.

One of President Obama's first acts in office was to sign an executive order to close the facility at Guantanamo.

However, the President himself suspended all detainee transfers from Gitmo to Yemen on January 5, 2010. This decision was made in the aftermath of the failed 2009 Christmas Day bombing attempt, which was the first attack on the U.S. by al Qaeda since 9/11.

The would-be bomber was radicalized and trained in Yemen. White House Press Secretary Gibbs said that:

Right now, any additional transfers to Yemen are not a good idea.

In May of last year, the President changed his mind, lifting the moratorium on transfers to Yemen and reviewing transfers ''on a case-by-case basis.''

Unfortunately, the U.S. intelligence community reports that the number of former Gitmo detainees who reengage in terrorism has steadily increased since 2002.

In December 2007, the first public intelligence report addressing Gitmo ''reengagement'' declared the reengagement rate was ''about 7 percent.'' As of March of this year, the reengagement rate had risen to 29 percent. The majority of these individuals remain at large.

This information, which is the best, most reliable data we have, comes from the Director of National Intelligence. The March DNI report also notes that:

Transfers to countries with ongoing conflicts and internal instability, as well as active recruitment by insurgent and terrorist organizations, pose a particular problem.

Finally, the intel community has noted there is a lag of time of ''about 2½ years between leaving Gitmo and the first identified reengagement reports.'' Therefore, estimated historical suspected and confirmed rates may be lower than the actual current rates.

The administration should seek to ensure that the transfer process is further examined and improved before proceeding with additional transfers.

Meanwhile, the security situation in Yemen is frighteningly fragile and has gone from bad to worse. According to a 2012 HASC Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee report on detainee reengagement, the United States has faced ''a persistent challenge'' in making certain that countries receiving transferred Gitmo detainees have ''the capacity and willingness to handle them in a way that sufficiently recognizes the dangers involved.''

Despite the commendable efforts of Yemeni President Hadi, numerous international organizations, such as the U.N. and the World Bank, have all noted the ''fragile environment'' in Yemen. Unfortunately, the country's progress is still at risk of being undermined by al Qaeda.

In fact, Yemen was recently ranked the sixth most failed state by The Fund for Peace, worse than even Afghanistan and Iraq, and the third most worsened state over the last 5 years.

□ 1945

It is no surprise that jailbreaks are a notorious problem in Yemen. Furthermore, press reports have characterized Yemeni prisons as ''overcrowded and under-monitored radicalization factories.''

To give one example, the Yemeni citizen who is the convicted mastermind of the USS *Cole* bombing escaped from prison in both 2003 and 2006 after his recapture. He was not recaptured after his second escape and remains at large.

In the most recent example, attackers mounted a bomb, grenade, and gun assault on the main prison in Yemen's capital this February, freeing 20 al Qaeda operatives. The U.S. Embassy has been closed since May 7 and remains closed today due to attempted kidnappings and terrorist attacks on U.S. citizens.

Finally, and most importantly, Yemen's branch of al Qaeda, commonly known as AQAP, was founded by former Gitmo detainees. Counterterrorism experts have declared AQAP to be al Qaeda's most effective affiliate, posing the greatest danger to the American homeland.

AQAP's predecessor, al Qaeda in Yemen, came into existence after the escape of 23 al Qaeda members from prison in the Yemeni capital in February of 2006. AQAP has orchestrated numerous high-profile terrorist attacks inside the Arabian Peninsula, but it has tried on numerous occasions to strike the U.S. homeland, typically through air travel.

Analysts evaluate that AQAP is the al Qaeda group that is currently the most capable and most committed to carry out sophisticated operations against the West.

To summarize, Mr. Chairman, we cannot risk trusting one of the world's most dangerous places with its most dangerous terrorists. The fundamental question is how much risk should we take with our Nation's security? This amendment helps ensure our homeland remains safe from terrorist attacks. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the gentlewoman's amendment. I believe that we need to set conditions to close the detention facility at Guantanamo. This includes retaining the option to transfer detainees from this facility elsewhere. It is in the United States' national security interest to do so.

Guantanamo has become a rallying cry. It serves as a recruitment tool for terrorists and increases the will of our enemies to fight while decreasing the will of others to work with America.

Part of the rationale for establishing Guantanamo in the first place was the misplaced idea that the facility would be beyond the law—a proposition rejected by the Supreme Court. As a result, the continued operation of this facility creates an impression in the eyes of our allies and enemies alike that the United States selectively observes the rule of law.

There is no reason that we should impose on ourselves the legal and moral problems arising from the prospect of indefinite detentions at Guantanamo after more than one decade. Working through civil courts since 9/11, hundreds of individuals have been convicted of terrorism or terrorism-related offenses and are now serving long sentences in Federal prison. Not one has escaped custody.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose the gentlewoman's amendment and reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to the balance of my time?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Indiana has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. WALORKSI. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I strongly

support her amendment. What was particularly galling in the Guantanamo transfer of these detainees was that the Taliban were able to choose the people they wanted released, and then the picture that we saw of their being greeted in Qatar by their terrorist brothers was enough to make you sick. So I am strongly supportive of her amendment. I am glad that we have renewed this commitment to make sure these people are not released anywhere. I thank the gentlewoman.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, we are a nation of laws. Again, I reiterate my objection and would yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

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

Mr. VISCLOSKY. 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 gentlewoman from Indiana will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NOLAN

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the ''Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Minnesota and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for the hard work that they have done in putting this appropriation bill together.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the House, there is a bipartisan group of us that have been meeting on a regular basis with the inspector general for Afghanistan and Iraq. He has over 200 investigators trying to determine where the funds have gone for this Afghan infrastructure fund.

To hear the story, it breaks your heart. Of the last $100 billion that have been spent on Afghan infrastructure, they can't find where most of that money went. Why? Well, for several reasons. One is that Afghanistan is largely a cash economy. So if you want to do a project in any of the remote areas, you have to show up with a truckload full of cash.

Secondly, it is now certified as the most corrupt nation in the world. It is the number one narco-state in the world, supplying more heroin than the rest of the world combined. As the U.S. troops withdraw, there is no way to audit these funds, there is no way to inspect these funds, and it is an absolutely unmitigated prescription for unparalleled fraud.

It has got to stop, and today and tonight is the time to put an end to it. That is why I am offering my amendment here to stop any funds from going to this Afghan reconstruction fund.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NOLAN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the point that the gentleman is raising and certainly would associate myself with his remarks. I do believe it will be acceptable to the committee.

Mr. NOLAN. I thank the gentleman.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. MILLER OF MICHIGAN

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 10002. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, or prepare to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, any A–10 aircraft, or to disestablish any units of the active or reserve component associated with such aircraft.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentlewoman from Michigan and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I offer this amendment because I stand shoulder to shoulder with the troops on the ground, any one of whom will tell you that the champion workhorse aircraft in theater in both Iraq and Afghanistan has been the A–10.

Now, it might be an old airplane, but I will tell you it has been proven to be ideally suited for its mission. It is lethal, it is incredibly effective, and when our troops on the ground, Mr. Chairman, hear it coming, they know what it means. But guess what? So does our enemy, because they know pain is coming their way.

The Air Force wants to save money, but they don't have an adequate follow-on at this time. And with what is happening in Iraq and the Middle East, eliminating the A–10 is the absolutely wrong move. Army Chief of Staff General Odierno says that the A–10 is the best close air support aircraft, and I agree, and, most importantly, so do our brave men and women on the ground.

The A–10s were authorized in both the House and Senate Armed Services Committee, and I urge my colleagues to continue their support and vote ''yes'' on this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BARBER), the cosponsor of this amendment.

Mr. BARBER. I thank Congresswoman MILLER.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer this important bipartisan amendment with my colleague from Michigan and the support of our colleagues from Illinois, from Georgia, Arizona, Missouri, and Hawaii. Our amendment would protect the A–10 Thunderbolt and keep it flying so it can continue to supply support to our troops who are on the ground.

Last month, I introduced in the House Armed Services Committee an amendment that received an overwhelming, bipartisan vote in favor of keeping the A–10 flying for FY15. This amendment passed also with overwhelming support in committee and on the House floor. It is now a part of the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act, and, I might add, of the one that is going to be coming out of the Senate.

And now, the House, I believe, wants to ensure, once again, that the A–10 is protected because it protects our troops. Our troops deserve the best close air support that we can provide, and there is no better close air support than the A–10.

When I talk to soldiers who come home from Iraq and Afghanistan who work in my district at Fort Huachuca, they have said over and over again, keep the A–10 flying. I was in Afghanistan 2 months ago, and marines and Army personnel on the ground said:

When you go back to the Congress, keep the A–10 flying. It is the best close air support we can have.

There is no other fixed-wing aircraft that is as proficient as the A–10 in operating in rugged environments while providing the most effective close air support available. With no other aircraft available and capable of taking its place with our men and women still in combat, we simply cannot allow the A–10 to be grounded. We also cannot afford to lose the knowledge and expertise of the pilots that fly this aircraft, like those who are stationed in my home district at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Mr. Chairman, this is a commonsense amendment. I urge my colleagues to support it, as we did in the National Defense Authorization Act, for our national security and for our men and women on the ground.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I would yield at this time 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT).

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment to preserve the A–10 Warthog, as well. This is the most effective, cost-efficient aircraft that we have for the missions that we are engaged in right now.

Our men and women who are out there in harm's way deserve to have this aircraft flying above them and protecting them. Our enemies run in fear from it, and, quite honestly, I think it is the best money we can spend in protecting our troops while they are on the ground.

The A–10 Warthog is the most effective aircraft for close air support. We need it for the missions we are in now, and we are going to need it for the missions tomorrow.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART) who has very personal experience with the ability of the A–10.

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentlewoman for giving me 1 minute to speak on this.

I was an Air Force pilot for 14 years. I flew for 7 years as a combat rescue helicopter pilot. We flew and exercised with the A–10s all the time. I also flew for 7 years the B–1. We were tasked with this mission of close air support. I am not here because I have A–10s in my district. I am here because I realize what an invaluable resource this is.

Close air support is an incredibly delicate and unforgiving mission. If you hit the wrong bridge, people will forgive you. If you frag your own troops, you will never forgive yourself. It is best done by an aircraft that is low and slow, that has superb communications and superb visibility.

There is nothing that is as good as the A–10 is in this mission. I know that from my own experience. That is why I rise and stand in support of this very important amendment.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I would urge all of our colleagues to join us in supporting our troops by supporting this amendment, and I would say before you vote ''yes'' or ''no,'' speak to those who have actually fought in combat on the ground in the battle zones of Iraq and Afghanistan, and I am very confident that the message you will hear from them will be the same message that all of us have gotten, and that is to keep the A–10 flying.

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, let me stipulate at the onset that the A–10 Thunderbolt is a tremendous aircraft. We have heard it from somebody who piloted one, and certainly we are listening to our colleagues from the respective States that have A–10s, and they could testify, as I am sure others can, as to their value. But close air support is also provided—actually 80 percent—by other aircraft, and that has been true since 2008.

The Air Force itself has recommended the retirement of the entire fleet. It is not going to happen overnight. It is not going to happen by 2019. At some point in time it is going to happen because this is not about saving millions of dollars, this is about saving billions of dollars—nearly $4 billion. And the money that we will save will allow us to procure the next generation of aircraft.

□ 2000

I understand the desire to keep an aircraft that has been doing incredible work for 30 or 40 years, but it is time we look to the future and make that investment.

I am pleased to yield to the ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY).

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate the chairman yielding and would also add my comments that the A–10 is a wonderful aircraft. The B–17 Flying Fortress was a wonderful aircraft. It was replaced. The Kiowa Warrior was indispensable during Vietnam. It is being replaced.

The A–10 is being replaced over a protracted period of time. In the interim, other aircraft are going to take its place until the F–35 is prepared to do its mission.

The second point I would make is that the Chief of Staff for the Air Force flew the A–10. It is their recommendation to phase this plane out. The Air Force has also stated to the committee that, if given another $4.3 billion, they have a whole range of other options they would pursue before continuing the A–10 program.

The final observation I would make is that the amendment is somewhat disingenuous, and I don't say that in a pejorative sense because I know that is not the intent of my colleagues, but while it would sound to our colleagues that there is no money involved in this amendment, I would propose that I would like to find $339 million that is not in the bill because you now need crews and you need fuel and you need maintenance that is not in the bill because we agreed with the administration's position.

There is another $200 million that would be required over the next year for spares and modifications of this aircraft.

Essentially, you are leaving the committee now in a position of $600 million by simply saying no funds shall be used to terminate this program during the coming year that aren't in the bill, and the author of the amendment and those who support it have not shown us where that money is going to come from in this bill.

I strongly urge my colleagues, for the reasons stated in my opening remarks, we have to begin to make some tough decisions. There is a finite amount of money in this bill.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I yield to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I would just indicate that we had several other amendments that we offered up to the committee, but we were told there would be a point of order on those amendments, so we had offsets articulated in those amendments, so we were looking for additional dollars.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. I appreciate that, but the fact is there is no offset in this amendment and the cost to the committee is $600 million that is not in the bill. I appreciate the chairman yielding to me.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I reclaim my time, and I urge a ''no'' vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. 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 gentlewoman from Michigan will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC.____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to make aircraft (including unmanned aerial vehicles), armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, toxicological agents (including chemical agents, biological agents, and associated equipment), launch vehicles, guided missiles, ballistic missiles, rockets, torpedoes, bombs, mines, or nuclear weapons (as identified for demilitarization purposes outlined in Department of Defense Manual 4160.28) available to local law enforcement agencies through the Department of Defense Excess Personal Property Program established pursuant to section 1033 of Public Law 104–201, the 'National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 1997'.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved on the amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 628, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to address a growing problem throughout our country, the militarization of local law enforcement agencies.

Police in our communities should be engaged in community policing. Unfortunately, all too often, local police departments have begun to look like

military units preparing for battle on America's streets.

We fight our wars abroad, not at home, and the weapons and tactics used on our local streets should reflect that fact.

The New York Times recently reported that:

> Police departments have received thousands of pieces of camouflage and night-vision equipment and hundreds of silencers, armored cars, and aircraft.

I think this is appalling. My amendment would prohibit the Department of Defense from gifting excess equipment, such as aircraft—including drones—armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, bombs, and so on to local police departments.

There is no mass rebellion brewing here in the United States. There are no improvised explosive devices on the sides of our roads, but the abuse of military equipment to ward off these nonexistent threats is happening nonetheless.

So, of course, what you would expect to happen is happening. As The New York Times article, ''War Gear Flows to Police Departments'' explains:

> Police SWAT teams are now deployed tens of thousands of times each year, increasingly for routine jobs. Masked, heavily-armed police officers raided a nightclub in 2006 as part of a liquor inspection. In Florida in 2010, officers in SWAT gear and with guns drawn carried out raids on barbershops that mostly led to charges of ''barbering without a license.''

DOD equipment is changing the mentality of police departments throughout our country. Recruiting videos now feature clips of officers storming into homes with smoke grenades and firing automatic weapons into homes, as well as clips of officers creeping through the fields in camouflage—war camouflage. This is not policing; this is war.

One South Carolina sheriff's department now takes its new tanklike vehicle with a mounted .50-caliber gun to schools and community events. The department spokesman said his tank is a conversation starter. That is not a conversation I want us to have.

I think this is wrong. The Federal Government should not be encouraging our public servants to view America as occupied territory. I prefer the views of Ronald Teachman, the police chief in South Bend, Indiana.

According to that New York Times article, he decided not to request a mine-resistant vehicle for his city of South Bend, Indiana. He said:

> I go to schools, and I bring ''Green Eggs and Ham.''

Let's encourage leaders like the very appropriately named Ronald Teachman. Let's not treat our citizens as terrorists, and let's help our police act like the public servants they need to be.

I reserve the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriation bill and, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part:

''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.''

The amendment requires a new determination.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does the gentleman from Florida wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. GRAYSON. Yes.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. GRAYSON. There is no new determination out of this amendment. I call your attention to the specific language here. It says:

> None of the funds made available in this act may be used to make aircraft (including unmanned aerial vehicles), armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, toxicological agents (including chemical agents, biological agents, and associated equipment), launch vehicles, guided missiles, ballistic missiles, rockets, torpedoes, bombs, mines, or nuclear weapons (as identified for demilitarization purposes outlined in Department of Defense Manual 4160.28).

In other words, all the terms that I just described are as identified for demilitarization purposes as outlined in Department of Defense Manual 4160.28. Since they are in the Department of Defense Manual 4160.28, they require no new determination of law.

I will continue:

> Available to local law enforcement agencies through the Department of Defense Excess Personal Property Program.

Again, local enforcement agencies is a defined term under statute. The Excess Personal Property Program is established, as this amendment indicates, pursuant to section 1033 of Public Law 104–201, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007.

Therefore, every single term that is used here is a term defined in law. There is no new determination to be made by anybody, including the people who enforce this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

The Chair finds that this amendment includes language requiring a new determination as to the meaning of ''local law enforcement agencies'' within the context of the Department of Defense Excess Personal Property Program.

The amendment, therefore, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

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

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DAINES) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, 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. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 2015

AMNESTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the Appropriations Committee for the appropriations process. I think we are all better when we have open amendments and have a chance to have everybody have input. It is a nasty process, but it is a good way to do it.

Input is important, because when you don't listen to proper input, you can end up having a judgment, as did the Pelletier case where a juvenile court judge in Massachusetts took away custody from her parents, and finally a victory yesterday as the court, Judge Joseph Johnston, wrote in his ruling:

> Effective Wednesday, June 18, 2014, this care and protection petition is dismissed and custody of Justina is returned to her parents, Lou and Linda Pelletier.

His first statement there is:

> I find that the parties have shown credible evidence that circumstances have changed since the adjudication on December 20, 2013, that Justina is a child in care and protection pursuant to G.L. c. 199, 24–26.

Clearly, the only thing that had changed was not credible evidence. It was a judge who finally did his job, which was not to take parents' kids away from them.

It reminded me of comments made by a daycare director in the Soviet Union back when I was an exchange student during college days. The daycare director was bragging that the children belonged to the state, that parents are only temporary caregivers that serve at the whim of—she didn't say ''whim''—but basically at the discretion of the government.

Back then, in the Soviet Union, if you ever told your child anything negative about the Soviet Union—the Soviet Government, Soviet leaders—and they found out, they would whisk in, take your child away, and as the director said, give them to more deserving parents.

It appears that is really what happened in the Pelletier case. Some bureaucrats refused to consider all of the evidence as they should have and decided that they would play God for a while and give custody of this poor child to the State instead of her parents who gave every indication of loving her and caring about her, trying to do the right thing for her. Instead, the State caused great damage. Unfortunately, that happens too often in many

different areas when the State thinks they know better than the people personally involved.

What gets even worse is when you have a Federal administration that believes they know better than the law, that they don't have to follow the law because they are better than the law, which would make them right on par with Chavez in Venezuela or pick out the dictator. They are right there, because they know so much better than anybody else in the country. That is why they are called dictators.

One of the most shocking things about the lawlessness of this administration is that they could have spokespeople with straight faces come out and say: We really don't know what is causing this wave of humanitarian crises on the border. We just really don't understand why this wave is coming now.

Well, all they have to do is review some of the reports from Border Patrolmen, ICE agents—particularly the Border Patrolmen who have been interviewing these kids, especially the older ones, 15, 16, 17: Why did you come to the United States illegally now? And the Border Patrol reports so many of the children just say basically the same thing: It is because of your new law that is going to let us come and stay legally. It is the new law that we get amnesty, that all we have to do is come.

It is incredible the humanitarian crisis that this administration has caused. There is some blame to go around for Republicans as well, that have entered into this discussion about providing amnesty, providing legal status when, if they would simply listen to the people in the field on the border and understand the trauma that they have been going through trying to protect this country, they would find out, as Chris Crane has said before, he said again yesterday, when people in Washington talk about amnesty or legal status, we see a massive influx of people coming because they want to get here for the legal status, the amnesty. That is why it is so critical that we not talk about any kind of legal status or amnesty being awarded to anyone, that we wait until we have a President, hopefully a change in this President's heart so he will start enforcing the law and start faithfully executing the laws of the country.

It is unconstitutional for anyone in the United States, including the President, to say: I don't like the law the way it is. Congress hasn't changed it, so here's the new law.

One rather shocking thing is when the President said, you know, that Congress hadn't fixed it so here is the new law on who is going to be allowed to stay and be given legal status that we are not going to throw out. Here is the new law; here are the new requirements.

I couldn't believe conservative news media, liberal news media, they are all reporting the same thing. Gee, here is the new law. Here are the new requirements that the President just pronounced into law.

Fortunately, there are many levelheaded folks that understand that we are supposed to act within a Constitution, who pointed out you can't just stand up and say, ''Here's the new law.'' You actually have to have it pass through Congress. Yeah, it is a tough thing to do, and that is exactly what the Founders intended, because they knew the easier it was to pass laws, the quicker Americans would lose their liberty.

Ever since the 17th Amendment was ratified, the States lost their check and balance over the Federal Government not usurping the power reserved to them in the 10th Amendment. Some have incorrectly reported that I want to repeal the 17th Amendment, go back to selecting Senators by State legislatures making the selection. There were some abuses there. Some legislators figured out how to game the system through the Senators they selected. All you would have to do is say: All right. We are going to select you to be our Senator, but here is our laundry list of things that we want.

So it was susceptible to being abused as well, but the point should not be lost that there has to be a way for States to regain the check and balance over the Federal Government usurpation of rights of the various States, the powers of the State.

If the States still had the check and balance over the Federal Government, you wouldn't see a report like John Roberts of FoxNews reported this week. ''Wave of humanity,'' he reports: ''Border Patrol overwhelmed by flow of illegal immigrants.'' He says:

> At daybreak in this border town, two women from Guatemala—one with a small child strapped to her back—wait patiently on the levy overlooking the Rio Grande.
>
> They have been instructed by the ''coyote'' who ferried them across the river for an exorbitant fee—as much as $1,000—to simply wait for the Border Patrol to pick them up. After processing, they will likely be given a notice to appear before an immigration judge and a bus ticket to wherever in America they may have friends or relatives.
>
> That's the way it goes, day in and day out, in what has become ground zero of the latest immigration crisis. Thousands upon thousands of people from Central America exploiting the porous border of the Rio Grande Valley to enter the United States.

To quote:

> ''If we don't send the message that they can't just come in and stay here, it's gonna continue, this wave of humanity,'' said Texas Representative HENRY CUELLAR. Cuellar is a Democrat, but an outspoken critic of how President Obama has handled this crisis.

Another story from Brandon Darby from Breitbart reports:

> Vice President Moran invoked the case of Robert Rosas, a Border Patrol agent who was ambushed by illegal immigrants in 2009 in southern California. In that instance, Agent Rosas was dispatched alone to check on a sensor activation. Breitbart News has covered that issue extensively and revealed that one of the men involved had been on supervised release from U.S. authorities. The illegal immigrants wanted Agent Rosas's night-vision equipment, so they lured, trapped, and murdered him, according to the U.S. Attorney's office. ''A repeat occurrence of an incident like this is what we fear, especially now without full staffing in the field,'' said Vice President Moran.

Shawn Moran is vice president of the National Border Patrol Council, the NBPC. He stated:

> ''The administration was already putting budgets before securing the border. Our jobs are immensely dangerous as we interrupt cartel activity on U.S. soil. Their border security policy failures have already reduced the number of agents securing the border, and now they have fewer agents out there to back each other up. The lives of Border Patrol agents should not be pawns in the political games of Washington, D.C., and this administration is literally risking our lives.''

The loss of Agent Rosas is an example of what happens when an administration is lawless. It breeds more lawlessness, and that is exactly what we have now on our United States border in the south. The story says:

> Though Border Patrol are often heavily grouped in urban areas along the U.S.-Mexican border, they are often alone in desolate rural areas—and most of the U.S.-Mexico border is desolate.

It is really tragic what is happening, and this administration wrings its hands—well, some do. Some play golf. Some wring their hands. Some make sure they have got a good grip on their 7 iron, but others wring their hands about the losses of life and the tragedies occurring on our U.S.-Mexico border.

A story from the LA Times, Molly Hennessy-Fisk:

> The call went out on Border Patrol radios just before sundown one day this week: 31 immigrants spotted illegally crossing the Rio Grande on a raft.
>
> No sooner had the migrants been found hiding in the mesquite brush then another report came in: a woman and boy were walking up riverbank.
>
> The Rio Grande Valley has become ground zero for an unprecedented surge in families and unaccompanied children flooding across the Southwest border, creating what the Obama administration is calling a humanitarian crisis as border officials struggle to accommodate new detainees.

□ 2030

> Largely from Central America, they are now arriving at a rate of 35,000 a month. Anzalduas Park, a 96-acre expanse of close-cropped fields and woodland that sits on a southern bend of the river, has turned from an idyllic family recreation area into a high-traffic zone for illegal migration. The number of children and teenagers traveling alone from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador is expected to reach up to 90,000 across the southwest border by the end of the year.

This story was written June 13. We have information that that number hit 60,000 by May, and originally 60,000 was expected to be the top. So I think it would be a good estimate to expect if we got more than 60,000 and they are coming faster and faster, and that 60,000 was hit by early May or the 1st of May, I think you can pretty well count

on more than 90,000, perhaps more than 120,000, and that is this year.

As these teenagers and others are given legal status, then their parents, they will be able to be anchors to bring other family members in with them. So you are talking about just in 1 year adding maybe 1 million people when you start looking at all the other ways people are coming in.

We bring in over 1 million people with visas legally every year. No other country in the world does that. Countries a number of times our size don't allow that many visas. We do because we are an open country. But we understand there is an obligation. You have to maintain some kind of semblance of order.

At a time when you have got tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people coming in illegally, and you don't know who they are, you have got drug cartels that are taking advantage of that, as ICE and Border Patrol are pointing out. They are taking advantage of it, they are moving more drugs than ever. As some have said this week, we—Border Patrol, ICE agents—were changing diapers while they are stepping up the number of drugs they are bringing in.

So how is this all happening? It comes back to the administration. If you have an administration that is lawless and refuses to enforce the law, as this administration has, you are going to reap the whirlwind.

There is another story from U.S. News, from Hidalgo County, ''Migrant Surge Jams Border'':

> Sergeant Dan Broyles once had to battle through the spiky thicket of border vegetation here to find an immigrant illegally sneaking into the country.
>
> But all he had to do on a recent day was to wait in plain sight along a dirt road, as a group of Salvadoran migrants, including a 7-year-old girl with a pink Hello Kitty backpack, deliberately walked up and surrendered to him a mile north of the Rio Grande.
>
> ''They're all giving up,'' said Sergeant Broyles, 51-years-old, a Hidalgo County Constable's official whose main responsibility is supposed to be serving court papers. As he waited for Border Patrol agents to pick up the migrants, another group was coming up behind them.

And on and on and on it goes.

It is what happens when an administration refuses to enforce the law, refuses to follow the law themselves. When you have an Attorney General that obfuscates and is complicit in the hiding of evidence and keeping evidence secret of what happened with a couple of thousand guns being forced by the government to be sold to people that never should have gotten them in the operation called ''Fast and Furious.'' We have known about it for a number of years, but we have always felt like even in the John Mitchell Department of Justice, even when there was illegality somewhere, even at the top with the Attorney General, that there would be good people in the Department of Justice that would stand up and say: This is wrong, you are going to destroy our country because we are supposed to be the department that ensures justice across the country.

It seems like what we are doing here in the DOJ is going after political enemies of the administration instead of being fair across the board. The rest of the world notices these things, and they notice that we are not being fair and just and righteous, as we once were. All the time this humanitarian crisis, illegal immigrants flooding into the country from our south, and the administration saying: We don't know why this is happening; why are they rushing here?

Well, then here is a story this week:

> The White House to honor young illegal immigrants. The White House will honor 10 young adults on Tuesday who came into the United States illegally and qualified for the President's program to defer deportation actions.

I might remind, Mr. Speaker, that this is the President's program where he decided to change the law unilaterally, without Congress, to say he didn't like the existing law, so he pronounced new law into existence.

The story from Rebecca Shabad says:

> Each person has qualified for the government's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which delays removal proceedings against them as long as they meet certain guidelines.
>
> They were honored as ''Champions of Change.''

So the White House is glorifying people that came in illegally and then is shocked that more people want to come in and be glorified for coming in illegally.

There is another story from Reuters of New York:

> A New York lawmaker wants to grant many of the rights of citizenship to millions of illegal immigrants and noncitizen residents, including the right to vote in local and State elections, under a bill introduced on Monday.

So let's give benefits, let's give a place to stay, let's give food, let's give legal counsel, as this administration is doing all, and let's give them incentives. Let's give them the right to vote so that they can vote for more people to come in illegally. Because once you give the right to vote to people who have not respected the law, and you give them that right to vote before they can be educated on the importance and the responsibility of maintaining a republic—madam, if you can keep it—you are going to lose that republic, you are going to lose the ability to have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It becomes lawless. Might makes right.

A story from Breitbart this week:

Pro-Bono Lawyers: Most Unaccompanied Border Children Eligible for Amnesty.

A story by Sylvia Longmire:

> Under the authority of the Homeland Security Act, the federal government transfers custody of illegal immigrant children who are apprehended alone at our borders to the Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Refugee Resettlement. Their primary goal is to reunite them with a family member or legal guardian already here in the U.S.

So, as U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen has said, now we are engaging in human trafficking.

This is a good lesson in how you lose a great nation because you refuse to enforce your laws. This country has never had perfect laws, never will have perfect laws. They are made by man. But the thing we are supposed to internally perpetually strive for is making them better and better.

You don't have to study all that much history to understand that no nation ever lasts forever. They never have, they never will, not in this life.

So the question is: How long are you able to sustain a great nation? Some have gone for hundreds and hundreds of years. The United States has never been, will never be, an empire like the Greek or Roman empire or the British empire because the United States has never been imperialistic.

When we go in and fight for freedom, Americans die for freedom, people still speak their same language, still have their same currency. We help them to set up a government. Well, it is time we quit nation-building.

Now Iraq. So many of us warned about this, and after my last visit to Iraq, DANA ROHRABACHER and I pointed out problems to Prime Minister al-Maliki, and he didn't like it. We each pointed out promises that were made and had been broken, and he didn't like it. Even 3 or 4 years ago, it was very clear to us that Maliki was either going to totally sell out to the Iranians, who had been killing Americans who were there, or he would get knocked off, just like in Afghanistan. President Karzai is either going to have to sell out to the Taliban or he is going to be killed, or he can take money that people say he has not actually embezzled that maybe some of his family has, take off with the money and try to live on that somewhere outside of Afghanistan.

We don't have to nation-build. We should just make it clear to a country: Look, you can pick whatever government you want, but when you are a threat to us and you announce you want to destroy us as the great Satan, destroy Israel as the little Satan, and you are working on the bomb that will do that, then we need to take your government out. We need to take out all of your areas where you are working on nuclear weapons and keep bombing until we have satisfactorily done that, and then let the nation pick whatever government they want. But if it is one that wants to come after us again, as the Khomeini administration has, then we need to take them out too.

The problem is this administration has been floating ideas of working with Iran, which had been killing American soldiers the entire time that U.S. soldiers were in Iraq, providing IEDs, providing weapons, providing the means

and people to help kill Americans, and which has made clear they want to wipe our country off the map, wipe Israel off the map, and this administration has people who say: Let's work with Iran to control Iraq.

That is sheer insanity. Who is thinking of these things? Allies of the United States all over the world are asking: Are we the next ally to be thrown away as the United States continues to embrace its enemies and throw away its friends?

Take your pick of the way nations have been lost over time, great nations have lost what freedom they had, what self-control they had. Look at the way they have been lost. Some have lost it internally. They spent too much money on themselves, overspent, they lost the country, became a bankrupt nation. Or sometimes they let their defense down and people came in and overwhelmed the nation. Or sometimes they were attacked by armies who destroyed their power, their government. Everywhere you turn, it appears we are taking the steps—this administration and Congress is not doing enough yet to stop them—but it appears the administration repeatedly is taking all of those roads that lead to destruction.

□ 2045

You cannot keep punishing your friends, rewarding your enemies. You cannot keep encouraging your enemies and allowing them to develop weapons that will destroy you. You cannot leave your borders open when people have made clear: We are bringing drugs in, and we are coming in with weapons now. We are taking over gangs in your cities. We are going to destroy you from within.

You can't keep doing that. Then, all that time, we are cutting spending on our defense to keep evil out. We are still overspending.

Sure, we have given some and helped wonderful companies like Solyndra and paid $600 million or so for a Web site for ObamaCare and friends of the administration when we are told: gee, you could have done a better Web site for $4 million.

Sure, we have spent it on all kinds of things like that, but the spending of future generations' money has to stop because you can lose the country just in that way as well.

Just when you think the lawlessness of the administration could not get any worse—just when you think, wow, it is absolutely incredible—it is very clear now that this administration's Internal Revenue Service was using IRS laws to persecute political opponents of the administration, so they could not be effective and do again in 2012 what they did in 2010.

Guess what? It worked. At first, we were told: No, they were going after liberal groups and conservative groups the same way.

Well, now, we know that is not true. They were going after conservative groups, and when any administration has IRS officials that send out questions asking about the content of your prayers, it is time to start firing people right and left.

Since that hasn't happened, it tells you that there is a disease running through this administration, a cancer that needs to be stopped.

We know that the Attorney General himself is in contempt of Congress, and we know that he sat there and told me that I was not to ever think it was a big deal for him to be found in contempt, when he knew that a year before he told ABC it wasn't a big deal to him because he didn't have any respect for people in Congress that voted to hold him in contempt. He couldn't even get his story right when he was testifying before Congress.

He needs to go. Since the administration has refused to move out an Attorney General who has repeatedly failed to do his job, has repeatedly failed to do justice, has repeatedly allowed the law to be used to go after political enemies while protecting political friends, while they have refused to go after people who believe that this country ought to be part of a great radical Islamist caliphate—and we protect those people.

Not only do we protect them, according to Egyptian periodicals that were controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood, they bragged about the people in this administration who were in positions of power, amazingly—maybe it shouldn't be that amazing—but eventually, truth does have a way of coming forward.

Yes, we have the IRS, at this point, losing emails. Of course, that triggered ideas in my head because there are criminals laws about obstructing Congress. There are criminal laws about obstructing investigations. There are criminal laws about IRS agents abusing their positions.

So anyone anywhere in the administration that is in any way assisted or encouraged in any way the losing or the reported loss of emails—this active coverup that is going on—they committed a crime, and it isn't just a 6-month statute of limitations, and they should be worried.

So the IRS, despite the laws regarding redundancy, despite the requirements that they are to keep records, they haven't done so.

There was a great letter that was sent by an attorney for True the Vote, one of the persecuted conservative groups. Cleta Mitchell, the attorney, writes to the counsel for the IRS and says:

As you know, True the Vote filed its lawsuit in the above-referenced matter on May 21, 2013. By the time True the Vote filed its suit, the Internal Revenue Service and its employees and officials were on notice of the commencement of several congressional investigations.

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Finance Committee have each provided notice to the IRS of their ongoing investigations into the IRS and, specifically, defendant Lois Lerner and her activities related to the issues involved in the True the Vote litigation for over a year now.

Late Friday, the IRS apparently advised the Ways and Means Committee that the IRS has ''lost'' Lois Lerner's hard drive, which includes thousands of Defendant Lerner's email records.

However, several statutes and regulations require that the records be accessible by the committees and, in turn, must be preserved and made available to True the Vote in the event of discovery in the pending litigation.

Those statutes include the Federal Records Act, Internal Revenue Manual section 1.15.6.6, IRS Document 12829, 36 CFR 1230, and 36 CFR 1222.12.

Under those records retention regulations and the Federal Records Act generally, the IRS is required to preserve emails or otherwise contemporaneously transmit records for preservation.

Therefore, the failure for the IRS to preserve and provide these records to the committees would evidence further violations of numerous records retention statutes and regulations or obstruction of Congress.

Federal courts have held, in the context of trial, that the bad faith destruction of evidence relevant to proof of an issue gives rise to an inference that production of the evidence would have been unfavorable to the party responsible for its destruction.

It then cites a Federal case. That is called the doctrine of spoliation.

The fact that the IRS is statutorily required to preserve these records, yet nevertheless publicly claimed that they have been ''lost'' appears to be evidence of bad faith.

18 USC 1505 makes it a Federal crime to obstruct congressional proceedings and covers obstructive acts made during the course of a congressional investigation, even without official committee sanction.

It cites authority for that proposition.

Further, by letters dated September 17, 2013, True the Vote provided notice to counsel for the individual IRS defendants in this litigation. The individual defendants are: Steven Grodnitzky, Lois Lerner, Steven Miller, Holly Paz, Michael Seto, Douglas Shulman, Cindy Thomas, William Wilkins, Susan Maloney, Ronald Bell, Janine L. Estes, and Faye Ng.

True the Vote's September 17, 2013, correspondence reminded you and your clients of the individual defendants' obligation ''not to destroy, conceal, or alter any paper or electronic files, other data generated by and/or stored on your clients' computer systems and storage media, e.g., hard disks, floppy disks, backup tapes, or any other electronic data, such as voice mail.''

We identified the scope as encompassing both the personal and professional or business capacity of your clients and involving data ''generated or created on or after July 15, 2010.'' See attached letters to Ms. Benitez and Messrs. Lamken and Shur.

As the D.C. District Court has found, ''a party has a duty 'to preserve potentially relevant evidence . . . ' once that party anticipates litigation.'''''

It cites the authority for that.

In fact, ''that obligation 'runs first to counsel, who has a duty to advise his client of the type of information potentially relevant to the lawsuit and of the necessity of preventing its destruction.''' It ''also extends to the managers of a corporate party, who 'are responsible for conveying to their employees the requirements for preserving evidence.''''

By letter dated September 25, Ms. Benitez acknowledged receipt of our ''litigation

hold'' letter and vociferously objected to our having the temerity to send such a letter, ''rejecting'' our characterization of documents to be preserved.

Indeed, Ms. Benitez, you indicated that you took great offense at having been put on notice to preserve and maintain documents related to the issue of this litigation.

You further advised, however, that you would continue to advise ''your clients as appropriate and, as always, will abide by my legal and ethical obligations.''

The public reports released late on Friday, June 13, 2014, stated the IRS now claims to have ''lost'' the emails of defendant Lois Lerner.

I have got to inject. Ms. Benitez apparently wasn't being honest. She apparently didn't know how to properly advise her clients and properly abide by the legal and ethical obligations that she had.

This letter goes on:

These reports are particularly astonishing in light of your representations, Ms. Benitez, that you would ''advise your clients, as appropriate, and would abide by your legal and ethical obligations.''

The ''lost'' emails, from press reports, appear to cover a time period from January 2009 to April 2011.

We are deeply troubled by this news and are concerned about the spoliation of information and documents pertaining to this case and the apparent failure on your part to, a, protect and preserve all potentially relevant information and, b, to advise us of such failure and spoliation when you first learned of it.

We are even more concerned after receiving your assurances that you would ''abide by your legal and ethical obligations.''

Accordingly, we hereby request that you advise us of the following.

Then it goes on with demands. They are quite reasonable.

It says:

In addition to seeking responses to the questions in this letter, we also seek your consent to immediately allow a computer forensics expert selected by True the Vote to examine the computers that is or are purportedly the source of Ms. Lerner's ''lost'' emails, including cloning the hard drives, and to attempt to restore what was supposedly ''lost'' and to seek to restore any and all ''lost'' evidence pertinent to this litigation.

We also seek access to all computers, both official and personal, used by any and all of the defendants from and after July 1, 2010, in order to ensure preservation of the documents of all defendants in this action.

We wish to resolve our concerns amicably; but, absent your consent, we will file such motions as deemed necessary and appropriately asking the court to require that you respond to the questions contained in this letter and to permit such forensic examination described herein and for such other relief as may be appropriate for this egregious breach of legal authority and professional ethics.

Anyway, the judge in that case needs to go ahead and order all kinds of sanctions against the Internal Revenue Service. It needs to order all kinds of sanctions against the attorneys and the employees involved in that litigation who have failed to produce what was required.

The judge needs to make clear that justice, including from our own so-called Justice Department, will not permit this kind of lawlessness. It is outrageous. It is simply outrageous.

□ 2100

Just when you think the ignoring of the safety of American citizens couldn't get much worse by this administration, they brag that they are bringing a known terrorist to New York City. Nobody on the left seems to be terribly bothered by the fact that they say they are putting him on a slow ship to the U.S. when they should have put him on a fast plane to Guantanamo Bay. It is better kept than many prisons I have been to that actually meet the requirements of the law, including the requirements of liberal judges. It is better than so many prisons.

Yes, they get to play soccer, and when they continue to throw feces or urine on our guards, then they do lose some of their movie time watching. When I was down there a couple of times, somebody lost movie privileges because he figured out a way to throw urine or feces on guards. There actually was a guard who yelled back at the person who threw feces on him, and he ended up being punished, I was told, by Article 15 because you are not allowed to respond when a terrorist throws feces or urine on you. They will take care of the adequate punishment, and they think it is enough to take away some of their movie watching time or television watching time or to maybe take away some of the time they get to be outside, playing soccer.

They don't need to be in the United States if they have committed an act of war against the United States, and the evidence seems to indicate clearly that this defendant had. I am very pleased and I applaud the administration for finally picking up this guy who was so available to international media that they could get interviews with him. Yet the administration didn't want to pick him up. If they had, they could have gotten him at any time. I guess, last year, they picked up this terrible terrorist in Libya, and when I was over there, the Libyans said his address had been on the Internet for a year. The U.S. could have gotten him any time they wanted to—they knew where he lived—but the administration finally decided to do something about it, so they did.

This is an article from CBS News: ''Benghazi Suspect Expected to Face Criminal Charges in D.C. Federal Court.'' When Americans say someone who commits an act of war against the United States should be brought to a Federal district court because it is his constitutional right, it tells you immediately they don't know the Constitution because, under the Constitution, there isn't even a U.S. District Court created. How can somebody have a right to a United States district court under our Constitution when there is no U.S. district court created in our Constitution?

As David Guinn used to say, who was my old constitutional law professor, there is only one court created in the entire Constitution. That is the Supreme Court. Every other Federal court in America owes its existence and jurisdiction to the United States Congress. As Bill Cosby said his father used to say, ''I brought you in this world, and I can take you out.'' The Congress brought these courts into this world. We can take them out of this world. Nobody has a constitutional right to a U.S. district court. If you commit an act of war, you have got a right to a tribunal if we so choose, and we have. You may have a right to a military court.

I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, why in the world liberals in the United States think that someone who commits an act of war against the United States should have more constitutional rights than our United States military, and this administration thinks one does. How do you know? Look at what they are doing to our military. Go talk to some of our military members who have been put in prison. They say: We believed our lives were in jeopardy, that we were in immediate danger of death or of serious bodily injury, so we defended ourselves.

You shouldn't have because you hit a civilian or you hit somebody else or you hit somebody who was messing with an IED, but that didn't mean that he actually planted it.

There are all kinds of people we have in prison now who are serving our United States military, and they were not given near the rights that this person—this radical Islamist who wants to destroy America—is now being told he is going to get.

So they say they are questioning him, but the Federal Government said that about the last suspect they arrested and put on a slow boat to the U.S., and there were people here who were saying this is great, that this may be the one guy they say they wouldn't mind having waterboarded in order to get all of the information out of him they could.

Then we hear from an international arms dealer who says: Yes, I was the one who negotiated the arms deal for the U.S. State Department. They wanted to get arms to Libyan rebels, and I proposed just their buying them, and then I would get them to the rebels. But they said: No, no, no. We don't want it that direct. So he says he bought the weapons for the State Department and got them to Qatar and then, from Qatar, got them to the rebels who were infused with al Qaeda rebels.

Anyway, the international arms dealer sent me a statement saying he wanted to testify before Congress because the people he worked with who were representing the U.S. Government and others were either dead or they were on a boat somewhere so that nobody could talk to them. He figured, if he could get his story out before Congress, then maybe there wouldn't be any need to kill him or to stick him on a boat

somewhere so he couldn't talk. That was what the statement of the international arms dealer has been—the statement that was sent to me—and yet they want to bring here someone they say they are certain committed an act of war against the United States.

I heard on the news today that, gee, they have had evidence of this al-Shabaab involvement since the event happened. Since the event happened? That would mean all of the time that Secretary Clinton was out there—saying it was the video and looking family members of the deceased of Benghazi in the eye and saying: We are going to get the guy who did the video—she knew that the evidence was nothing of the sort, that the video had nothing to do with the loss of these four American lives.

There is no right of someone who commits an act of war against the United States to get an immediate trial. He is not entitled under our Constitution to get a speedy trial. He is not under our Constitution entitled to get a trial before a U.S. district court. He is entitled under the current law to go to Guantanamo Bay—where no one has ever been waterboarded by the way—and have a trial in that courtroom. I went through it, and I was impressed at how well equipped it was for trying terrorists, even to the extent of having bulletproof glass for the gallery.

There could be all kinds of horrible scenarios to arise out of this administration's insistence on bringing an enemy combatant—a warrior against the United States—who should be considered either an enemy combatant or a prisoner of war. He shouldn't be brought. There are too many bad things that can happen. New York has suffered enough.

I do want to finish with this one article, published this week by Breitbart and written by Kerry Picket. I have talked for some time about a Texan named Mohamed Elibiary. I questioned our Secretary of Homeland Security about her giving him a secret security clearance when he clearly should not have met any of the requirements to get such a clearance. We knew that he had downloaded two documents from using his secret classification. According to reporter Patrick Poole, not only did he download them, but he offered them to national media for publication.

Mr. Elibiary has gotten so cocky now because I have been talking about this for a number of years. The administration has not bothered to revoke his secret classification, and he continues to be one of the top advisers to Homeland Security. It is our homeland security for heaven's sake, and he sends out this tweet on June 13 that says:

> Kind of comical watching pundits on some U.S. TV channels freak out about an ISIS caliphate. Easy, folks. Take deep breaths and relax.

Kerry Picket reports:

> Mohamed Elibiary, a member on the Obama administration's Homeland Security Advisory Council, is at the center of a controversy involving allegations that former DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano gave him secret clearance, which led to his downloading classified information. According to Representative Louie Gohmert, Elibiary later shopped that classified material around to a reporter.
>
> Elibiary, a supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood, who regularly goes after the Sisi-led Egyptian Government, is also an active participant on Twitter, and mocked the ''freak out'' by U.S. talking heads discussing the terrorist activities relating to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS.

So Elibiary says that. He thinks it is comical watching pundits freak out over the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria's caliphate.

He goes on in another tweet in response to a tweet back that says:

> So no need to be outraged?

He says:

> As I've said before, inevitable that caliphate returns. Choice only whether we support an EU-like Muslim Union vision or not.

So Mr. Elibiary, who is a top adviser in the United States of America Homeland Security Department, is saying it is inevitable that we have an Islamic caliphate over the United States. It is just whether or not we are going to embrace a European Union-style caliphate that is coming or something else.

Even when he is questioned again by another tweet, in talking about an Islamic caliphate, he says:

> The U.S. is heading in the direction. Bush created the OIC—Organization of Islamic Council—Special Envoy.

So that took us a little bit down the road to being part of the caliphate. Then he says:

> Obama removed the discriminatory engagement policy toward the Muslim Brotherhood.

That is the purging of documents I have been talking about for years. This administration, according to their Homeland Security adviser here, has been moving toward being part of a caliphate for years. Get used to it. He finds it comical that pundits are even worried about it.

With the lawlessness that is occurring in the United States and inside our Justice Department and in this administration in numerous places—in the IRS, on our border—it is time for Americans to wake up, and it is time for Americans to let their Congressmen and Senators know we have had enough lawlessness. You guys have got to hold the Attorney General and the President accountable. Once enough people wake up and demand it, they will get it because the adage remains true: democracy ensures a people get a government no better than they deserve.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for June 18–20 on account of family obligations.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1254. An act to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, June 19, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6013. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Salable Quantities and Allotment Percentages for the 2014-2015 Marketing Year [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1 FR] received May 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6014. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of Southeastern California; Increased Assessment Rate [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-14-0010; FV14-925-1 FR] received May 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6015. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — User Fees for 2014 Crop Cotton Classification Services to Growers [AMS-CN-13-0085] (RIN: 0581-AD35) received May 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6016. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Eric E. Fiel, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list to the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

6017. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Contractor Personnel Supporting U.S. Armed Forces Deployed Outside the United States (DFARS Case 2013-D015) (RIN: 0750-AI01) received May 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6018. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-74; Introduction [Docket No.: FAR 2014-0051; Sequence No. 1] received June 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6019. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation;

Commercial and Government Entity Code [FAC 2005-74; FAR Case 2012-024; Item I; Docket No.: 2012-0024, Sequence No. 1] (RIN: 9000-AM49) received June 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6020. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Expansion of Applicability of the Senior Executive Compensation Benchmark [FAC 2005-74; FAR Case 2012-017; Item III; Docket No.: 2012-0017, Sequence No. 1] (RIN: 9000-AM38) received June 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6021. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Repeal of the Recovery Act Reporting Requirements [FAC 2005-74; FAR Case 2014-016; Item II; Docket No.: 2014-0016, Sequence No. 1] (RIN: 9000-AM77) received June 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6022. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's annual report on material violations or suspected material violations of regulations relating to Treasury auctions and other Treasury securities offerings during the period January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3121 nt; to the Committee on Financial Services.

6023. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (Thai Airways) of Bangkok, Thailand pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

6024. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 14-17, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6025. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 14-0C, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6026. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Belarus that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6027. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

6028. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2014 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 1st Quarter Fiscal Year 2014'', pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6029. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Semi-annual Report of the Bureau, as required under Section 1016 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6030. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's fiscal year 2013 annual report prepared in accordance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6031. A letter from the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, transmitting the 2013 management report and statements on the system of internal controls of the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6032. A letter from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting a report entitled, ''Sexual Orientation and the Federal Workplace: Policy and Perception''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6033. A letter from the Chairman, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the semi-annual report on activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period of October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6034. A letter from the Biologist, Ecological Services, Endangered Species, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Wood Bison in Alaska [Docket No.: FWS-R7-ES-2012-0033; 70120-1113-0000-C3] (RIN: 1018-AW57) received May 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6035. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Endangered Species Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Determination of Threatened Status for Leavenworthia exigua var. laciniata (Kentucky Glade Cress) [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2013-0069] (RIN: 1018-AY73) received May 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6036. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Endangered Species Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Leavenworthia exigua var. laciniata (Kentucky Glade Cress) [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2013-0015] (RIN: 1018-AZ47) received May 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6037. A letter from the Branch Chief, Endangered Species Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Jemez Mountains Salamander [Docket No.: FWS-R2-ES-2013-0005] (RIN: 1018-AZ28) received May 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6038. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the annual report of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

6039. A letter from the National Chairman, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, transmitting the annual and financial reports for the year 2013, pursuant to Public Law 87-655; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

6040. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — June 2014 (Rev. Rul. 2014-16) received May 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

6041. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Depreciation of Ethanol Plants (RR-138367-08) (Rev. Rul. 2014-17) received May 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

6042. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Treatment of Property Used to Acquire Parent Stock or Securities in Certain Triangular Reorganizations Involving Foreign Corporations [Notice 2014-32] received May 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on 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. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 629. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4413) to reauthorize the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to better protect futures customers, to provide end users with market certainty, to make basic reforms to ensure transparency and accountability at the Commission, to help farmers, ranchers, and end users manage risks to help keep consumer costs low, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–476). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana (for himself, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. REED, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ROSS, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. SCHOCK):

H.R. 4885. A bill to encourage and support partnerships between the public and private sectors to improve our nation's social programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LUMMIS (for herself and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 4886. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4887. A bill to expand the research and education on and delivery of complementary

and alternative medicine to veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 4888. A bill to provide for the identification and dissemination of best practices for medical professionals and other health care providers relative to neonatal abstinence syndrome, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 4889. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to require States to dedicate 5 percent of certain funds to projects that reduce emission to public safety vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. HORSFORD:

H.R. 4890. A bill to provide for a land conveyance in the State of Nevada; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HORSFORD (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4891. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain lands in Las Vegas, Nevada, for the development of a nonprofit work center and affordable housing for people with intellectual disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. MICHAUD, and Ms. ESTY):

H.R. 4892. A bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Ways and Means, Oversight and Government Reform, 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 Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 4893. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of the waiting period for disability insurance benefits in cases of terminally ill beneficiaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4894. A bill to establish the United States Commission on an Open Society with Security; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on 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 Mr. PALLONE:

H.R. 4895. A bill to prohibit the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself and Mr. RIGELL):

H.R. 4896. A bill to prohibit congressional recesses until Congress adopts a concurrent resolution on the budget that results in a balanced Federal budget by fiscal year 2024, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. SALMON (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MCKEON, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. HUNTER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GARCIA, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. ROKITA):

H.R. 4897. A bill to require the Secretary of Education to complete a data analysis on the impact of the proposed rule on gainful employment prior to issuing a final rule on gainful employment; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. SALMON):

H.R. 4898. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide hospital care and medical services in non-Department facilities for veterans waiting longer than 14 days for an appointment in a Department facility, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. HAHN, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. MEEKS):

H. Res. 630. A resolution recognizing the benefits and importance of music making as an essential form of creative expression and expressing support for designating the Summer Solstice, June 21, 2014, as Make Music Day; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 4885.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mrs. LUMMIS:

H.R. 4886.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: ''The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.''

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4887.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 4888.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 4889.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. HORSFORD:

H.R. 4890.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relation to the power to dispose of and legislate for all territories and properties belonging to the United States.

By Mr. HORSFORD:

H.R. 4891.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relation to the power to dispose of and legislate for all territories and properties belonging to the United States).

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 4892.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, ''to provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 4893.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4894.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: section 1 of article I, and clause 18, section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PALLONE:

H.R. 4895.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

[The Congress shall have Power] To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 4896.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 9, clause 7 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4897.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America.

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 4898.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 1 and Article I Section 8 Clause 18

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills as follows:

H.R. 107: Mr. DAINES.
H.R. 346: Mr. MICA.
H.R. 494: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 543: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
H.R. 594: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 661: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 781: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 792: Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 800: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 855: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 920: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 997: Mr. CAMP and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 1015: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1020: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. DENT, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 1074: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. DELBENE, and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 1078: Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 1125: Mr. PIERLUISI.
H.R. 1199: Mr. CLYBURN.
H.R. 1249: Mr. HURT.
H.R. 1494: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 1518: Ms. WATERS.
H.R. 1658: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 1696: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 1750: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 1761: Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 1837: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 1838: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 1893: Ms. PINGREE of Maine and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1984: Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 1998: Mr. WAXMAN.
H.R. 2001: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 2053: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 2066: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 2220: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 2453: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. LATTA, Mr. PIERLUISI, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 2499: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2536: Mr. CAMP.
H.R. 2591: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 2663: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 2673: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 2737: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 2745: Mr. CASSIDY.
H.R. 2825: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 2992: Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H.R. 3086: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Ms. ESTY, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 3112: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 3118: Ms. TITUS and Ms. CLARK OF MASSACHUSETTS.
H.R. 3133: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3199: Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 3279: Mr. MICA and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 3317: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3382: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 3383: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 3489: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3505: Mr. JOLLY, Mr. PIERLUISI and Mr. MCALLISTER.
H.R. 3556: Ms. CLARK OF MASSACHUSETTS and Mr. COBLE.
H.R. 3566: Mr. POCAN and Ms. MENG.
H.R. 3708: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 3723: Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 3740: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 3741: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3782: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 3833: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 3877: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 3921: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3992: Mr. WELCH and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4026: Mr. VEASEY, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 4040: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4060: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4086: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 4148: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 4149: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4162: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4169: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 4187: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 4190: Mr. JOLLY and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4234: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 4240: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 4252: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4315: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 4320: Mr. HUELSKAMP and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 4325: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 4351: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4437: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 4445: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 4446: Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 4450: Mr. COBLE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BECERRA, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 4489: Mr. SMITH of Missouri and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 4510: Mr. POCAN, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. MENG, Mr. KLINE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. COLE, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. REED.
H.R. 4521: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. MCALLISTER.
H.R. 4531: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4577: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 4589: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4590: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 4612: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4622: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 4630: Ms. ESTY and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4635: Mr. HURT.
H.R. 4636: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 4645: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4653: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 4664: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 4680: Mr. CAPUANO and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4701: Mr. BARROW of Georgia and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4704: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4717: Mr. TERRY and Mr. MAFFEI.
H.R. 4726: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 4749: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. SALMON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 4773: Mr. DESANTIS.
H.R. 4781: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4782: Mr. POLIS and Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 4786: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 4792: Mr. OLSON, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. HARPER, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 4805: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4808: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 4826: Ms. NORTON and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 4827: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 4834: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 4841: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CICILLINE, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. MOORE, Ms. ESTY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. RAHALL, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WALZ, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. ENYART, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 4851: Ms. WATERS.
H.R. 4852: Mr. ENYART, Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4855: Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 4864: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4871: Mr. ROYCE, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 4878: Mr. SCHOCK and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 4881: Mr. FINCHER and Mr. GARRETT.
H.J. Res. 20: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Con. Res. 27: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H. Con. Res. 52: Mr. HANNA.
H. Res. 30: Mr. KENNEDY.
H. Res. 72: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H. Res. 170: Mr. ROONEY, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H. Res. 412: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H. Res. 435: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H. Res. 442: Mr. CALVERT.
H. Res. 519: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.
H. Res. 564: Mrs. LOWEY and Mr. SABLAN.
H. Res. 587: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H. Res. 588: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. KLINE, Ms. BASS, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H. Res., 593: Ms. LEE of California.
H. Res. 606: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. YARMUTH.
H. Res. 607: Mr. JOLLY.
H. Res. 612: Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H. Res. 621: Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. COLE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. SALMON.
H. Res. 622: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. BRIDENSTINE

AMENDMENT NO. 7: Page 7, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $8,000,000)''.

Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $15,000,000)''.

Page 12, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. BRIDENSTINE

AMENDMENT NO. 8: At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for any bilateral military-to-military contact or cooperation between the United States and the Republic of France unless and until the Republic of France cancels a contract to provide the Russian Federation with Mistral-class warships.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 9: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if the offeror certifies, pursuant to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, that the offeror or any of its principals—

(1) within a three-year period preceding this offer has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or

(2) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1); or

(3) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 10: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for flag or general officers for each military department that are in excess to the number of such officers serving in such military department as of January 17, 2014.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 11: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by an officer, employee, or contractor of the intelligence community to subvert or interfere with the integrity of any cryptographic standard that is proposed, developed, or adopted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 12: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to make aircraft (including unmanned aerial vehicles), armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, toxicological agents (including chemical agents, biological agents, and associated equipment), launch vehicles, guided missiles, ballistic missiles, rockets, torpedoes, bombs, mines, or nuclear weapons (as identified for demilitarization purposes outlined in Department of Defense Manual 4160.28) available to local law enforcement agencies through the Department of Defense Excess Personal Property Program established pursuant to section 1033 of Public Law 104-201, the 'National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997'.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 13: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to detain, without conviction, any person for more than 15 years at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. FLEMING

AMENDMENT NO. 14: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to appoint chaplains for the military departments in contravention of Department of Defense Instruction 1304.28, dated June 11, 2004, incorporating change 3, dated March 20, 2014, regarding the appointment of chaplains for the military departments.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 15: Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: (increased by $10,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 16: Page 31, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 19, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MRS. MILLER OF MICHIGAN

AMENDMENT NO. 17: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 10002. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, or prepare to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, any A–10 aircraft, or to disestablish any units of the active or reserve component associated with such aircraft.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. BRIDENSTINE

AMENDMENT NO. 18: At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for any bilateral military-to-military contact or comparable activities between the United States and the Republic of France.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. VARGAS

AMENDMENT NO. 19: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) LIMITATION.—None of the funds made available in this Act may be obligated or expended to implement a final decision affecting the homebasing of F–35 aircraft on the West Coast of the United States until the date on which the Comptroller General of the United States submits to the congressional defense committees the comparative financial analysis under subsection (b).

(b) ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a comparative financial analysis of homebasing F–35 aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro and Naval Air Station Lemoore.

(2) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The analysis conducted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Annual operational costs to perform the training missions at each location specified in paragraph (1).

(B) Annual costs associated with detachment training at each location specified in paragraph (1).

(C) Estimated annual costs of flying F–35 aircraft to and from each location specified in paragraph (1) to the depots for such aircraft.

(D) Cost savings that might be achieved by homebasing such aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro, which is in close proximity to the F–35 aircraft of the Marine Corps located at both Miramar Marine Corps Air Station and Yuma Marine Corps Air Station.

(E) Cost savings that might be achieved by homebasing the F–35 aircraft at Naval Air Station Lemoore.

(F) Estimated annual costs of F-35 aircraft detachment training that would continue at each location specified in paragraph (1), even if the location is not used as the homebase for F–35 aircraft.

(G) Comparison of military construction costs associated with homebasing such aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro versus Naval Air Station Lemoore.

(H) Comparison of the net cost savings to be achieved over 10 and 20 year budget horizons by homebasing such aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro versus Naval Air Station Lemoore.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. DELANEY

AMENDMENT NO. 20: Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $24,000,000)''.

Page 88, line 6, after the dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $16,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. FORTENBERRY

AMENDMENT NO. 21: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to provide weapons to combatants in Syria.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. MORAN

AMENDMENT NO. 22: Strike section 8108.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. MORAN

AMENDMENT NO. 23: Strike section 8107.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. MCKINLEY

AMENDMENT NO. 24: Page 9, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $21,000,000) (increased by $21,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. KILDEE

AMENDMENT NO. 25: Page 22, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. NUGENT

AMENDMENT NO. 26: Page 31, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000) (increased by $10,000,000)''.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. NUGENT

AMENDMENT NO. 27: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to plan for or carry out a furlough of a dual status military technician (as defined in section 10216 of title 10, United States Code).

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LOFGREN

AMENDMENT NO. 28: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC.____. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), none of the funds made available by this Act may be used by an officer or employee of the United States to query a collection of foreign intelligence information acquired under section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1881a) using an identifier of a United States person.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to queries for foreign intelligence information authorized under section 105, 304, 703, 704, or 705 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1805; 1842; 1881b; 1881c; 1881d), or title 18, United States Code, regardless of under what Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act authority it was collected.

(c) Except as provided for in subsection (d), none of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the National Security Agency or the Central Intelligence Agency to mandate or request that a person (as defined in section 1801(m) of title 50, United States Code) redesign its product or service to facilitate the electronic surveillance (as defined in section 1801(f) of title 50, United States Code) of any user of said product or service for said agencies.

(d) Subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to mandates or requests authorized under the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (47 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MR. SENSENBRENNER

AMENDMENT NO. 29: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC.____. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), none of the funds made available by this Act may be used by an officer or employee of the United States to query a collection of foreign intelligence information acquired under section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1881a) using an identifier of a United States person.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to queries for foreign intelligence information authorized under section 105, 304, 703, 704, or 705

of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1805; 1842; 1881b; 1881c; 1881d), or title 18, United States Code, regardless of under what Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act authority it was collected.

(c) Except as provided for in subsection (d), none of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the National Security Agency or the Central Intelligence Agency to mandate or request that a person (as defined in section 1801(m) of title 50, United States Code) redesign its product or service to facilitate the electronic surveillance (as defined in section 1801(f) of title 50, United States Code) of any user of said product or service for said agencies.

(d) Subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to mandates or requests authorized under the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (47 U.S.C. 1001et seq.).

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 30: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for deploying members of the Armed Forces on the ground in Iraq for purposes of engaging in combat operations except to protect the United States Embassy.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 31: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the purposes of conducting combat operations in Iraq.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 32: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the purpose of conducting combat operations in Afghanistan after December 31, 2014.

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 33: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be obligated or expended pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107–243; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note).

H.R. 4870

OFFERED BY: MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 34: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. __. None of the funds made available by this Act may be obligated or expended pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) after December 31, 2014.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, before the mountains were settled and the hills brought forth, Your power and majesty were known. Come to our lawmakers on Capitol Hill today. Come as light to enlighten their minds. Come as truth to teach them Your precepts. Come as Spirit to transform their hearts. Come as fire to purge from them the dross of transgression. Come as power to use them in Your service. May Your presence provide them with such patience, steadiness, and encouragement that they will be instruments for Your glory.

We pray in Your sacred 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 read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 18, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the appropriations bill led by Senator MIKULSKI.

We hope to begin the consideration of the bill today. We are now postcloture. We had to file cloture to get on the bill, as usual, and I think we have wasted the 30 hours. But that is where we are. So we hope to begin consideration of the bill today and work through the amendments. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Over the last several days the world has looked in horror as the terrorist organization ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, has swept across Iraq. As we speak they are sweeping even closer to Baghdad. They are murdering and they are pillaging. The group is now positioned outside Baghdad. It threatens to unleash its violent extremism on the capital of Iraq. ISIS poses a threat to Iraq and the surrounding region—and that is an understatement.

As President Obama and his advisors consider options to combat the threat, conservative Members of Congress—or I should say Republican Members of Congress and their pundit cheerleaders—are more interested in playing their favorite game—their favorite game: blame Obama. It doesn't matter what it is, it is his fault for putting people's lives in jeopardy—our military, special forces. The FBI captured someone who was the ringleader of the Libya Benghazi attack. They have criticized the President for bringing this man to justice.

Yesterday I listened with dismay when the Republican leader suggested and claimed that President Obama prematurely withdrew troops from Iraq. Think about that for a minute—5,500 dead Americans, tens of thousands wounded. Thousands and thousands have been wounded grievously.

I ask my friend and Republicans he leads, would they have preferred the United States stay in Iraq? Would they have preferred our soldiers have stayed in Iraq in harm's way? Is he—are they, the Republicans—willing to risk more American lives?

The Republican leader and other Republicans seem to have forgotten why President Obama initiated the troop drawdown in June of 2009. Why? The Iraqis wanted us out. The Iraqi government didn't want American forces to stay. Is the Republican leader and the Republicans he leads suggesting that American servicemembers should risk their lives even more, even as the Iraqi people were telling our military to leave?

What has been taking place in Iraq is a civil war. Do the Republicans and their leader believe that service men and women from Kentucky and the other 49 States across this great country should be inserted in the middle of their civil war? I don't think so. Fighting between factions in Iraq has cost thousands of Iraqi and American lives over the last decade, and it spawned a new breed of terrorism now. Yet the original architects of the war—of the invasion of Iraq—would have us believe that this is all President Obama's fault. Think about that.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Is there anything further from the truth?

I don't think so. This is an Iraqi civil war, and it is time for the Iraqis to resolve it themselves. Those who attack President Obama for bringing our troops home from Iraq are wrong and out of step with the American people. After a decade of war the American people have had enough. American families have had enough. I do not support in any way putting our men and women in the midst of this civil war in Iraq. It is not in the national security interests of our country. It is not worth the blood of American soldiers. It is not worth the monetary cost to the American taxpayer.

Rather than spending hundreds of billions of dollars—the war in Iraq is at about $1.5 trillion. Rather than spending more money doing that—fighting George W. Bush's war—how about we use that money to rebuild our Nation's infrastructure—roads, bridges, dams, water systems, sewer systems. We have a deficit in infrastructure of trillions of dollars.

How about doing a better job of educating our children? Maybe we could raise the minimum wage or give the long-term unemployed unemployment compensation or maybe we could help men and women draw the same amount of money for doing the same work or maybe we could fully fund the Veterans' Administration and ensure that our veterans—more than a million have come back from Iraq—are getting the care they need and deserve. Instead of addressing these issues at home, they are stuck in the same game. And it is not blame Obama; this is a new one—new yesterday or the day before. They are stuck listening to the very same neocons—obviously, that is where the Republicans are getting their information again—the same neocons who pushed us into the Iraq war in the first place, as they try to plunge our military in yet another foreign misadventure.

What is absurd is the fact that after all these years their suggestions haven't changed. They are in a time warp. Those who are the so-called experts are so eager to commit American soldiers to another war. Why is their advice so valuable?

Take President Bush's Paul Wolfowitz, who some say was the architect of the war. He has accused President Obama recently of not taking a strong position in Iraq. Wolfowitz took a strong position on Iraq's sectarian violence when he stated—listen to this bizarre statement—and this is a quote: ''There's been none of the record in Iraq of ethnic militias fighting one another.'' No, only for centuries. Look at what he said: There is none of the record in Iraq of militias fighting each other. That is Wolfowitz.

How about Bill Kristol—not the comedian. He is a writer. Bill Kristol is another one of the architects of the Iraq war who infamously predicted that American soldiers would be welcomed as liberators in Iraq. He said the war would last 2 months. Well, he was only wrong by about 9 years and 10 months. Kristol also claimed there was no evidence of discord among Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq. No? Only centuries of discord—centuries. Yet even in light of this incorrect assertion about Iraq, Kristol went on to say that we need to have more fighting in Iraq, beating the drum alongside all the neoconservative friends.

This morning there was an op-ed piece in the Wall Street Journal. Who would write that? How about Dick Cheney? Just to remind everyone, he is the former Vice President of the United States, who clearly was the chief architect of the war. If there is one thing this country does not need, it is that we should be taking advice from Dick Cheney on wars. Being on the wrong side of Dick Cheney is being on the right side of history.

To the architects of the Iraq war, who are now so eager to offer their expert analysis, I say thanks but no thanks. Unfortunately, we already tried it your way, and it was the biggest foreign policy blunder in the history of the country. Now people come back and say they can give me some examples that have been worse, and I listen. But for me—I know a little bit about history—this was a foreign policy blunder that would be hard to take away from being the number one foreign policy blunder in the history of the country.

President Obama and his military advisors are considering their options to address ISIS, but putting combat troops back in Iraq isn't one of them. I have no doubt that President Obama and America will meet this threat head-on without the advice of Wolfowitz, Cheney, Kristol—the architects of the invasion of Iraq. President Obama will meet the threat with the same smart foreign policy which has been the hallmark of his administration. The President will continue to identify and protect what is truly in our national security interests, using our full array of national security tools and standing up to terrorism where it threatens our national stability.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. For 5½ years the Obama administration and its allies in Congress have sought cover for their disastrous economic agenda with routine broadsides against an endless procession of straw men. It is hard to recall a single speech from a Democratic leader in Washington that didn't involve some spirited defense of a principle nobody ever challenged or some attack on a villain that doesn't exist. Instead of working with us on ideas that would actually do something to alleviate the concerns and anxieties of the middle class, these Democratic leaders have been blissfully content to play politics year after year after year.

Instead of delivering relief, they have delivered a steady diet of bad political theater day in and day out with the same ridiculous and predictable moral every single time: Democrats care. So vote for them and all will be well.

If you haven't noticed, all is not well for working families in this country. Four years after administration officials trumpeted ''recovery summer'' in June 2010, working men and women in this country are more anxious about work and family and the high cost of living—and that is to say nothing of the millions who can't find work at all.

The White House knows all of this, and that is why they are planning to hold a summit on the topic next week. They want everyone to think they are on the case, that they have a plan, but what they don't seem to realize is nobody believes them anymore and that folks have moved on.

The sad truth is most of the folks I have talked to are convinced government is working against them, not for them. I don't blame them. Whether it is frustration over an absurdly complicated Tax Code that drains people of their time and energy or just a general sense that government programs are rigged to help the well-off and well-connected, an increasing number of our constituents don't even think government is capable—let alone interested—in making their lives any easier these days. It is a shame because while the Obama administration has been playing politics, Republicans have been quietly assembling a lot of good ideas to help Americans deal with the stresses of a modern economy.

All of these ideas are consistent with our party's longstanding commitment to the principles of upward mobility, shared responsibility for the weak, and a strong but limited central government. Every single one of them deserves a vote.

For my part, I have pressed for legislation that addresses a variety of concerns of the people in my State. The Family Friendly and Workplace Flexibility Act, which I introduced with Senator AYOTTE, would enable working mothers to enter into a voluntary agreement with their employers whereby they could bank overtime compensation in the form of time off with their families. It would give families the choice, not just the employer.

Another bill I will introduce today will fix a flaw in the Tax Code so men or women who work at home are not prevented from claiming a deduction for a home office if that office includes a baby crib so they can take care of their child while working. The Working Parents Home Office Act would not only help parents save on childcare costs, it would help increase their earning potential by incentivizing them to create new income streams from home.

For parents worried about failing schools for their children, Senator KIRK introduced the Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Act—a bill that would provide more and better educational choices and some much needed compensation for teachers unions that too often put their own interests above those of our children.

Then there is the National Right to Work Act, a bill I cosponsored with Senator PAUL, which will eliminate a Federal rule that requires employees of certain companies to join a union or pay union dues whether they want to or not. Lifting this rule would vastly increase job opportunities in my State for women and men who want to work but can't find it, especially in the area of manufacturing.

The senior Senator from Maine has a proposal that would repeal a senseless provision in ObamaCare that is incentivizing employers all across the country to limit their employees to 30 hours a week.

The junior Senator from Nebraska has a bill—the Workplace Advancement Act—that would further equip women in the workplace with the knowledge and tools they need to fight employer discrimination.

The junior Senator from Florida has a bill—the RAISE Act—that would amend the National Labor Relations Act to allow employers to give merit-based pay increases to employees who are currently prohibited from receiving them because of outdated labor rules, and the junior Senator from Utah has a number of good proposals in a variety of areas.

These are just a few of the very good ideas that Members of my conference have put together to address the concerns and anxieties of working men and women whose wages have remained stubbornly flat during the Obama years, even as the cost of everything from college tuition to health care continues to soar. There are many others, including bills passed by the House that the Democratic majority in the Senate continues to block.

I am very proud of the work so many of my colleagues have done in putting all this legislation together. This morning some of us will present a number of these ideas at a press conference to draw attention to the urgent needs of our constituents and the shortsightedness of the majority leader in blocking our ideas to address them. Every one of these Republican ideas is meant to address some common concern of working families in our country, but none of them ever get a vote because it would not fit the story line Washington Democrats are peddling.

Apparently Senate Democrats would rather people didn't know Republicans have been working overtime behind the scenes to make their lives easier or paychecks bigger for working moms and recent college graduates. They would rather people didn't even know about these or dozens of other ideas we have that are aimed at making life a little easier for middle-class Americans, because if they did, they might realize there is an entirely different approach to the problems that have been plaguing this economy for years now and choose it over theirs.

What Republicans have been saying is that there are a number of things we can do right now to help folks deal with the pressures they face every day in this economy. We have been talking about these ideas for years, and we will be talking about them later today because 5½ years into the Obama economy Americans are eager for some fresh thinking. They are tired of the same old big government solutions that only make life harder and more complicated. They are tired of a Democratically controlled Senate that will not allow a debate or a vote on any of our better proposals.

Most of our constituents are thinking about long commutes, shrinking budgets, obscenely high tuition and health care bills. They think about how nice it would be to have some more flexibility at work. They are frustrated with a Tax Code that seems to punish their efforts to make a little bit more money for their family, and they are not getting anything from the White House but empty rhetoric and more of the same.

Today Republicans are reminding people there is another way. While Democrats have been plotting ways to hold on to their majority, we have been listening to the concerns and anxieties of our constituents and figuring out new, creative ways to address them.

It is long past time we had a real debate in this country, instead of the false choice Democrats constantly present to the public between their own failed ideas and some political villain that doesn't exist. It is time Americans saw the real choice before them, and once they do, I think the choice will be an easy one.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

MASTER SERGEANT AARON C. TORIAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning I wish to commemorate the life and service of a brave U.S. marine from Paducah, KY, MSgt Aaron C. Torian. This highly accomplished marine was tragically killed on February 15, 2014, from injuries sustained during combat training operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He was 36 years old.

For his service in uniform, Master Sergeant Torian received many medals, awards, and decorations—including the Purple Heart, the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon with Gold Star, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon with three stars, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal.

When he was 28, Master Sergeant Torian was named the Second Marine Division's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. It is a high honor. This distinction recognizes marines who excel in physical fitness, leadership skills, and tactical and technical proficiency. Receiving it made Aaron a role model for hundreds of NCOs in the Second Marine Division.

At the time he won the award, he simply said:

> I had to step up. I just figured that this is what I'd joined the Marine Corps to do, and so I always did it 100 percent.

''His work ethic was remarkable,'' says Aaron's mother Esta Smith. She said:

> He was a warrior as a marine. . . . He ultimately gave everything for his country and he never put himself anything but last. He gave everything because he loved his country.

Born in 1977, Aaron was a native of Paducah and grew up in the region before his family moved to Maryland. Aaron graduated from Thomas Stone High School in Waldorf, MD, where he was a star athlete in baseball and football. He was awarded a football scholarship to the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he graduated in 2001. Aaron then went on to earn a master's degree in instructional leadership at Tennessee Tech in 2003.

Aaron's time at Tennessee Tech was notable for a few other reasons besides his degree. He worked as a graduate assistant football coach, and he also met the woman who would become his wife, Jurley Pomeroy. Together the couple had three children.

''He was a great dad and always everything his children needed him to be,'' says his wife Jurley. ''When he got off the plane, being the best dad and best husband was his number-one priority.''

Aaron joined the Marine Corps in 2003 and promoted to Master Sergeant in September of 2013. In addition to being a wonderful father and husband and an exemplary marine, he was a faithful member of College Acres Baptist Church in Wilmington, NC. He was a community volunteer for his local college baseball grounds crew and also at the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church annual Greek festival.

Aaron's mother said:

> Aaron held on to the thing he believed in: faith, love, and freedom. . . . The conversation was always about how blessed he felt and how he thanked God for his beautiful family. Humility was the definition of Aaron.

Aaron's final deployment was his sixth in total. He served two tours in Iraq and four in Afghanistan. At the time of his final deployment, he was assigned to the Second Marine Special Operations Battalion, Marine Special Operations Regiment, U.S. Marine

Corps Forces Special Operations Command based out of Camp Lejeune, NC.

In late February of this year, Master Sergeant Torian was laid to rest with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. Just last month at the Memorial Day ceremonies in Aaron's native McCracken County, KY, county officials unveiled a commemorative street sign for MSgt Aaron C. Torian. For 1 year it will be displayed in front of the county courthouse and then placed permanently at a location of his family members' choosing.

''Thank God for the blessing and honor of allowing me to be your mom,'' says Aaron's mother Esta. ''Semper Fi—always faithful. My son, you are a true American hero.''

We are thinking of Aaron's family today as I share his story with my Senate colleagues, including his wife Jurley, his children Elijah, Laura Bella, and Avery, his mother and stepfather Esta and Jim Smith, his father Joe Torian, and many other beloved family members and friends.

I want the family of MSgt Aaron C. Torian to know that just as his life of dedication and service is recognized at the McCracken County Courthouse and in the hallowed shrine of Arlington, so too it is recognized in the Senate.

I know all of my colleagues join me in solemn reverence and gratitude for this brave young man's willingness to pledge everything for our country. We honor his supreme sacrifice on behalf of all Americans.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4660.

The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 428, H.R. 4660, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, we bring to the floor our fiscal year 2015 spending bill, but before the Republican leader leaves, as the Senator from Maryland, I too would like to join with great respect in condolences for Master Sergeant Torian's family. For all of us who are Senators who have constituent families where people have died, we have to be in this together.

These are times when we are not the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. We are not red or blue. We have to be red, white, and blue. From this side of the aisle to that side of the aisle, Godspeed to his family, and I thank the Senator for bringing this wonderful young man to the attention of the Senate. Those remarks were quite poignant and moving.

We have to stand by those families—the widow, the children who will need an education, and let's do it shoulder to shoulder.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Maryland for her additional comments about this wonderful young man.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today we bring to the floor on a bipartisan basis the annual appropriation bills of the Commerce-Justice-Science bill, the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and also the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration. I wish to thank all of the members of the Appropriations Committee for their tremendous work on these bills. First, I wish to say a special word about my vice chairman RICHARD SHELBY, who has done the hard work and the due diligence of helping move the entire process but also moving, in particular, our bill that funds the Commerce Department, Justice Department, and the science programs, such as our space program.

In terms of transportation, we have the able leadership of Senator MURRAY, with her vice chairman Senator COLLINS; and on agriculture, chairman MARK PRYOR and, again, his vice chairman ROY BLUNT.

This process is about moving America forward. This legislation we are putting before the Senate today puts America's middle-class families first, creating opportunity by creating jobs today.

With investments in physical infrastructure in the transportation and housing bill, we are building roads and bridges, repairing them, and updating transit lines and rail lines, so we literally and figuratively can keep America on the move. At the same time we are also meeting America's compelling human needs with our investment in home ownership as well as in housing and in urban and economic development.

We also create jobs tomorrow with investments in research and discovery. What we do in these important science agencies is drive innovation, leading to new products and new jobs. And guess what. Science saves lives.

When we look at Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations, we see that we fund the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—a lot of words with a lot of alphabet, synonyms and acronyms and so on.

At the end of the day, we fund the weather service. What does the weather service do? They predict weather. They predict immediate weather, such as is it going to rain this afternoon, and they predict weather emergencies, whether we are going to have a tornado.

Our hearts go out, again, on the other side of the aisle, to the people of Kansas, where they were hit by a double tornado—an unprecedented weather event. They are calling it the twin sisters, referring to what happened in Nebraska. They were the ugly sisters, but they were made less ugly because of the way the weather service could help alert the people in that community. That is what we fund.

We protect the American people by making sure we fight crime and terrorism by funding Federal law enforcement; by making sure our medicines and medical devices are safe by funding the Food and Drug Administration; and we meet compelling human needs, whether we are talking about affordable housing or affordable food.

While we do it, we are also reforming the agencies. Sure, people talk about appropriators as spenders, but we have a sense in this committee on both sides of the aisle—and I must say that Senator SHELBY has helped lead this—that we need to be a more frugal government. We need to get value for our dollar, demonstrating that we need to be able to save money or use money. We are going to spend very wisely.

It has been 3 years since we were able to bring an appropriations bill to the floor. I am not going to go into all the reasons why. ''Why'' doesn't get the job done. What we need to do is return to regular order. So what does that mean? Today we have these three bills pending. It means we want to enact all of our appropriations bills by October 1. We want to keep government operating not on autopilot, not on shutdown, nor on lavish spending. We have to reduce our Federal deficit, but we also have to reduce other deficits, particularly in the area of deficits related to innovation as well as the fact that our crime rates are on the rise in many cities and we need to reduce them. The American people today want to make sure we have a government they can count on. But they need to count on the fact that not only are we open and doing business but that when we are, we are smarter about it.

Vice Chairman SHELBY and I have been working on a bipartisan basis. We have been working on a bicameral basis. That means hands across the aisle, hands across the dome to restore regular order and civility in this process.

I look forward to moving this bill. I would say to my colleagues who are listening, many of my colleagues saw a few months ago the way Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, Senator TOM HARKIN, Senator RICHARD BURR, and I moved a bipartisan bill on the child care and development block grant. That had not been reauthorized since 1996, but we showed we could do it. We cleared 18 amendments. We actually had votes on amendments. We had an open process where amendments could be offered, discussed, debated, and at the end of the day voted on because we had a process that worked. As Senators

who worked together, we were able to pass that bill.

Senator SHELBY and I are providing leadership today to be able to do that. So we ask our colleagues to support us in coming to an agreement on the motion to proceed so that we can move ahead on this bill. We are making progress. There are several bills we have already moved out of the committee, and we will be moving more. But right now, today, we want to move these three bills and do it in a way that we are proud of what we do, we are proud of our process, we are proud of our conduct, and we are proud that we did it in the right way, with debate, discussion, and the votes that are required.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, this morning I wish to join my longtime colleague and friend, the senior Senator from Maryland and chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, in supporting the consideration of three bills before us today. All three bills received strong bipartisan support at the full Committee on Appropriations level.

I am pleased we have begun to reestablish regular order in the appropriations process. We started that last year, and we need to continue it, and we are.

After the uncertainty of sequestration and last year's disagreement over the Budget Control Act caps, this past December's Murray-Ryan budget deal provided the clarity needed to move us toward a regular budget and a regular appropriations process. The Murray-Ryan deal, which became the Bipartisan Budget Act, provided a compromise solution that ended the congressional deadlock over top-line discretionary spending.

While I appreciate that the chairwoman was operating in a tight fiscal environment, we did not ultimately agree everywhere on how to allocate funds within the new caps. All 14 Republican members of the Appropriations Committee wrote to the chair on May 21 of this year expressing our concerns over the use of budgetary mechanisms in subcommittee allocations. In that letter we also stated and we continue to express our opposition to increasing the level of total CHIMPs in the Federal discretionary budget beyond current levels.

While we continue to have concerns about how the majority reached total 302(b) allocations, the bills before us today for the most part reached their allocations by making tough choices; that is, shifting resources from lower to higher priority programs.

The allocations for the CJS, transportation and housing, and Agriculture bills conform to the intent of the Murray-Ryan deal. Both the Commerce-Justice-Science bill and the Agriculture bill actually decrease spending compared to the current enacted levels, while still being sufficient to meet the needs of the agencies. I am pleased to have worked with the chairwoman to ensure that the CJS bill successfully balanced the important and competing interests of law enforcement, scientific advancement, and U.S. competitiveness. The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill has a moderate increase of only 1.4 percent, after taking into account the scorekeeping difference between OMB and CBO on FHA loan receipts.

I believe passing these funding measures will give Congress a voice in government spending that it was constitutionally intended to have. Instead of ceding spending discretion to the executive branch or simply locking in place priorities that have become outdated—as a continuing resolution would do—this bill includes hundreds of limits on how taxpayer dollars can be spent. While I might not agree with every item in each bill, I think we have found solid middle ground upon which both sides of the aisle can comfortably stand.

Once again, I thank the chair, Senator MIKULSKI, for her willingness to work together, and I encourage my colleagues to come to the floor and offer their amendments so we can debate the merits of them.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I thank the vice chairman for his remarks. I think he makes excellent points. We had a tough top line to meet. The CBO score—these budgets speak words that people are trying to follow. The Congressional Budget Office actually says how much things will cost, and when they took a look at what our FHA program and certain mortgage rates would cost, they found out we overestimated revenue by $4 billion. That is a lot of money even by Washington standards. So we had to adjust accordingly, and it has not been easy.

I will tell my colleagues that we are now coming down to talk about where we really are now—what are the agencies we want to fund, why we want to fund them at the amount we do, and what problems they actually solve for the American people. The American people have a right to ask at the end of the day not ''did you spend money'' but ''what did you spend it on and what did we get for it? Are we a stronger country? Do we have a better economy? Do our children have a brighter future? Are we meeting compelling human needs?'' I think in these three bills the answer is yes.

When we look at Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations, we want to tell our colleagues what we have done. It really funds several different agencies, and it comes to a total of $51.2 billion. It is consistent with the CJS allocation, and it is $398 million less—I want to say this clearly. What we are doing in the Commerce-Justice-Science bill, we are spending less money than we did last year, but we think we are getting more value for the dollar. We are $398 million below what we spent last year, but at the same time we have kept our communities safe, we have promoted jobs, and we have promoted innovation.

We used our spending to guide Federal decisions from Federal law enforcement to space exploration. The CJS bill provides $28 billion for the Justice Department. This is $260 million more than 2014. We did this because we believe the Justice Department is an agency that people in local communities feel they need to be able to count on. It keeps America safe from crime and terrorism. It protects communities at the local level. It protects families against domestic violence and sexual predators. And the job of the Justice Department is to administer justice fairly.

This bill funds key law enforcement and prosecution agencies. What do we mean by that? Federal law enforcement is made up of the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the U.S. attorneys who actually prosecute the bad guys or the bad gals for everything from mortgage fraud, to cyber terrorism, to drug dealing and drug cartels, so they can keep us safe from all of this, protecting us against gangs, drug dealers. Why is it important? Federal law enforcement goes after gang activity, fraudsters trying to be more predatory.

What is the result in this funding? We have done a lot. In my own home State of Maryland, over the last year our Federal law enforcement has arrested 280 violent fugitives. Federal law enforcement brought down child pornographers and traffickers, bank robbers, and took a big whack at the heroin trafficking rings. I am really proud of them. I am proud of what they do in Maryland, and I am proud of what they do around the world.

Look at how our FBI, working with our special operations, brought to heel and brought into our custody one of the men who killed our Embassy personnel in Benghazi. Let's do a big hurrah for the FBI and special ops, but let's do our hurrah not only with words but putting the money in the Federal checkbook so they get to be able to continue to do the job of keeping America safe.

There are many other aspects of this bill that are important. This is why we look out for our State and local departments.

We have also put in an important investment in the Violence Against Women Act. We are spending $430 million to give grants to prevent and prosecute domestic violence and also to be able to deal and help with rape victims.

This bill puts money in the Federal checkbook to put more police officers on the beat. But I like the fact that we are actually protecting them with more bulletproof vests and being able to do other work.

This bill also addresses the backlog of sexual assaults, making sure we test no matter where they are. We have seen time and time again that evidence is gathered and that somehow or another it is in some box in some lab or some police department. Rape victims cannot be dually assaulted—one by the predator who attacked them and then by a lackluster prosecutorial system. If you gather the evidence, test it and use it to make sure we have the right predator. Prosecute the predator. See if they are a serial predator. Let's not doubly assault the victim by not only what happened to them on the street but also what happens to them in the criminal justice system.

So we are doing a lot. I feel very strongly about this, but I also feel very strongly about the need to create jobs. This bill provides $8.6 billion for the Department of Commerce, which helps them protect our patents, promotes trade and economic development. It helps our coastal economies with sustainable fisheries and healthy oceans. It exports American goods and services and supports more than 11 million jobs.

This bill does a lot by putting our Commercial Service officers—those who actually work in embassies—to work, with business to be able to help them. And we make sure they are not only in Europe but they are in Asia and Africa, where the new opportunities are.

Our dynamic Secretary of Commerce has focused on bringing foreign investments to the United States, and we have seen what they have meant to Maryland and what they have meant in Alabama and what they have meant in America.

We also, through the Commerce Department, help with our weather bureau. I am going to say more about it, but what I want to talk about right now is the National Science Foundation—one of our other main agencies—because it does the basic research in science, technology, and engineering.

Then there is NASA. I am going to say more about NASA later. I know we have others waiting to speak. For NASA, actually, we have done more than what the President wanted to do because we wanted to have a balanced space program. We have particularly emphasized human space flight, a reliable transportation system, and space science.

We have here where we are creating jobs, we are protecting people in their communities, and we are laying the groundwork for jobs of the future. There are many other issues I will talk about as the bill unfolds.

Senator SHELBY and I have worked very closely with Senator COBURN. Everybody knows Senator COBURN prides himself on being a watchdog on Federal spending. And you know what. He has been. I love some of his ideas; some give me a little pause. But we actually met. We actually met to see what we could do to be able to reform our government so we could get more value for the dollar. I am going to have a separate speech just on that so the American people know, when they say ''Watch what you spend, Barb,'' I really am doing it. So is Senator SHELBY. So are the members of our committee.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, again I rise today in support of, specifically, the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill, where I am the ranking member for the Republicans.

I appreciate the leadership, as I have said earlier, of the chair on this particular bill. We have worked together for many years. I chaired this subcommittee at one time, and I believe the bill being considered today reflects a strong bipartisan effort.

The competing interests of the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill always prove challenging, but I believe this bill strikes the appropriate balance.

The allocation for the CJS bill; that is, the Commerce-Justice-Science bill; is $51.2 billion, which is just below the fiscal year 2014 enacted level—yes, below. Working within this allocation, we sought to balance priorities, hold agencies accountable for their work, and demand efficiencies to stretch limited Federal dollars. Ultimately, these efforts ensure that Federal resources are spent efficiently and effectively.

The bill before us provides robust funding for the Department of Justice and law enforcement grant programs totaling $28 billion. It focuses attention and resources on some of the most difficult issues plaguing the Nation, including human trafficking, gang violence, child predation, a growing heroin crisis, threats to cyber security, and domestic terrorism.

Grant programs such as VALOR, Byrne, veterans courts, crime lab improvements, violence against women, and the COPS Program will receive funding to advance the important work being done at the State and local level in our Nation.

Moreover, the bill ensures that the Department maintains its focus on evidence-based programs and activities that have a proven record of effectiveness. This requirement emphasizes the committee's commitment to ensuring that Federal dollars are not just spent but are spent wisely.

The bill also includes $8.6 billion for the Department of Commerce, which is responsible for a range of issues, including weather forecasting, economic development, trade promotion, and fisheries conservation, among others.

The bill prioritizes resources to support NOAA's next generation of weather satellites that will enable the National Weather Service to continue to provide timely warnings for dangerous weather outbreaks that we all experience. To ensure that these weather satellites stay on budget and are delivered on time, the bill continues and expands stringent oversight requirements involving the inspector general. I believe our Nation cannot afford cost increases and schedule delays in these programs, and we expect that these oversight requirements will help avoid such a scenario. These satellites are essential to weather forecasters across the country. Without them, forecasters would be unable to provide important warnings about devastating storms, tornado outbreaks, and hurricanes, putting the safety of the American people at risk.

The bill also provides sufficient resources and direction to improve the management of the Nation's fisheries, including new approaches to manage red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico. These new approaches should provide a more equitable system for commercial fishermen and increase the number of fishing days for recreational anglers.

The bill also provides $18 billion for NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. In order to preserve the planned launch schedule in 2017 for the heavy lift launch vehicle, or SLS, the bill includes $1.7 billion for SLS rocket development, which is very crucial. It also maintains focus on these efforts by requiring NASA to follow its own internal guidance regarding joint confidence levels in future funding requests.

The bill also preserves important funding for ongoing activities of the International Space Station and other vital science research missions.

In addition, the bill safeguards the advancement of efforts underway to develop a U.S. vehicle to transport our astronauts to the space station. I believe those efforts must continue in a transparent way to ensure that the government is not saddled with mounting bills and no recourse.

I commend the chair for working with me to include language that requires certified cost and pricing data for the crew vehicle development contract. The goal of the language is not to up-end a fixed-price contract; rather, the goal is to make certain that the price NASA has agreed to pay for vehicle development matches actual development expenditures. NASA and its contractors have a history of cost overruns and schedule delays, whether the contract has a fixed price or not. With no other U.S.-based options to get to the space station, I believe we cannot find ourselves at the eleventh hour with an overburdened program that requires a bailout to succeed.

Once again, these measures are included to ensure that the government is not just spending taxpayer money, but that it is doing so in a cost-effective manner.

I reiterate my belief that the bill reflects the Senate's priorities and the needs of our Nation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I am pleased the Senate is now considering appropriations bills that fund important segments of our Federal Government. Those include the agencies responsible for scientific research, justice and nutrition programs, as well as the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development.

It has been some time since we have been able to fund the operations of the government through regular order, so it is encouraging that leaders on both sides of the aisle have been able to work together now to pursue that goal.

As we are here today considering these bills, I think it is helpful to remember where we were at this time last year. We were unable to start a budget conference. There was a government shutdown looming just a few months ahead, and businesses and families across the country had absolutely no certainty about whether their government could even keep the lights on.

Today we have more certainty thanks to the 2-year budget agreement, and building on the bipartisan work we all did to reach that agreement, the members of our committee, Senator COLLINS and I, have been able to put together a transportation and housing bill that makes responsible investments in infrastructure and community development and helps protect the most vulnerable among us.

Less than 2 weeks ago the Appropriations Committee approved the transportation and housing bill by a vote of 29 to 1—an extremely strong show of bipartisan support. This bill received such remarkable support because it helps families and communities, it gets workers back on the job, and it lays down a strong foundation for long-term and broad-based economic growth. It does this in a manner that is fiscally responsible, with growth of just a little more than 1 percent over the fiscal year 2014 level when looking at the program funding levels and factoring in FHA receipts, which do vary from year to year. After adjusting for inflation, the funding in this bill is actually 2.5 percent less than what it was in fiscal year 2008, as a result of the spending cuts we have now applied to discretionary appropriations.

This bill is timely. It makes critical, targeted investments to address concerns that have developed over the past year. In light of the dramatic growth in domestic energy production, it includes new resources to strengthen oversight of energy shipments by rail to keep our communities safe, including funding for additional rail safety and hazardous materials inspectors, training for first responders, more track inspections, research into the volatility of crude oil, and requirements for stronger tank car designs.

This bill includes $10 million to improve vehicle safety defects analysis and investigation, to help ensure we do not see a repeat of the Department of Transportation's failure to detect unsafe parts in General Motors and other manufacturers' vehicles.

This bill provides an additional 10,000 vouchers to move us closer to finally eliminating homelessness among our Nation's veterans. Due to these investments, we have been able to reduce the number of homeless vets on our Nation's streets by 24 percent since 2010. We are well on our way to eliminating it altogether.

Our bill includes direction to help communities implement the Violence Against Women Act in Federal housing programs as well as resources to improve coordination between housing programs and domestic violence survivors services. It makes it possible for HUD to support youth aging out of foster care, giving them more time to find stability and save money, thereby helping to reduce the elevated risk of homelessness facing those vulnerable young people.

This bill invests in our communities. It provides $3 billion for community development grants to State and local governments to help communities fund projects that meet their unique needs and support efforts to create jobs and $950 million for the HOME Program to help create affordable housing.

It ensures the FAA has sufficient funding to continue rebuilding its workforce after the disruptive effects of last year's sequestration. It fully funds the FAA's airport grants and research programs as well as the contract towers and Essential Air Service Program that so many of our rural communities depend on.

It includes sufficient funding for HUD's house and homeless assistance program, to preserve this vital piece of the Nation's safety net. More than half of the 5.4 million very low-income households that depend upon the housing assistance provided in this bill include someone elderly, disabled, or both. Without these programs, many of these individuals would be homeless.

The bill includes $90 million for Choice Neighborhoods. That is a program that helps tear down and rebuild distressed public housing as well as language making it possible for more local authorities to access private capital through the Rental Assistance Demonstration to renovate our aging housing stock. Notably, it includes reforms to make the programs in this bill more accountable and more effective. These include provisions to make it easier for public housing authorities to manage their capital and operations needs as well as resources for HUD to use the lessons it has learned since Hurricane Katrina to develop templates that communities can quickly implement to speed recovery effectively following a disaster.

The bill streamlines environmental reviews for Native American housing. It works to ensure accountability for property owners who do not maintain the quality of their HUD assisted housing. It increases accountability in the CDBG Program.

That is our bill. We do make tough choices. To fund increases for inflation and other uncontrollable costs, we made the very difficult choice of trimming funding for programs that Members care about, including the TIGER and HOME Program. In short, this bill is a good bill.

I note that most of the transportation funding, a total of just over $50 billion, comes from our highway trust fund. As we all know, right now, the highway trust fund is headed toward a crisis. The Department of Transportation expects the balances in this fund to reach critical levels later this summer. To deal with this uncertainty, States now are already bracing for the worst-case scenario. Some States such as Arkansas have already put their projects on hold. This crisis could also hurt workers in the construction industry who depend on jobs to repair our roads and bridges.

If Congress does not act, a shortfall in the highway trust fund will put at risk the funding we have included here in our THUD bill. We need immediate action to solve that crisis well before October when the new fiscal year starts. We need to work together to avoid that unnecessary and preventable crisis. In the meantime, I am glad we are turning to the transportation and housing bill and getting the work of the Appropriations Committee done.

Together with the Senator from Maine, SUSAN COLLINS, I encourage Members to bring their amendments to the floor and to work with us to make it even better. This bill enjoys broad bipartisan support, because it takes a practical approach to addressing the real needs we find in the transportation and housing sectors.

The investments it makes would improve safety, increase efficiency, and help our communities, and lay down a strong foundation for long-term and broad-based economic growth and help position our country and our economy to compete in winning the 21st century global economy. I urge our colleagues to support our bipartisan bill. I hope we can move rapidly to final passage.

Before I yield, I do want to thank Chairman MIKULSKI for her support and leadership. As the former chair of the VA HUD subcommittee, she appreciates the importance of the investments in our bill. This bill includes priorities of Members on both sides of the aisle, reflecting the Appropriations Committee's bipartisan tradition.

I thank our entire committee for their work. I especially want to take a moment to express my thanks to my ranking member Senator COLLINS and her staff for all of their hard work and cooperation throughout this process. I am proud that together we have written a bill that works for families and communities. Investing in families and communities and long-term economic growth should not be a partisan issue. I think the bipartisan work that went into this bill and the strong support it received in committee proves it does not have to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I am told the Senator from Washington State has a very brief statement she would like to make. I ask unanimous consent that she be allowed up to 3 minutes to make her statement before I reclaim the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Maine. I will explain to her later how Maine continues to play a very interesting role in such an important issue.

(The further remarks of Ms. CANTWELL are printed in today's RECORD under ''Morning Business.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I am pleased to join with Chairman MURRAY as we hope to begin floor consideration of the bipartisan fiscal year 2015 appropriations bill for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies.

As usual, it has been a great pleasure to work with Chairman MURRAY. She is extremely fair-minded and bipartisan in the approach she has taken to this bill. I also thank her staff for working closely with my staff as we sought to craft a bill that I believe deserves the support of all of our colleagues.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI and Vice Chairman SHELBY for their extraordinary leadership in advancing those three appropriations bills through what at times is turning out to be a daunting process. It is my hope and expectation that we can give Members of this body the opportunity to debate all three of these bills, to offer amendments, and ultimately to pass them, and that we have an open and transparent process.

I would encourage cooperation on both sides of the aisle. It is in the best interests of this country for us to do our work in the regular order, in the normal process, and to pass these bills, and then to hold conferences with the House to iron out any differences.

Last week the House did approve its own version of the THUD appropriations bill. This is an important step in the process which will eventually allow the two Chambers to meet in conference and produce a final bill to send to the President for his signature. I commend the leaders of the Appropriations Committee and also the floor leaders for making sure we have the time available to bring these bills to the floor.

There is no reason we cannot pass each one of the appropriations bills, have a conference with the House, and get them to the President before the start of the fiscal year so we can avoid gigantic omnibus bills that are a poor way to legislate or, even worse, continuing resolutions that lock into law increased costs and priorities that may no longer reflect today's needs.

The THUD bill before us today is essentially a jobs bill. It provides $54.4 billion in responsible investments in transportation and housing programs, and it includes input from Members on both sides of the aisle. Every Senator has unmet transportation and housing needs in his or her State, from crumbling roads and unsafe bridges to a growing population of vulnerable low-income families, seniors, and disabled individuals in need of housing assistance.

Chairman MURRAY and I worked very hard to accommodate the input from many Members. This bill we bring before you received overwhelming support in the full Appropriations Committee. In fact, as Chairman MURRAY mentioned, the vote was 29 to 1 to report this bill to the full Senate. It is essential to acknowledge that this year's THUD bill is directly affected by nearly a $3 billion reduction in Federal Housing Authority receipts for fiscal year 2015. As a result, we were faced with making very difficult decisions to ensure that the Federal investments in this bill were prioritized to meet the most critical needs.

One of the most pressing issues this bill addresses has not received a great deal of attention, so I want to spend a moment on it; that is, the safe transportation of crude oil and other hazardous materials by rail. I know the Presiding Officer is very familiar with this issue. I am pleased to say our transportation bill strengthens three components to help ensure the safe transportation of crude oil and other hazardous materials. It focuses on prevention, mitigation, and response. If you talk to any emergency responder, they will tell you those are the three critical components.

We do so without adopting the President's poorly conceived proposal, which would have created yet another level of bureaucracy in the Secretary's office. Instead, we chose what I believe to be a wiser course. We provided funding directly to the agencies to support additional rail inspectors, advance research efforts, and to establish cooperative training programs.

I know firsthand how horrific these disasters can be, because last year there was a terrible derailment in Lac-Megantic, Quebec, 30 miles from the border of Maine, that cost 47 lives and essentially destroyed this picturesque village. I was very proud that 30 Maine firefighters responded to the call for help from their Canadian counterparts.

Senator MURRAY and I held an oversight hearing to look at rail safety, and the fire chief from Rangeley, ME, Tim Pellerin, testified before our committee at our oversight hearing. He provided gripping testimony about this extraordinarily dangerous experience, as well as thoughtful recommendations about what should be done. I want to tell the chief that we listened to him, and a lot of our recommendations in the bill—particularly with regard to training—reflect the advice he gave us as a first responder on that very dangerous scene.

Turning to another issue, this bill provides $550 million for the TIGER Program, an effective initiative that helps advance transportation infrastructure projects. We have seen firsthand how TIGER projects create good jobs and support economic growth in our home States.

Turning now to air travel, the aviation investments included in our bill will continue to modernize our Nation's air traffic system. These investments are creating safer skies and a more efficient air space to move the flying public.

In addition to transportation programs, our bill provides sufficient but not generous funding to keep pace with the rising cost of housing vulnerable families. More than 4 million families will continue to receive critical rental assistance for their housing. Without it, many of these families would otherwise become homeless.

Chairman MURRAY and I continue to share a strong commitment—indeed, a passion—to reducing homelessness in this country. For that reason we have included more than $2 billion for homeless assistance grants. Since 2010 we have reduced overall chronic homelessness by 16 percent and veterans homelessness by 24 percent.

These programs are working, and we have the data to prove it. That is why our bill builds on these successes and provides an additional 10,000 HUD-VASH vouchers to serve our Nation's veterans.

We have an obligation to our Nation's veterans. That has been very much on our minds recently, and we can point with pride to the reduction by 24 percent in homelessness among veterans, but we want to complete the job. We don't want any veteran to be homeless, and we are making progress through this well-conceived program.

While our bill helps families in need and our Nation's veterans, it also invests in our communities. Boosting local economies is critical to job creation and helping families obtain financial security. Our legislation supports these local development efforts by providing more than $3 billion for Community Development Block Grants.

I am sure the Presiding Officer has had the experience, as most Members have, of talking to State and local officials about the Community Development Block Grant Program. It is an extremely popular program with States and communities because it allows them to tailor the Federal funds to support locally driven economic and job-creation projects. It isn't Washington telling them how this money should be spent but, rather, providing the flexibility so that they can meet local economic development needs and help to create new jobs.

The bill before us does not solve all of the problems in either the Department of Transportation or in the Department of Housing and Urban Development; we don't have the money to do that.

Most notably, the administration's budget does not come up with a realistic way to address the urgent need to prevent the highway trust fund from becoming insolvent in August.

There should be no doubt in the mind of any Member of this body, if the administration and Congress do not take action before the August recess, State departments of transportation will not be reimbursed for work that has already been completed and new projects will likely grind to a halt and jobs, good construction jobs, will be lost.

The administration must present an achievable plan to avoid this disruption, these lost jobs, these stalled transportation projects, and Congress must work in good faith to secure passage.

Transportation is the lifeline of our economy, supporting millions of jobs and moving people and products. When coupled with the housing and economic development projects, the fiscal year 2015 transportation and housing appropriations bill will create jobs now when they are needed most and will establish the foundation for future growth.

Just as important to our economic future, however, is reining in excessive Federal spending and getting our national debt under control, which must be a priority governmentwide.

We have met the budget allocations that have been provided to us. In setting priorities for fiscal year 2015, I believe our T-HUD bill strikes the right balance between thoughtful investment and the necessary fiscal restraint.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this legislation to the Members of this Chamber. As we continue the debate on these bills, I urge my colleagues to consider how important it is that we complete our work on time, and I hope they will support the efforts of the Appropriations Committee.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I yield to the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

NFL FOOTBALL

Mr. REID. I appreciate the chairman of the Appropriations Committee being so kind.

There are 27 tribes in the State of Nevada, Native Americans. The issue regarding the name Redskins is very important to every one of those tribes. Every time they hear this name, it is a sad reminder of a long tradition of racism and bigotry.

A month or so ago, Daniel Snyder, the owner of the team, had some people come to Nevada and agree to buy one of the Indian tribes a car if they would say nice things about the Redskins. They refused.

This is extremely important to Native Americans all over the country, that they no longer use this name. It is racist.

Daniel Snyder says it is about tradition. I ask: What tradition? The tradition of racism, that is all this name leaves in its wake.

The writing is on the wall. The writing is on the wall in giant blinking neon lights. This name will change and justice will be done for the tribes in Nevada and across the Nation who care so deeply about this issue.

The Patent and Trademark Office today took away all the trademarks. The Redskins no longer have trademarks. They are gone.

So as I understand the law, if the Presiding Officer wants to use the name Redskins and sell them shirts, she can do that. There is no trademark anymore for the Redskins.

Daniel Snyder may be the last person in the world to realize this, but it is only a matter of time before he is forced to do what is right and change the name.

The leader on this issue is the junior Senator from the State of Washington. Senator CANTWELL has been tireless in showing the American people how unfair it is for the Redskins' name to be used as it is. I think she is one of the leading causes that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office said it is no longer—no longer—a trademark. They did that this morning.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I know Senator COLLINS and Senator MURRAY are leaving to go to the DOD to meet with Secretary Hagel, and we both look forward to their return this afternoon, but I want to acknowledge the great role they played in putting together the appropriations and transportation funding for the entire United States of America, as well as the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

We are going to talk more about transportation because it literally keeps America rolling, whether it is the kinds of problems we solved with the issues around safety, congestion—they are absolutely crucial. But also what they talked about in their bill is housing and urban development and how—it is also the famous HUD bill—it does not only do urban development.

I know the Presiding Officer is from the State of North Dakota, whose terrain and challenges are very different than my State, a coastal State. But the Presiding Officer would be interested to know—because she has been hit by some bad weather—that when Hurricane Sandy hit, my State was hit by two things: a hurricane—a hurricane on my Eastern Shore, in which a whole town was underwater and literally people had to be rescued by Zodiacs, by boats, and so on.

Then out in western Maryland, our mountain counties, people were hit by a blizzard. It was so bad that regular snowplows, local government, and the private sector weren't working. The Governor had to bring in the National Guard—and God bless our State troopers and first responders. They were bringing out senior citizens on snowmobiles and things strapped to their chests to get them to safety because the free zone was there.

I tell that poignant story because while we looked to FEMA to rescue, it was really the Community Development Block Grant money that helped local communities come back. FEMA was there for readiness, so we were ready to respond. It was ready to respond. But the big job of rehabilitation always comes through CDBG. I am going to talk about it because it is a lot of letters—one more agency with a lot of letters—but it is also a big impact. What we need to be able to focus on is this is Federal spending with local decisionmaking. It is money that comes to local communities to eliminate blight and to create jobs. Blight can come from a natural disaster or communities that are aging with that kind of impact.

We hope we have support for the bill, but, gee, they did a good job and they did it with diligence, civility, collegiality and common sense, as is characteristic.

I would point out we have tried to use common sense too. Working with Senator SHELBY, as I have said, I am going to emphasize the word ''frugality.'' How do we make sure we get value for the taxpayers' dollar.

It is something in which I strongly believe. My colleague has been a Federal watchdog. He, like I, believes in the funding of these agencies. These watchdog agencies are absolutely crucial.

The Appropriations Committee, under my chairmanship but with the strong concurrence of the vice chairman, believes in the inspectors general.

Congress can hold an investigation and we can pound our chests and put glasses on our noses and ask tough questions, but we need the kind of truly drilling down to know what agencies are doing and are they making sure we avoid boondoggles, waste, stupidity, and at the same time terrible cost overruns.

Thanks to working on a bipartisan basis, we have insisted that inspectors general be at every hearing. This has been a new innovation of the leadership of Senator SHELBY and me. We want the inspectors general to be part of our official record so we know the top 10 issues they brought to our attention to stand sentry, and we put money in the Federal checkbook to fund them.

We funded the Commerce Department IG at $30.6 million, $600 million above 2014 for Justice to make sure grant programs were well administered for NASA, to avoid techno-boondoggles, and for the NSF, so they too keep an eye on it.

We are going to talk more about the problems they identified and the problems we solved, but I note on the floor

Senator PRYOR from Arkansas, who has chaired the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, an important subcommittee that is part of our overall bill today.

I yield the floor for Senator PRYOR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I rise in support of the fiscal year 2015 Agriculture appropriations bill. I know Senator BLUNT, the ranking member, is on his way over. We were just in another subcommittee hearing and we were asking questions.

Before I say anything else, I thank Senator BLUNT because he has been a great partner to work with. He has been outstanding. He knows this stuff. He works hard. He knows how to work the system. He has been great. He is one of those guys we can trust, and he is very bipartisan. If we had more folks like Senator BLUNT around here, we would get a lot more done. He is doing great work for the country by doing what he is doing.

This is a commonsense and bipartisan bill. It did pass unanimously coming out of the full Appropriations Committee last month, and I am confident my colleagues will support it. When they have a chance to see it, they will like it. I heartily encourage everyone to take a good look at it and support it for final passage.

Agriculture, as we know very well, is something America does better than anybody else in the world. We are the envy of the world when it comes to agriculture. We do it right. We are the gold standard. We are what every other nation in the world wants to be. It is of course rural America's No. 1 industry. So when we talk about agriculture and rural America, it is doing something we can be extremely proud of in this body and in this country because they do it better than anybody else.

I learned a lesson 1 or 2 years ago when Senator STABENOW took over as chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. She told me everybody thinks of Michigan and they think of automobile manufacturing—heavy industry—as the No. 1 industry, and it is in Michigan, but agriculture is No. 2.

If we were to go around a map of the United States, that is what we would see pretty much in almost every State. Agriculture is either the No. 1 industry or No. 2. In a few cases it is the No. 3 industry. I could go around to all 50 States, but in Arkansas, as an example, agriculture equals a full 25 percent of our State's economy. So 25 percent of our economy is agriculture or agra related.

Again, if we look around the country, we will see numbers similar to that in many States. It contributes $17 billion in economic activity to Arkansas. It also supports thousands and thousands of jobs—in fact, about one in six jobs. We could put up a chart similar to this for any State in the Union. The numbers may change from State to State, but they will be generally the same.

The Agriculture appropriations bill we are talking about builds on the strengths of our agricultural industry. It invests in the Farm Service Agency. It prohibits the closure of FSA offices, which provide vital services to our farmers and ranchers, and it provides funding for farm ownership loans. It also invests in the Agricultural Research Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service so America can continue to innovate and make our agricultural products more efficiently.

This is another area America truly leads the world in, agricultural innovation. Agriculture is actually very science-based and very innovative. It doesn't always get credit for being high-tech, but it actually is. So much of that basic research and the things that make a difference out in the field happen in this legislation, but that is not all the bill does. It also makes smart investments to help improve job opportunities and quality of life for families in rural America.

One thing we don't want to see is the old ''Tale of Two Americas,'' where urban and suburban get all the money, get the latest and the greatest and the best and the cutting edge and rural America is left behind. That can happen and it does happen in Washington, unfortunately, quite a bit—but not in this bill. This bill's primary emphasis is on rural America. It is one of the few bills we talk about in any given Congress that does focus on rural America. It makes smart investments there.

It maintains funding for the Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal Program to help many of our very small communities obtain clean water and sanitary waste disposal systems. Here again, just because one lives in smalltown America doesn't mean they shouldn't have clean water. Everybody should have clean water. So this bill makes sure that happens.

It increases funding for the Food and Drug Administration to ensure that our food and our drug supply remains the safest and the most reliable in the world. There again FDA is in this bill. Everybody in the world wants to be like FDA. Everybody wants the integrity we have in our system for our food and our drugs. We fund FDA here.

It provides funding for the Food Safety and Inspection Service to keep our food supply safe, and it sustains the school meals equipment grants so our schools can continue to provide healthy meals for kids.

We also included in this legislation money for disaster relief. Some people have asked me: Why? Why should we do that? I have a photograph recently taken in Arkansas. This is just one example of the devastating effects of a tornado.

Here we look at what used to be someone's home. We have to remember these people worked all their lives to have this house, and in about 45 seconds this is what was left of it. It may be hard to see on the television, but right here is a motorcycle, a pickup truck, a power line lying in the yard, a few appliances, a few people hugging, but one thing we see is their pride in America, where they put up their flag. Even in the most adverse circumstances they came together and pulled together to make that happen.

So we put disaster money into this legislation because our country needs disaster money. We need to make sure disasters are fully funded and we have those resources when our neighbors need it the most.

In this storm lives were lost, homes were completely wiped out, and many communities were left in ruins. Arkansas is not unique. I wish I could say this didn't happen, but it does happen periodically around the country. This bill provides funding to help States respond when natural disaster strikes.

My view is that supporting this legislation is a no-brainer. It is bipartisan. It is a good, commonsense, solid piece of legislation. It sustains our agricultural producers, our communities and our families, and it strengthens our economy and secures the future of our Nation.

Before I turn it over to my colleague from Missouri—and I know we are all anxious to hear what he says—there has been a question, as I have talked to many of my colleagues both on the Democratic and the Republican side, about whether we will allow amendments. The answer is: Absolutely, yes; we would like to see amendments.

I cannot speak for everyone in the Chamber, but from the members of the Appropriations Committee who are involved in this legislation, including the chairwoman and the ranking member, yes, we want to talk to Senators about their amendments. It is a little bit like the Statue of Liberty: ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.'' We want to see those amendments. We want to talk about them.

We are hoping we will be able to put together managers' packages. We are hoping we will be able to find common ground and make this bill better as it goes through the process. Certainly we don't want a lot of funny business on that. We want real amendments, good amendments, amendments that are important to moving this forward.

I know many of my colleagues have been frustrated, but we would like to talk to as many Members as possible about their amendments. I will be on the floor on and off most of the day, either on the floor or near the floor all day. So if anyone's office wants to talk to me about amendments or any Member wants to talk about amendments, I will be glad to do that.

I yield the floor for my colleague from Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I am pleased to join the Senator from Arkansas in introducing this bill. He has been a great person to work with.

I also fully associate myself with his comments about our colleagues' ability to amend these bills. Senator MIKULSKI and Senator SHELBY have been real advocates for us getting back to the process the way it essentially worked in the country for a couple hundred years. We got out of the habit of bringing these bills to the floor, letting Members come to the floor and offer better ways to spend this money or if they want to propose not to spend it at all, that is one of the proposals they can make.

The Senator from Arkansas and I have worked to make the tough choices, but seldom is a bill so perfect that it can't be improved, and there is nothing wrong with defending the decisions we have made.

I believe one of the real losses for the country and the Senate of these bills not coming to the floor in recent years is that Members of the Senate haven't had to hear the debate. Members who bring a bill to the floor haven't had to defend the bill. Before we know it, if we don't have to defend what we are for, we have a hard time remembering why we are for what we are for.

This process makes sense if we do it the right way. Certainly, Senator PRYOR has wanted to approach this in that way, and maybe, more importantly, from both our points of view, Senator MIKULSKI and Senator SHELBY have been advocating that we bring these bills to the floor and we debate these priorities.

I am particularly pleased to join with Senator PRYOR in introducing this bill and bringing this bill to the floor, the fiscal year 2015 Agriculture appropriations bill, for agriculture, for rural development, for the Food and Drug Administration, and the things that relate to those agencies. The Senator made a good point already about how important this industry is. In Missouri as in Arkansas, agriculture is the No. 1 industry. In my State it is responsible for 16 percent of the State's workforce. Frankly, as world food needs develop, I believe the percentage of our workforce that will have jobs because of agriculture—growing, producing, and processing it, figuring out how to get it to markets around the world—will be an even higher percentage in the future. I think agriculture is the No. 1 industry in most States. If it is not the No. 1 industry, it is right there at the top.

For 150 years now the Federal Government, through what would become the Department of Agriculture after a bill President Lincoln signed in 1862, has been doing many of the things we want to continue to do in this bill. This is not a newfound obligation on the part of the Federal Government. This is not something for which the Federal Government just decided it needed to have some responsibility. This is something that 150 years ago the Federal Government said: You know, we don't need to have—as the land grant universities were founded, the Federal Government said: We need to help these universities manage the research they are doing so that what they are doing can be shared throughout our country, so it is not needlessly duplicated, so it is properly not only allocated but funded.

So the activities in this bill include one of my priorities, which is agricultural research. It includes conservation activities, housing and business loans for rural communities, domestic and international nutrition programs, and food and drug safety. Certainly all of those have a top priority on the list of different individual Members of the Senate. It would be hard to find a Senator who didn't have near the top of their priority list one of the things this bill does.

The Senator from Arkansas and I have made difficult decisions in drafting this bill. Aside from the disaster recovery efforts, the bill is $90 million below last year's bill. I think it represents a responsible approach to the funding of these priorities but at the same time tightening our belts as we work to live within our means.

We have prioritized programs that protect public health and maintain the strength of our Nation's agricultural economy. Agriculture is one of the few sectors in our economy that consistently enjoy a trade surplus. Last year was our strongest export year in ag products in the history of the country. Recent information from the Department of Agriculture indicates that 2014 is going to set a new record. We need to continue to work through the U.S. Department of Agriculture to open new markets, and we are doing that—particularly markets in Asia and Europe that need to be more open to our products. Expanding agricultural exports is vital. Every $1 billion in agricultural exports supports an estimated 8,000 American jobs.

If we need to have a domestic priority in the Congress today, it is more private sector jobs. One way to do that is to continue to do what we are doing in this bill and to do it even better.

Opening export markets is only one piece of the puzzle that maintains our agricultural economy. The American farmer is the best in the world at producing products that are desired worldwide in the global marketplace. Smart investment in ag research has helped us get to that point. We have products with a quality, with a market sensitivity, and with a health and nutrition value that people all over the world want.

This bill places significant emphasis on maintaining research at our land grant universities and our non-land grant university systems that have a commitment to agriculture and funding competitive research beyond that in things such as the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.

These programs are critical to our increased production. Every dollar spent in agricultural research results in around a $20 return to the U.S. economy. By the way, that comes year after year. Once you create that notch and work to try to improve it, it continues to come.

This bill will also provide our rural communities with even more ability to compete both here and abroad.

In a bill where many items didn't get the funding that was requested, we fully funded the Food and Drug Administration request. It is important to the chairman, important to our committee, and important as we look at the health and safety of the products for which the Food and Drug Administration is responsible.

Again, I thank the Senator from Arkansas for his leadership. I thank our chairman and ranking member of the full committee for working so hard to see these bills debated on the floor. I look forward to working with our colleagues as they come up with ways to improve this bill. It is one of the three bills that are on the floor this week.

I hope we can return to a day very quickly where all the appropriations bills are on the floor in as small a group as possible and where they are all open to amendment. We have to get back into the practice of remembering why we are for what we are for and why we have decided to propose that the hard-earned dollars of American families should be spent for these things as opposed to not spending them all or spending them on something else. It is a process that will work if the Senate shares the commitment of the chairman and Senator SHELBY and I think everybody on the Appropriations Committee to try to get back into the business of doing this business publicly and openly and in the right way.

Madam President, I will yield for Senator PRYOR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. I have a few more comments after listening to my colleague from Missouri. I did want to mention a few.

The first point is on exports. We all know we have a bad trade deficit. We all know that. But it would be horrendous if it were not for agriculture. Agriculture is really a huge net plus for us when it comes to exporters. You may ask yourself why that is. It is because we raise the safest, highest quality food in the world, and other people want it. There is no question that when that food shows up on shelves in foreign countries, if this says ''Made in the USA,'' sometimes they can charge a premium because they know the USDA seal of approval is of the highest quality you can find anywhere in the world. So exports are very important.

We heard the President—not just this President but the previous President as well—talk about exports and how many jobs exports create. We need to get back in the exportation business, and agriculture is a great way to do that.

Senator BLUNT alluded to research. There are some tremendous numbers in research. For every dollar of research, you get a $20 return to the U.S. economy. That is a no-brainer. That is

smart policy. That is the right thing to do. It is good for the economy.

But also we both had an experience a few weeks ago where Bill Gates, who founded Microsoft, came in and talked to us about American agricultural research and how important it is in feeding the world. One aspect that struck me is here is a man—Bill Gates—who has been an economic revolutionary. He has changed the world with Microsoft and the digital revolution and the high-tech and all the efforts in which he has been involved. He has been at the cutting edge of so much of that change we have seen in our economy and the world's economy in the last 20-, 30-plus years. It is phenomenal. But here he is in the autumn of his life, and what does he come back to? Agriculture—something that is so basic that we take for granted, but because he has seen the work in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, he has seen the work around the world, he has seen the abject poverty, and he has seen the starvation, he knows that when they get their hands on American products such as seed, fertilizer—all the things we take for granted—that would be a life-changer for those people around the world.

I think it was Senator BLUNT who said his experience is that when people have been eating bad food all their lives, once they get a chance to eat good food, they don't want to go back to bad food. That is what Bill Gates is talking about, and that is where ag research comes in. That is how this piece of the puzzle fits.

There is another point I want to make about rural America. Generally in this legislation we have provisions for rural water, rural housing, rural broadband, rural electricity. Again, we have to understand the economics of that. If you wanted to add broadband somewhere, if you wanted to do it, say, in suburban Washington, DC, obviously you have in many cases relatively high income levels and you have population density. You have what makes it economically feasible. But if you are out in rural America, you want those people to have access to broadband, but you get so many fewer customers per mile. That is why we help. This is sort of the premise of the old Universal Service Fund we have had for a long time in telephone to help expand that network to every single home in America. Now, of course, we have a lot of wireless technologies and whatnot. So we want to make that readily available to rural America.

The last bit of substance I wanted to add to what Senator BLUNT mentioned is the funding for the Food and Drug Administration. I am not sure there is an agency that is responsible for more innovation than the FDA. We need to keep the FDA stable. We need to keep them well funded. They need to be able to approve drugs and do the testing they need to do.

One of the new frontiers they are dealing with is nanotechnology. We are seeing nano products enter the marketplace all over this economy, and there has been very little testing on that for human safety. So the FDA is doing that. We need to continue to fund them so they can do the job. We don't want them to be an obstacle to innovation; we want them to be a partner in innovation. Let these companies that come in and have these great products, whatever they are—cosmetics, food, whatever—let them innovate and do that and again create American jobs and enhance the marketplace. But in order for the FDA to do that, we need to fund them.

Senator BLUNT is right. We have the best system of government in the world, bar none. And the U.S. Senate always has its moments where it gets a few rough edges. This is democracy at its finest. People don't always agree. They fuss and fight and things get balled up here and there. But our system works, and it works great if we let it work.

I think what the chairwoman and the ranking member of the full committee are saying is: We want the process to work. We want it to work. We want to talk about amendments. We want to have amendments. We want to have votes. We want to get back to regular order, whatever that means in the Senate. But most of us know what that means. It means getting back to where Senators can participate in the process, but it is also done in good will and good faith.

With that, Madam President, I would yield the floor, but I would encourage my colleagues to look closely at and support this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I note that the distinguished Senator from Arizona is on the floor, and we want to be sure he has an opportunity to speak.

I do have a housekeeping matter to take care of and just a few words—about three sentences—about ag, but I want the Senator from Arizona to be heard.

Madam President, I wish to comment on the Agriculture bill, but I will keep that for later on in the day. I will be on the floor along with Senator SHELBY trying to move this bill in a way that we could complete the motion to proceed and that we could move to amendments.

Right now, I wish to compliment both the Senator from Arkansas and the Senator from Missouri, Senators PRYOR and BLUNT, for the excellent way they have moved the agriculture FDA bill. They have worked on a bipartisan basis. They have met compelling human needs—in other words, feed America first; see how we can feed others in need around the world; look out for everyone from the family farm to also food safety because now so much of our food is also imported. At the same time, they have supported the Food and Drug Administration. That is an agency located in Maryland that is responsible for oversight of the food supply but also our pharmaceuticals, biotech, and medical devices.

My colleagues have spoken eloquently about exports, particularly with food. I will speak later today about the exports of pharmaceuticals, biotech, and medical devices because there are countries around the world that want to look out for their own people, but they don't have an FDA. So when we have products—life science products—that save lives or improve lives and they have been stamped by the FDA as safe and effective, then countries know they can buy them with confidence. This means those areas of endeavor are not only good for jobs in this country, great for improving the lives of people in our country, but they are also a major source of the new American export economy.

I think they did a great job, and I will say more about it. But right now, unless Senator SHELBY has something to say, we can go to our Senate colleague from Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as if in morning business, and I wish to enter into a colloquy with the Senator from South Carolina when he arrives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I come to the floor this morning with my colleague, the Senator from South Carolina, to put to rest once and for all the claim we hear so often today: President Obama wanted to leave a residual force of U.S. troops in Iraq after 2011. He tried his hardest to do so, but Iraqi leaders prevented that from happening because they demanded that Iraq's parliament approve legislation to grant privileges and immunities for U.S. troops that would remain in the country.

This is a very important item and aspect of the debate that is now going on, and it is a claim that was made in growing desperation these days as it becomes increasingly clear for all to see that the President's mishandling of Iraq for the past 5 years and his consistent inaction on Syria has now brought us to the verge of disaster.

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria—a more ambitious, more violent, and more radical offshoot of Al Qaeda—has now taken over a swath of territory in Iraq and Syria that is the size of the State of Indiana. It is the largest terrorist safe haven in history. The ISIS's offensive is now reigniting sectarian conflict in Iraq and threatening to erase the gains that nearly 4,500 brave young Americans gave their lives to secure and was largely secured when the President took office in January in 2009. In January 2009 the surge had succeeded. Iraq was not violent. The surge had succeeded. We had won the war. In

the words of General Keane: We won the war and lost the peace. And that is a fact.

The administration and its defenders are now scrambling to pin the blame for this catastrophic failure on anyone but themselves. They are trying to blame the Bush administration, and they are trying to blame people like myself and the Senator from South Carolina for voting to authorize the war while conveniently forgetting that Vice President BIDEN, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, his predecessor, Secretary Clinton, and many other Democrats still serving in this body voted for the war in Iraq as well.

They also seem to have forgotten that the Senator from South Carolina and I began criticizing the Bush administration as early as 2003 for their mishandling of the war and calling for a change in strategy. In fact, in 2006 I called for the firing of the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Rumsfeld, because of the mishandling of the war. Indeed, the very strategy that was finally adopted with enormous success was thanks to a great leader named General David Petraeus and a great ambassador by the name of Ryan Crocker.

Most of all, the administration and its defenders are trying to blame the failures of Iraq on Iraq's leaders. To be sure, the lion's share of the blame for Iraq's current problems lies squarely with Prime Minister Maliki and other Iraqi leaders. But the administration cannot escape its own responsibility for the current disaster. This is something that the Senator from South Carolina and I saw firsthand, and we stated that over and over. In order to set this debate to rest once and for all, we would like to review the record.

We predicted that when all the troops were withdrawn there would be the events that are taking place today—not as rapidly, but we predicted that Iraq would fall into chaos if we withdrew all the troops and did not leave a residual force behind as we have in South Korea, Germany, Japan, Bosnia, and other countries after the conflict had ended.

From its first day in office, the Obama administration signaled a hands-off approach to Iraq. It immediately pushed for a faster drawdown of U.S. forces than our commanders recommended. It appointed an ambassador to Iraq, Christopher Hill, who had no experience working on Iraq or serving anywhere in the Arab world. I think he is a fine man, but he had no experience. It adopted a hands-off approach of shaping Iraqi politics, which was demonstrated most vividly as it refused for months and months to take a hands-on approach with Iraqi leaders and help them broker the necessary compromises about the country's future in the aftermath of the 2010 elections in Iraq.

Nowhere was the Obama administration's failure more pronounced than during the debate over whether to maintain a limited number of U.S. troops in Iraq beyond the 2011 expiration of the 2008 Status of Forces Agreement or SOFA. The administration is quick to lay blame on others for the fact that they tried and failed to keep a limited presence of troops in Iraq. They blamed the Bush administration, of course, for mandating the withdrawal in the 2008 SOFA. This does not ring true, however, because as former Secretary of State Condolezza Rice has made clear, the plan all along was to renegotiate the agreement to allow for a continued presence of U.S. forces in Iraq. ''Everybody believed,'' she said in 2011, ''it would be better if there was some kind of residual force.''

Most of all, the Obama administration blames Iraqis for failing to grant the necessary privileges and immunities for a U.S. force presence beyond 2011. This too is totally misleading because as we saw firsthand—Senator GRAHAM and I traveled to Baghdad and Erbil. We met with Allawi and Maliki, and we met with Barzani. We met with all of the leaders of the main political blocs, and we heard a common message during all of these conversations: Iraqi leaders recognized that it was in their country's interest to maintain a limited number of U.S. troops to continue training and assisting Iraqi security forces beyond 2011. But when we asked Ambassador Jim Jeffrey and the commander of U.S. Forces in Iraq Lloyd Austin—in direct response to a question in a meeting with Maliki—what tasks U.S. troops remaining in Iraq would perform and what their missions were, the answer was they had still not made a decision.

In Erbil, Barzani said he would fly to Baghdad. Allawi, the actual winner of the election, said that he would agree, and then after that, Prime Minister Maliki announced that if his partners agreed, which they did, he would agree to a residual force in Iraq. Those are just facts.

Just days after the Senator from South Carolina and I left Baghdad, Prime Minister Maliki, as I said, signaled his willingness—and it is a matter of public record—to a residual presence of U.S. troops if 70 percent of Iraqis agreed. The Kurds agreed, the Sunnis agreed, and Maliki himself signaled his support. Had the United States and our Iraq partners used our influence then and there, we could have lined up the remaining Shia support to enable Maliki to make this difficult decision. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

Instead, months and months passed and the administration made no decision on what missions and troop levels it would be willing to maintain in Iraq. By August 2011 the leaders of Iraq's main political blocs joined together and stated that they were prepared to enter negotiations to keep some U.S. troops in Iraq.

Another entire month passed and still the White House made no decision. During this long internal deliberation, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey later testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the size of a potential U.S. force presence kept ''cascading'' down from upwards of 16,000 to an eventual low of less than 3,000. By that point, the force would be able to do little more than protect itself, and Prime Minister Maliki, and other Iraq leaders, realized that the political cost of accepting this proposal was not worth the benefit. To blame this failure entirely on the Iraqis is convenient, but it misses the real point. The reason to keep about 10,000 to 15,000 U.S. forces in Iraq was not for the sake of Iraq alone. It was first and foremost in our national security interest to continue training and advising Iraqi forces and to maintain greater U.S. influence in Iraq. That core principle should have driven a very different U.S. approach to the SOFA diplomacy. The Obama administration should have recognized that after years of brutal conflict, Iraqi leaders still lacked trust in one another, and a strong U.S. role was required to help Iraqis broker their most politically sensitive decisions. For this reason the administration should have determined what tasks and troop numbers were in the national interest to maintain in Iraq and done so with ample time to engage with Iraqis at the highest level of the U.S. Government to shape political conditions in Baghdad to achieve our goal. I focus on this failure not because U.S. troops would have been engaging in unilateral large-scale combat operations to this day. In fact, they had won the conflict, and there was literally no further combat that the United States was engaged in. By 2011 U.S. forces were no longer in Iraqi cities or engaged in security operations. However, a residual U.S. troop presence could have assisted Iraqi forces in their continued fight against Al Qaeda. They could have provided a platform for greater diplomatic engagement and intelligence cooperation with our Iraqi partners. It could have made Iranian leaders think twice about using Iraqi airspace to transit military assistance to Assad and his forces in Syria. And most importantly, it could have maintained the significant diplomatic influence that the United States still possessed in Iraq—influence that had been and still was essential in guaranteeing Iraq's nascent political system, reassuring Iraqi leaders that they could resolve their differences peacefully and politically despite their mistrust of one another and checking the authoritarian and sectarian tendencies of Prime Minister Maliki.

There is a need for immediate action. Every day that goes by, there is greater sectarian violence, and there is greater success by ISIS. I do not believe they can take Baghdad. But look at the places they have already taken. By the way, they are now threatening the major oil refinery in Iraq. I can assure you that will affect the world price of oil. There is a need because

there is more polarization of Iraq, there is a return of the Iraqi Shia militias, there is wholesale killing and slaughter going on, and it will get worse every single day.

Is there any good option now in Iraq? No, there is no good option. The worst option is to do nothing, and apparently, according to the Wall Street Journal this morning, that is basically the approach that has been taken.

We need to recognize that taking military action now is difficult because our intelligence has been so severely degraded since 2011 because ISIS is becoming so integrated with the Sunni tribes. We need to be careful about striking targets, even convoys in the open. There is a real risk of killing Sunni tribal elements and pushing the tribes closer to ISIS.

We also have to recognize that political change in Baghdad has to take place. But the question is: Do we wait for political change? Every day we wait there is more and more Iranian influence. The chief—one of the most evil people in the world—of the Iranian Quds Force has been in Baghdad planning with Maliki. So what does Maliki do when he doesn't see us giving him any real assistance? He turns to the Iranians. There are published reports of Iranian combat troops now coming into Iraq as more and more of the radical ISIS people are flowing from Syria into Iraq.

As I said, I admit that I was surprised at the rapidity of the success of the ISIS. But I also believe that the longer we wait to carry out some airstrikes—as difficult as it is—that we can identify with the few people we have on the ground—it sends a signal psychologically over these people who are traveling long distances in the desert—the ISIS—of an American aircraft flying overhead and perhaps taking some of them out if we have sufficient information. That is a psychological effect on any enemy. Air power alone does not win conflicts, but air power can have a significant effect on the morale of your people, on your capability, and of at least inflicting some damage and changing the enemy's plans.

Obviously, political reconciliation is the key, and we must do everything in our power to make sure that Maliki appoints a government of reconciliation. But it can't be the prerequisite for U.S. military action because the events and time are not on our side.

We also have to recognize this is not an Iraqi conflict. This is an Iraqi-Syrian conflict now. The most, the largest, and the richest center of terrorism in the history of the world is now in the Iraq-Syria area. They have hundreds of millions of dollars from the banks in Mosul, and, obviously, they acquired a whole lot of equipment during their incredible progress across Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to have a look at the maps of Iraq and Syria and look at the places that are now controlled by ISIS. As I say, I don't believe they can roll into Baghdad in their vehicles with their guns mounted on them, but they sure as heck can cause a lot of problems: bombings, assassinations, the radicalization of these Shiite militias. If one of these Shiite shrines is damaged by ISIS or by Sunni militants, we are going to see a very bigger explosion which will bring us back to the days of 2003, '4, '5, and '6, before the Anbar awakening. The same Sunnis who were part of the Anbar awakening that joined us in putting down Al Qaeda are now being polarized by Maliki. The Shiites, as well as the chickens, are coming home to roost as far as Maliki is concerned because of the continued marginalization and persecution of Sunnis all over Iraq, much less in Anbar Province.

So we have to act. We have to act. We must act. I know there are always people who will tell our leaders reasons why we can't, but I know of no military expert who believes that doing nothing is a recipe for anything but further chaos and eventually threats to the United States of America. Our Secretary of Homeland Security has stated it and our Director of National Intelligence has stated it: that people in this part of Iraq and Syria will be planning attacks on the United States of America. That is their view. It also is mine. But we can do some effective air strikes. We can. And it is more difficult because of our degraded intelligence. By the way, when we left Iraq, all of those intelligence capabilities were shut down.

To make them more effective and mitigate the risks that could push Sunnis deeper into the arms of ISIS, they have to be accompanied, as I mentioned, with a limited presence of special forces on the ground. These forces could gather intelligence to improve our targeting by ISIS control, air strikes from the ground, and provide advice to Sunni tribes.

I believe several other steps could be taken. No. 1, who are the most respected people in Iraq today? Probably David Petraeus and Ryan Crocker. Send them back. Send them back, those who worked so closely with the Sunnis such as General MacFarland—then Colonel MacFarland—the people who built up these long relationships with the Sunnis. Send them back. Maliki will listen to David Petraeus and Ryan Crocker. Send them back. Send back a planning team, a group of smart people who can work with what is left of the Iraqi military leadership and identify tactics and a strategy that can reverse this tide of the ISIS which is about to engulf them.

Send some air power. Send some air power with targets we can identify. I am fully aware of the risks associated with it. I wish to repeat over and over and over: There are no good options. Also, we need to make it very clear to Maliki that his time is up; that he must arrange for a transition.

The Shia won the election, a majority of the votes—not a majority of any of the parties but an overall majority of the vote. This new government could be headed by a Shia, but it has to be a Shia who can reach out to the Sunni and bring them together in a government of national reconciliation.

All of my colleagues have seen the pictures of the young Shia who are now joining up and are ready to die—the movement from Basra of the Shia militia organizations which had been put down before that are now rising from the ashes. We have seen the horrible pictures of the executions that are taking place and the incredible displacement—500,000 people from Mosul alone. The Kurds have now taken Kirkuk. That is an ambition they have had for the last 50 years. We will see now a drive for total Kurdish autonomy from the government in Baghdad, and they will be making their own deals as far as oil is concerned, and the Kurds will now be pursuing their centuries-old ambition for a Kurdish state, which will cause the Turks to be very concerned.

I also wish to point out that if ISIS continues to succeed and they move back and forth to Syria, they will now pose a direct threat, first of all, to Jordan, and then to other gulf states, and finally, eventually, Saudi Arabia, but those right next to Iraq will be most under threat.

So I urge the President and I urge my colleagues to understand the gravity and the seriousness of this situation; to understand that if ISIS succeeds, even without taking Baghdad, and they are able to establish what they call a caliphate in the Syria-Iraq area—larger than the State of Indiana—and are able to train, equip, and export terror not only throughout the region but throughout the world, it will pose a direct threat to the security of this Nation.

Mr. GRAHAM. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MCCAIN. I wish to thank the Senator from South Carolina for showing up.

Mr. GRAHAM. I am sorry I was late. Actually, I had an exchange with General Dempsey about this very topic.

Does the Senator from Arizona see any scenario where ISIS is militarily stopped and that the Iraqis can retake ground lost to ISIS without U.S. air power being involved?

Mr. MCCAIN. I know of no military expert who believes that without the use of U.S. air power they will be able to at anytime soon regain the lost territory, which is a sizable part of Iraq.

Mr. GRAHAM. Did my colleague hear President Obama say it is unacceptable for Iraq or Islamists to have safe havens in Iraq and Syria? Did my colleague hear him say that?

Mr. MCCAIN. No, I did not, but I did hear him say on December 14, 2011: ''We are leaving behind a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq with a representative government that was elected by its people,'' and other quotes throughout the campaign.

Mr. GRAHAM. My point is, does my colleague agree he is right? It is not acceptable for our national security interests for ISIS to have a safe haven in Syria and Iraq that could run from Aleppo to Baghdad; that that is not a good thing for us?

Mr. MCCAIN. I totally agree.

Mr. GRAHAM. Well, if it is not a good thing for us, how do we change it? Give me a scenario where we put these folks on the run in Syria and in Iraq without American air power. Give me a scenario of political reconciliation in Baghdad where that has a snowball's chance in hell of succeeding as long as they are losing on the battlefield. Give me a scenario where the battlefield turns our way without U.S. air power.

I can give my colleagues a scenario where it begins to turn on the battlefield: Iran comes in with great numbers. The most likely scenario to stop ISIS is Iranians getting involved with Shia militia. Does that bother the Senator from Arizona?

Mr. MCCAIN. I would also like to point out what the Senator from South Carolina knows and I know: The air power has a psychological effect. When an aircraft flies over the enemy, they are going to do things differently if they fear they are going to be hit from the air, as we all know. Air power does not determine the outcome of conflicts, but it sure is important in the battlefield equation.

Mr. GRAHAM. Is it fair to say the Air Force in Iraq is grounded for all practical purposes?

Mr. MCCAIN. Not only grounded but a lot of the air assets, I am to understand, such as Apache helicopters, are in the hands of ISIS.

Mr. GRAHAM. So, to the President: We agree with you that Iraq matters. We agree with you that it is not in our national security interests to have ISIS occupy territory from Aleppo to Baghdad. But here is what is a mystery to me: How do we turn this around unless we stop their advance inside of Iraq and we go after them in Syria?

As to political reconciliation, I completely agree that is the ultimate change that needs to occur, that air strikes alone will not get us to where we want to go, but it is a chicken-and-egg concept for me. Can my colleague from Arizona imagine a scenario where we can get all the parties together when ISIS is winning on the battlefield?

Mr. MCCAIN. That is why I was amused by various commentators who have been consistently wrong, including one in the New York Times today: All we need to do is have everybody sit down together—a total misreading of the situation.

Mr. GRAHAM. Here is the problem with that: To go to a meeting in Baghdad, you are likely to get killed trying to get there. Who is going to sit down in Baghdad when everybody is getting killed based on sectarian differences? So my advice would be to use American air power before it is too late as part of a coordinated, diplomatic effort. That American air power is part of diplomacy. That may sound counterintuitive, but it makes perfect sense to me. Diplomacy cannot succeed unless we change momentum on the battlefield. But when you drop a bomb, you need to have a game plan beyond the bomb falling, and that would be a regional conversation.

Can my colleague see how Maliki can put Humpty Dumpty back together again?

Mr. MCCAIN. I cannot. That is why he has to agree to a transition.

Mr. GRAHAM. I would not send $1 to Iraq. I would not send one soldier to Iraq, one airman to Iraq until we understand that over the arc of time Maliki has to go. I have been there more times than I can count. Maliki did some good things on his watch, but he has become a political leader who cannot bring the country together. But that, to me, is a concern that is addressed after we stop the momentum on the battlefield.

Does the Senator from Arizona believe it is still possible that the Kurds, the Sunnis, and the Shias, that we know fairly well, can regroup and reconcile with themselves if we act decisively?

Mr. MCCAIN. I am totally confident that they can. That is how the country was held together for long periods of time.

Could I ask my colleague—I began before the Senator from South Carolina arrived talking about this business of the allegations that somehow it is the Iraqis' fault that we didn't leave a residual force in Iraq. I went through our meetings with Maliki, with Barzani, with Allawi, how they were all committed to maintaining residual force.

Could the Senator from South Carolina for the RECORD recount the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing where he directly questioned General Dempsey about this entire issue, after we had withdrawn?

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes, I will be glad to. And to put it in context, in 2008 we signed a strategic framework agreement. It was envisioned that we would negotiate a follow-on force with advisers and some special forces units to secure our Nation as well as to protect our gains. In the process of trying to get the Iraqis on board, Hillary Clinton called me to ask if my colleague, the Senator from Arizona, and I think Senator Lieberman—maybe he didn't go; I can't remember—would go over there and talk to Barzani, Allawi, and Maliki, and we said, Sure, we would be glad to.

Here is what I found. I found in the meeting with Prime Minister Maliki, who was very openminded about a follow-on force—Barzani said, I will take 250,000 Americans; that was never in doubt about where the Kurds were—Allawi understood, the Sunnis understood the need for a follow-on force. It really was about the Shia politics.

After we got back, Maliki said, If the other groups will do it, I will do it. But he says, What kind of force are you talking about, Senator GRAHAM?

Mr. MCCAIN. This was in a meeting in Baghdad?

Mr. GRAHAM. This was in a meeting in his office. He asked me, What kind of force are you talking about? I turned to General Austin and Ambassador Jeffries and I asked them, What is the number? Answer the Prime Minister's question. They said, We are still working on that. The Prime Minister looked at me and said something to the effect, Well, I don't know what I am supposed to be agreeing to.

We come back to Washington. We go to the Vice President's house. We talk to Mr. Donilin, saying they need a number—sometime—and they said they would get back to us about the number. I am still waiting on that phone call.

During my questioning of General Dempsey about the follow-on force, I asked him—General Austin recommended somewhere in the 18,000 to 20,000 range, the Pentagon got down to 10,000, and below that they felt very uncomfortable. I asked him directly, Did the number cascade down or did the number go down because the Iraqis said, That is too many Americans; we don't want that many Americans on our soil. He said, No, sir; the numbers kept cascading down because the White House kept changing the number.

So I want the record to reflect that in a meeting with the Prime Minister of Iraq, when he asked me how many troops we are talking about, we could not give him an answer. I want the record to reflect the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs said the numbers went down and down and down not because the Iraqis were saying no but because the White House kept lowering the number—to the point that it got to be absurd, and we will prove that over time.

Mr. MCCAIN. Finally, could I—I see our colleague from Florida is waiting. I think I would like to have the Senator from South Carolina summarize. The cost of inaction, of doing nothing, is the greatest cost we can incur. The situation on the battlefield is not only terrible, but the polarization of the different groups in Iraq is growing worse by the hour. We are seeing the resurgence of the old Shia militias that, thanks to David Petraeus, we had put down before. Iraq is largely under control, thanks to David Petraeus, Ryan Crocker, and the surge in 2011. If we had left—and it is a fact—if we had left that residual force behind, history would be very different.

I would add one other comment. We cannot ignore Syria in this situation. We have to understand Syria is now part of this huge area, the size of the State of Indiana, which is governed by ISIS.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I find there are a number of things I agree with the Senator from Arizona on. One of the things I agree with the senior Senator from Arizona on is that Maliki needs to go. Otherwise, I think Iraq is going to blow apart, and it is going to end up in three parts, just like the Vice President, when he was a Member of the Senate, as the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said was going to happen.

I will address this subject later on.

I came to thank Senator SHELBY, who is here, and Senator MIKULSKI, who I hope is within earshot of my remarks, for the bill they have come forth with and specifically with regard to the part that has to do with a little agency that I have some familiarity with and to which I have a great deal of emotional attachment; that is, NASA.

What they have done is continue to flush out in Appropriations the direction that was laid out—when there was no direction—4 years ago in the 2010 NASA authorization bill, for which I constantly give credit to our former colleague, Kay Bailey Hutchison from Texas. I had the opportunity to help draw up a balanced plan for the space program—balanced in all aspects: human, nonhuman space exploration, aeronautics, science, education, the whole works.

Earlier this month the National Academies came out with a report that was required by that act 4 years ago that reaffirmed the need for a robust U.S. space program aimed at the goal. The goal is way down the line. We are going on a human mission to Mars. The Academies' study was cochaired by a former Republican Governor, a former head of the Office of Management and Budget, Gov. Mitch Daniels. What they concluded was that human space exploration remains vital to the national interest but it is only going to succeed if it is properly funded.

So the increase in funding provided in this bill for human exploration is going to keep us on track in the coming year. We know that the Space Launch System and its spacecraft, a capsule called Orion—which is being built as we speak, assembled at the O&C building at the Kennedy Space Center—we know these are critical to human exploration. NASA has a very boring term for that. They call it ''foundational capabilities.'' That is the capability of putting humans into deep space and eventually on Mars. While other countries are talking about a heavy lift rocket, we are actually building it, and it is being built today with its spacecraft.

Now we are going to look to the first test of this spacecraft. It is going to come in just a few months. It is the Orion spacecraft on top of another rocket to do the deep space penetration and high-velocity reentry, pulling lots of Gs, to see how the instrumented spacecraft performs. It is on track and the space launch system is on track.

However, the funding increases are going to have to be maintained in future years. If we go back to this, shall I say—I have other adjectives for it, but shall I say not the best idea of taking a meat ax to the budget called the sequester—if we go back to the sequester levels, NASA is not going to be able to achieve its exploration goals.

So this funding bill that Senators MIKULSKI and SHELBY have produced also reiterates the need to engage our international partners in science and exploration. It supports the international collaboration that is so important in our space program.

There is another new NASA partnership with the German space agency for astronomy research. This same bill also continues the investment in NASA's Commercial Crew Program. It would allow the largest NASA investment in the program to date.

The President requested $849 million to do a competition to make these rockets that are already proven to be safe for humans—put in all the redundancies and the escape systems. The President requested $849 million. That was NASA's request. This bill gets it close. It gets it to $805 million.

But we are going to need to work, to continue to work, with Senator SHELBY and Senator MIKULSKI, as the bill goes to the conference committee, to make sure we have the right mix of oversight and innovation in how NASA contracts for this competition with the competitors—the private industry—as we are letting commercial companies provide this service not only of cargo to and from the International Space Station, but now we are going to provide this service of crew going to and from the ISS.

I cannot overstate the importance of the commercial crew in the long-term viability of the space station because, look, we are going to extend the ISS; that is, the International Space Station, to 2024. It ought to be extended beyond that. Certainly there is all the research that is being produced. We spent $100 billion putting it up there. We ought to keep it to the end of the decade of the 2020s at least, and we need to make sure there is sufficient funding to support the research on this orbiting outpost.

It is a fantastic asset in low-Earth orbit. It is not only for research to improve life on Earth, but it is also a technology test bed and a steppingstone for exploration.

There is another reason. Because we have had the aggressiveness of Mr. Putin, and suddenly all the reverberations coming out of Ukraine, it is just another reminder that we want American rockets for Americans to fly on to get to our own space station. The commercial crew, if we can pour the juice into it, as to their target of 2017, they can actually move it back to 2016. So we have a geopolitical reason to keep this going.

It is interesting that as of this day, with this bill on the floor of the Senate, scientists and engineers have gathered in Chicago for the third annual International Space Station Research and Development Conference. Research investments will help ensure the maximum scientific return for this one-of-a-kind laboratory. By the way, because of Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, it is designated as a national laboratory—a part of the ISS.

I thank Senator SHELBY and Senator MIKULSKI for their hard work in supporting the Nation's space program. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with them. At the end of the day, what we want to do is to get this bill out of conference and to the President's desk for signature.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, first of all, I thank the Senator from Florida for his remarks, especially in the area of NASA, the funding of NASA, the importance of NASA, which he knows very well. We have worked together a long time and of course some of us—the Presiding Officer might not remember—but he was an astronaut himself in another part of his life. We go back a long time to our House days. We came to the House at the same time. But we have worked together on NASA because we believe in science, we believe in space, we believe that it is great for America in many ways.

I point out again that we have a bipartisan effort on the floor right now. We have three bills: the agriculture appropriations bill, which came out of the Appropriations Committee 30 to 0, with Republican and Democratic support; the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill—where I serve as the ranking member of the subcommittee and Senator MIKULSKI serves as the chair of the subcommittee—which came out 30 to 0; and the transportation, housing bill, which came out 29 to 1.

We are talking about working together. We are working under the Murray-Ryan numbers. That is what we are trying to stay within. I would like to see us move these three bills. If we can do this, we are going to regular order, which we need. I think it shows—when we have this kind of bipartisan effort coming out of the Appropriations Committee to the floor—we are saying to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle: Look, we believe these are fair bills, we believe it is a bipartisan effort, and we want to fund these agencies because they are important to this country and also there is some certainty out there. We do not need to go back to uncertainty in this body or in this government.

I thank Senator NELSON for his remarks.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Thank you, Madam President.

This morning the Energy and Natural Resources Committee passed legislation approving the Keystone XL Pipeline. I believe that Congress should do all it can to push the Obama administration to approve this project. This will, of course, help create American jobs; they will come along with the Keystone XL Pipeline.

To me, this morning's committee vote was nothing more than a show vote. It is going to do nothing to advance the Keystone XL Pipeline. It will put no pressure on the White House. It will not put a single shovel in the ground building the pipeline because the Democratic majority leader has absolutely no intention of allowing this bill to get to a vote right here on the Senate floor. The majority leader knows that if Senators got the chance to vote on this bill, there is a very high likelihood it would pass. President Obama cannot afford that, and the majority leader will not do anything the President does not want. The majority leader will not do anything to anger the extremists who fund the Democratic Party and who oppose an ''all of the above'' energy strategy in a plan that includes oil.

I know the last thing Americans and the people in the gallery want to hear about is Senate process and Senate procedures, but here is why it matters: There are issues that are important to this country, issues such as jobs, energy, and controlling government spending. There are problems we need to solve in this country, and they are not being voted on here in the Senate because the majority leader continues to block votes. He has blocked votes, he has blocked amendments, and he has even blocked debate on one issue after another.

I believe the majority leader has abused every power at his disposal and even broken the rules of the Senate—rules that have been in place for over a century. He has done this to give himself new powers. Over the past 6½ years the majority leader has taken an unprecedented stand against action in the Senate. He has used tactics such as the so-called filling the amendment tree on bills. That means he stops anyone else from offering amendments other than himself. He has used what is called rule XIV of the Standing Rules to bypass committees, so we are only able to talk about what he wants to talk about, not what our constituents want to talk about, what we hear about from home, or what other committee members want to talk about. These kinds of tactics may make it easier for Senator REID to get what he wants, but they shut Senators—Republicans and Democrats—out of legislating and they shut out the American people whom all of us represent, Democrats as well as Republicans.

Senator REID has filled the amendment tree at least 85 times since he became majority leader. That is more than twice as many times as the previous six majority leaders combined.

Between July 2013 and May of this year, Republicans in the Senate filed 810 amendments, but we only got a total of 9 votes—810 different ideas brought forward by Republicans, and Senator REID has blocked vote after vote, to the point where we have gotten only 9 votes on 810 amendments, and this is almost in a full year.

If you want a comparison, take a look at the House of Representatives, where the Republicans are in the majority but the minority party, the Democrats, have an opportunity to offer amendments and have votes. Over that same time period in the House of Representatives, the Democrats have gotten 132 votes on their amendments. The Democratic minority on the House side has had 132 votes, while the Republican minority on the Senate side has gotten a total of 9.

In the Senate, it is not just the Republicans who are not getting their votes. The majority leader is blocking the Democrats as well. During that same time, from July of 2013 to May of 2014, Democrats introduced 676 amendments on legislation on the floor, and there were only 7 rollcall votes on 676 amendments. I guess it is not surprising that Republicans cannot get votes on their amendments, but it is very surprising that the Democrats cannot get votes because only the majority leader gets a vote.

It is the same story on appropriations bills, and that is why I am here at this time—because we are dealing with appropriations bills. They are some of the most important bills we are supposed to consider in Congress. These are the bills which determine how much Washington spends every year on all the discretionary programs. We started debating the first of these yesterday, and we may do so over the next few weeks.

It used to be that the Senate would take up these bills one by one, and Senators would get a chance to offer amendments and to represent the people who elected them to office. Not anymore. Under this Democratic majority leader, the amendment process on appropriations bills has been almost completely shut down. In the past 2 years Republicans have gotten just six amendments to appropriations bills. Senate Democrats only got one amendment during that same period. The Senate approved trillions—trillions—of dollars in Washington spending, but HARRY REID allowed action on just seven amendments total. In the 8 years before Senator REID became majority leader, the Senate processed an average of almost 300 amendments to appropriations bills every year—every year almost 300 amendments to appropriations bills.

Senators from both parties have been shut out of the process, and the people we represent have been shut out of the process as well—all by Senator REID. It is the same kind of power grab we saw last September when the majority leader used the so-called nuclear option to stop debate in the Senate. He radically changed the rules of the Senate to strip the rights of the minority party. Originally, it had to do with eliminating the filibuster on nominations, but it is the same effect. The majority leader grabbed more power for himself and took away the right of anyone else in the Senate to represent their constituents.

This is not how it is supposed to be. The Senate was designed to be a place where we debate these issues and where political minorities get fair representation. The father of our Constitution James Madison explained that the Senate's role was ''first to protect the people against the rulers.'' James Madison, the father of the Constitution, stated that the Senate's role is ''first to protect the people against the rulers.'' That was the point of this body. That is why over its history the Senate has adopted rules that provide strong protections for political minorities. Well, the way the Senate has been run by Majority Leader REID, it has been embarrassing, it has been unfair, and it has been insulting to the American people.

Again, I know this isn't the most exciting topic of discussion for people to hear, but the damage that is being done by the Senate's failure to act is very real. Congress has important legislation to debate, such as approving the Keystone XL Pipeline, but the majority leader won't even allow a vote on the bill. Our Nation has a total debt of $17.5 trillion, but the majority leader of the Senate blocks amendments that could improve the appropriations bills and maybe start to control Washington's wasteful spending. We should have an open amendment process on these appropriations bills this year, as we should have had in previous years, and we should be starting with the bill that is on the floor today.

It is time for Democrats to stop the show votes and allow real votes on issues important to American families.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the role.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded, and that I be recognized to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to come to the Senate to speak about the situation in Iraq. A moment ago I was

joined by some very close friends from South Florida, including the former mayor of West Miami, and now the chair of the county commission in Miami-Dade County, Rebecca Sosa. She actually got me started in politics.

When she was mayor of West Miami, I told her I was interested in public service. We walked door to door in the small city called West Miami which has 5,000 residents. She taught me how to campaign one on one with real people and their real lives.

Now I return home every weekend—when we are done here and with my work throughout the State—to the same community that I still live in, and increasingly people there are asking me about the situation in Iraq. The question I get from many people is—and I want to be blunt about how they say it—I understand this is a problem, but why is it our business? Why do we care about what is happening in another country when it seems to be a fight among themselves?

That is a very legitimate question. I know Americans are watching the issues that are happening abroad, and they ask themselves: Why does America need to be the world's policeman?

I want to take a few moments to explain why this matters—why it matters to people not just in the Middle East but even people in the small city of West Miami where I still live. The situation in Iraq is, to some extent, a civil war between Sunni and Shia, as we see in other conflicts such as Syria and other places. That is a real aspect of it. I would say the current government of Iraq has contributed greatly to it—by the way, spurred on by Iranian influence—to further exacerbate that divide between Sunni and Shia.

While it is fair to say that much of what is happening in Iraq is a civil war between two sects, it is not fair to say that is all it is, because what is happening in Iraq has a direct bearing on the future security of every American, even those Americans who live in the small city of West Miami where I live. Here is why.

Imagine for a moment if we could go back in time to the year 1997 or 1996 or 1998 or 1999 and had known about Al Qaeda then what we knew by September of 2001. We would have realized this is a dangerous group that had the capacity and the deep willingness to attack and kill Americans in order to terrorize so that we would leave the Middle East and turn it over to people such as them. If we had known that and taken that seriously—and I would say some did know this—if we had done something about it, it is fair to say that eventually there would have been some sort of terrorist attack, but maybe there wouldn't have been one on September 11, 2001. If we had actually targeted this group and degraded their capabilities while they were still in their safe haven in Afghanistan—or even before that—we potentially could have saved the lives of thousands of Americans and, more importantly, avoided the rise of Al Qaeda in the region and in the world. But we did not. While this is not a time to point fingers or throw blame around, I certainly think it is a time to learn the lessons of that history and apply them to the challenges of our time.

What is happening today in Iraq and in portions of Syria is in many ways the exact same thing: A radical group—ISIL—which, by the way, rose through the ranks of Al Qaeda until they now have a split from Al Qaeda, believe it or not, because Al Qaeda thinks that ISIL is too brutal to their fellow Muslims. This group has been growing in strength ever since the United States left Iraq. This group has been fed and its strength has been given to them by foreign fighters who have spilled into the conflict in Syria where they have established a foothold and have used it as a staging and operational ground to take their brand of ruthlessness now into Iraq.

We saw over the weekend images and photographs and videos of the mass assassinations, executions of Shia members of the Iraqi military. They have grown in strength over this time and they have begun to grow in their influence in Iraq. Their goal is simple: They want to establish the premier Islamic caliphate in all the world—the premier Sunni Islamic caliphate in the region. Caliphate basically means Islamic kingdom. They don't care about existing borders. The kingdom they envision is a vast safe haven that encompasses portions of Syria they already have under their control and portions of Iraq they are now gaining control of.

What is their goal for this place they are trying to set up? Their first goal is to institute Sharia law, and they have a particularly brutal brand of Sharia they have forced upon people both in Syria and now increasingly in Iraq.

Their second goal is to establish an Islamic caliphate state—a safe haven from where they can plan and train and ultimately carry out terrorist attacks against the United States and other countries, including attacks here in our homeland.

We must learn the lessons of before 2001, and we must say to ourselves: Under no circumstances will we ever again allow a safe haven or for this kind of terrorist group to ever gain a safe haven anywhere in the world. We will never allow this to happen again.

That is why it is so critical for us to be engaged here. The reason why we should care about this issue is not because we want to force upon Iraq democracy or force upon Iraq the type of government we think they need. The reason why we care is because we cannot allow a safe haven to develop there, that can be used to carry out attacks that can kill Americans, including here in our homeland. This is why we should care. This is why it is so important that the Commander in Chief of the United States—the President—come as quickly as possible before the American people and before this Congress with a plan to address this risk.

I know the President likes to go around saying the war is over, but no one told ISIL that. No one told Al Qaeda that. No one has told these terrorists that. They don't think the war is over. In fact, in their minds, this war will go on for hundreds of years. The only person who can rally this country behind a plan to address this is not a U.S. Senator or a Member of Congress, not the majority leader or the Speaker of the House, not the countless people who write very well-informed opinion pieces in our newspapers. The only person in this country who can rally us around a plan to address this is the President himself.

So while I understand he doesn't want us engaged in another conflict, and neither do most Americans, he knows—he must know—that we are going to have to do something about this. That is not the issue before us. The issue before us is whether we do something about it now or we do something about this later when the problem will be much harder and more costly to address.

I hope the President does bring us together to solve this problem. This doesn't need to be—and it should not be—a partisan issue. The national security of the United States should never be a partisan issue, for if terrorists carry out an attack on our homeland they will not attack Democratic sites but Republican sites; they will not target conservatives but leave liberals alone; they will target Americans. Americans from every political persuasion died on 9/11. I fear that may happen at some point again. So we should all care about this.

The only person who can bring us together to do something about it is the President, and so far he has failed to do it. I don't know if it is because it runs counter to his political narrative that the war is over and he got us out of Iraq. I don't know why it is, but so far he has not done that, and he must.

Mr. President: On this issue, you must lead. You must put aside all of these domestic, political debates that are going on in your office about how this is going to poll or whether this runs contrary to what you said on the campaign trail. This is too important, it is too vital, it is too serious, and it is too dangerous.

I have my own ideas, as do others, about what that plan should look like, but we want there to be a plan. We are not asking the President to come forward with a plan to go looking for something to attack. We want him to come forward with a plan because only he can, and he must. In my opinion, that plan has to be we must do whatever we can and everything we can to prevent this group, ISIL, from gaining operational long-term control of these territories in Iraq. To me, that means going after their command-and-control structure, which involves their ability to transit fighters and weapons and fuel and food and ammunition from

their safe havens in Syria to their increasingly new spaces they have now carved out for themselves in Iraq.

I think all of us in this Chamber, when it comes to issues of national security, understand we should not be a part of the back-and-forth of partisan politics.

I guess my plea here today on the Senate floor is this: Mr. President, you must lead on this issue. You must come forward with a plan that we can rally this Congress and our people behind, because if we fail to do so, I fear our Nation will pay a terrible price down the road. Never again can we allow an Al Qaeda-style group to establish a safe haven where they can plot against us anywhere on this planet. The choice before you, Mr. President, is you either deal with it now or some future President and future Congresses and future Americans will deal with it later. I hope you will deal with it now. I hope we will remember the lessons of our recent history. The only one who can lead us in that direction is you, Mr. President. I hope you will, because the consequences of failing to do so would be dramatic and, in my opinion, will be condemned by history.

I hope over the next few hours, the next few days, we will have the opportunity to come to this floor and advocate on behalf of a concrete plan of action that most, if not all, of us can support, so we can ensure we can say that during our time here we did everything we needed to do to keep America safe.

Madam President, 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. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the House's tragic and disconcerting failure to do anything to fix our broken immigration system, even though an entire year has passed since the Senate passed bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform with 68 votes—an impressive bipartisan vote total in this increasingly partisan climate.

The House Republicans' lack of action on immigration is almost completely inexplicable if you compare the most recent Republican Party platform to what the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office had to say about the Senate immigration reform bill.

When you take the time to look at both of these documents, you realize that no other bill that we could pass during this or any other Congress would accomplish as many of the Republican Party's stated legislative objectives as passing immigration reform.

Just so that everyone understands this, I want to take you through a step-by-step process where we look at the Republican Party platform and compare it to the CBO report.

The first substantive sentence of the Republican Party platform says:

> The best jobs program is economic growth. Republicans will pursue free market policies that are the surest way to boost employment and create job growth and economic prosperity for all.

Well, what does the CBO report have to say about what the immigration bill does for economic growth, job growth, and economic prosperity?

Page 3 of the CBO report says that ''the bill would increase real . . . GDP relative to the amount CBO projects under current law by 3.3 percent in 2023 and by 5.4 percent in 2033. . . .''

Think about what that means in a $16 trillion economy. If we pass this bill, we will be adding over $500 billion of annual economic growth to our economy than we otherwise would. This is a staggering number.

Well, what does the immigration bill do for job growth? Page 4 of the CBO report says that the bill will increase the number of jobs in the U.S. economy by about 6 million.

What about economic prosperity? On this front, page 3 of the CBO report says ''the rate of return on capital would be higher under the legislation than under current law. . . .'' That means Americans would have more savings and a more secure safety net.

This means that passing immigration reform would accomplish the Republican Party's top priority far better than any piece of legislation the Republicans currently have before Congress.

What about the second stated priority of the Republican platform? That priority says that ''small businesses are the leaders in the world's advances in technology and innovation, and we pledge to strengthen that role and foster small business entrepreneurship.''

Do you know what the best way to foster small business entrepreneurship is? Immigration reform.

According to a study from the Kauffman Foundation, immigrants were almost twice as likely to start small businesses in 2012 as native-born Americans. Madam President, 27.1 percent of new entrepreneurs in 2012 were immigrants. That is up from 13.7 percent in 1996.

More than 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants—90 companies—or by their children—an additional 114 companies—because a lot of these small businesses become big businesses. The immigration bill has an entrepreneurship visa where immigrants who have raised money from legitimate investors will be given a green card to come here, open companies, and hire Americans.

Why will this happen? Because immigrants have always provided the enthusiasm, hard work, and determination to reenergize America. They perform very important jobs at the lower end of the economic spectrum without complaint to make a better life for their families and they provide innovation and new ideas at the higher end of the economy to create the latest big inventions that fuel our growth.

But that is only scratching the surface of what this immigration bill does. The next priority on page 3 of the Republican platform is ''balancing the budget.'' What is the bill that Congress can pass this year that best balances the budget? Immigration reform.

According to CBO, passing immigration reform would ''reduce budget deficits by $197 billion over the 2014–2023 period and by about $700 billion over the 2024–2033 period.'' That is $1 trillion in savings that we can achieve by passing immigration reform.

Finally, with regard to immigration itself, the Republican Party platform says ''our highest priority is to secure the rule of law at both our borders and at ports of entry.''

Under the Senate immigration bill, anyone who wants to try and cross the border illegally will have to figure out a way to get over an 18-foot steel pedestrian fence, get past the border agents standing every 1,000 feet apart from Brownsville to San Diego 24 hours a day, and then evade the sensors, cameras, and drones that will track the crosser until they are caught by a border agent or local police.

That is an amendment proposed by our Republican colleagues but we put into the bill. If you try to overstay your visa, your name will be placed on a list given to immigration enforcement officials to find you, detain you, and deport you. If you try to work here illegally, you will never be able to get a job because you will not have a name, a Social Security number, and a matching picture that will pop up on our new E-Verify system when you apply for a job. Future waves of illegal immigration will be prevented if this bill is passed.

So for all of the railing from the hard right about stopping illegal immigration, no one—no one—can deny there have been huge improvements over current law.

Let's take an inventory of what this bill does: Stimulate the economy. Check. Create jobs. Check. Help small businesses. Check. Reduce the debt. Check. Secure the border. Check. End visa overstays. Check. End illegal employment. Check.

These are all of the things Republicans claim they want to do, all in one bill. So why is it that all of these positive benefits to passing reform and all of the costs we pay for doing nothing, why is it that with that the House of Representatives, and the House Republicans in particular, refuse to do anything to fix our broken immigration system? Why do House Republicans not pass our bill to fix our broken immigration system, not change it, not pass a good law? This question can be answered with one simple word: Fear. One simple word. Fear.

Fear is what often causes people to do what is counter to their self-interest. Fear makes people succumb to their basest instincts instead of rising to their noblest ambitions. Fear paralyzes us during times when we need to be taking action. House Republicans are afraid of immigration. They are not only afraid of voting on an immigration bill, they are even afraid of introducing legislation on immigration.

Let me give you some examples. June 2013, Congressman JOE HECK says he was going to introduce immigration reform that would address our broken system. In December of 2013, Republican Congressman HECK announced he would not be introducing any immigration bill of any kind.

April 2014. Congressman JOE BARTON said he was going to introduce major immigration legislation. The bill was never introduced. ERIC CANTOR, who just this week claimed that his position on immigration never wavered, said last year he was going to introduce legislation to ''deal with the kids who did not break any laws and themselves came into this country in many cases unbeknownst to them.'' This legislation was also never introduced.

Finally, House Republican leadership has repeatedly announced they ''think we finally have the policy right on immigration.'' But again, we have seen no bill even introduced, much less voted on. House Republicans are so afraid of immigration that they have handed the policy and leadership gavel to STEVE KING, who compares immigrants to dogs and livestock and who claims immigration is a slow-motion holocaust.

ERIC CANTOR is actually right that his position on immigration reform never wavered. His rhetoric was often proreform, but his legislative and voting record was always antireform. CANTOR never introduced or voted for a single immigration bill that would help a single immigrant. But he loved to vaguely reference the need for immigration reform when asked about it. That has been the real Republican Party position on immigration: pretending to be pro-immigration reform rhetorically, but never, never permit a Republican to actually introduce immigration reform legislation and definitely never allow immigration reform legislation to come to a vote. This is because House Republicans may claim to disagree with STEVE KING's words, but they certainly do not seem to disagree with STEVE KING's policy objectives. They do not want immigration reform that will rationalize our legal immigration system and create a path to legality for those who are already here. Instead, they support the failed and tragic policies of self-deportation for the people who are already here, and they want to reduce legal immigration to a trickle for the people who wish to come here and contribute to our society.

Two nights ago, when I watched our gritty U.S. soccer team win an amazing game against Ghana, I saw an amazing team effort coached by an energetic German immigrant whose tactics and decisions helped the United States prevail in the final stages of an incredible, compelling game.

Did Republicans watch the same game and ask: Why is an immigrant coaching our team? These last 2 weeks, I watched the San Antonio Spurs play some of the greatest team basketball anyone has ever seen with players from France, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Italy, Canada, and, of course, the United States. Did Republicans watch those same games and ask: Who cares about the quality of the basketball being played? Why are immigrants allowed in the NBA?

This is the problem the Republicans face. Republicans have a very important choice to make the next few days. If they continue on the same path they are on now, where they feign sympathy for immigration in their rhetoric but do not vote on or even introduce legislation to fix our broken system, it will be impossible for the average voters to distinguish between any Republican and STEVE KING. Republican words of sympathy will not matter to people whose families are suffering, whose businesses cannot find the workers they need or whose churches are seeing their members deported. They will know that Republicans are to blame for doing nothing on immigration reform. Even worse, Republicans will get the worst of both worlds in this scenario. Their most strident rightwing voters will actually punish them for their Machiavellian efforts to feign sympathy for immigration reform.

So what is the real answer for Republicans? Well, LINDSEY GRAHAM showed us the way by being a man of principle. This weekend he said it best. He said:

> I don't think Eric got beat because of his stand on immigration, I think he got beat because of his lack of defining himself on immigration. Republicans nationally will accept an earned pathway to citizenship if you secure the border. For our party to let the 35 percent tell us how to engage on immigration, we will lose a natural ally in the Hispanic community.

That is from Senator GRAHAM who just won his election with 59 percent of the vote, while defending back at home in a conservative Republican State, South Carolina, immigration reform.

In conclusion, to Speaker BOEHNER, Majority Whip MCCARTHY, and others in the new House leadership, the choice is yours. Join with us, the evangelical community, the Catholic Church, American farmers, American police chiefs, America's business community, and 65 percent of American voters in supporting tough, fair, practical immigration reform legislation or, alternatively, you can ignore the benefits of immigration reform and continue to fail to address our broken immigration system because of your fear, and you can eventually watch your party go into the dustbin of history. Those are your two choices, Republicans.

There is no doubt that at the moment STEVE KING is winning. Republicans are implementing his policy objective of inaction to perfection because they are so fearful. But hopefully, just like the U.S. team, House Republicans can overcome their fears, appeal to their more noble aspirations, and we can pull victory from the jaws of defeat at the very end here and pass the immigration reform legislation our country so desperately needs.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS.) The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, we have been on the motion to proceed to our three appropriations bills since 10 a.m. this morning. It has almost been 4 hours, and it is true, under the cloture, there is 30 hours of debate. We could let this go on until 11 p.m. tonight—we could. Actually, Members have had an interesting day speaking about issues related to Iraq and to immigration, but we would like to focus on the bills beforehand: agriculture, FDA—how do we feed people in our own country, save the family farm, and be able to export food.

We would like to bring up a bill that funds FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, that looks out for food safety, but also the safety and efficacy of life-science products such as medical devices, biotech products, and pharmaceuticals, which I know are important to the State of the Presiding Officer.

We want to be able to bring up Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development. The highway trust fund is going to run out.

In my own home State we need the transportation money. We need it for the formula funding that will be important to roads, but we also need the money in there that looks out for small airports, such as the Hagerstown airport, the Frederick airport, which the President's plane needs to get to Camp David.

Right up the road is the Hagerstown airport, for which there is a growing manufacturing hub, of which there is small manufacturing employing 300 to 400 people. Some make trucks, some make the heavy-duty equipment to be sold, that are also export products. One company actually puts in the avionics to the airplanes guarding our border.

If we put all that together, it is close to 900 to 1,200 jobs. Hello, this is what we are talking about—public investment that creates private sector jobs and does public safety.

So we are saying to those who are considering how we could move ahead, we encourage them now. I suggest we follow the model when we were on the floor 3 years ago. That was the last time we had these appropriations on the floor. We had an amendment process.

The managers of the bill, such as my vice chairman Senator SHELBY and I, worked with Members on a defined list, some we could actually take. There were some excellent ideas where Members wanted to improve on what we had done.

For those who have concern about spending, they can actually come and offer cuts or they can offer replacements. This is the place where if you want government to work your way, it is your day and you do it through the amendment process.

Most Americans don't understand that in order to debate a bill on the Senate floor, you have to first file a motion to proceed. That is asking permission to come to the floor to take up the bill. So we had to have a cloture vote on it. OK, it passed 95 to 3. I think it is the will of the Senate to get it going, and let's get these amendments—get it on with the amendments.

Are there anxieties on both sides about the nature of those amendments? Sure. But that is what amendments are. Some we can take, some we need to debate.

We are the greatest deliberative body in the world. We have to start deliberating.

I say to my friends who are pondering how to proceed, the best way to proceed is look at the agreement we had in 2011 that allowed for amendments, a regular order, a methodical process for considering those amendments, and then we would be able to get on them, be able to debate them. My suggestion would be that we would alternate sides, a Democratic amendment, a Republican amendment—hey, maybe even a bipartisan amendment.

I hope we do not spin our wheels and spin the clock for 8½ more hours, because the American people know that after all is said and done, more gets said than gets done.

I am suggesting—really—let's follow the regular order. The process I am recommending is not new. There are no surprises, there are no stunts. It is a process we have followed in the past. I am suggesting, along with Senator SHELBY, the exact model we used 3 years ago, the last time appropriations were on the floor.

There are those who say in this country we have a spending problem. If you think we have a spending problem, this is the time to come to the floor and debate. If you think we have a spending problem and we are spending too much on the Justice Department—if you think it is too much money on bulletproof vests for cops or shelters for battered women, come on. If you think there is too much money in the space program, you don't like this rocket ship or that satellite, this is the place to come. Offer amendments. We are ready to debate.

I speak for my two other subcommittee chairs, Senator MURRAY on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies, and Senator PRYOR on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. We are already in consultation with the other side of the aisle. Senator COLLINS on transportation and Senator BLUNT on agriculture are also ready to debate.

I would hope we could move forward, have a method for moving forward that promotes regular order. If we do that, I think Members who haven't experienced too much—because of our gridlock and deadlock and the lock on amendments that we actually—I think they are going to like it because they like democracy. If you like the Constitution, if you like democracy, this is the place where we can put it into place today.

Before I yield the floor, I note that the leadership from the Republican side is in conference with Senator SHELBY. I hope that is good news.

Then for those on both sides of the aisle watching the process on the floor, if you have amendments, start to gear up and get ready to bring them over. Senator SHELBY and I are here. We are ready to receive them. We are ready to get ready to do them, we are ready to talk about them, and set the stage for hearing them.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, with what is happening in Iraq, what is happening with the claim of lost IRS emails from Lois Lerner, what is happening in the developments of the Benghazi investigation, what is happening in Ukraine, and what could happen in Afghanistan, it is easy—perhaps too easy—to overlook a crisis occurring right here in America on our southern border. That crisis is easily described as a wave of humanity coming across our southern border from Central America.

Tragically, tens of thousands of the people coming across our borders seeking refuge in the United States are children—unaccompanied minors—from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. The question we should ask ourselves is, Why are we seeing this unprecedented increase in the number of unaccompanied minors coming across our southwestern border?

As we can see, in 2011 there were 6,560 detained. But that number has grown steadily, from 2012, 2013, and now 2014. So far 47,000 minors—unaccompanied children—have been detained coming across our border, primarily from Central America. It is estimated that this 60,000 number will likely double next year unless something is done.

These children—and their parents are enabling this—are crossing the border because of a widespread perception that they will be allowed to stay here. The reason for that perception is a series of events—a series of stated changes in policy—which have given the impression that President Obama does not have a commitment to enforce our immigration laws.

None of us denies that Central America's Northern Triangle is plagued by drug cartels, street gangs, rampant violence, and deeply entrenched poverty. There is no doubt about it. The fact is that the majority of people coming across the southwestern border these days are not from Mexico; they are from Central America. They are coming through a 500-mile strip of border between Guatemala and Mexico, making their way up the Mexican coast in areas largely controlled by the Zetas—a criminal organization, a drug cartel which has basically figured this is another way to make money. In other words, they not only traffic in drugs, they traffic in people, and now, quite honestly, they are trafficking in tens of thousands of children.

The massive spike in unaccompanied minors, of course, seemed to start to take off when President Obama announced in 2012 his so-called deferred action plan. To be clear and to be fair, this deferred action announcement where the President said he would not deport certain categories or classes of children would not apply to the children coming across the border today. So we might wonder, why in the world do they keep coming?

Well, that was not an isolated event in 2012. Just to remind my colleagues, this deferred action announcement came 2 years after John Morton, who was the Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, circulated a memo declaring that the enforcement of U.S. immigration laws against most illegal aliens was now a lower priority. That memo went out in June of 2010.

A few months later several colleagues and I sent a letter to then-Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano expressing our concern that the administration's selective enforcement of our immigration statutes was jeopardizing public safety and breeding contempt for the rule of law. That letter read, in part:

> Numerous criminal aliens are being released into society and are having proceedings terminated simply because ICE has decided that such cases do not fit within the Department's chosen enforcement priorities. It appears that ICE is enforcing the law based on criteria it arbitrarily chose with complete disregard for the enforcement laws created by Congress.

Then, in the second Morton memo the following June, then-Director Morton sent around another memo which further advised U.S. immigration authorities to systemically reconsider hundreds of thousands of immigration cases and to make them low priorities to enforce immigration laws against millions of people illegally present in the United States. That second Morton

memo went even further than the first in looking at everyone—all the undocumented population here in the United States—and saying: We are going to reconsider our priorities in terms of repatriation of those individuals should they be detained by ICE. That June 2011 memo laid the groundwork for the deferred action program the President announced a year later, which was 2012, and these programs were extended earlier this month.

The average was about 6,500; then it doubled in 2012; and then it doubled again in 2013; and then it is scheduled to double again in 2014.

The administration has continued to treat the vast majority of illegal immigrants as low-priority offenders, thereby creating perverse incentives for people to cross the border. If people don't believe there is any consequence associated with entering the country in violation of our immigration laws, they are going to continue to do it. As the distinguished Presiding Officer knows, law enforcement has more than just what I would call a goal-line defense priority. In other words, deterrence is very important. Obviously, people are not being deterred.

Perversely, people are being encouraged by this series of events to show up at the border—and, of course, in huge numbers—overwhelming Border Patrol, which is now no longer looking uniformly at drug dealers and human smuggling operations. Now they are trying to take care of children and trying to get them to a safe place to live and to take care of them.

John Sandweg, who served as the ICE Director from 2013 to 2014, recently told the Los Angeles Times:

> If you are a run-of-the-mill immigrant here illegally, your odds of getting deported are close to zero.

It is just unlikely to happen. That message has obviously gotten through to folks in Central America, who, admittedly, are living in a very tough neighborhood, and it has encouraged many of them to risk their lives and their children's lives on an extremely dangerous journey through this region of Mexico covered by the drug cartels.

Actually, it is part of the business model of the drug cartels to encourage this flow of illegal migration from Central America through Mexico because they effectively get paid a tax by the coyotes and human smugglers who smuggle people through this dangerous region. One of the ways they come is on the top of one of these trains.

This is a shot of a train they call The Beast. It has been well documented and written about by a Salvadoran journalist, Oscar Martinez, in a book he wrote in 2013 which is chilling, but it describes the journey from Central America through Mexico on the top of one of these trains and the risk of accident, the likelihood of sexual assault—6 to 8 out of 10 migrant women are sexually assaulted—people who are kidnapped for ransom, and people who are killed who don't comply with the dictates of the drug cartels.

Don't take just my word for it.

Last week the Washington Post confirmed that the influx of unaccompanied minors:

> . . . is being driven in large part by the perception that they will be allowed to stay under the Obama administration's immigration policies.

The New York Times recently told the story of a 13-year-old Honduran boy who was detained in Mexico while trying to reach the United States. Like so many others across Central America, the Times reported this boy

> . . . said his mother believed that the Obama administration had quietly changed its policy regarding unaccompanied minors and that if he made it across he would have a better shot at staying.

The distinguished Senator from Maryland is here.

Not only is this affecting States such as Texas, but these children, 1,000 of them, are being effectively warehoused in Lackland Air Force base in San Antonio, TX, some are being shipped to Arizona and California, and some are being sent—or at least the plan is to send them—to Virginia and Maryland, because these 47,000 children who have been detained since October of last year are overwhelming the capacity of local communities and State and Federal authorities to deal with them. As I said, The Beast, which transports people 1,000 miles or so on a trip from southern Mexico up to the southern border of Texas, is a horrific way to transit that huge expanse.

Migrant women are preyed upon by drug cartels such as the Zetas. Officials from the mayor's office in Ciudad Hidalgo told Oscar Martinez, the author of the book ''The Beast,'' in Ciudad Hidalgo the Zetas control all trafficking, sending men to recruit women in Central America, and sometimes even kidnapping migrant women riding the buses. They sell the women to truck-drivers for a night, and then throw them away like unwanted scraps.

My point is, there is nothing humane about encouraging people to travel through cartel-dominated smuggling routes in the hopes of reaching the United States. Yet that has been the effect of the perception that the President and his administration are not committed to enforcing our immigration laws. I know that wasn't their intention but that has been the consequence. Even before the ongoing border crisis erupted, people were taking notice of the President's disregard for the rule of law.

Last December, for example, a Federal district court judge in Brownsville, TX, absolutely excoriated the Obama administration for making a mockery of enforcement, noting that the President's policies were incentivizing human traffickers and endangering the lives of children. Here is what Federal Judge Andrew Hanen said:

> By fostering an atmosphere whereby illegal aliens are encouraged to pay human smugglers for further services, the government is not only allowing them to fund the illegal and evil activities of these cartels, but is also inspiring them to do so.

That is a Federal district judge in Brownsville, TX.

One final point. Some of my friends across the aisle have argued that if only Congress would pass President Obama's preferred immigration reforms, the current border crisis would never have happened. That ignores the fact that none of these children qualify for any of the deferred action policies either ordered in 2012 or any of the others I mentioned. But there is the perception caused by the first Morton memo, the second Morton memo, then the deferred action announcement, and now the widely publicized news that the President has instructed Jeh Johnson, the Secretary of Homeland Security, to reconsider the entire repatriation and deportation policy, and it is clear this is related to the upcoming midterm election and the President's desire to try to make a point.

The problem is his point is backfiring. It is victimizing the very same people the President believes, I think, that he is trying to help. That is what happens when the rule of law is no longer your priority—unintended consequences. As I explained today, the President's actions have helped cause this humanitarian crisis.

I know the Finance Committee has in subcommittee appropriated I think roughly $2 billion to help the Federal authorities to deal with this humanitarian crisis. Unfortunately, unless we are able to process appropriations bills across the floor of the Senate, I don't know when that money is going to be available, and that is another problem.

But the most fundamental problem is the American people's confidence that the Federal Government will enforce the laws, until such time as those laws are changed, has been undermined. Passing new legislation will do nothing to fix that unless the President is willing to enforce laws that have already been passed by Congress. This isn't a problem of passing some more laws; this is a problem of the President and his administration effectively conveying the message that they are not going to enforce the laws they don't want to enforce. Unless we send a clear, unambiguous message that our border is secure and our immigration laws are being enforced, we can expect more and more Central American migrants to embark on the harrowing journey from Central America up through Mexico, which means more of them will be robbed, kidnapped, raped, and killed. We don't know how many start out on this journey. All we know is how many show up on the border. We ought to be concerned about that.

To be clear, I remain personally committed to fixing all aspects of our broken immigration system, but I cannot and will not support any policy that effectively empowers human traffickers and endangers the lives of these children.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, before the Senator from Texas leaves—and I know we have other matters to discuss—first I want to make a comment and then I have a question.

I want to thank the Senator from Texas for that very compelling presentation. I might not agree with every sentence, but I think the Senator painted a picture of what is happening at the border. We do have a humanitarian crisis.

As chair of the Appropriations Committee, I was made aware of this last year by Secretary Sebelius when they asked for more money to help. I said, yes, more money to help, but we needed to plan. What were we going to do with this? So now these numbers have surged, and what it has become is these children effectively function as refugees.

This portrait the Senator has portrayed—the horrific sense of The Beast, and human beings, women and children, and boys, as well, being sold as if they were commodities? Commodities. It gives you goosebumps. The Senator has painted a very compassionate and compelling picture.

My question, though, is we have to deal with the immediate crisis now. But as the Senator talks about the enforcement on the border, what would the Senator recommend we do?

In other words, the pictures I have seen—and I hope I will go down and see this for myself—is the children come up to the border control guy, some as young as 4 and 5 years old and some go up to the early teens. Some teens carry their younger siblings. Is the Senator saying we should turn them away? These are not provocative questions. We have to work across the aisle to deal with this issue constructively, humanely, and effectively.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if I may respond to the distinguished Senator's question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mr. CORNYN. I appreciate the Senator's leadership and big heart. This is not a political issue. The first and most important thing we need to do is to pursue the best interests of these children, but we cannot simply deal with our immigration problem, illegal immigration problem, at the border. It has to start back in Central America. That is one reason I am glad Vice President JOE BIDEN is traveling to Guatemala, as I know Jeh Johnson, the Secretary of Homeland Security has, to try to see what they can do.

We then need to try to persuade our friends in Mexico to commit more resources. Perhaps we can persuade them to deal with the 500-mile southern border that is basically controlled by the cartels. But the cartels are making money. So this is a governance issue in Central America and Mexico as well.

I might point out that perhaps with the same reservations the distinguished Senator from Maryland made about not agreeing with everything I said, but much of what I said, what I have said has I think pretty much been echoed by my friend Representative HENRY CUELLAR from Laredo, TX, who obviously by virtue of where he lives and was raised is very knowledgeable about the border around Laredo and Mexico and Central America.

I saw an interview with our former First Lady Hillary Clinton, that unless we send a very clear and loud message to people in Central America that you should not come, you should not risk your children making this long, harrowing journey because they will not be able to stay, then they are going to keep coming, because right now when these children come here, as the Senator knows, our capacity to deal with them is overwhelmed at the local level, at the State level, and at the Federal level, and they are essentially being treated like refugees and warehoused in places such as Lackland Air Force Base and other places around the country.

You can imagine the impact in the long run not only on the health care system, on education, and other services that would be required to take care of these children until they can be repatriated. But I would align myself with what former Senator Clinton, the former Secretary of State, said: The President and the administration need to send a very clear and loud message that anyone who comes to the United States will be returned to their country of origin once a safe family member can be identified to repatriate these children. But right now the system is so overwhelmed that we don't even know who these children are being placed with in America. They may be some claimed family member, but I am not sure whether there are background checks being done for criminal history or perhaps sex offense.

This is overwhelming the whole system. I am sure working together we can come up with an improvement over where we are now, and I would point out this is not a partisan issue, but it is a very harsh reality and my concern is it is being overwhelmed by the news out of the Middle East and other concerns here in Washington when it is very much front and center back home in Texas.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the senior Senator from Texas, a former attorney general, as I recall. The Senator knows the law, he knows the border, and he knows what is going on.

This Senator looks at this too as not only the chair of the Appropriations Committee but as a social worker. The care of the children even in our own country gives me pause.

They were originally looking at a closed Social Security building to house these children, with no bathrooms except down the hall, putting them in little office cubicles. So we have a very serious problem.

I want the Senator from Texas to know I agree with the holding that we need to have the strong and clear message in Central America, first of all, that these rumors are false.

Today is not the day to do this. I thank the Senator for his compelling comments. I would like to work with the Senator from Texas and also continue to work with the administration to focus on this. But the message does have to go to Central America. I think we are fair game in Central America. From what I have heard, there are all these radio ads and so on that are truly exploiting this. There is violence, there is ghoulish, grim violence against children in Central America. Desperate mothers and grandmothers are trying to look for a way out. They are being exploited. I am going to work with the Senator in any way I can to stem the flow, deal with the humanitarian crisis, and get a long-range solution. I appreciate this conversation going forward.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator and look forward to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. President, I rise today not only as a Senator from Montana, but as a veteran of the long and difficult war in Iraq. Like most Americans, the increasing instability in Iraq and the disintegration of the country along sectarian boundaries has me deeply concerned. This past weekend when I was home in Montana and talking to Montanans, they were very concerned about what was going on in Iraq; they express their interest to me about Iraq on a regular basis.

The heinous advance of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, their systematic execution of Iraqi soldiers, and the murder of innocent civilians gives pause to people everywhere.

I stand here today as a veteran and as a father whose son has been deployed multiple times. I wish to recognize my son today, who is with me today. I ask that my son Michael stand and be recognized.

We fought in the war that Washington began based on false information—a war that ended and from which we must move on.

I led an infantry battalion—the 1st Battalion, 163rd Infantry—into combat, which was made up of more than 100 of Montana's finest. Our area of operation was from just north of Tikrit—from Baiji—to Kirkuk, which is the very same area being fought over today.

It was late 2004 and the country had fallen into a bitter sectarian conflict—a conflict that unfolded after the dismantling of the Baathist-led army and fueled by ancient divides between the Shias and Sunnis. Those same disputes are again boiling over in Iraq today.

From the end of 2004 to late 2005, my unit fought to hold ground, secure roads, and build infrastructure. We worked with local sheiks and key leaders to forge a path to peace. We helped return Iraq's government to its people. While there we oversaw two successful elections and watched with hope and

great satisfaction as the Iraqis ratified their constitution. It was during this time that I also dispatched a team from the battalion to focus solely on training and assisting members of the newly formed Iraqi army.

During our unit's entire deployment in Iraq while fighting the insurgency, we faced rocket attacks, snipers, and improvised explosive devices on a daily basis. Four of my men were killed in action, and there is not a day that goes by that I don't think of those men and their families: MSG Robbie D. McNary of Lewistown, MT, died on March 31, 2005; SSG Kevin Davis of Lebanon, OR, died on April 8, 2005; SGT Timothy Kiser of Tehama, CA, died on April 28, 2005; and SGT Travis Arndt, died on September 21, 2005. Travis was from Bozeman, MT. Scores of other soldiers were injured.

One of my soldiers died by suicide after returning home to Montana. He was a victim of the invisible wounds of war.

Nearly 4,500 Americans have been killed in Iraq, among them 28 Montana heroes. Some 32,000 Americans have been wounded. The war cost us more than $2 trillion—I say more than $2 trillion—most of which Congress put on a credit card so our grandchildren can pay the debt.

Because this Nation has failed to prepare for new veterans returning home, we now have a crisis of care within our VA health care system—a system that is overwhelmed after more than a decade of war.

Today we are seeing 22 veterans die by suicide each and every single day across this country. These are the true costs of war. Montanans understand this, and Americans understand this.

Because I work for Montanans, and I am listening to them, I call on President Obama to use extreme caution when considering options to deal with the sectarian violence that we are seeing take place in Iraq today. America cannot afford another Iraq financially or the human costs that are associated with war. We did our job there, and we did it with honor and integrity. Our men and women should be very proud of their success, and the citizens of this country should be proud of the accomplishments of the men and women who served in our armed forces.

Today some are suggesting we make an open-ended commitment to Iraq and keep American troops on the ground indefinitely. Sending thousands of America's young men and women back into Iraq to step into the middle of a civil war is not a solution.

To my fellow Members of Congress, I urge temperance as we navigate this difficult terrain because I know that foreign policy failures made in Washington fall disproportionately on the backs of young men and women from the small towns across Montana and the country.

I have seen war up close and, like too many American families, I have seen the cost of war up close on families and on communities all across this country.

I believe it is now time for the Iraqis to secure and defend their own nation. The embrace of their own self-determination is the only path to a true and everlasting peace in Iraq.

I wish to remind the American people of the costs that have been associated with the war in Iraq. We are dealing with a crisis within the VA health care system. At one time over a year ago, we had over 450,000 men and women on a backlog list trying to get in to see a health care provider.

Today that backlog has been significantly reduced, but we still have a problem within the VA health care system. We put over 2 million American veterans into that health care system without making sure that the system was ready for them when they came home. Can you imagine sending over 2 million American servicemembers into Iraq or Afghanistan—or anywhere else in the world—whom we didn't train, equip, or provide the resources for them to go into Iraq?

When people talk to me about the cost of war, I think this is a cost that we sometimes overlook because when our men and women return from Iraq, the war is not over. We will be dealing with this cost for many years.

As we talk about the men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan and contemplating our extension of deployment in Afghanistan, a figure has been thrown around as to the costs. Today it costs approximately $1.2 million for a soldier in Afghanistan. When we reduce the number of soldiers in Afghanistan from 32,000 to less than 10,000, that cost goes up to $2.3 million. Again, we are planning to put that cost on the credit card.

We have a responsibility, and that responsibility lies on the citizens of this Nation and on the citizens of Montana. We must continue to look out for these people.

I don't want to be an isolationist. I understand there are problems in Iraq and Afghanistan, but we have to take care of our problems here in Washington, DC.

As I travel back to Montana and talk to Montanans, they are concerned about our debt. They know we have a spending problem, and we have to take care of that spending problem. But sending our soldiers to Iraq or extending their stay in Afghanistan is not going to solve the problems we are dealing with there.

Again, America cannot afford another Iraq financially or the human costs that are associated with Iraq. We owe it to the citizens of this Nation.

The Members of the Senate need to ask themselves: If it were my son or daughter who was going to be sent into Iraq to fight in a sectarian conflict, would I be as willing to do that as I am today without having someone I care for sent over there?

We hear about suggestions on a daily basis about what we should be doing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I know we are dealing with a difficult situation there, but we have to make the right decision. We have to look out for the United States of America and what is happening here in America.

I think that too many of my fellow Members of Congress are too abrupt and think too quickly about what we should do in Iraq. I believe they need to take a step back and think about the impacts—the second and third order of effects of continuing to send our men and women back over to Iraq.

As I said, I know that foreign policy failures made in Washington will fall disproportionately on the backs of smalltown America—towns like Culbertson, MT, Livingston, MT, and Boulder, MT. It is not the large cities that will bear the burden of sending men and women back into Iraq.

I have also mentioned I have seen war up close. I still recall the ramp ceremonies we held shortly after the deaths of the men and women in Iraq. We had to have those men and women out of there within a 12-hour period. Those were very difficult times to deal with not only for me but for the other 700-plus men and women who were deployed with me to Iraq.

Again, I cannot overemphasize how important I think it is that we really step back, take a look at what is happening in Iraq and determine if this is really the best thing for the United States of America. Is it the best thing for our military to have to deal with?

We have been at war for over 13 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our military will do whatever we ask of it, but we also have to think about the families of our service men and women, the impacts that the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan have had on them with the number of divorces, broken marriages, and broken families. Those are also the costs of war we are having to deal with.

There are no easy answers to what is happening in Iraq, and I know we will come together and come up with a solution, and I hope it is the right solution because these are very important times. Who knows what will happen next? Will it happen in the Middle East? Will it happen in Europe? I don't think that anyone knows, and we have to be prepared.

Again, I have said it once and I wish to emphasize this point again: I believe it is time for the Iraqis to secure and defend their own nation. We heard they have over 17 divisions. Think about the size of those divisions. A division of the United States is nearly 20,000 soldiers, and I am sure that an Iraqi division is somewhere in that same capacity. They have 17 divisions—4 of which we hear have dropped their weapons and fallen back, but that still leaves 13 divisions they would have to fight, and so they can make a stance to protect their country.

I am calling on the Members of this Senate to ask the Iraqi people to stand up and fight for their country.

I thank the Chair.

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. 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, I come to the floor to make an objection, if necessary, to an effort to submarine the President's climate change initiative, which two-thirds of all Americans support and which a huge number of major name-brand American corporations supported and which is supported by those whom we trust to lead our national defense and our national security interests. But something about this building, something about this place makes it a place where the polluting interests have wildly disproportionate sway, so we keep seeing these attacks on environmental regulations. So it is actually kind of fortunate timing that I am here because it gives me a chance, for the 71st time, to try to wake this body up to the harm carbon pollution is causing to our oceans, to our economy, to our wildlife, and to our health.

I traveled recently to New Hampshire. I have been traveling around the country, going to States that are facing the carbon predicament and seeing how they are doing it.

I can tell my colleagues that Granite Staters are facing up to the daunting challenges of climate change. Rhode Islanders understand that New Hampshire's challenges are like our own. We see similar threats in our own State. At the Newport, RI, tide gauge, right at our naval station, sea level is up almost 10 inches since the 1930s. In the winter, we are three to four degrees warmer in Narragansett Bay. The recent ''National Climate Assessment'' report concludes that Rhode Island will see even more rising sea level, warmer temperatures, and extreme weather.

New Hampshire showed that there is plenty of Yankee good sense up there as well. The people of New Hampshire get it, and they are taking steps to tackle climate change. Let me first say that no one pretended it isn't real. The first line of defense on the other side of the aisle is that climate change isn't real. No one I spoke to in New Hampshire is pretending it isn't real.

University of New Hampshire expert Cameron Wake told me that New Hampshire is ''getting wetter and getting warmer,'' and they pointed out that it is happening fast. The ''National Climate Assessment'' shows that due to climate change, the Northeast already has seen 70 percent more extreme precipitation in recent years—dramatic downpours that increase the risk of flooding. This University of New Hampshire data shows an even more severe problem for New Hampshire. Dr. Wake told me that he and his University of New Hampshire colleagues have collected data from southern New Hampshire on what they call ''extreme precipitation events''—what we might call a rain burst, where over 4 inches of rain falls in just 48 hours. The data show these rain bursts have increased 4 to 10 times since 1960, and they will only grow more frequent through the rest of the century, Wake and his University of New Hampshire colleagues report.

That brings us to the warmer part of the wetter-and-warmer equation. The University of New Hampshire's recent studies show the State's temperature has increased by twice the global average, happening in large part due to what Dr. Wake calls ''snow dynamics'': Warmer temperatures during New Hampshire's winter mean less snow. Less snow exposes more dark ground underneath. The dark ground absorbs more heat, and it warms faster than if it were covered in reflective snow—what scientists call high albedo snow. So the ground then warms the air—and on goes the cycle.

At Plymouth State University, the Appalachian Mountain Club has data which show temperature increases in Pinkham Notch in New Hampshire's White Mountains. The average increase in temperature has climbed over 75 years. Then, if we look at the average over 50 years, we see that the line has steepened and it is accelerating, and if we look at the line for the last 25 years, it has steepened again and the increase is accelerating further. So New Hampshire's temperatures aren't just rising, they are rising faster.

What do these temperatures mean for Granite Staters? Well, big changes to their winter industries, such as skiing. Six years ago Ben Wilcox, who is the general manager of the ski resort Mount Cranmore in North Conway, NH, was using 40 to 50 snow guns to cover his ski mountain. Now he is using 150. In the last 5 years, Wilcox reports, ski mountains in his region have invested in over 1,700 new top-of-the-line snow guns, capable of making three to four times the amount of snow of previous models, so they can offset the snowpack loss from the shorter winters. That makes them lucky. But when people down the mountain don't see snow, they don't think about skiing, so they don't go.

Stefan Hausmann is the owner of Zimmermann's Ski and Snowboard Shop in Nashua, NH. He told me his business sees this in fewer new skiers and snowboarders buying their equipment at his store. He is still selling the higher end skis to established skiers at a pretty good clip, but he is selling less equipment to beginners. Those lower end customers just aren't coming in the door, says Hausmann.

Of course, New Hampshire's winter tourism industry goes far beyond skiing. The New Hampshire Department of Travel and Economic Development says 34 million visitors travel to the Granite State and spend roughly $4.6 billion. This makes tourism the State's second largest industry, and climate change hits a lot of it.

For instance, snowmobilers and Nordic skiers come to New Hampshire's backcountry for more than 7,000 miles of trails. If you are a ski mountain, you can crank snow out onto your busy ski slopes. It is not so easy when you are talking about snowmobile trails or Nordic skiing trails. So the ski business of trail skiing and the snowmobile business is taking a hit.

The Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, based in North Woodstock, NH, has found that snow cover has decreased by 22 days since I was born in 1955, and the frozen lakes included in those trail systems that snowmobilers and Nordic skiers use are covered in ice less of the year—33 less days on Mirror Lake just since 1967, for example. As one Granite Stater told me, this hit not just the trails but the hotels, restaurants, snowmobile shops, and outdoor outfitters who depend on that market.

Of course, it is not just sports. Jamey French of Portsmouth, the CEO and president of Northland Forest Products, told me how climate change is affecting two of New Hampshire's most valuable hardwoods—the sugar maple and the yellow birch.

Sugar maples, of course, support New Hampshire's maple sugar industry, but they also draw leaf peepers who travel to view the spectacular foliage that blankets the New Hampshire landscape in the autumn. As New Hampshire and neighboring States get warmer, the trees' geographic range moves north. Scientists predict that future warming will exacerbate this trend, meaning more production of maple syrup in Canada and less in the United States—bad news for New Hampshire's maple sugar houses.

As for the yellow Birch, Mr. French points out that in the 1940s and 1950s, most of the furniture in New England was made out of yellow birch, and yellow birch remains a valuable hardwood, drawing good prices for New Hampshire's timber business.

French fears the consequences for his industry if yellow birch and sugar maples are pushed northwards and out by warmer-weather trees. ''Will there be a wood product industry?'' he asks. ''Will there be a maple sugar industry in a climate-changed New England? There is going to be a lot less of one,'' he concludes.

New Hampshire biologist Eric Orrf is witnessing one of the most dramatic changes. He studies the moose—an animal that is bred to survive harsh northern winters. But what Orrf sees is a catastrophic decline in moose population mostly due to the success of moose ticks. This is going to get a little bit gross, so forgive me. Moose ticks breed more easily and they survive longer in milder winters. Orrf explains—these are his words:

What happens when we have an early spring, when winter ticks fall off on bare

ground, is they thrive. They lay their eggs. They are successful at reproducing. Then, in the fall, in November, when the baby moose ticks are hanging together, if there is no snow, then by the thousands, tens of thousands, they get on the calves. Now for these calves, they'd literally have to resupply their blood supply two times over to survive the winter. They suck them dry.

I think one tick is pretty revolting. The idea of tens of thousands of ticks on a moose calf, sucking the blood out of the calf so fast that it can't keep up, is a truly grisly thought. They literally ''suck them dry,'' according to Orrf.

Jim O'Brien of the New Hampshire Audubon Society told me how climate change is affecting the State's bird. New Hampshire's State bird is the purple finch. It is the official bird of New Hampshire. It is a cold-weather bird with a range up to Canada. He said this:

The purple finch is at the southern end of its range, and, in all likelihood, our state bird isn't going to be found in the State of New Hampshire anymore.

So while we dawdle and delay in Congress thanks to the influence of big polluters, there is work to be done out there. Thankfully, States across the country, knowing the risks of doing nothing and knowing the costs of doing nothing, are starting to act.

I have been to the Southeast coast. I have been to the Midwest. I have seen wind parks in Iowa with 500 wind turbines generating more than a quarter of the State's electricity. I went South. I saw Republican mayors and county officials in the Southeast putting climate and energy policy at the center of their government's plans.

I saw it again in New Hampshire, Granite Staters who understand the risks all too well. The University of New Hampshire recently released two—not one but two—comprehensive reports about climate change, one for northern New Hampshire and one for southern New Hampshire. I have them with me. New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan has played a pivotal role in making sure this work gets done and in developing and operating New England's Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which we call ''Reggi,'' which is already at work reducing our region's carbon pollution and providing a model for how other States can succeed under the powerplant regulations.

We are already seeing our States—our laboratories of democracy—taking sensible steps down the path to reducing carbon emissions. The EPA rule for carbon pollution from powerplants will encourage that State role. Just this morning the Wall Street Journal and NBC News released polling saying two-thirds of Americans support President Obama's new climate rule, and more than half say the United States should go for it and deal with global warming even if it means higher electricity bills for them. People in America get it. It is only this building that is isolated by polluter influence.

It is time for Congress to wake up, and we will if the American people will give us a good shake. It is time to wake up.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BRIANNA VANCE

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize a remarkably brave, very young West Virginian, 10-year-old Brianna Vance, who helped save her father's life just last week—truly amazing. It was on Twitter, all over the pages.

On June 10, as a severe storm—and with all of the severe storms we have been having all over the country—tore through her neighborhood in Henlawson, WV, Brianna's father Gregory and two of his friends were sitting on the porch when lightning struck a nearby very large tree that crashed down on top of them and their home.

Brianna tried to use her phone to call for help, but the storm had knocked out all of the cell services. She had nothing. She could not do a thing. Remarkably, she was still able to access the Internet and quickly logged onto Facebook—just by a miracle.

In an extraordinary demonstration of courage and resourcefulness, Brianna posted a video, and I have seen this video. If you haven't, please go to Brianna's Facebook page, ''Brianna Vance,'' and look at it. She asked anyone who had cell phone service or access to a phone to please call 911 and send an ambulance to her yellow house to save her daddy.

She thought, had enough presence about her during this very trying and emotional time. When people see the video, I think it will explain and speak for itself.

Thankfully, someone saw her post and a rescue team was able to save the three victims, including her father, because of that Facebook post.

When all other options failed, Brianna did not give up. She still had the presence of thought and her desire to help her father and his friends.

Because of her sharp wit and resourcefulness, her father is alive and recovering today—just in time to celebrate Father's Day together, as we just finished up this past weekend.

I am so proud of Brianna, and I know her family and community are as well, as can be expected when we have situations not just in West Virginia but in the Presiding Officer's own State of Ohio and all over this great country, where we have family bonds such as this and we have family stories that have good outcomes that we do not hear enough of.

I thank Brianna for her heroism that helped save the lives of her father and his friends. She should be recognized for her bravery.

So I say, Brianna, on behalf of the grateful State of West Virginia, thank you for what you have done for your father and his friends and showing the courage you have as a young West Virginian.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. 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. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon because this week the Senate has a chance to take another crucial step away from the political cliffs and manufactured crises of previous years and to get back to the regular order—to get back to the considered, measured, orderly process on this floor that for so long was characteristic of this body, in the past considered the greatest deliberative body on Earth, but in recent years it has ground to a halt.

It is critical that we return to regular order and that we return to the steady consideration of appropriations bills in a way that will move not just the Senate and this Congress but this country forward.

I thank the chair and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, Senators MIKULSKI and SHELBY, for their leadership and their steadfast determination to work in a bipartisan manner and bring us back to regular order.

We are considering today a collection—or what is called today a ''minibus'' instead of an omnibus—of three appropriations bills: Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration; Commerce, Justice, and Science; and Transportation and Housing and Urban Development—an unbelievable scope across these three appropriations bills that could in combination make a real and significant difference for our communities, our States, and our country. This is an opportunity for this Congress to carry out its duties to provide oversight and direction and to help all the different agencies I just named move forward and address some of our most important priorities.

As a member myself of the Appropriations Committee, I have advocated for some of what are our Nation's top priorities embedded in these three important bills. So I wish to speak for a few minutes about how these bills will, first, help my home State of Delaware; second, help our country; and then, third, the important obligation we have as Senators to return to regular order and to use the appropriations process for oversight and for management of this whole Federal project.

For Delaware, these three bills invest in a number of areas. I could talk about literally dozens of matters critical to my home State, but let me focus on two—public safety and infrastructure.

When we think about it at the local level—where I served for a decade in county government—these are the foundation of what government does and does well: Keep our people, homes, communities, and families safe, and provide for the sewer water, drinking water, and the highways and tollways and bridges and ports that are critical to moving commerce and our country forward.

This bill extends children's advocacy centers. Let me talk for a few minutes about what children's advocacy centers are and why it is so vital to public safety.

Children's advocacy centers allow communities to bring child abusers to justice without retraumatizing their victims. Children's advocacy centers are unique because it is a model that brings together, under one roof in one place, law enforcement, prosecutors, counselors, and child service professionals—all focusing on how to best care for and move forward with a child who has been a victim of abuse.

In Delaware we have three centers—one in each of our three counties. And although I wish we didn't need them, the fact is they are indispensable. In my experience in a decade of local government, I was exposed over and over to the critical role they play in helping law enforcement secure critical evidence and move forward to conviction against the monsters who commit abuse against our children.

Since the creation of these centers, they have transformed our Nation's response to child abuse, giving families hope and guidance in their darkest moments and delivering justice to those who have endured the worst.

As we work together to continue to try our best to keep our children safe, this bill allows us to continue to fund child advocacy centers so we can have a more efficient, more effective, more federally sponsored and coordinated way to deliver at a very modest cost this vital resource for our children.

Second, as we work to keep our children safe, this bill also allows us to protect those who protect us. Every day more than 1 million law enforcement officers across this country accept risks to their personal safety. As they leave their families at dawn and head off to their jobs, they know that what they accept as part of their mission is the risk they may not come home that night. That is why it is so important this bill also funds the bulletproof vest partnership.

In Delaware we know its value all too well. Last February at the New Castle County Courthouse in my hometown of Wilmington, DE, a gunman unleashed a hail of bullets into a courthouse lobby, tragically killing two. On what was a difficult morning in Wilmington, two lives were also saved—those of Sergeant Michael Manley and Corporal Steve Rinehart—members of the Delaware Capitol Police—officers who were wearing bulletproof vests funded by the Federal Bulletproof Vest Partnership. This is a partnership launched by my predecessor, now-Vice President BIDEN. It has been sustained on a bipartisan basis for many years, but without this appropriation, this vital Federal-State-law enforcement partnership would grind to a halt.

Vests work. They save lives. They save officers' lives, and with this bill we will be able to ensure even more officers all across this country have life-saving bulletproof vests.

Those are two areas where in law enforcement and public safety this bill continues critical investments in partnership from the Federal Government to State and local governments.

In recent weeks in Delaware we have also been reminded of just how critical our infrastructure is—our bridges, our roads, and highways.

There is a bridge on I–495 that goes across the Christina River. This is a vital highway for Wilmington and for the whole mid-Atlantic region. It carries 90,000 drivers a day, but 2 weeks ago it was closed indefinitely when workers nearby noticed four of its pillars were off plumb, were slanted, and then upon further investigation discovered there were cracks in the very foundation holding this bridge 50 feet in the air. Its closure is hurting families, businesses, and commuters, and it is just one in a string of recent emergencies all across our country that demonstrate the need for investment in fixing America's roads and bridges.

The funding we are considering this week in this bill recognizes that and takes steps to address some of our most urgent needs across this country. It continues to invest in two innovative funding vehicles: One called TIGER grants and another called TIFIA loans. These are acronyms, but they are inventive ways to mobilize private capital in partnership with States and the Federal Government, to get us moving again in repairing and upgrading the roads and bridges of America. They help State and local governments pay for new highways and bridges, public transit projects, railways, and ports.

In Delaware, the Port of Wilmington—a critical economic engine for our State and region—secured a $10 million TIGER grant last year to renovate facilities built in 1922. On U.S. 301, a little south and west of Wilmington but still in Delaware, TIFIA grants are helping us to do critical work to relieve congestion.

In southernmost Delaware at Georgetown, at the Sussex County Airport, we have also seen the vital role and the value of Federal investment. Since 2012, the Sussex County Airport has received $4 million in airport improvement grants to expand its runway and improve safety and to help grow manufacturing jobs at that Georgetown Airport. With this week's bill, we will be able to continue making these kinds of critical improvements at airports in Delaware and across our country.

I relatively rarely get to fly, but I commute virtually every day back and forth from Wilmington, DE, to Washington, and I ride on Amtrak when I do so. Today, ridership levels are at a record high, and Delaware's region in the Northeast corridor brings in $300 million in profits alone. So it is good this bill maintains Amtrak's national operations and investments in its capital needs, but I believe we need to do more. We need to step up and do more federally to invest if we want to keep these results, not just in the Northeast but across the country.

We have a more than $6 billion backlog to reach a state of good repair for Amtrak. As our bridges, tunnels, and rail lines get older and older, fixing them will only become more expensive. That is why I intend to offer an amendment to this bill to further increase our investment in the capital needs of Amtrak. This is critical. It is something we need, and we need to start chipping away at this long overdue debt we have, this unaddressed infrastructure debt, if we are going to continue to serve our communities.

There are many other great provisions in these incredibly broad bills that are of national and international importance. Let me just briefly reference a few.

At home manufacturing continues to be critical to our economy and our future, and biomanufacturing plays an increasingly important role; the manufacturing of products and materials from renewable sources, from plant-based sources rather than petrochemicals. For the first time, through this bill, we will dedicate $15 million to the National Science Foundation's budget for new biomanufacturing initiatives that will allow us to deploy in the marketplace new inventions and innovations.

Our competitors aren't holding back on doing so. Countries from the United Kingdom to China are ramping up their investments in new biomanufacturing. In my view it is time for the United States to refocus our research, to reprioritize our investments, and to stay competitive in this vital field.

Finally, I am proud these appropriations bills also support in the housing area funding for Community Development Block Grant—CDBG—Programs. We used them when I was in county government in Delaware to help rehabilitate homes, to help provide for affordable homes, and to help strengthen and sustain jobs in our communities.

In 2013, so-called CDBG, or Community Development Block Grants, helped 225 families. Some in this body have tried to cut CDBG, but I am thrilled we have been able to successfully move forward and sustain its support in this bill.

While we invest at home, these appropriations bills also make important

investments abroad. One I would like to briefly highlight is in our international food aid program, where we feed millions but can do more. This bill provides for flexibility of our food aid that will allow it to be delivered more efficiently, more quickly, and to feed more who hunger around the world.

As businesses also look abroad from the United States, we are doing more to open new markets for them. One of the investments I most value that is in this bill in this regard is the expansion of the Foreign Commercial Service at the Department of Commerce—in particular, its expansion in Africa, where 7 out of 10 of the fastest growing economies in the world are currently growing but where the United States isn't doing enough to take advantage of these burgeoning export markets for our products.

As chair of the African Affairs Subcommittee, I have had a chance to see up close the great opportunities for growth and partnership that Africa offers. There will be four new Foreign Commercial Service offices in Angola, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, as well as expansion in Kenya, Ghana, Morocco, and Libya. Now we can make investments in them jointly so our growing partnerships in the Sub-Saharan countries I listed can thrive.

As I close, I also make one brief point about why this whole process is important—why we need to pass these appropriations bills rather than just continuing resolutions, which go on from year after year, that sustain funding but do not engage the minds and skills of the Members of this body in doing oversight of the Federal Government.

As the Federal Government changes, as our Nation's needs change, we need to be able to ensure that our spending and our focus adapts as well. A great example from this particular minibus bill that is on the floor today is the Crude By Rail Safety Initiative. Within the last year there have been a number of accidents on our rail networks that demand our action. America is moving more and more oil and hazardous products by rail every year, so we are putting in place an approach to do it safely.

The Department of Transportation and Transportation Secretary Foxx have done a great job responding with the resources and tools they have, but Congress needs to do more. That is why this bill adds 20 new rail and hazardous materials inspectors, adds $3 million to ensure that oil routes are safe and sound, creates a new short-line safety institute, improves classifications, and extends training for first responders.

Without this appropriations bill and regular order, new and timely investments such as these that are responsive to conditions of the world wouldn't happen. Thus, if I might say in closing, while our economy changes, we need to change, and we need regular order and regular appropriations bills to be able to do that.

I again thank the chair and vice chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senators Mikulski and Shelby, for their leadership and their efforts to shepherd a bipartisan process forward. It is critical to our country, our economy, and our future.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to deliver my remarks in full.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the distinguished Senator BROWN be permitted to speak immediately following my remarks for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Thank you, Mr. President.

GUANTANAMO RELEASES

I rise today out of serious concern about the release of the five senior Taliban commanders detained at Guantanamo and the way in which the Obama administration has accomplished it.

These individuals that the Taliban successfully demanded the release of in exchange for SGT Bowe Bergdahl were some of the most dangerous terrorists in our custody. Some had close operational ties to Al Qaeda. Others perpetrated horrifying war crimes. All were senior leaders in the Taliban—a group with whom we remain at war.

These former detainees, the Taliban five, are only subject to a 1-year international travel ban. It seems shockingly unrealistic to expect that they will not seek to undo everything our brave men and women in uniform have fought and died for in Afghanistan.

However foolish, the prospect that we might release the most dangerous Guantanamo detainees has been a matter of national debate for some time. President Obama and his subordinates have long espoused a singular devotion to closing the detention facility at Guantanamo. Many of us in Congress have remained decidedly less sanguine about this longtime leftwing fantasy. We are wary of the dangers, inappropriateness, and oftentimes the impossibility of prosecuting battle-hardened terrorists in civilian court as if they were common criminals. We are frustrated by the procedural roadblocks to pursuing justice through military commissions. Above all else we are alarmed by the more than one in four released detainees who have apparently rejoined the fight. And unlike the administration, we have long been disabused of the notion that our enemies and perennial critics would somehow fall in love with America if we simply close Guantanamo.

With these concerns in mind, we exercised our rightful legislative authority under the Constitution to prevent the transfer of any further detainees out of Guantanamo. Nevertheless, the Obama administration bitterly opposed any release restrictions. Facing incessant and intense pressure from the administration to repeal our ban, Congress acted on a bipartisan basis to reach a compromise—a compromise that was extraordinarily generous to the administration's position.

Under the new law in effect—section 1035 of last year's National Defense Authorization Act—Congress must be notified 30 days before any detainee transfer. The notification must contain a detailed statement of the basis of transfer, an explanation of why the transfer is in the national security interests of the United States, and a description of the actions taken to mitigate the risks of detainees returning to the fight. Our subsequent funding legislation also banned the Obama administration from using any of the appropriated money to transfer detainees except in accordance with these agreed-upon procedures.

Despite this good-faith effort on the part of Congress to find common ground with the President, he chose to simply disregard his statutory obligations to inform Congress of this highly controversial release of the Taliban five. While we should celebrate the return of any American from Taliban captivity, the President's actions carry very troubling consequences.

When a lawmaker animatedly denounces the President's violation of a technical provision so wonky and seemingly unimportant as a statutory notification requirement, many Americans might understandably dismiss such a concern as a petty turf war—if their eyes don't glaze over first. Although perhaps intuitive, such an impression couldn't be more wrong.

First, notification requirements such as this one have proven critically beneficial to national security decision-making, particularly in the national security context. The most prominent example is our oversight of the intelligence community. For more than 30 years, prior congressional consultation has been a key foundation of ensuring effective policymaking on intelligence-gathering activities and covert operations.

On these incredibly sensitive and weighty issues, the executive branch is required to brief certain members of the legislative branch on all such proposed activities before they happen. The discussion of such highly classified information necessitates a strict observance of secrecy, which Congress has a long tradition of respecting. Discussions behind these closed doors provide the benefits of deliberation outside of the fishbowl of the ordinary policy process. In this setting concern about national security and the wisdom of the contemplated action dominate. Politics takes a back seat. The administration can modify or cancel proposed actions without the costs that attach to public policy pronouncements. And by assuaging our concerns before execution, the administration

gets the congressional buy-in that is so necessary when these sorts of difficult decisions are taken.

Although the system certainly has its critics on all sides, I remain a passionate believer in its overall effectiveness. I should know: I served on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence longer than any other Republican ever has. For years I was intimately involved in this process and witnessed up close just how well it works to produce good policy. In the context of national security—an area in which our Nation regularly faces so many critical and difficult decisions—we need a well-functioning congressional oversight process to ensure our safety and security, now more than ever.

But even beyond improving an administration's national security decisionmaking, we should genuinely concern ourselves as a nation that formal restraints on power be observed by the coordinate branches of our government. Whether the administration agrees with the restrictions on its power to release Guantanamo detainees, those restrictions remain enshrined in a duly-enacted Federal statute, and the President remains obligated to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

To ignore the law and the President's constitutional obligation to see that the law is enforced may seem enticing in an instance of apparent pressing need, but our Constitution provides no such authority.

Consider the wisdom of Justice Jackson in his seminal concurrence in the Steel Seizure case:

> The appeal . . . that we declare the existence of inherent powers [out of necessity] to meet an emergency asks us to do what many think would be wise, although it is something the forefathers omitted. They knew what emergencies were. . . . [T]hey made no express provision for exercise of extraordinary authority because of a crisis. I do not think we rightfully may so amend their work, and, if we could, I am not convinced it would be wise to do so. . . .

Indeed, the central organizing principle of the Federal Government is the division of powers and authorities between the different branches. As a 21st-century American, it is far too easy to treat the separation of powers as a cliche confined to the civics classroom rather than a meaningful cornerstone of our liberty. But we should recall Madison's warning in Federalist 47 that ''[t]he accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.''

To disregard these central precepts of constitutional government is to vitiate the barriers protecting us from arbitrary government action and to undermine the rule of law.

We in the Congress should make no apology for zealously guarding the legal prerogatives of the body in which we serve, for, as Madison also warned in Federalist 51, ''[T]he great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others.''

Nevertheless, out of respect for a coordinate branch of government, the Obama administration's arguments excusing its action in releasing these five dangerous Taliban detainees merits thoughtful consideration and analysis. I have never been shy about defending the powers of the President when exercised lawfully, no matter how unpopular. Nevertheless, such an examination of the Obama administration's explanations reveals not only the ridiculousness of its arguments but also demonstrates deeply concerning attitudes and priorities that guided the administration's action.

The Obama administration has advanced multiple distinct arguments about the legality of its move to release these senior Taliban leaders. Advancing multiple, sometimes contradictory arguments does not exactly instill confidence in the administration's commitment to its legal obligations. Some have been patently absurd, such as the suggestion from the White House Press Secretary that briefing Members of Congress more than 2 years ago about the potential for the detainee exchange constituted sufficient compliance with the detailed statutory notification requirements for an actual decision to transfer.

I want to examine the two more sophisticated rationales advanced by the administration because it is in the details of these arguments that my gravest concerns arise.

First, I want to consider the National Security Council spokeswoman's written statement to the press asserting that ''Congress did not intend that the Administration would be barred from taking the action it did in these circumstances.''

Trying to read Congress's mind when interpreting the law, as the administration purports to do, has always struck me as absolutely absurd. Article I of our Constitution creates a legislative process that today includes 536 different individuals. To assume the existence of a single intent among so many different minds—all with different interests, different purposes, different philosophies, and different methods—runs counter to basic logic, not to mention the theory of representative government at the foundation of our Constitution. This notion that we should be governed by easily manipulated arguments about what Congress supposedly would have wanted long justified the hijacking of the law to undermine the clear meaning of the text.

Fighting this abuse of the law and the Constitution has animated so much of my work over the past 38 years. We have made enormous progress in reestablishing the bedrock principle that we are governed not by vague claims about intent but, rather, by the words themselves—words that have a fixed and discernible meaning, with the power to bind us all—including the President. I will continue to fight for this principle as long as I have the honor to serve our people in this country.

In this light, a proper reading of the detainee transfer and release notification requirements includes no such exception that the Obama administration imagines exists. We should always be skeptical of arguments assuming unwritten exceptions to laws, and here the relevant factors counsel strongly against assuming such an exception into existence.

The statute uses strong universally applicable language: ''the Secretary of Defense shall notify''; ''each notification shall include, at a minimum''; ''the Secretary of Defense may transfer . . . only if'' and the like.

The text of the provision is particularly detailed. This detail, especially when read in conjunction with the numerous other incredibly detailed provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act and its many predecessors—many of which contained detailed exceptions—demonstrates that Congress is quite capable of creating exceptions to a provision like this one but instead actively chose not to include one here.

Finally, as had been clearly established, lawmakers were aware of the administration's desire to conduct exactly this sort of a transaction before the beginning of the legislative process. To assume such an exception, when the Congress was aware of the administration's desire and proffered need for such a provision but chose not to provide one, would completely undermine the notion that Congress has the power to choose its preferred policies by legislation.

Put another way, how could Congress have been clearer that no detainee transfers could be accomplished outside its established process? If Congress's bright-line rule can be wished away by the Obama administration in this case, when can the Congress act to establish a policy to which the administration cannot carve out exceptions—exceptions that destroy the very core of the law?

In advancing this rather ridiculous attempt to misconstrue the transfer and release notification requirements, the Obama administration is simply avoiding making their more controversial argument explicit. The administration's Pentagon General Counsel admitted as much last week.

This argument centers on the President's contention that ''in certain circumstances'' the transfer and release notification requirements ''would violate constitutional separation of powers principles.''

Other senior administration officials have made statements, albeit hesitantly, invoking the President's authority under the Constitution to disregard the statute. Although the administration attempts to cloak it in the complex obscurity of statutory construction, this is the real issue at hand.

As a threshold matter, the rule of law and the separation of powers both depend on the longstanding notion that an unconstitutional statute is no law at all. We should take the Obama administration's arguments about the constitutionality of the notification requirement as applied to the Taliban five trade very seriously.

When appropriate, I have defended the President's authority to act in contravention of certain statutes. And I absolutely stand by the positions I have taken before—no matter how unpopular they have sometimes been.

I feel it is incumbent upon me to lay out my case of why I am so disturbed by the administration's actions here not to deflect any charge of hypocrisy for personal benefit but because I feel so passionately about the Obama administration's overreach in this and so many other cases. To risk having these arguments dismissed without serious consideration of their merits would be unbearable. I feel compelled to lay out my case in some detail.

Here, the Obama administration's arguments fail on the administration's own terms and in so doing demonstrate some disturbing trends at work within this administration.

Now, the Obama administration has not advanced the notion that the transfer and release notification requirements are always unconstitutional. Instead, the administration has been very careful to suggest that the notification requirements unconstitutionally encumbered the executive branch because of the specific circumstances at issue in the Taliban five trade. The general terms of the Obama administration's rationale initially seemed potentially reasonable: that it feared Sergeant Bergdahl would be endangered unless the administration moved swiftly and secretly to make the trade, and compliance with the notification requirement would have prevented the President from exercising his lawful authority to order the detainee swap.

However, the logic of the administration's rationale falls apart under closer inspection of the two key factors that were cited as creating the specific circumstances in disregarding the statute: the need for swiftness and the need for secrecy.

First, the need for swift action. The Obama administration has—at various times—suggested that Sergeant Bergdahl's health was in rapid and accelerating decline to the point of necessitating immediate rescue, and that the Taliban would refuse to agree to Bergdahl's release unless the administration executed the trade quickly. After examining what evidence the administration provided us, a number of my colleagues from both parties, including the senior Senator from California, the chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, have expressed significant doubt about these claims.

But even if we accept the Obama administration's claims that there existed a need for swift action, that when faced with this realization, compliance with the 30-day notification requirement would have endangered the potential for recovering Sergeant Bergdahl, and that these are the sort of circumstances where the Constitution authorizes the executive branch to act in defiance of a notification requirement—even if we accept everything the administration suggests, their argument doesn't totally nullify the administration's obligations under the statutory notification requirement.

Under the administration's own logic that the notification requirement is not unconstitutional per se but, rather, only under certain circumstances, the executive branch still has a duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. Thus, even if it is authorized to order a transfer or release of detainees in less than the 30 days mandated by the statute, the President remains obligated to comply as substantially and faithfully as possible, mitigating any anticipated breach by keeping Congress abreast of negotiations and complying with the notification requirements as soon as any transfer decision is made or undertaken.

But that clearly is not the case here. Instead, we know from the statements of senior administration officials that the administration deliberately withheld notification from Congress until after the trade occurred—months after negotiations to make this trade resumed and intensified, weeks after the detainee transfer agreement with Qatar was signed, and days after the final decision itself was taken. Given that the administration accepts the constitutionality of the legality of the notification requirement generally, its actions represent a direct effort to undermine the obvious core purpose of the law: giving Congress the opportunity to raise its objections and lobby against an ill-advised release or transfer before it happens.

This is not maximally faithful compliance. This is outright flouting of the statute.

The administration, though, has also claimed a need for secrecy—specifically, that informing Congress would endanger the prospects for Sergeant Bergdahl's safe return. I take this concern for secrecy extraordinarily seriously, and I know that every one of my colleagues does as well. Preserving secrecy as not to endanger ongoing operations remains an absolutely vital cornerstone of congressional oversight of national security issues, and my long service on the intelligence committee engendered in me a particular appreciation for how necessary it is.

But administrations have for decades briefed Congress on extraordinarily sensitive matters. Take the Bin Laden raid. It is hard to think of an operation more sensitive than that. In both the Taliban five swap and the Bin Laden operation, the mission objectives as well as the safety of our troops would have both been completely unattainable if details leaked. Yet, even before the Bin Laden operation, the administration kept Congress regularly briefed as required by law, which is, to me, testament to the extraordinary resiliency of our oversight structure.

Even those of us who have long defended robust executive powers in the national security context have long asserted that:

> The constitutional basis for withholding notification can only be invoked credibly, by its own terms, in very rare circumstances. A generalized fear that Congress might leak would not by itself suffice, because the same fear could be invoked equally from all [secret operations].

In the case at hand, the Obama administration accepts the constitutionality of congressional notification requirements in most circumstances. Yet it has also failed to articulate any particular reason why notifying Congress would impose a particular problem when compared to other sensitive operations. But the implication that it did not notify Congress just because of a generalized fear of leaks not only disregards decades of successful congressional oversight of intelligence collection and covert operations but also makes an exceedingly radical argument that would give the President essentially arbitrary power to ignore what he acknowledges is a valid law.

In this case, though, the administration's actions wholly undermine the notion that there was an unusual secrecy concern at issue here. First, consider that the administration itself estimated that between 80 and 90 executive branch officials were told of the decision to release the Taliban five ahead of time—in an administration that leaks sensitive national security information like a sieve, but zero—zero—Members of Congress were informed.

The Secretary of Defense and his General Counsel even admitted that Justice Department lawyers were told of the upcoming trade for the very purpose of keeping even a few key Members of Congress in the dark. In light of the statutory requirement to notify just a key handful of Members of Congress, this situation appears flatly absurd and certainly inconsistent with maximally faithful compliance with the statute.

Furthermore, the administration had already discussed with Congress the potential for such a deal. They ran into bipartisan opposition, as expressed in the bipartisan letter of early 2012 signed by the top Democrat and top Republican on both the House and Senate intelligence committees. In response to that letter, media reports indicate that the then-Secretary of State

and former Senator from New York promised the administration would pursue further congressional consultations before making the exchange. And in 2013 the White House Press Secretary responded to a question about trading Sergeant Bergdahl for Taliban detainees in stark terms promising: ''We would not make any decisions about transfer of any detainees without consulting Congress.''

So why the more than 2 years of radio silence from the Obama administration? Why the disregard of the Federal statute when the administration's arguments for doing so in this case are so disturbingly unconvincing? Why wait until after the decision could not be challenged before telling Congress?

After reviewing these events, the answer seems obvious. President Obama and his subordinates illegitimately chose not to inform Congress until after the decision was irrevocable because they knew that Congress would object. Two administration officials told Bloomberg News as much: The failure to notify key Members of Congress in advance was a deliberate move to skirt opposition to releasing the five Taliban prisoners.

While the vigor of the Obama administration's defense of the deal has shocked many, it has not shocked me. To this President, this deal represents the apex of responsible winding down of the conflict in Afghanistan—not only in returning Sergeant Bergdahl but also in releasing the Taliban five, whom the administration has eagerly sought to release so often before.

Just take it from the majority leader who said he was ''glad to get rid of these five people.'' And for a President and an administration that have demonstrated endless reservoirs of faith in the goodwill of hostile forces abroad, there is also surely hope—no matter how ridiculous—that giving into the Taliban's demands will somehow inspire a renewed interest on the part of the Taliban in peace talks, as if that did anything but demonstrate how the Taliban's current tactics will get them concessions from the Obama administration.

President Obama has on many occasions annunciated very clear beliefs of our detention operations at Guantanamo, articulating a nearly religious conviction that detention of Taliban, Al Qaeda, and associated forces under the law of armed conflict is a beacon of this nation's evils to the world. And although the administration has faced immense political pressure to reconsider from many of us, I have absolutely no doubt President Obama intends on following through with his long-time, recently repeated promise to make every effort to close Guantanamo during his remaining time in office.

Many of my colleagues and I share a diametrically opposed view from the President's—one that is more focused on securing the stability of the Afghan Government that our men and women in uniform fought so hard to establish. But in our honest disagreements, President Obama only sees reflexive intransigence. On Guantanamo and on so many other matters, President Obama has proven himself unable to accept good-faith differences with those of us elected to a coordinate and coequal branch of government. This frustration has motivated the President to enact his agenda unilaterally. In doing so, he not only poisons the well of congressional oversight of sensitive national security matters, as troubling as that is, but also by arrogating power with casual disregard for the structural restraints of the Constitution, he stretches our longstanding laws and norms past the breaking point.

My allegiance to constitutional government and the rule of law compels me to stand up to this overreach by President Obama and the executive branch. I will continue to speak out against what I strongly believe are serious instances of overreach by this administration—as I have already done on immigration, sentencing, education, Benghazi, and, of course, ObamaCare. I urge all of my colleagues to join me, for what is at stake is not just our rightful authority to get done what our constituents sent us here to do but also the very precepts at the core of our Constitution.

That is why I have joined my colleague, the junior Senator from Ohio, to cosponsor a resolution declaring that the Obama administration violated the statute and calling for an investigation into the matter. With all that is at stake, registering our objection in this way could not be more important.

Additionally, in light of these troubling events—which also involve the Justice Department, which should hold the separation of powers in the highest regard—I should note I found myself now unable to support the nomination of Peter Kadzik to be Assistant Attorney General for Legislative Affairs. My deference to the administration's choice of appointees can only go so far, and I cannot support a nominee who has so persistently refused to share the Department's memos on the release of the Taliban five. Absent a real commitment from Mr. Kadzik and the Justice Department to respect Congress's role under the Constitution, I felt compelled to oppose his nomination.

On their own terms, the Obama administration violated the law by releasing the Taliban five—dangerous men who are sure to return to the fight. In doing so, he not only endangered the lives of our men and women in uniform but also jeopardized everything they fought and died for in Afghanistan. My commitment is to them and to the Constitution's division of powers and authorities amongst the coordinate and coequal branches of government which they fight to protect. These loyalties are what have compelled me to stand up to the Obama administration.

I urge all of my colleagues, regardless of party, to join me in this fight. Too much is at stake to let petty partisan concerns and blind political loyalty to the President take precedence over the weighty matters of national security and constitutional authority that are at stake, and especially when one considers how much this branch of government is being ignored on almost a daily basis by this out-of-control White House.

Democrats and Republicans have to put a stop to this, and they have to start standing up on these issues or we are in danger of losing the Constitution itself.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, yesterday I chaired, along with Congressman SMITH, a Republican from New Jersey, the Congressional-Executive Committee on China. At this hearing, Terry Sefranek, a Clevelander actually from Brooklyn Heights, OH, a suburb of my city, submitted written testimony. The hearing was to address the concerns that American consumers, pet owners, farmers, and parents have about the safety of pet food, pet treats, processed chicken, and animal feed from China. Ms. Sefranek joined me then today on a call with some national press to talk about this issue. I wish to share briefly the actual words of Ms. Sefranek's testimony. She said:

> In December of 2011, my little Sampson, a healthy, lively and hilarious fox terrier mutt was showing signs that he was not well. He seemed withdrawn, and his appetite was decreasing, and all he wanted was to drink water and urinate. His health rapidly decreased.
>
> We took him to the veterinarian 3 times in the next two weeks. Finally, blood tests revealed horrible results. Sampson was in acute renal failure.
>
> The Doc gave him intravenous fluids for six long, tormenting days. And then, the agonizing decision, the hardest, most heartbreaking decision. With my husband and children around us, I held my little buddy in my arms for the last time, as he was euthanized.

Ms. Sefranek continues:

> One day during this time, I saw a local family on the news, holding up a bag of Waggin' Train Chicken Jerky Treats. Their dog had eaten them and died of renal failure a few weeks earlier. Their new little puppy was fed leftovers from the same bag—and became ill right away. As soon as they stopped the treats, he recovered.
>
> I was floored. It was the exact same treat that Sampson had eaten; it has been his new favorite, and I was giving him them as a treat for about a month. I'm sure that was the only major change in his diet.

Sixty-two million households in this country have a pet. Americans raise 83 million dogs and 96 million cats whom, as is the case with my wife's and my dog Franklin, we treat, in many ways, as members of the family. That is why it is alarming that since 2007, the FDA has been aware of the deaths and illnesses of thousands of pets, but we still don't know what is causing it.

Last month the FDA said that reports of illnesses had increased to 5,600

pets, including 1,000 dog deaths, and now three human illnesses.

Pet owners shouldn't have to worry about the safety of the food they give their pets. When we go to a pet store, go to a grocery store and buy pet food, we shouldn't have to worry that pet food could actually endanger that dog's, that cat's health.

While no cause has been identified, the illnesses many think are linked to pet treats from China, which raises questions. If something says it is made in China, can we be assured that it is safe? If it says ''made in the USA,'' what exactly does that mean? Is everything being done to keep these pet treats safe?

Last year the USDA declared that China can export processed, cooked chicken into the United States. This paves the way for chicken sourced in the United States to be shipped to China for processing and then sold back to American consumers. While no such chicken has yet entered our shores, it is possible that very soon this processed chicken could end up on our dinner tables and in our school lunchrooms.

Researchers are exploring a possible link also between animal feed from China and the PEDv that has wiped out 10 percent of piglets—10 percent of our young pig population. It has been a year already and no definitive cause has been identified.

Americans want and require better answers. We want and require clearer labels and the peace of mind that the foods we import from the People's Republic of China are safe.

This is why I am introducing an amendment to the agriculture appropriations bill to ask the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture about the status of inspectors' visas to China and how many are currently inspecting there.

We heard in testimony yesterday an uncertainty from FDA and USDA about our ability to get the number of inspectors we need into China to inspect the processing of chickens in China. I urged the FDA to investigate and determine the cause of these pet illnesses and PEDv, and the companies to ensure the highest safety standards.

When we buy something that says ''made in the United States of America,'' whether it is food for human consumption or whether it is processed food for human consumption or whether it is processed food for our pets, we should be confident that food is actually made, processed, and put together in the United States of America. In our testimony yesterday, we couldn't quite be 100 percent sure that is the case.

A couple of things need to go on there. One, the packaging and the labeling needs to be believable and credible and it needs to be true. Second, those companies that import—it used to be that companies would produce in the United States with food safety rules we have in the United States—drug safety, food safety—customers, buyers, and supermarkets that buy this food with ''made in the USA'' labels knew that because we have a good FDA, because we have a good U.S. Department of Agriculture, because we have good food safety rules in our country—we knew that ''made in the USA'' was a label we could trust.

Then companies in this country began to do something in the last 20 years—especially since Congress passed Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. Companies began to shut down production in places such as Rocky River and Maple Heights and Garfield Heights and Brooklyn Heights, OH, and move that production to Wahan or Shihan or Beijing, or Shanghai, China, and then sell those products back to the United States. If companies are going to do that, costing our communities jobs in far too many cases, hurting families and workers who lose those jobs—if companies are going to do that, they need to be responsible in the production in those countries. They need to be responsible when pharmaceuticals are made in China by U.S. companies and then shipped back to the United States. Those pharmaceuticals need to be safe.

We know in the case of a drug called Heparin which people in Toledo, OH, took, and a number of people died from it. All over the country they took this drug. It was a blood thinner made in China by a company that, frankly, didn't know—couldn't reach back and determine and find out where all the ingredients for these drugs were made.

So there are a couple of points. One is whether it is dog treats, whether it is food that humans consume in our country or whether it is pharmaceuticals, our regulatory structure needs to make sure these are safe. If they are made in the United States, we are much more confident they are safe, because government rules and regulations in the United States—despite what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle always like to say about government regulation—we know our food supply is pretty darn good. But if companies are going to outsource that production, move it to China and then sell it back to the United States, we need these rules in place. We need these companies to be reliable and liable ultimately in what they are doing. So if a company is going to bring a drug into the United States—an American company producing in China and bringing it back to the United States—they are responsible for the contents, and they are responsible for the safety of those drugs. Their executives, those companies, should be liable if they are producing that food. Whether it is for human consumption or whether it is for pets or whether it is pharmaceuticals, all of that matters.

Americans, again, should not be worried about the safety of the food they put on the dinner table nor the safety of the pet food they give to their dogs and cats.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. 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. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about children's health insurance, an issue we hear about periodically but not nearly enough and an issue that will fast become a critically important question before both bodies, the Senate especially, because of what could happen to the Children's Health Insurance Program, which we call at the State level the CHIP program, known more commonly in Washington as S–CHIP, one of the great advancements in health care in recent American history.

We can go back 25 or 50 years, and other than Medicare and Medicaid and maybe a few other examples, VA health care, children's health care has been a great success and I would say forthrightly a bipartisan success, but we need to keep it that way. I have a particular interest in this program because of the experience we have in Pennsylvania, as tens of thousands of families have benefited from the Children's Health Insurance Program that was signed into law and advocated strongly by my father when he served as the Governor of Pennsylvania. At the time Pennsylvania was a model for the country. This was the early 1990s I am talking about.

When he signed that bill into law, Pennsylvania became one of the largest States with a new Children's Health Insurance Program which then became a model for the Nation. Here is how that happened. In 1997, Congress passed the bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program signed into law in August of 1997 by President Clinton. The original bill was cosponsored by the late Senator Ted Kennedy, from Massachusetts of course, and the Senator from Utah, still serving, Mr. HATCH.

They worked together, along with many others in a bipartisan fashion to produce important legislation for our children. Since that time this program has worked as a remarkable public-private partnership to deliver critical health care to children. So in addition to being bipartisan, it was public and private together.

Care such as well child visits, immunizations, physical and occupational therapy, home health care and medical equipment and more were all available for the first time for many families. So it helps children not only have health insurance and health coverage, but it helps them be well and to stay well

over a long period of time, providing them with care they need and giving their parents something government does not do enough; it provides a measure of peace of mind to parents and to families.

In 2009, the President signed into law a bipartisan reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program. The most recent year of data indicates that CHIP covered over 8.1 million children over the course of a year. Consider that. With this program more than 8.1 million children have health care that would not have it any other way in the absence of this program.

Even with the progress we have made in providing new health insurance options in the last couple of years as a result of the Affordable Care Act, the rate of uninsured Americans overall is still over 13 percent. That is the lowest rate since 2008 but still too high. The rate of uninsured children is 9 percent, a much lower rate obviously than the overall rate but still too high.

CHIP has played an important role in increasing access to insurance for children. The Web site for the Pennsylvania program, which is www.chipcoverspakids.com, discusses several stories from Pennsylvania parents about how this Children's Health Insurance Program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has helped one particular family, in this case, and many others. As you read the stories—here is one story. I will sum it up briefly. The CHIP program has been great.

So said one family member:

> We know that this is quality insurance and we are finally able to sleep at night knowing that our kids can be seen by excellent pediatricians. I do not know what we would have done without CHIP. Now my children can play sports and go away to camp like other kids and if they get hurt, CHIP is there for them.

So said a parent. That is probably the best summation or the best recitation of all of the reasons it is so important to make sure we preserve the Children's Health Insurance Program and preserve the funding for it and preserve any strategy that will ensure that children have the health care they need.

So CHIP is always going to be there for those kids. That is what we need to make sure that we hold on to. I, similar to so many here and many in both parties, have consistently advocated for the Children's Health Insurance Program. I am pleased it has been authorized through fiscal year 2019. However—this is why I am standing here today. However, we were able only to secure funding through 2015. So the program is reauthorized to 2019 but funded only through fiscal year 2015.

That deadline is approaching. Now is the time to act, again in the right bipartisan way, to preserve the Children's Health Insurance Program. It is time to make sure we ensure that CHIP will continue to be funded through the authorization, at a minimum, through fiscal year 2019.

Senator ROCKEFELLER, one of the great champions of this program over many years now, decades literally, introduced legislation last week that I wholeheartedly support. That is an understatement. There is not a Senator in this Chamber who should not support his legislation, the CHIP Extension Act of 2014, S. 2461.

The legislation extends funding for CHIP through fiscal year 2019, bringing the funding in line with the authorization. I cannot stress enough the need to pass this legislation this year, pass this 2014 legislation that deals with this 2015 problem. State budget cycles are such that if we wait until next year, when the funding is about to expire, we will be jeopardizing health insurance for millions of American children.

States need time to plan their budgets and cannot operate under the uncertainty of a funding threat to such an important program. I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for his tireless commitment to the Children's Health Insurance Program over many years—as I said, over several decades. I thank him for his work in introducing this legislation.

I urge all of my colleagues in both parties to support Senator ROCKEFELLER's legislation, the CHIP Extension Act of 2014, S. 2461, to make sure children's health insurance will always be there for the children who are covered by that program.

In conclusion, this is very simple. We have people in both parties who have spent a lot of their careers saying how much they care about children. They give speeches, they campaign, they talk about kids. We all talk about kids in very positive ways. That is wonderful. But the test is how we act and what actions we take. That usually means how we vote. So if someone votes for this bill, they can stand and say they have taken a substantial step in the direction of ensuring that children will have the health care they need. If they do not, and they vote against it, I do not think they can say that.

If someone votes against it, I think they have to have a substitute for it, some measure that will provide the same coverage for the same number of children by a different method. If they cannot come up with that, they cannot stand and say they are for kids. They cannot stand and say they care about our children and their future.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives with respect to H.R. 3230.

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate a message from the House, as follows:

H.R. 3230

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the Senate amendment to the text of the bill (H.R. 3230) entitled ''An Act making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period.'', and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Ordered, That Messrs. Miller of Florida, Lamborn, Roe of Tennessee, Flores, Benishek, Coffman, Wenstrup, Mrs. Walorski, Mr. Michaud, Ms. Brown of Florida, Mr. Takano, Mses. Brownley of California, Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Walz, be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate insist on its amendment, agree to the request for a conference with the House, and authorize the Chair to appoint conferees with a ratio of eight Democrats and six Republicans, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. SANDERS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. RUBIO as conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. REID. 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. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM PATENT

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor because the patent office has just ruled that the name of the Washington football team is not patentable because it is a slur. We are so excited to know that finally people are recognizing this issue can no longer be a business case for the NFL to use this patent. They will not be able to

forcefully exclude other people for having derivatives of this logo or the name, thereby putting a big dent in the business case the NFL has.

So many people have helped in this effort. I want to applaud them, from Senator REID and his leadership, to Amanda Blackhorse and Suzan Harjo. Those are the people who have been fighting this case before the patent office. To all of the people who have watched the video on changethemascot.org, a Web site that basically depicts why Native Americans want to be viewed as human beings and not a mascot, we want to thank all of them.

This is not the end of this case. But this is a landmark decision by the patent office that says the NFL team here in Washington, DC, does not have a patentable name, and that this is an offensive term, not patentable by the patent office.

I hope all the business decisions over there at the team will understand this is no longer a business case, and will get off of this spurious name that we need to change.

I thank my colleague in Maine for yielding me this opportunity to speak on this breaking important issue. I thank my colleagues here on the floor.

TRIBUTE TO CHUCK LOVELESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and recognize the career of Chuck Loveless, director of Federal Government Affairs for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFSCME. For 21 years, Mr. Loveless has labored tirelessly to protect the rights of workers. I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Loveless as he represented AFSCME in the Nation's capital on a wide variety of issues affecting State and local government and health care employees.

Mr. Loveless has a long list of accomplishments over the span of his career. He received his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and an M.A. degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley. He is a past chairman of the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans' Public Employees Committee and of its Government Liaison Committee. He is a member of the International Foundation's Government Liaison Committee and Health Care Expert Panel. Mr. Loveless is a former chair of Americans for Tax Fairness and of Americans United for Change, and he continues to serve on the latter's board. He is also a member of the board of Citizens for Tax Justice.

On behalf of the Senate, I commend Chuck Loveless on a lifetime of public service, and I wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

REMEMBERING NELDA BARTON-COLLINGS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is with great grief and a heavy heart that I report to my fellow Senators the passing of Mrs. Nelda Barton-Collings. A native of my home State, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Nelda was an accomplished businesswoman, a dedicated public servant, and a joy to all of those who have had the pleasure of knowing her. She died in her home last Friday at the age of 85.

Nelda was born and raised in Providence, KY, and she graduated from college just a few counties over at Western Kentucky University. After graduation she began what was to be a successful career in business. Among her many achievements, she expanded her family's nursing home business by opening new homes across the State and founded several community banks that were eventually consolidated into the Lexington-based Forcht Bank.

Nelda's pursuits were not limited to business ventures, however. She exhibited a passion for public service and was heavily involved in the Republican Party throughout her life. She was the first woman to chair the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, and she served for 28 years as Kentucky's Republican National Committeewoman. She worked tirelessly to better the lives of her fellow Kentuckians—a quality that elevated her to the national stage. In 1980, she spoke at the Republican National Convention, and in 1996, she called to order that year's convention.

Word of Nelda's dedication to public service reached all the way to the Oval Office, and she was appointed to the Federal Council on Aging and the Council for International Affairs during President Ronald Reagan's administration, as well as President George H.W. Bush's Council on Rural America.

At this time, I ask that my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in paying tribute to the wonderful life of Nelda Barton-Collings. She will be deeply missed.

The Lexington Herald-Leader recently published an obituary for Mrs. Barton-Collings. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Lexington Herald-Leader, June 14, 2014]

NELDA BARTON-COLLINGS, LEADER IN BUSINESS AND REPUBLICAN POLITICS, DIES IN CORBIN AT 85

(By Jack Brammer)

Nelda Barton-Collings, who served 28 years as Republican National Committeewoman for Kentucky and was the first woman to be chair of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, died Friday at her home in Corbin. She was 85.

Her death elicited comments from several of Kentucky's top Republican officials.

U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell of Louisville said, ''As a pioneer in business and politics in Kentucky, Nelda was a fantastic force for good and gave the state she loved a lifetime of service. Her determination to improve our Commonwealth and nation was outmatched only by her charm and benevolent optimism.''

U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers of Somerset said Barton-Collings ''was a woman ahead of her time, pioneering new avenues in the business world and proclaiming her dedication to conservative principles.

''She captivated crowds with her dynamic personality and Southern charm, yet took the time to guide and mentor individuals of all ages and social status.''

State Senate President Robert Stivers of Manchester called Barton-Collings ''a true stateswoman who, until the end, battled for the betterment of Kentucky'' and said her legacy will be her ''passion for public service and her determination to improve the Commonwealth.''

State House Majority Leader Jeff Hoover of Jamestown said Barton-Collings' ''compassion and dedication to improving the lives of all Kentuckians through her public service is an example that more of us should strive to follow.''

A native of Providence in Webster County, Barton-Collings was a successful businesswoman in banking, nursing homes, newspapers and other small-business ventures in partnership with Terry Forcht.

Besides her involvement with the Republican National Committee, she was a delegate to several Republican national conventions.

Barton-Collings also was a member of President Reagan's Federal Council on Aging and Council for International Affairs and President George H.W. Bush's Council on Rural America.

Her portrait hangs in the Kentucky Capitol for a Kentucky Women Remembered Award by the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.

Visitation will be from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the O'Neil Lawson Funeral Home in Corbin.

Services will be at Grace on the Hill United Methodist Church in Corbin at 11 a.m. Wednesday.

Donations may be made in her honor to Hospice of the Bluegrass.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLIE MCBRIDE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, Senator VITTER and I wish to recognize and honor Charlie McBride, a native son of Louisiana who has given so much of his time and energy towards the goal of educating this Nation's youth in civic and community responsibility. Through his service and commitment to the Close Up Foundation, Charlie has led an organization that for the past 43 years has significantly impacted and provided citizenship education to nearly 800,000 high school and middle school students and educators from around the country and U.S. Territories. On behalf of the Senate and the State of Louisiana, we, as former Close Up participants applaud Charlie for his devotion to Close Up and the civic education of our youth.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, as you know, Close Up is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes responsible participation in our democratic process. Its mission is to inform, educate, and inspire students to exercise the rights and accept the responsibilities of being a citizen in our democracy. Through experiential civic education programs based in Washington, DC, and other local communities, and publication of classroom resources to help educators teach students about public policy issues, Close

Up impacts the lives of students every day.

Both of us are testament to the profound impact these programs have on our youth, as we participated in the Close Up program in its early years, an experience that incited our first thoughts of a career in public service. We commend and congratulate Close Up on its important work.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Charlie McBride is no stranger to public policy. He worked for 12 years on personal and committee staffs in the Senate and the House of Representatives. Since then, as a government relations and business consultant, he has represented a myriad of clients in virtually every policy field, for which he is known and well-respected by our colleagues. His experiences have instilled in him a strong appreciation of the need for knowledgeable and thoughtful citizens, particularly in our legislative processes. For this reason, he has enthusiastically embraced Close Up's efforts to develop an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry among this Nation's youth.

Mr. VITTER. Charlie was first introduced to Close Up in 1974 when he was chief of staff for Senator Bennett Johnston and helped secure funding for the Allen J. Ellender Fellowships that served to provide support for economically disadvantaged students and teachers to participate in Close Up programs. After working closely with Close Up for many years, he joined its board of directors in 1988 and has served as the vice chairman for the past 10 years. During his service, Charlie has provided leadership and assisted Close Up in its relations with Members in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Ms. LANDRIEU. We are proud that Louisiana students and teachers have participated in Close Up programs since the organization's inception and that a good friend and fellow Louisianan has contributed so much time and effort to this great organization. Thanks to people like Charlie, students are provided the unique opportunity to learn about our government by meeting lawmakers, representatives of public interest groups, journalists, and people from all branches of government, and to understand how they can make a positive contribution through participation in our democracy. Charlie's presence at Close Up will be sorely missed. We are privileged to formally recognize Charlie's commitment and efforts to this great endeavor.

TRIBUTE TO JEFFREY HOWARD

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to pay special tribute to Jeffrey R. Howard, a key member of my staff on the Select Committee on Intelligence for his distinguished service to the Senate. Jeffrey will leave us shortly to join the new office being opened by Ionic Security in Maryland, where he will serve as the chief technology officer's chief of staff. I am honored to have the opportunity to publicly thank Jeffrey and note my appreciation for his outstanding service to the Select Committee on Intelligence during the past 4 years.

Since becoming the vice chairman of the committee in 2011, I have often relied upon Jeffrey's impressive technical expertise and teamwork skills on a wide range of oversight issues. He has provided us with his expert advice in matters relating to science, technology, and engineering, including cybersecurity, oversight of the National Security Agency, and information technology programs.

Jeffrey is well known on the Hill and by the private sector as one of the leading congressional staff experts on cybersecurity legislative issues. He has worked tirelessly with my team to develop and negotiate legislative proposals consistent with my strong desire to get an effective cybersecurity information sharing bill enacted into law. During the 112th Congress, Jeffrey was a crucial participant in the negotiations that led the ranking members of eight Senate committees to co-sponsor S. 2151 and S. 3342, the Strengthening and Enhancing Cybersecurity by Using Research, Education, Information, and Technology Act of 2012, more commonly known as ''SECURE IT.'' During this Congress, Senator FEINSTEIN and I have been working very hard to develop a bipartisan cybersecurity information sharing bill that we believe will be well-received by the private sector and our colleagues in the Senate and the House of Representatives. We are finally quite close to being able to mark up our cybersecurity information sharing bill and Jeffrey played an integral role every step of the way.

Jeffrey even has a superpower—he has the ability to translate extremely complicated technical topics into clear and concise explanations that can be used to solve difficult, real-world problems. He is also the undisputed staff champion at documenting the extent of his oversight efforts. He has filed more memoranda for the record during his tenure than half of the professional staff members combined. I dare say that Jeffrey may know more about the National Security Agency than some of the senior executives who have served there. Jeffrey's inexhaustible work ethic and sound judgment have made him an indispensable member of the committee staff and an invaluable resource to other congressional committees. His sly wit and good humor make him a pleasure to work with. He is the consummate team player who improves the performance of everyone around him.

My colleagues and I trust Jeffrey's judgment implicitly. His dedicated public service and exceptional day-to-day performance on the job have earned our respect and admiration, and it inspired a generation of staff who had the privilege to work alongside him. There is no doubt that Jeffrey has a bright future at Ionic Security; however, should the right opportunity present itself, I would strongly encourage my Senate colleagues to entice him back into public service. We will miss Jeffrey deeply, but his legacy will remain a part of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO NORMA LOVE

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Norma Love—a venerable Associated Press reporter who is retiring at the end of the month after a long career covering government and politics in the Granite State.

Norma's name is well-known to anyone in New Hampshire who has picked up a newspaper in the past three decades. She started in the AP's Concord bureau 31 years ago, and she has covered the statehouse for 29 of those years—spanning the administrations of seven Governors.

It was at the statehouse where I first had the privilege of meeting Norma. We crossed paths on more times than I can count during my years in the attorney general's office. Whenever Norma called, I always knew that I would be talking to a consummate professional who holds herself to the highest standards of journalism.

Norma understands that journalists have a responsibility to ask tough questions. She has always taken a firm—but fair—approach to her reporting, and that is why she is so deeply respected by public officials on both sides of the aisle.

Norma could have been a reporter anywhere in the country, but she chose New Hampshire. During her decades of diligent reporting, she has been a witness to history—chronicling the people and places of her adopted State. While much has changed in the Granite State, and in newsrooms, since Norma arrived at the AP, her commitment to excellence in journalism has never wavered.

The people of New Hampshire are so fortunate that Norma Love has been asking hard questions on their behalf for the past 31 years. Norma brings tremendous credit to the profession that she loves, and she will leave behind big shoes to fill in the statehouse press room.

I am pleased to join with Norma's colleagues and many friends in wishing her the very best as she makes this transition and looks to new horizons. As we thank her for her many years of dedicated reporting, we send her every good wish for a long, full, and happy retirement.•

BOONE COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic

development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Boone County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Boone County worth over $5.7 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $7.3 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together is the community's tremendous success in obtaining more than $3.3 million from the Federal Aviation Administration for improvements to the airport. As a strong supporter of small community airports, I have long fought for funding from programs that support service to small communities and infrastructure support to keep these airports modern.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Central Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Boone County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Boone County, I have fought for funding for more than $5.9 million in Defense Department funds for Iowa Thin Film Technology, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Boone County has received $339,299 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Boone County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling $194,051.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Boone County has received more than $2.5 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Boone County's fire departments have received over $699,392 for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Wellness and health care: Improving the health and wellness of all Americans has been something I have been passionate about for decades. That is why I fought to dramatically increase funding for disease prevention, innovative medical research, and a whole range of initiatives to improve the health of individuals and families not only at the doctor's office but also in our communities, schools, and workplaces. I am so proud that Americans have better access to clinical preventive services, nutritious food, smoke-free environments, safe places to engage in physical activity, and information to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. These efforts not only save lives, they will also save money for generations to come thanks to the prevention of costly chronic diseases, which account for a whopping 75 percent of annual health care costs. I am pleased that Boone County has recognized this important issue by securing $236,000.

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television, but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Boone County, both those with and without disabilities.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Boone County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Boone County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

BLACK HAWK COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and

residents of Black Hawk County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Black Hawk County worth over $98 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $196 million to the local economy.

Of course, my favorite memories of working together range from supporting a wide array of programs at the University of Northern Iowa, funding construction of the Avenue of the Saints and US–63, improving Waterloo's sewer treatment system, and cleaning up and developing blighted brownfield areas to create a tech jobs corridor.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Northeast Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Black Hawk County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Black Hawk County, I have fought for over $100 million to construct the Avenue of the Saints, $10 million to improve US–63, $35 million to improve Waterloo's sewer system, and more than $1.9 million for the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face—in Iowa and all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our small towns and rural communities. This isn't just about economics. It is also about maintaining our identity as Iowans. Main Street Iowa helps preserve Iowa's heart and soul by providing funds to revitalize downtown business districts. This program has allowed towns like Waterloo and Cedar Falls to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Black Hawk County has earned $440,000 through this program. These grants build much more than buildings. They build up the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Black Hawk County has received over $7 million in Harkin grants. In addition, since 2001, I have helped to provide more than $80 million in Federal funds to the University of Northern Iowa, including support for projects such as a transit hub, the National Ag-Based Lubricants Center, Project SOAR, and many others.

Disaster mitigation and prevention: In 1993, when historic floods ripped through Iowa, it became clear to me that the national emergency-response infrastructure was woefully inadequate to meet the needs of Iowans in flood-ravaged communities. I went to work dramatically expanding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's hazard mitigation program, which helps communities reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and enables mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery period. Disaster relief means more than helping people and businesses get back on their feet after a disaster, it means doing our best to prevent the same predictable flood or other catastrophe from recurring in the future. The hazard mitigation program that I helped create in 1993 provided critical support to Iowa communities impacted by the devastating floods of 2008. Black Hawk County has received over $22.9 million to remediate and prevent widespread destruction from natural disasters.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as the methamphetamine epidemic. Cities in Black Hawk County received over $2.3 million in Community Oriented Policing Services and Byrne Justice Assistance Grants. Since 2001, Black Hawk County's fire departments have received over $1.6 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Wellness and health care: Improving the health and wellness of all Americans has been something I have been passionate about for decades. That is why I fought to dramatically increase funding for disease prevention, innovative medical research, and a whole range of initiatives to improve the health of individuals and families not only at the doctor's office but also in our communities, schools, and workplaces. I am so proud that Americans have better access to clinical preventive services, nutritious food, smoke-free environments, safe places to engage in physical activity, and information to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. These efforts not only save lives, they will also save money for generations to come thanks to the prevention of costly chronic diseases, which account for a whopping 75 percent of annual health care costs. I am pleased that Black Hawk County has recognized this important issue by securing more than $4 million to support the People's Community Health Clinic.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Black Hawk County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Black Hawk County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET LOUISE CARTER

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to recognize someone who people in my State know very well; someone who for more than three decades has been an inspiring leader and a tireless advocate for children, the elderly and the disabled. She is also a close friend who has never been shy in using her formidable voice to let me know how we can do more to help those in need.

Margaret Louise Carter may be poised for retirement, but that does not mean she is going to stop adding to an impressive list of accomplishments and building on her legacy of hard work and determined advocacy.

Margaret Carter is a true force of nature. A single mother of nine, she graduated from Portland State University with a B.S. in education. She later earned her Master's in Educational psychology from Oregon State University, which led to a career as teacher and counselor at Portland Community College.

Out of concern for the most vulnerable in her northeast Portland neighborhood, she used her compassion, natural leadership ability and tenacity to win a seat in the Oregon House of Representatives in 1984, becoming the first African-American woman elected to the Oregon State Legislature.

She did not stop there. She went on to serve in the Oregon Senate, as chair of the Democratic Party of Oregon, became president and CEO of the Urban League of Portland and president of the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women. She helped establish the Job Skills Center for Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, where the Technology Education Building was renamed in her

honor, making it the first building in PCC's 50 year history to be named after a woman.

Margaret accomplished many notable things while in office, including, but not limited to, helping create a permanent Head Start program in Oregon, co-sponsoring a bill to create parity for mental health services, establishing a State holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and co-founding the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps.

While Margaret may be leaving the world of work, those of us who know her know that there is no way she is leaving the world of community involvement. Whether it is advocating for affordable home-ownership options for low to moderate-income families, organizing a kids choir to perform at community events, or entertaining friends with a singing voice that is just as strong as her personality, you can rest assured that Margaret will be there.

After a life of service to others, it is fitting that Margaret is retiring from her position at the Oregon Department of Human Services. It is with great pride, both personally and professionally, that I extend my congratulations to Margaret Louise Carter.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:32 p.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. 43. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 Red River Avenue North in Cold Spring, Minnesota, as the ''Officer Tommy Decker Memorial Post Office''.

H.R. 1216. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Center in Prescott, Arizona, as the ''Dr. Cameron McKinley Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Center''.

H.R. 1391. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 South Oak Street in London, Ohio, as the ''London Fallen Veterans Memorial Post Office''.

H.R. 1458. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, as the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building''.

H.R. 1671. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6937 Village Parkway in Dublin, California, as the ''James 'Jim' Kohnen Post Office''.

H.R. 1707. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the ''James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building''.

H.R. 1865. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 35 Park Street in Danville, Vermont, as the ''Thaddeus Stevens Post Office''.

H.R. 2112. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 787 State Route 17M in Monroe, New York, as the ''National Clandestine Service of the Central Intelligence Agency NCS Officer Gregg Wenzel Memorial Post Office''.

H.R. 3375. An act to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be constructed at 3141 Centennial Boulevard, Colorado Springs, Colorado, as the ''PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic''.

H.R. 3472. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the ''Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office''.

H.R. 3682. An act to designate the community based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 1961 Premier Drive in Mankato, Minnesota, as the ''Lyle C. Pearson Community Based Outpatient Clinic''.

H.R. 3765. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 198 Baker Street in Corning, New York, as the ''Specialist Ryan P. Jayne Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3786. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska.

H.R. 3998. An act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation.

H.R. 4199. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the ''Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center''.

H.R. 4360. An act to designate the facility of the United States Forest Service for the Grandfather Ranger District located at 109 Lawing Drive in Nebo, North Carolina, as the ''Jason Crisp Forest Service Building''.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 37. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the United States Capitol in commemoration of the Shimon Peres Congressional Gold Medal ceremony.

The message further announced that the Clerk of the House of Representatives request the Senate to return to the House the bill (H.R. 4412) to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

At 4:01 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, and be it further, that the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the aforementioned bill, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

The message further announced that the House insist upon its amendment to the Senate amendment to the text of the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon and that Messrs. Miller of Florida, Lamborn, Roe of Tennessee, Flores, Benishek, Coffman, Wenstrup, Mrs. Walorski, Mr. Michaud, Ms. Brown of Florida, Mr. Takano, Mses. Brownley of California, Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Walz, be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 43. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 Red River Avenue North in Cold Spring, Minnesota, as the ''Officer Tommy Decker Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1216. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Center in Prescott, Arizona, as the ''Dr. Cameron McKinley Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Center''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 1391. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 South Oak Street in London, Ohio, as the ''London Fallen Veterans Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1458. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, as the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1671. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6937 Village Parkway in Dublin, California, as the ''James 'Jim' Kohnen Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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H.R. 1865. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 35 Park Street in Danville, Vermont, as the ''Thaddeus Stevens Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2112. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 787 State Route 17M in Monroe, New York, as the ''National Clandestine Service of the Central Intelligence Agency NCS Officer Gregg David Wenzel Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3375. An act to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be constructed at 3141 Centennial Boulevard, Colorado Springs, Colorado, as the ''PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3472. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the ''Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3682. An act to designate the community based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 1961 Premier Drive in Mankato, Minnesota, as the

''Lyle C. Pearson Community Based Outpatient Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3765. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 198 Baker Street in Corning, New York, as the ''Specialist Ryan P. Jayne Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3786. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3998. An act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 4199. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the ''Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2491. A bill to protect the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to reconciliation involving changes to the Medicare program.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. LANDRIEU for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Suzette M. Kimball, of West Virginia, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey.

*Norman C. Bay, of New Mexico, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the term expiring June 30, 2018.

*Estevan R. Lopez, of New Mexico, to be Commissioner of Reclamation.

*Monica C. Regalbuto, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Environmental Management).

*Cheryl A. LaFleur, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the term expiring June 30, 2019.

*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. HARKIN (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2486. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to establish salary thresholds for and limitations on executive, administrative, and professional employees and address highly compensated employees, for purposes of the requirements for exemption from the Federal minimum wage and maximum hour provisions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 2487. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to increase the maximum loan limits under the microloan program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 2488. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exception to the exclusive use requirement for home offices if the other use involves care of a qualifying child of the taxpayer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WALSH:

S. 2489. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that sufficient funding is made available for the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2490. A bill to include a question to ascertain United States citizenship and immigration status in each questionnaire used for a decennial census of population, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 2491. A bill to protect the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to reconciliation involving changes to the Medicare program; read the first time.

By Mr. SCOTT:

S. 2492. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase access for the uninsured to high quality physician care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2493. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 Red River Avenue North in Cold Spring, Minnesota, as the ''Officer Tommy Decker Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2494. A bill to expedite applications to export natural gas, to require the public disclosure of liquefied natural gas export destinations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 478. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to enhanced relations with the Republic of Moldova and support for the Republic of Moldova's territorial integrity; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 1056

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1056, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. 1184

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1184, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to include information on the coverage of intensive behavioral therapy for obesity in the Medicare and You Handbook and to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1368

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1368, a bill to facilitate nationwide availability of volunteer income tax assistance for low-income and underserved populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1622

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1885

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1885, a bill to place conditions on assistance to the Government of Burma.

S. 1998

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1998, a bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to reserve funds for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Tribal College or University adult education and literacy.

S. 2020

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S.

2020, a bill to set forth the process for Puerto Rico to be admitted as a State of the Union.

S. 2091

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2091, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2187

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2187, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a five-year extension of the rural community hospital demonstration program.

S. 2220

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2220, a bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State.

S. 2291

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to require that Peace Corps volunteers be subject to the same limitations regarding coverage of abortion services as employees of the Peace Corps with respect to coverage of such services, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 2325

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2325, a bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to provide for the expansion of emergency planning zones and the development of plans for dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, and for other purposes.

S. 2392

At the request of Mr. WALSH, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2392, a bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

S. 2440

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2440, a bill to expand and extend the program to improve permit coordination by the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes.

S. 2476

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2476, a bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to promulgate regulations that prohibit certain preferential treatment or prioritization of Internet traffic.

S. 2483

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2483, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect more victims of domestic violence by preventing their abusers from possessing or receiving firearms, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 462

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 462, a resolution recognizing the Khmer and Lao/Hmong Freedom Fighters of Cambodia and Laos for supporting and defending the United States Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast Asia and for their continued support and defense of the United States.

S. RES. 469

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 469, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the May 31, 2014, transfer of five detainees from the detention facility at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

AMENDMENT NO. 3246

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3246 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4660, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2486. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to establish salary thresholds for and limitations on executive, administrative, and professional employees and address highly compensated employees, for purposes of the requirements for exemption from the Federal minimum wage and maximum hour provisions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2486

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 ''Restoring Overtime Pay for Working Americans Act''.

SEC. 2. SALARY THRESHOLDS, HIGHLY COMPENSATED EMPLOYEES, AND PRIMARY DUTIES.

(a) SALARY THRESHOLDS FOR EXECUTIVE, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES.—Section 13 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting before ''; or'' the following: '', subject to the requirement that any employee whom the Secretary determines is required to be paid on a salary (or equivalent fee basis) in order to be exempt under this subsection shall, in order to be so exempt, receive compensation at a rate of not less than the salary rate (or equivalent fee basis) determined under subsection (k)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(k) SALARY RATE (OR EQUIVALENT FEE BASIS).—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The salary rate (or equivalent fee basis) determined under this subsection for purposes of subsection (a)(1) shall be—

''(A) beginning 1 year after the first day of the first month that begins after the date of enactment of the Restoring Overtime Pay for Working Americans Act, $665 per week;

''(B) beginning 2 years after such first day, $865 per week;

''(C) beginning 3 years after such first day, $1,090 per week; and

''(D) beginning on the date that is 4 years after such first day, and on such first day in each succeeding year, an adjusted amount that is—

''(i) not less than the amount in effect under this paragraph on the day before the date of such adjustment;

''(ii) increased from such amount by the annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers; and

''(iii) rounded to the nearest multiple of $1.00.

''(2) SPECIAL RULE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), for any employee for whom the minimum wage would otherwise be determined pursuant to section 8103(b) of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (29 U.S.C. 206 note), the Secretary may determine, through regulations, the salary rate (or equivalent fee basis).

''(l) PRIMARY DUTY.—In any case where an employer classifies an employee as an employee employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity, for the purpose of subsection (a)(1), or in a position described in subsection (a)(17), for the purpose of such subsection, such employee shall not spend more than 50 percent of such employee's work hours in a workweek on duties that are not exempt under paragraph (1) or (17) of subsection (a), respectively.

''(m) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:

''(1) ANNUAL PERCENTAGE INCREASE.—The term 'annual percentage increase', when used in reference to the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, means the annual percentage increase calculated by the Secretary by comparing such Consumer Price Index for the most recent month, quarter, or year available (as selected by the Secretary prior to the first year for which a minimum wage is in effect pursuant to this subsection) with such Consumer Price Index for the same month in the preceding year, the same quarter in the preceding year, or the preceding year, respectively.

''(2) CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR URBAN WAGE EARNERS AND CLERICAL WORKERS.—The term 'Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers' means the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (United States city average, all items, not seasonally adjusted), or its successor publication, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.''.

(b) HIGHLY COMPENSATED EMPLOYEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary of Labor, in the discretion of such Secretary, determines that an employee may be exempt for purposes of section 13(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213(a)(1)), as a highly compensated employee (as such term is defined and delimited by the Secretary), then the level of total annual compensation necessary for such exemption shall be—

(A) beginning 1 year after the first day of the first month that begins after the date of enactment of this Act, $108,000;

(B) beginning 2 years after such first day, $116,000;

(C) beginning 3 years after such first day, $125,000; and

(D) beginning on the date that is 4 years after such first day, and for each succeeding calendar year, an adjusted amount that is—

(i) not less than the amount in effect under this paragraph on the day before the date of such adjustment;

(ii) increased from such amount by the annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers; and

(iii) rounded to the nearest multiple of $1.00.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection or the regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor under this subsection shall override any provision of a collective bargaining agreement that provides for overtime employment compensation, or rights to such compensation, that exceed the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.).

(3) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection, the terms ''annual percentage increase'' and ''Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers'' have the meanings given the terms in section 13(m) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213(m)), as added by subsection (a).

(c) PUBLICATION OF NOTICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days before the effective date of any adjustment in the salary rate (or equivalent fee basis) required under section 13(k)(1)(D) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213(k)(1)(D)), as added by subsection (a), or any adjustment in the amount of compensation required for the highly compensated employee exemption required under subsection (b), the Secretary of Labor shall publish, in the Federal Register and on the website of the Department of Labor, a notice announcing the adjusted salary rate (or equivalent fee basis) or adjusted amount of compensation, respectively.

(2) NONAPPLICABILITY OF RULEMAKING REQUIREMENTS.—The provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to any notice required under this subsection.

(d) PENALTIES.—Section 16(e)(2) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 216(e)(2)) is amended by inserting ''or section 11(c), relating to the records that each employer is required to make, keep, and preserve,'' after ''relating to wages,''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date that is 1 year after the first day of the first month that begins after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 2488. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exception to the exclusive use requirement for home offices if the other use involves care of a qualifying child of the taxpayer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2488

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 ''Working Parents Home Office Act''.

SEC. 2. EXCEPTION TO THE EXCLUSIVE USE REQUIREMENT FOR HOME OFFICES FOR CARE OF CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 280A(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) EXCEPTION TO EXCLUSIVITY REQUIREMENT FOR BUSINESS USE OF A DWELLING UNIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A taxpayer shall not be treated as failing to meet the exclusive use requirement of paragraph (1) with respect to a portion of a dwelling unit if the only other use of that portion is to care for a qualifying child of the taxpayer while the taxpayer is conducting the trade or business described in paragraph (1).

''(B) QUALIFYING CHILD.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'qualifying child' has the meaning given to such term by section 152(c)(1), except that only individuals bearing a relationship to the taxpayer described in section 152(c)(2)(A) shall be taken into account under section 152(c)(1)(A).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

By Mr. SCOTT:

S. 2492. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase access for the uninsured to high quality physician care; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, one of the greatest issues impacting the American health care system is the lack of access to high quality care for the uninsured. According to a 2012 CBO study, 26–27 million people will not have health insurance in 2016, with other studies suggesting that number may be closer to 30 million. Recent data from the Health Resource and Services Administration, HRSA, shows that close to 20 percent of Americans live in areas with an insufficient number of primary care physicians. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, AAMC, it is expected that there will be a shortage of 45,000 primary care physicians in the US by 2020, further limiting access to care.

An immediate way to improve access to high quality health care for the uninsured is to engage the physician community to provide greater levels of charity care. Currently, there is little incentive for physicians to provide charity care outside of their normal scope of practice, and the percentage of physicians providing charity care has been in a state of steady decline. Due to reimbursement changes over the years, physicians are currently forced to maintain a certain amount of private, Medicare, and Medicaid insured patients in order to ensure their practices can remain profitable. This often leaves no opportunity to care for patients who lack insurance and who are often the most vulnerable and sick.

The Charity Care Expansion Act would create a much needed incentive for doctors to deliver uncompensated care, thereby improving and expanding access to care for the uninsured.

The bill amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and allows for physicians to have a tax deduction for the taxable year at an amount equal to the amount the physician would have otherwise been paid.

For example, if Medicare would have reimbursed at $100 for a service, the physician would be able to deduct for $100. None of the deduction amounts would be arbitrary.

To qualify for the tax deduction, the bill would require physicians to have a pre-existing relationship with a health care clinic or another organization providing health care which is targeted to serve low income individuals. Through this coordination, the patient would be placed into the healthcare system with follow ups and health care professionals to see, instead of getting lost in the system after treatment. This would also prevent the use of the tax deduction as a tool to write off bad debt.

The limitations on the deduction are 10 percent of gross income of the taxpayer for the taxable year derived from the taxpayer's provision of physicians' services. For retired physicians, no more than a $10,000 deduction would be allowed.

While I am still waiting for a cost estimate on the bill, I repeal the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, PHHSBG, which was included in the President's budget as a recommended cut, to provide an offset.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 478—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE WITH RESPECT TO ENHANCED RELATIONS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND SUPPORT FOR THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 478

Whereas the United States has enjoyed good relations with the Republic of Moldova since the Republic of Moldova's independence in 1991;

Whereas, since the Republic of Moldova's independence, the United States has provided financial assistance to support the efforts of the people of the Republic of Moldova to build a prosperous European democracy;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Moldova further strengthened their partnership through the launching of a Strategic Dialogue on March 3, 2014;

Whereas the Republic of Moldova is due to sign an Association Agreement containing comprehensive free trade provisions with the European Union on June 27, 2014;

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Moldova made extraordinary efforts to comply with the criteria for an Association Agreement with the European Union, including significant legislative reforms to improve the rule of law and curtail corruption;

Whereas the United States Government supports the democratic aspirations of the people of the Republic of Moldova and their expressed desire to deepen their association with the European Union;

Whereas the United States supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and, on that basis, participates as an observer in the ''5+2'' negotiations to find a comprehensive settlement that will provide a special status for the separatist region of Transnistria within the Republic of Moldova;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation banned the import of Moldovan wine in 2013 and has threatened to ban Moldovan agricultural products, curtail the supply of energy resources to the Republic of Moldova, and impose stricter labor migration policies on the people of the Republic of Moldova;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation maintains a contingent of Russian troops and a stockpile of Russian military equipment and ammunition within the Moldovan region of Transnistria;

Whereas the Government of Russia has been actively issuing Russian passports to the residents of the Transnistria region in the Republic of Moldova;

Whereas the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Government of the Republic of Moldova have called upon the Government of the Russian Federation to remove its troops from the territory of the Republic of Moldova;

Whereas authorities in the Republic of Moldova's Transnistria region have restricted the access of OSCE Mission to Moldova monitors to the Transnistria region, thereby preventing the Mission from providing impartial reporting on the security situation in the region;

Whereas the House of Representatives and the Senate both passed, by an overwhelming majority, and the President signed into law the Act relating to ''United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions'', approved April 3, 2014 (Public Law 113–96; 22 U.S.C. 6211 note), providing for a United States international broadcast programming surge to counter misinformation from Russian-supported news outlets and ensuring that Russian-speaking populations in Ukraine and Moldova have access to independent news and information; and

Whereas Moldova has been a valued and reliable partner in promoting global security by participating in United Nations peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Georgia, and Kosovo: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms that it is the policy of the United States Government to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and the inviolability of its borders;

(2) supports the Strategic Dialogue as a means to strengthen relations between the Republic of Moldova and the United States and to enhance the democratic, economic, and security reforms already being implemented by the Republic of Moldova;

(3) encourages the President and the Secretary of State to enhance United States cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Moldova and civil society organizations and to focus assistance on rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, energy security, and promoting trade and investment opportunities;

(4) supports increased educational exchanges between the United States and the Republic of Moldova;

(5) encourages the President to expedite the implementation of the Act relating to ''United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions'', approved April 3, 2014 (Public Law 113–96; 22 U.S.C. 6211 note), especially because it relates to populations in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova;

(6) affirms the Republic of Moldova's sovereign right to determine its own partnerships free of external coercion and pressure, and affirms the Republic of Moldova's right to associate with the European Union and any other regional organization;

(7) urges the European Union to continue to work for greater political, economic, and social integration with the Republic of Moldova;

(8) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to fulfill its commitments made at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) 1999 summit in Istanbul to withdraw its military forces and munitions from within the internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Moldova;

(9) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to refrain from economic coercion against the Republic of Moldova and to cease support for separatist movements on the territory of the Republic of Moldova;

(10) supports constructive engagement and confidence-building measures between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the authorities in the Transnistria region in order to secure a peaceful, comprehensive resolution to the conflict that respects the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity;

(11) urges officials in the Transnistrian region to allow OSCE Mission to Moldova monitors unrestricted access to that region;

(12) urges all parties to refrain from unilateral actions that may undermine efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution, as well as the agreements already reached, and encourages leaders of the Transnistrian region to resume negotiations toward a political settlement; and

(13) affirms that lasting stability and security in Europe is a key priority for the United States Government which can only be achieved if the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all European countries is respected.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3250. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3251. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3252. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3253. Mr. CASEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3254. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3255. Mr. COATS (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3256. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3257. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3258. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3259. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3260. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3261. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3262. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. COATS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3263. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3264. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3265. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. JOHNSON of

Wisconsin) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3266. Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3267. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3268. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3269. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3270. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3271. Mrs. FISCHER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3272. Mrs. FISCHER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3273. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3274. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3275. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3276. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3277. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3278. Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3279. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3280. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3281. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3282. Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3283. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3284. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3285. Mr. WALSH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3286. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3287. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3288. Mr. REID (for Ms. MURKOWSKI) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1237, to improve the administration of programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes.

SA 3289. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3250. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 146, line 23, strike ''$1,000,000'' and insert ''$3,000,000''.

On page 172, line 25, strike ''and'' and insert '', and shall be available for''.

SA 3251. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 387, between lines 7 and 8, insert the following:

(3) The Secretary shall provide a waiver to exempt any school from the whole grain requirements referred to paragraph (1) not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives from a school written notification that the school would encounter a hardship in complying with those whole grain requirements if the school identifies the hardship is due to increased costs or difficulty procuring the necessary items.

SA 3252. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 298, beginning on line 22, strike ''not to exceed'' and all that follows through the end of line 24 and insert ''not to exceed $1,000,000 shall be available for necessary expenses of a Healthy Food Financing Initiative to be carried out by the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service; not to exceed $25,120,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, of which $24,311,000''.

SA 3253. Mr. CASEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II of division A, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act—

(1) the total amount made available under the heading ''JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS'' under the heading ''OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS'' under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'' in this title shall be $294,500,000; and

(2) the amount made available for youth mentoring grants under paragraph (2) under the heading ''JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS'' under the heading ''OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS'' under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'' in this title shall be $90,000,000.

(b) The amounts appropriated under this title (except for amounts appropriated for the purposes described in subsection (a)(2)) shall be reduced on a pro rata basis by the amount necessary to reduce the total amount of such spending by $37,000,000.

SA 3254. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 148, line 4, strike ''(a)'' and all that follows through line 22.

SA 3255. Mr. COATS (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 156, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

SEC. 143. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to administer the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Roadside Survey.

SA 3256. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 101, strike lines 7 through 16 and insert the following:

SEC. 528. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act or any other Act may be used to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release to or within the United States, its territories, or possessions Khalid Sheik Mohammed or any other detainee who—

(1) is not a United States citizen or a members of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(2) is or was held on or after June 24, 2009, at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by the Department of Defense.

(b) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act or any other Act may be used to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release to the custody or control of any foreign country or entity of any detainee described in subsection (a) if—

(1) such detainee has been recommended for continued law-of-war detention by the Guantanamo Review Task Force;

(2) such country or entity is a country or entity to which any individual who was detained at United States Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after September 11, 2001, was transferred and such transferee was subsequently confirmed to have engaged in any terrorist activity; or

(3) such country has not fully honored its commitments to the United States to monitor, detain, or control the travel of individuals formerly detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by the Department of Defense.

SA 3257. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PROHIBITION OF FUNDS FOR COLLEGE RATING SYSTEM.

None of the funds made available under this Act or any other Act shall be used to carry out (including develop, refine, promulgate, publish, implement, administer, or enforce) a Postsecondary Institution Ratings System or any other performance system to rate institutions of higher education.

SA 3258. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be used by the National Labor Relations Board to promulgate, administer, enforce, or otherwise implement any rule or decision expanding or otherwise modifying an employer's legal obligation—

(1) to provide a labor organization with a list of names and home addresses of employees eligible to vote in a labor organization representation election under section 9 of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 159), in accordance with the National Labor Relations Board's decision in Excelsior Underwear, Inc. (156 N.L.R.B. 1236 (1966)); or

(2) to enable labor organizations to electronically communicate with employees, in accordance with the rights of such employees under section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 157).

SA 3259. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

PROTECTING STATE CONTROL OVER ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS, AND ASSESSMENTS

SEC. _____.

None of the funds made available under this Act or any other Act shall be used by the Department of Education or any other Federal agency—

(1) to mandate, direct, control, or exercise any direction or supervision over the academic content standards or academic achievement standards adopted or implemented by a State;

(2) to establish any criterion that specifies, defines, or prescribes the standards or measures that States or local educational agencies use to establish, implement, or improve State academic content standards, State academic achievement standards, or State assessments;

(3) to establish any direct or indirect requirements that States or local educational agencies adopt any particular academic standards or assessments, including any academic standards or assessments developed by a partnership of States; or

(4) to require or incentivize a State to enter into a partnership with another State or States to develop or implement academic content standards, academic achievement standards, or assessments, including—

(A) as a condition of approval of a State plan submitted under section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6331 et seq.);

(B) as a condition of an award of Federal funds under any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement;

(C) by awarding any additional points or providing any preference in competitive grant programs; or

(D) as a condition of approval of any request for waivers of requirements under any provision of Federal law.

SA 3260. Mr. ALEXANDER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Section 1311(c)(5) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18031(c)(5)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor, submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the authorizing committees of jurisdiction of the Senate and the House of Representatives and make available to State governors, State insurance commissioners, and the public, reports concerning consumer interactions with the Internet website maintained by the Federal Government for health insurance coverage (healthcare.gov or any subsequent Internet site (or sites) that is established in whole or in part by the Federal Government to facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans, the receipt of advance premium tax credits or cost sharing reduction assistance, or comparisons of available qualified health plans) and any efforts undertaken to remedy problems that impact taxpayers and consumers, such reports—

''(i) to be submitted not later than—

''(I) the first Monday after the date of enactment of this subparagraph; and

''(II)(aa) except during the period between November 15, 2014, and February 15, 2015, the first Monday of each month thereafter through December 2015 (or the next business day when Monday occurs on a Federal holiday); and

''(bb) during the period between November 15, 2014, and February 15, 2015, each Monday (or the next business day when Monday occurs on a Federal holiday); and

''(ii) to include a State-by-State break down of—

''(I) the number of unique website visits;

''(II) the number of individuals who create an account;

''(III) the number of individuals who have selected a qualified health plan;

''(IV) the number of individuals who enrolled in Medicaid, and, of such number, the number who became eligible to enroll because of changes in eligibility effected under this Act and the number who otherwise were eligible to enroll;

''(V) the number of individuals who have effectuated enrollment in a qualified health plan through payment of the first monthly premium;

''(VI) the age of individuals who have effectuated enrollment in a qualified health plan through payment of the first monthly premium;

''(VII) the number of enrollees in each zip code; and

''(VIII) the level of coverage obtained.''.

(b) Section 1311(i) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18031(i)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF LIST OF NAVIGATORS.—Not later than 5 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary shall make available to Congress, State attorneys general, State insurance commissioners, and the public a list of all

navigators and certified application counselors that have been trained and certified by Exchanges, including contact information for all navigator entities and their partner organizations, including subcontractors. Such list shall be updated by the Secretary on a monthly basis through December 31, 2015.''.

(c) Section 1312(e) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18032(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following flush sentence: ''Not later than 5 days after the date of the enactment of this sentence, the Secretary shall make available on the Internet website maintained by the Federal Government for health insurance coverage (healthcare.gov or any subsequent Internet site (or sites) that is established in whole or in part by the Federal Government to facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans, the receipt of tax credits or cost sharing reduction assistance, or comparisons of available qualified health plans) a list of all agents and brokers who have been trained and certified by the Federal Exchange, including their name, business address (if available), and phone number. Such list shall be updated on a monthly basis through December 31, 2015.''.

SA 3261. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 275, between lines 22 and 23, insert the following:

SEC. 247. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available under this title may be used by any recipient of such funds to discriminate against any person because that person is a member of the uniformed services.

(b) Any person or entity, acting in good faith, that has knowledge of any instance in which a recipient of funds under this title has discriminated or is discriminating against a member of the uniformed services may file a complaint against such recipient with the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term ''member of the uniformed services'' means an individual who—

(1) is a member of—

(A) the uniformed services (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code); or

(B) the National Guard in State status under title 32, United States Code; or

(2) was discharged or released from service in the uniformed services (as so defined) or the National Guard in such status under conditions other than dishonorable.

(d) Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit the use or availability of any funds appropriated or otherwise made available under this title for programs, activities, or accounts that assist or provide housing to members of the uniformed services.

SA 3262. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. COATS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to approve a new foreign air carrier permit under sections 41301 through 41305 of title 49, United States Code, or an exemption application under section 40109 of that title of an air carrier already holding an air operators certificate issued by a country that is party to the U.S.–E.U.–Iceland–Norway Air Transport Agreement where such approval would contravene United States law or Article 17 bis of the U.S.–E.U.–Iceland–Norway Air Transport Agreement.

SA 3263. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, after line 21, add the following:

SEC. _____. It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Interstate Route 11 would significantly enhance for the western United States—

(A) commerce;

(B) tourism;

(C) international trade;

(D) economic vitality; and

(E) competitiveness on the global stage;

(2) Interstate Route 11 would connect communities and economic systems in the States of Arizona and Nevada, including—

(A) the 2 largest cities in the United States without an Interstate connection;

(B) major trade hubs;

(C) existing and future domestic and international deep-water ports; and

(D) transcontinental roadways and railroad corridors;

(3) Interstate Route 11 would improve safety and travel time in north-south corridors of the western United States;

(4) the establishment of Interstate Route 11 from the southern border of the State of Arizona through the State of Nevada and, ultimately, to the Canadian border would enhance the economic vitality of the western United States; and

(5) the States of Arizona and Nevada, metropolitan planning organizations (as defined in section 134(b) of title 23, United States Code), and other local leaders and stakeholders should be encouraged to continue their efforts to advance the Interstate Route 11 project.

SA 3264. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 324, line 17, insert before the period at the end the following: '': *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, $2,000,000 shall remain available until expended for the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service to reduce the backlog of undetermined wetlands in the Prairie Pothole Region, with funds divided proportionately among States based on the number of undetermined wetlands in each State as of the date of enactment of this Act, and made available in addition to any other funds for this purpose''.

SA 3265. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. No funds made available under this Act may be used to create or operate a checkpoint that exclusively targets motorcycle operators and motorcycle passengers.

SA 3266. Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 7____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation or the Risk Management Agency to carry out a downward trending adjustment on the actual production history of a producer with respect to the yield of a perennial crop, including peaches, the yield of which is determined under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) using a 5-year database.

SA 3267. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII of division _____, add the following:

SEC. _____. To expedite emergency feed assistance that is needed to address emergency drought conditions in any State, the Secretary of Agriculture shall complete all requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) that are necessary to make emergency haying and grazing decisions on acres enrolled under a contract for the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) in a State, not later than 30 days after receiving such a request.

SA 3268. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to negotiate an agreement that includes a waiver of requirements under chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code (popularly known as the ''Buy American Act'').

SA 3269. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. NO BUDGET, NO PAY.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''Member of Congress''—

(1) has the meaning given under section 2106 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) does not include the Vice President.

(b) TIMELY APPROVAL OF CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET AND THE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS.—If both Houses of Congress have not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget as described under section 301 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632) for a fiscal year before October 1 of that fiscal year and have not passed all the regular appropriations bills for the next fiscal year before October 1 of that fiscal year, the pay of each Member of Congress may not be paid for each day following that October 1 until the date on which both Houses of Congress approve a concurrent resolution on the budget for that fiscal year and all the regular appropriations bills.

(c) NO PAY WITHOUT CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET AND THE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds may be appropriated or otherwise be made available from the United States Treasury for the pay of any Member of Congress during any period determined by the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate or the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under subsection (d).

(2) NO RETROACTIVE PAY.—A Member of Congress may not receive pay for any period determined by the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate or the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under subsection (d), at any time after the end of that period.

(d) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) SENATE.—

(A) REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATIONS.—On October 1 of each year, the Secretary of the Senate shall submit a request to the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate for certification of determinations made under subparagraph (B) (i) and (ii).

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate shall—

(i) on October 1 of each year, make a determination of whether Congress is in compliance with subsection (b) and whether Senators may not be paid under that subsection;

(ii) determine the period of days following each October 1 that Senators may not be paid under subsection (b); and

(iii) provide timely certification of the determinations under clauses (i) and (ii) upon the request of the Secretary of the Senate.

(2) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATIONS.—On October 1 of each year, the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives shall submit a request to the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives for certification of determinations made under subparagraph (B) (i) and (ii).

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives shall—

(i) on October 1 of each year, make a determination of whether Congress is in compliance with subsection (b) and whether Members of the House of Representatives may not be paid under that subsection;

(ii) determine the period of days following each October 1 that Members of the House of Representatives may not be paid under subsection (b); and

(iii) provide timely certification of the determinations under clauses (i) and (ii) upon the request of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on February 1, 2015.

SA 3270. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to promulgate or enforce any regulation that mandates the installation or use of an event data recorder in a light duty, noncommercial, passenger motor vehicle.

SA 3271. Mrs. FISCHER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Board of Directors of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) shall submit a report to Congress that includes—

(1) the amount of money expended by FirstNet since its establishment under section 6204 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–96);

(2) a description of FirstNet's cumulative accomplishments; and

(3) a timetable for deploying a functioning nationwide, interoperable, public safety broadband network.

SA 3272. Mrs. FISCHER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to regulate, adopt guidelines with respect to, or prescribe the design of mobile application software (apps), devices, or other mobile connected vehicle technologies, except for software whose primary purpose is integral to the operation of a motor vehicle.

SA 3273. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. __. Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) NATURAL GAS VEHICLES.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall issue regulations to allow a vehicle, if operated by an engine fueled primarily by natural gas, to exceed any vehicle weight limit under this section by an amount that is equal to the difference between—

''(1) the weight of the vehicle attributable to the natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle; and

''(2) the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system.''.

SA 3274. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 718 of division ____, strike ''SEC. 718. None of the funds'' and all that follows through the end of paragraph (1) and insert the following:

SEC. 718. (a) There is appropriated to the Secretary of Agriculture, out of funds of the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $12,000,000 to carry out section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1012).

(b) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act shall be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel to carry out the following:

(1) The biorefinery, renewable chemical, and biobased product manufacturing assistance program established under section 9003 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8103) in excess of $38,000,000 of funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation for fiscal year 2015.

SA 3275. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of

Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 153, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 134. COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE SKILLS TESTING REPORT.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to determine—

(A) the Commercial Driver's License (referred to in this section as ''CDL'') skills testing procedures used by each State;

(B) whether States using the procedures described in paragraph (2)(A) have reduced testing wait times, on average, compared to the procedures described in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (2);

(C) for each of the 3 CDL skills testing procedures described in paragraph (2)—

(i) the average time between a CDL applicant's request for a CDL skills test and such test in States using such procedure;

(ii) the failure rate of CDL applicants in States using such procedure; and

(iii) the average time between a CDL applicant's request to retake a CDL skills test and such test; and

(D) the total economic impact of CDL skills testing delays.

(2) SKILLS TESTING PROCEDURES.—The procedures described in this paragraph are—

(A) third party testing, using nongovernmental contractors to proctor CDL skills tests on behalf of the State;

(B) modified third party testing, administering CDL skills tests at State testing facilities, community colleges, or a limited number of third parties; and

(C) State testing, administering CDL skills tests only at State-owned facilities.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report to Congress that contains the results of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (a).

SA 3276. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 157, line 24, strike ''$1,390,000,000'' and insert ''$1,620,000,000''.

SA 3277. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 115, line 9, insert '': *Provided*, That the Secretary of Transportation shall use up to $1,500,000 of the amounts made available under this heading to increase the number of projects published in the Federal Infrastructure Projects Permitting Dashboard'' before the period at the end.

SA 3278. Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to limit or prohibit the use of wood boards for cheese aging or ripening on an industry-wide basis before the Commissioner of Food and Drugs ensures that the public has an opportunity to review and comment on the policy of the Food and Drug Administration regarding good handling practices for cheese aging and the use of wood boards for cheese aging and ripening, including public comment on the relative economic impact of such use, and the Commissioner of Food and Drugs reports to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives on the agency's consideration of public review and comment.

SA 3279. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be used by the Bureau of the Census to conduct the 2020 decennial census of population unless the questionnaires used for such census include questions to ascertain United States citizenship and immigration stauts.

SA 3280. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, none of the funds made available under this Act may be used to carry out Operation Choke Point.

SA 3281. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be used to enforce the amendments to section 801 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 381) made by section 708 of the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (Public Law 112–144; 126 Stat. 1068) or to implement subsection (d) of such section 708 (21 U.S.C. 381 note).

SA 3282. Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be used to provide housing assistance benefits for an individual who is convicted of aggravated sexual abuse under section 2241 of title 18, United States Code, murder under section 1111 of title 18, United States Code, an offense under chapter 110 of title 18, United States Code, or any other Federal or State offense involving sexual assault, as defined in 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13925(a)).

SA 3283. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. No funds appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be used by the Federal Housing Administration to reduce the mortgage insurance premiums charged and collected under title II of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1707 et seq.) for the insurance of mortgages.

SA 3284. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 529A. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act may be used to construct, modify, or operate facilities at Thomson Correctional Facility, Illinois, for purposes of any operations of the Department of Defense at such facilities.

SA 3285. Mr. WALSH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, none of the funds made available in this Act to the Department of Justice or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives may be used, with respect to registered medicinal marijuana patients in the States of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin, to enforce the provisions of subsection (d)(3) or (g)(3) of section 922 of title 18, United States Code, against a registered medicinal marijuana patient based on either the status of the patient as a registered medicinal marijuana patient or the lawful use of medicinal marijuana under the laws of the State in which the patient resides.

SA 3286. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3244 submitted by Ms. MIKULSKI and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 7, line 11, strike ''$252,200,000'' and insert ''$242,761,000''.

On page 7, line 17, strike ''$896,744,000'' and insert ''$863,183,000''.

On page 12, line 4, strike ''$685,000,000'' and insert ''$673,583,000''.

On page 12, line 14, strike ''$156,000,000'' and insert ''$153,400,000''.

On page 12, line 15, strike ''$141,000,000'' and insert ''$138,650,000''.

On page 12, line 17, strike ''$15,000,000'' and insert ''$14,750,000''.

On page 13, line 1, strike ''$59,000,000'' and insert ''$58,017,000''.

On page 23, line 16, strike ''$115,000,000'' and insert ''$110,000,000''.

On page 45, line 20, strike ''$1,149,500,000'' and insert ''$1,216,500,000''.

On page 45, line 22, strike'' $376,000,000'' and insert ''$443,000,000''.

On page 68, line 18, strike ''$5,200,000,000'' and insert ''$5,198,836,000''.

On page 69, line 19, strike ''$551,100,000'' and insert ''$550,977,000''.

On page 70, line 8, strike ''$580,200,000'' and insert ''$580,070,000''.

On page 70, line 22, strike ''$4,367,700,000'' and insert ''$4,366,722,000''.

On page 70, line 24, strike ''$1,200,000,000'' and insert ''$1,199,731,000''.

On page 71, line 1, strike ''$2,051,300,000'' and insert ''$2,050,841,000''.

On page 71, line 6, strike ''$1,700,000,000'' and insert ''$1,699,619,000''.

On page 71, line 7, strike ''$351,300,000'' and insert ''$351,221,000''.

On page 72, line 3, strike ''$805,000,000'' and insert ''$804,820,000''.

On page 72, line 4, strike ''$311,400,000'' and insert ''$311,330,000''.

On page 72, line 19, strike ''$3,830,800,000'' and insert ''$3,829,942,000''.

On page 73, line 6, strike ''$108,000,000'' and insert ''$107,976,000''.

On page 74, line 1, strike ''$2,778,600,000'' and insert ''$2,777,978,000''.

On page 74, line 11, strike ''$446,100,000'' and insert ''$446,000,000''.

SA 3287. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 67, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

SEC. 221. (a) Subsection (a) of section 104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting ''; and'', and by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

''(6) amounts received pursuant to—

''(A) section 1201 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796); or

''(B) a program established under the laws of any State which provides monetary compensation for surviving dependents of a public safety officer who has died as the direct and proximate result of a personal injury sustained in the line of duty.''.

(b) The amendments made by this section shall apply to amounts received after December 31, 2011.

SA 3288. Mr. REID (for Ms. MURKOWSKI) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1237, to improve the administration of programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes; as follows:

Beginning on page 63, strike line 14 and all that follows through page 75, line 22.

On page 75, line 23, strike ''**8**'' and insert ''**7**''.

On page 76, line 6, strike ''**9**'' and insert ''**8**''.

Beginning on page 77, strike line 12 and all that follows through page 78, line 17.

On page 78, line 18, strike ''**11**'' and insert ''**9**''.

On page 79, line 3, strike ''**12**'' and insert ''**10**''.

On page 79, line 18, strike ''**13**'' and insert ''**11**''.

On page 80, line 8, strike ''**14**'' and insert ''**12**''.

SA 3289. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II of division A, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act to the Department of Justice may be used, with respect to the States of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin, to prevent such States from implementing their own State laws that authorize the use, distribution, possession, or cultivation of medical marijuana.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on June 24, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Falling Through the Cracks: The Challenges of Prevention and Identification in Child Trafficking and Private Re-homing.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Ashley Eden of the committee staff on (202) 224–9243.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on June 24, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Moving Toward Greater Community Inclusion—Olmstead at 15.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Danielle Corley of the committee staff on (202) 224–2330.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Aggressive E-Cigarette Marketing and Potential Consequences for Youth''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 2:15 p.m., to hold a hearing entitled ''U.S. Policy in Afghanistan and the Regional Implications of the 2014 Transition.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Intelligence Community: Keeping Watch Over Its Contractor Workforce.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 3 p.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Growing Small Business Exports, Growing U.S. Jobs.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on June 18, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF THE CLEAN AIR AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Climate Change: The Need to Act Now.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''High Frequency Trading's Impact on the Economy.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 18, 2014, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reduction in Face-to-Face Services at the Social Security Administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Bob Ross and Nicole Pollard, detailees from the Department of Agriculture to the Committee on Appropriations, be granted floor privileges during the consideration of H.R. 4660.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OMNIBUS TERRITORIES ACT OF 2013

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 352, S. 1237.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1237) to improve the administration of programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Omnibus Territories Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.
Sec. 2. Table of contents.
Sec. 3. Amendments to the Consolidated Natural Resources Act.
Sec. 4. Study of electric rates in the insular areas.
Sec. 5. Reports on estimates of revenues.
Sec. 6. Low-income home energy assistance program.
Sec. 7. Guam War Claims Review Commission.
Sec. 8. Improvements in HUD assisted programs.
Sec. 9. Benefit to cost ratio study for projects in American Samoa.
Sec. 10. Waiver of local matching requirements.
Sec. 11. Fishery endorsements.
Sec. 12. Effects of Minimum Wage differentials in American Samoa.
Sec. 13. Office of National Drug Control Policy.
Sec. 14. Drivers' licenses and personal identification cards.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSOLIDATED NATURAL RESOURCES ACT.

Section 6 of the Joint Resolution entitled ''A Joint Resolution to approve the 'Covenant To Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America', and for other purposes'', approved March 24, 1976 (Public Law 94–241; 90 Stat. 263, 122 Stat. 854), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''December 31, 2014, except as provided in subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (6), and inserting the following:

''(6) CERTAIN EDUCATION FUNDING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to fees charged pursuant to section 286(m) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1356 (m)) to recover the full costs of providing adjudication services, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall charge an annual supplemental fee of $150 per nonimmigrant worker to each prospective employer who is issued a permit under subsection (d) of this section during the transition program. Such supplemental fee shall be paid into the Treasury of the Commonwealth government for the purpose of funding ongoing vocational educational curricula and program development by Commonwealth educational entities.

''(B) PLAN FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.—At the beginning of each fiscal year, and prior to the payment of the supplemental fee into the Treasury of the Commonwealth government in that fiscal year, the Commonwealth government must provide to the Secretary of Labor, a plan for the expenditure of funds received under this paragraph, a projection of the effectiveness of these expenditures in the placement of United States workers into jobs, and a report on the changes in employment of United States workers attributable to prior year expenditures.

''(C) REPORT.—The Secretary of Labor shall report to the Congress every 2 years on the effectiveness of meeting the goals set out by the Commonwealth government in its annual plan for the expenditure of funds.''; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the third sentence of paragraph (2), by striking ''not to extend beyond December 31, 2014, unless extended pursuant to paragraph 5 of this subsection'' and inserting ''ending on December 31, 2019'';

(B) by striking paragraph (5); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (5).

SEC. 4. STUDY OF ELECTRIC RATES IN THE INSULAR AREAS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY PLAN.—The term ''comprehensive energy plan'' means a comprehensive energy plan prepared and updated under subsections (c) and (e) of section 604 of the Act entitled ''An Act to authorize appropriations for certain insular areas of the United States, and for other purposes'', approved December 24, 1980 (48 U.S.C. 1492).

(2) ENERGY ACTION PLAN.—The term ''energy action plan'' means the plan required by subsection (d).

(3) FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.—The term ''Freely Associated States'' means the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

(4) INSULAR AREAS.—The term ''insular areas'' means American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) TEAM.—The term ''team'' means the team established by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, within the Empowering Insular Communities activity, establish a team of technical, policy, and financial experts—

(1) to develop an energy action plan addressing the energy needs of each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States; and

(2) to assist each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States in implementing such plan.

(c) PARTICIPATION OF REGIONAL UTILITY ORGANIZATIONS.—In establishing the team, the Secretary shall consider including regional utility organizations.

(d) ENERGY ACTION PLAN.—In accordance with subsection (b), the energy action plan shall include—

(1) recommendations, based on the comprehensive energy plan where applicable, to—

(A) reduce reliance and expenditures on fuel shipped to the insular areas and Freely Associated States from ports outside the United States;

(B) develop and utilize domestic fuel energy sources; and

(C) improve performance of energy infrastructure and overall energy efficiency;

(2) a schedule for implementation of such recommendations and identification and prioritization of specific projects;

(3) a financial and engineering plan for implementing and sustaining projects; and

(4) benchmarks for measuring progress toward implementation.

(e) REPORTS TO SECRETARY.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Secretary establishes the team and annually thereafter, the team shall submit to the Secretary a report detailing progress made in fulfilling its charge and in implementing the energy action plan.

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a report submitted by the team under subsection (e), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a summary of the report of the team.

(g) APPROVAL OF SECRETARY REQUIRED.—The energy action plan shall not be implemented until the Secretary approves the energy action plan.

SEC. 5. REPORTS ON ESTIMATES OF REVENUES.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) evaluates whether the annual estimates or forecasts of revenue and expenditure of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Virgin Islands are reasonable; and

(2) as the Comptroller General of the United States determines to be necessary, makes recommendations for improving the process for developing estimates or forecasts.

SEC. 6. LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

With respect to fiscal years 2014 through 2017, the percentage described in section 2605(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(b)(2)(B)(i)) shall be 300 percent when applied to households located in the Virgin Islands.

SEC. 7. IMPROVEMENTS IN HUD ASSISTED PROGRAMS.

Section 214(a)(7) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 1436a(a)(7)) is amended by striking ''such alien'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''citizen or national of the United States shall be entitled to a preference or priority in receiving assistance before any such alien who is otherwise eligible for such assistance.''.

SEC. 8. BENEFIT TO COST RATIO STUDY FOR PROJECTS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study regarding the use of benefit-to-cost ratio formulas by Federal departments and agencies for purposes of evaluating projects in American Samoa.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall—

(1) assess whether the benefit-to-cost ratio formulas described in subsection (a) take into consideration—

(A) the remote locations in, and the cost of transportation to and from, American Samoa; and

(B) other significant factors that are not comparable to locations within the 48 contiguous States; and

(2) assess, in particular, the use of benefit-to-cost ratio formulas by—

(A) the Secretary of Transportation with respect to airport traffic control tower programs; and

(B) the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Corps of Engineers, with respect to a harbor project or other water resources development project.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study.

SEC. 9. FISHERY ENDORSEMENTS.

Section 12113 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) CERTAIN EXEMPTION.—Paragraph (3) of subsection (a) shall not apply to any vessel—

''(1) that offloads its catch in part or full in American Samoa; and

''(2) that was rebuilt outside of the United States before January 1, 2011.''.

SEC. 10. EFFECTS OF MINIMUM WAGE DIFFERENTIALS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

Section 8104 of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (29 U.S.C. 206 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) EFFECTS OF MINIMUM WAGE DIFFERENTIALS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.—The reports required under this section shall include an analysis of the economic effects on employees and employers of the differentials in minimum wage rates among industries and classifications in American Samoa under section 697 of title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, including the potential effects of eliminating such differentials prior to the time when such rates are scheduled to be equal to the minimum wage set forth in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)).''.

SEC. 11. OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY.

(a) CARIBBEAN BORDER COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy shall develop a biennial Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy, that is made available to the public, with emphasis on the borders of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States, on terms substantially equivalent to the existing Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy and the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Section 704(b)(13)(B) of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1703(b)(13)(B)) is amended by inserting ''the borders of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States and'' after ''in particular''.

SEC. 12. DRIVERS' LICENSES AND PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS.

(a) DEFINITION OF STATE.—Section 201(5) of the REAL ID Act of 2005 (49 U.S.C. 30301 note; Public Law 109–13) is amended by striking ''the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands,''.

(b) EVIDENCE OF LAWFUL STATUS.—Section 202(c)(2)(B) of the REAL ID Act of 2005 (49 U.S.C. 30301 note; Public Law 109–13) is amended—

(1) in clause (viii), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon at the end;

(2) in clause (ix), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(x) is a citizen of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau who has been admitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant pursuant to a Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Republic or Federated States.''.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered, the Murkowski amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to, the substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, 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 amendment (No. 3288) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To remove certain sections.)

Beginning on page 63, strike line 14 and all that follows through page 75, line 22.

On page 75, line 23, strike ''**8**'' and insert ''**7**''.

On page 76, line 6, strike ''**9**'' and insert ''**8**''.

Beginning on page 77, strike line 12 and all that follows through page 78, line 17.

On page 78, line 18, strike ''**11**'' and insert ''**9**''.

On page 79, line 3, strike ''**12**'' and insert ''**10**''.

On page 79, line 18, strike ''**13**'' and insert ''**11**''.

On page 80, line 8, strike ''**14**'' and insert ''**12**''.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1237), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1237

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 ''Omnibus Territories Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.
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Sec. 4. Study of electric rates in the insular areas.
Sec. 5. Reports on estimates of revenues.
Sec. 6. Low-income home energy assistance program.
Sec. 7. Improvements in HUD assisted programs.
Sec. 8. Benefit to cost ratio study for projects in American Samoa.
Sec. 9. Fishery endorsements.
Sec. 10. Effects of Minimum Wage differentials in American Samoa.
Sec. 11. Office of National Drug Control Policy.
Sec. 12. Drivers' licenses and personal identification cards.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSOLIDATED NATURAL RESOURCES ACT.

Section 6 of the Joint Resolution entitled ''A Joint Resolution to approve the 'Covenant To Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America', and for other purposes'', approved March 24, 1976 (Public Law 94–241; 90 Stat. 263, 122 Stat. 854), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''December 31, 2014, except as provided in subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (6), and inserting the following:

''(6) CERTAIN EDUCATION FUNDING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to fees charged pursuant to section 286(m) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1356 (m)) to recover the full costs of providing adjudication services, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall charge an annual supplemental fee of $150 per nonimmigrant worker to each prospective employer who is issued a permit under subsection (d) of this section during the transition program. Such supplemental fee shall be paid into the Treasury of the Commonwealth government for the purpose of funding ongoing vocational educational curricula and program development by Commonwealth educational entities.

''(B) PLAN FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.—At the beginning of each fiscal year, and prior to the payment of the supplemental fee into the Treasury of the Commonwealth government in that fiscal year, the Commonwealth government must provide to the Secretary of Labor, a plan for the expenditure of funds received under this paragraph, a projection of the effectiveness of these expenditures in the placement of United States workers into jobs, and a report on the changes in employment of United States workers attributable to prior year expenditures.

''(C) REPORT.—The Secretary of Labor shall report to the Congress every 2 years on the effectiveness of meeting the goals set out by the Commonwealth government in its annual plan for the expenditure of funds.''; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the third sentence of paragraph (2), by striking ''not to extend beyond December 31, 2014, unless extended pursuant to paragraph 5 of this subsection'' and inserting ''ending on December 31, 2019'';

(B) by striking paragraph (5); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (5).

SEC. 4. STUDY OF ELECTRIC RATES IN THE INSULAR AREAS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY PLAN.—The term ''comprehensive energy plan'' means a comprehensive energy plan prepared and updated under subsections (c) and (e) of section 604 of the Act entitled ''An Act to authorize appropriations for certain insular areas of the United States, and for other purposes'', approved December 24, 1980 (48 U.S.C. 1492).

(2) ENERGY ACTION PLAN.—The term ''energy action plan'' means the plan required by subsection (d).

(3) FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.—The term ''Freely Associated States'' means the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

(4) INSULAR AREAS.—The term ''insular areas'' means American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) TEAM.—The term ''team'' means the team established by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, within the Empowering Insular Communities activity, establish a team of technical, policy, and financial experts—

(1) to develop an energy action plan addressing the energy needs of each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States; and

(2) to assist each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States in implementing such plan.

(c) PARTICIPATION OF REGIONAL UTILITY ORGANIZATIONS.—In establishing the team, the Secretary shall consider including regional utility organizations.

(d) ENERGY ACTION PLAN.—In accordance with subsection (b), the energy action plan shall include—

(1) recommendations, based on the comprehensive energy plan where applicable, to—

(A) reduce reliance and expenditures on fuel shipped to the insular areas and Freely Associated States from ports outside the United States;

(B) develop and utilize domestic fuel energy sources; and

(C) improve performance of energy infrastructure and overall energy efficiency;

(2) a schedule for implementation of such recommendations and identification and prioritization of specific projects;

(3) a financial and engineering plan for implementing and sustaining projects; and

(4) benchmarks for measuring progress toward implementation.

(e) REPORTS TO SECRETARY.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Secretary establishes the team and annually thereafter, the team shall submit to the Secretary a report detailing progress made in fulfilling its charge and in implementing the energy action plan.

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a report submitted by the team under subsection (e), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a summary of the report of the team.

(g) APPROVAL OF SECRETARY REQUIRED.—The energy action plan shall not be implemented until the Secretary approves the energy action plan.

SEC. 5. REPORTS ON ESTIMATES OF REVENUES.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) evaluates whether the annual estimates or forecasts of revenue and expenditure of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Virgin Islands are reasonable; and

(2) as the Comptroller General of the United States determines to be necessary, makes recommendations for improving the process for developing estimates or forecasts.

SEC. 6. LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

With respect to fiscal years 2014 through 2017, the percentage described in section 2605(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(b)(2)(B)(i)) shall be 300 percent when applied to households located in the Virgin Islands.

SEC. 7. IMPROVEMENTS IN HUD ASSISTED PROGRAMS.

Section 214(a)(7) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 1436a(a)(7)) is amended by striking ''such alien'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''citizen or national of the United States shall be entitled to a preference or priority in receiving assistance before any such alien who is otherwise eligible for such assistance.''.

SEC. 8. BENEFIT TO COST RATIO STUDY FOR PROJECTS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study regarding the use of benefit-to-cost ratio formulas by Federal departments and agencies for purposes of evaluating projects in American Samoa.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall—

(1) assess whether the benefit-to-cost ratio formulas described in subsection (a) take into consideration—

(A) the remote locations in, and the cost of transportation to and from, American Samoa; and

(B) other significant factors that are not comparable to locations within the 48 contiguous States; and

(2) assess, in particular, the use of benefit-to-cost ratio formulas by—

(A) the Secretary of Transportation with respect to airport traffic control tower programs; and

(B) the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Corps of Engineers, with respect to a harbor project or other water resources development project.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study.

SEC. 9. FISHERY ENDORSEMENTS.

Section 12113 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) CERTAIN EXEMPTION.—Paragraph (3) of subsection (a) shall not apply to any vessel—

''(1) that offloads its catch in part or full in American Samoa; and

''(2) that was rebuilt outside of the United States before January 1, 2011.''.

SEC. 10. EFFECTS OF MINIMUM WAGE DIFFERENTIALS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

Section 8104 of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (29 U.S.C. 206 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) EFFECTS OF MINIMUM WAGE DIFFERENTIALS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.—The reports required under this section shall include an analysis of the economic effects on employees and employers of the differentials in minimum wage rates among industries and classifications in American Samoa under section 697 of title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, including the potential effects of eliminating such differentials prior to the time when such rates are scheduled to be equal to the minimum wage set forth in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)).''.

SEC. 11. OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY.

(a) CARIBBEAN BORDER COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy shall develop a biennial Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy, that is made available to the public, with emphasis on the borders of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States, on terms substantially equivalent to the existing Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy and the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Section 704(b)(13)(B) of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1703(b)(13)(B)) is amended by inserting ''the borders of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States and'' after ''in particular''.

SEC. 12. DRIVERS' LICENSES AND PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS.

(a) DEFINITION OF STATE.—Section 201(5) of the REAL ID Act of 2005 (49 U.S.C. 30301 note; Public Law 109–13) is amended by striking ''the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands,''.

(b) EVIDENCE OF LAWFUL STATUS.—Section 202(c)(2)(B) of the REAL ID Act of 2005 (49 U.S.C. 30301 note; Public Law 109–13) is amended—

(1) in clause (viii), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon at the end;

(2) in clause (ix), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(x) is a citizen of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau who has been admitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant pursuant to a Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Republic or Federated States.''.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2491

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2491 is at the desk, and I now ask, through the direction of the Chair, for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2491) to protect the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to reconciliation involving changes to the Medicare program.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for its second reading but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this bill is long overdue. I appreciate very much the work done by the author of this legislation, the senior Senator from Arkansas, Mr. PRYOR.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 19; 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; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4660, the CJS, T–HUD, and Agriculture appropriations bill, and all but 2 hours of postcloture debate time be considered expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:09 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 19, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE VILLAGE OF POUND

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Village of Pound, located in Marinette County.

The Village of Pound was incorporated on December 8th, 1914. Early records show that 54 ballots were cast during the incorporation process. Thirty-five residents voted in favor of creating the Village, while 19 voted against it. Today, the Village of Pound, located inside the Town of Pound, is known as the community "Where You're Always Welcome!"

It is interesting to note that both the Town and Village of Pound were named for a popular figure in Wisconsin's history. Thaddeus Coleman Pound, the grandfather of poet Ezra Pound, served as the inspiration for the community's name. As a prominent businessman in northern Wisconsin, Thaddeus Coleman Pound had the opportunity to serve in the Wisconsin State Legislature, as Lt. Governor of the great State of Wisconsin, and represented the 8th Congressional District from March 4, 1877 to March 3, 1883.

The Village of Pound is planning to celebrate its 100th anniversary June 27–28, 2014 with a Little League tournament, tractor pulls, live music and a fireworks display. Again, I congratulate the Village of Pound on their centennial anniversary and encourage all residents in 8th District to celebrate this community's history and heritage.

HONORING ODELL H. SYLVESTER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Mr. Odell H. Sylvester, former Chief of Police of Berkeley, California and devoted husband, father and friend. Known throughout the Bay Area for his firmness, fairness and compassion, Mr. Sylvester has left an indelible mark on our community. With his passing on January 25, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of his life's work.

Born on November 3, 1924 near Dallas, Texas, Mr. Odell Sylvester and his family later moved to Kansas City, Missouri. After his first year of undergraduate study at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, he enrolled in military service. For three years, he served as a military policeman in North Africa and Italy.

After returning to the United States, Mr. Sylvester attended the University of California, Berkeley and graduated with a degree in Business Administration in 1948. Mr. Sylvester went on to complete a Master's Degree in Public Administration at the University of Southern California.

Mr. Odell Sylvester began his long career in law enforcement by working with the Oakland Police Department in 1949. Progressing through the ranks by competitive examination, he became Sergeant in 1957, Lieutenant in 1961, moving up to Captain two years later and ended as Deputy Chief in 1971. After he left the Oakland Police Department in 1977, Mr. Sylvester accepted his appointment as Chief of Police in Berkeley.

Breaking racial barriers, Mr. Sylvester became the first African American Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and Deputy Chief in the Oakland Police Department, as well as the first African American Police Chief for the City of Berkeley.

In addition to his prolific career, Mr. Sylvester was an active member in the community, including the Oakland Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Goodwill Industries, the YMCA, the NAACP and the Church by the Side of the Road. He was also a founding member of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and was the Director of the Bay Area Minority Recruitment Project, involving the San Francisco, Berkeley, Richmond and Oakland Police Departments. Mr. Sylvester received numerous awards for community and professional service, as well as in recognition of his lifetime achievements.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual, Mr. Odell H. Sylvester. As an Oakland-resident, Mr. Sylvester's efforts have truly paved the way for minorities and impacted so many lives throughout the Bay Area. I join all of Odell's loved ones in celebrating his incredible life. He will be deeply missed.

IN RECOGNITION OF SANDWICH HERITAGE DAY

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 375th anniversary of Sandwich, Massachusetts, a scenic and vibrant town on Cape Cod.

Settled nearly 150 years before the American Revolution, Sandwich is not only the oldest town on Cape Cod, but it is also one of the oldest in the country. Sandwich was founded in 1637 by Puritans as an offshoot of the famed Plymouth Colony. The early economy of Sandwich emerged as one that was centered mostly around fishing and farming. Today, however, tourism is the town's highest grossing industry—and visitors flock from all over, especially in the summertime, to experience Sandwich's quaint charm. Attractions include the Sandwich town boardwalk, a place for crabbing, beach-going, and taking prom pictures. The adjacent Town Neck Beach on Cape Cod Bay is also a popular place to spend summer days sunbathing and admiring the view of the bay. The oldest home on Cape Cod—the Hoxie House—is a traditional saltbox design perched on scenic Shawme Lake; and nearby Dexter's Grist Mill, the oldest of its kind on the Cape, is located in the historic downtown district. Also located downtown is the Sandwich Glass Museum, a place that pays homage to the once lucrative trade of Sandwich settler Deming Jarves, who founded the Boston & Sandwich Glass Factory in 1825. Well known for its vibrant colors, Sandwich glass still graces the windows of many homes in this bayside town.

Along with its historic, colonial architecture, Sandwich also boasts beautiful natural landscapes such as salt marshes, cranberry bogs, and woodlands. The Cape Cod Central Railroad services tourists and the public with seasonal train rides along a scenic route that showcases some of these Cape landscapes.

Sandwich's town motto, translated from Latin, reads quite appropriately, "After So Many Shipwrecks, A Haven". And on this town anniversary, I know that I speak for all of us here when I acknowledge that Sandwich remains a haven for all of the families and individuals that call it home. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the town of Sandwich and the entire Sandwich community on the celebration of their anniversary. May this beautiful Massachusetts town flourish for many years to come.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED CAREER OF NANN BLAINE HILYARD AND HER OUTSTANDING IMPACT IN THE ZION-BENTON COMMUNITY

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional public servant who worked in library administration for 40 years and served for the last 11 years as director of the Zion-Benton Public Library in the northern Illinois district I represent.

When Nann Blaine Hilyard retired in April, she completed what has been a truly remarkable career in service to her community. In her time with the Zion-Benton Library, Nann was a champion of the Zion Genealogical Society, offering rooms for research, expanding a collection of genealogical materials and always demonstrating the strongest support for the group's mission and efforts.

This pursuit into family and local history underscores the dedication and commitment that Nann demonstrated for her adopted community.

In her 11 years with the Zion-Benton Public Library, there were tremendous advancements in collections, resources and outreach. Her broad experience and exceptional leadership

helped define a truly successful period in the library's history.

It is fitting that one of Nann's last actions as director was to secure a grant from the State of Illinois, ensuring that her legacy of excellence continues well into the future.

The entire Zion-Benton community is lucky to have enjoyed Nann Blaine Hilyard's service.

RECOGNIZING THE ALLEMAN SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding results achieved by the Alleman Pioneers against the Teutopolis Wooden Shoes in the 2A Illinois state softball championship game on June 7, 2014.

I congratulate the Pioneers for winning the Illinois 1A state championship. This hard fought victory by Alleman gives the school the only program in state history to have won a softball title in three different classes. The Pioneers now hold titles in Class A (1992, 1993, 1994, 1998), Class 2A (2014) and Class AA (1985).

The school and the entire community should be extremely proud of the effort put forth by Alleman, which concluded the season with a record of 10–3.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of the Alleman softball team, both on and off the field, and I am honored to salute them today.

RECOGNIZING DR. DAVID COCKRELL OF STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding citizen of Oklahoma's third congressional district. Dr. David Cockrell of Stillwater, Oklahoma, will soon be elected President of the American Optometric Association (AOA) as the association's 92nd president.

Dr. Cockrell is a graduate of the Southern College of Optometry. He is a past president of the Southwest Council of Optometry, and served in Oklahoma as chair of the Congress Committee as well as the State and Federal Legislative Committees. He is also a past President of the Oklahoma Association of Optometric Physicians and has been honored as the Oklahoma Optometrist of the Year. In 2012, he was named Distinguished Optometrist of the Year by the Oklahoma Association of Optometric Physicians. These are just a few ways in which David has served his community, profession, and colleagues over the years.

Dr. Cockrell is a dedicated advocate of optometric issues, and I am proud to have him serving as this year's AOA president. What an honor it is to have an Oklahoman serving in such a prestigious capacity! I am confident his leadership will serve his profession well, and I join his family, friends, and colleagues in congratulating him on this tremendous achievement and wish him the very best.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1964 CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Since its passage on July 2, 1964, this landmark legislation ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

After the Civil War, three Constitutional Amendments were adopted to abolish slavery, grant former slaves citizenship and allow all men the right to vote regardless of race. Following a brief period of Reconstruction, Congress did not pass any civil rights legislation until 1957 when the Civil Rights Section of the Justice Department and a Commission on Civil Rights were established.

Following the conclusion of the Birmingham Bus Boycott in May 1963, President John F. Kennedy proposed a comprehensive civil rights bill in June 1963. He stated then that the United States "will not be fully free until all of its citizens are free."

Passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required the masterful legislative savvy of President Lyndon B. Johnson. In his first State of the Union address he urged, "Let this session of Congress be known as the session which did more for civil rights that the last hundred sessions combined." The ban on employment discrimination against women was introduced as an amendment thought to be a mischievous attempt to kill the bill. The amendment passed.

The bill was debated on the Senate floor and one of the longest filibusters in Senate history took place. Never before in history had the Senate been able to raise enough votes to end a filibuster on a civil rights bill. Once the votes had been secured to end this filibuster, Minority Leader Senator Everett Dirksen, an Illinois Republican noted that the cloture vote was occurring on the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's nomination to a second term.

There was also "street heat" on Congress from ordinary citizens, civil rights organizations and churches. In June 1964 Senator Dirksen estimated that he had heard from at least 100,000 people about the bill. Telegrams, petitions and letters all urged passage and increased pressure on the Senate to pass the Civil Rights Bill. The NAACP, CORE, the National Urban League, SCLC and others represented organized African-American support for passage of the Bill.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act debate continued for 83 days, slightly over 730 hours and had taken up almost 3000 pages in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Finally, on July 2 within a few hours of the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, President Johnson signed it into law on national television, using more than 70 ceremonial pens.

On behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I would like to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as the most important civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. I join together with California Attorney General Kamala Harris, Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, Black Elected Officials and Faith Based Leaders of the East Bay, the Equal Justice Society, NAACP, City of Oakland, Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center, East Oakland Youth Development Center and labor organizations to celebrate this important milestone and continue the important work to ensure justice, equality and opportunity for all Americans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I was necessarily absent on Tuesday, June 17th in order to attend the funeral of a close family friend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 3375 (rollcall vote 313) and "yea" on H.R. 1671 (rollcall vote 314).

RECOGNIZING CARALINE SEPICH

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Caraline Sepich, a remarkable woman whose resiliency, dedication and talent continue to define her outstanding achievements as a student at Arizona State University.

On August 31, 2003, Caraline and her family suffered a horrific tragedy that altered the course of their life. Caraline's sister, Katie Sepich, was walking home from a friend's house when she was brutally raped and murdered in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The news of this crime sent a shockwave across the country and Caraline's family prompted the nation to prevent criminals from committing these violent crimes. After years of tireless work by Caraline and her family, President Obama signed into law the "Katie Sepich Act," which authorizes funding for states to collect DNA from detainees arrested on suspicion of serious crimes.

Despite her sister's death, Caraline continues to push forward with an unparalleled passion and drive to effect change everywhere she goes. Caraline graduated from high school as salutatorian in 2012, and the following summer she was a Biofuel Laboratory Intern for the Algal Production Project at the Center of Excellence in Carlsbad. Caraline is now aggressively pursuing a double major in Biochemistry and Biophysics at Arizona State University, is a founding member of the Arizona State University BIOMED Team, and is a recent recipient of a Helios Scholarship for her work in the Collaborative Sequencing Center at the Translational Genomics Research Institute.

Most recently, Caraline was selected into the prestigious Barrett-Mayo Clinic Premedical Scholars Program. There she hopes to further her understanding of medical research, and to

one day obtain her doctorate degree in the field.

Caraline's interest in and commitment to scientific advancement is an inspiration to all those who meet her. At the Arizona Science Center IMAX Theater, Caraline presented Katie's Law to motivate students and demonstrate the ability of one person to make an impact on an entire society. It is individuals like Caraline, whose resolute persistence, determination and resolve to effect meaningful change who truly define our country's values.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this moment to recognize and honor Caraline Sepich. With her sister forever in her heart, I have no doubt that Caraline will continue to accomplish great things in all her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, on June 17, 2014, due to delayed transportation to Washington, I was unable to vote on rollcall 313, final passage of H.R. 3375, to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be constructed at 3141 Centennial Boulevard, Colorado Springs, Colorado, as the ''PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic,'' and rollcall 314, final passage of H.R. 1671, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6937 Village Parkway in Dublin, California, as the ''James 'Jim' Kohnen Post Office.'' Had I been present, I intended to vote ''yes.''

INTRODUCTION OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON AN OPEN SOCIETY WITH SECURITY ACT OF 2014

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as the nation's capital brings thousands of Americans to Washington, D.C. this tourist season, I rise to reintroduce the United States Commission on an Open Society with Security Act of 2014. The bill expresses an idea I began working on when the first signs of the closing of parts of our open society appeared after the Oklahoma City bombing, well before 9/11. This bill grows more urgent as an increasing variety of security measures proliferate throughout the country without any thought about the effects on common freedoms and ordinary public access, and often without guidance from the government or bona fide security experts. Take the example of government buildings. Federal building security has gotten so out of control that a tourist passing by some federal buildings cannot even get in to use the restroom or enjoy the many restaurants. The security for federal buildings has too long been unduly influenced by non-security experts, such as the administrator in federal agencies, who do not take into account actual threats and, as a result, spend taxpayer dollars on needless security procedures or insist on restricting the public without regard to risk.

Another example is the District of Columbia's only public heliport, which the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) shut down following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, without explanation or means to appeal the decision. Just days after the 9/11 attacks, helicopter service was restored in New York City, the major target of the attacks. However, even twelve years after the attacks, TSA and FAA and particularly the Secret Service still will not permit commercial helicopters to fly to D.C., unlike all other cities in the U.S.

The bill I reintroduce today would begin a systematic investigation that fully takes into account the importance of maintaining our democratic traditions while responding adequately to the real and substantial threat that terrorism poses. To accomplish its difficult mission, the bill authorizes a 21-member commission, with the president designating nine members and the House and Senate each designating six members, to investigate the balance that should be required between openness and security. The commission would be composed not only of military and security experts, but, for the first time at the same table, also experts from such fields as business, architecture, technology, law, city planning, art, engineering, philosophy, history, sociology, and psychology. To date, questions of security most often have been left almost exclusively to security and military experts. They are indispensable participants, but these experts should not alone resolve all the new and unprecedented issues raised by terrorism in an open society. In order to strike the security/access balance required by our democratic traditions, a diverse group of experts needs to be at the same table.

For years, parts of our open society have gradually been closed down because of terrorism and the fear of terrorism, on an often ad hoc basis. Some federal buildings such as the U.S. Capitol have been able to deal with security issues, and then resume their openness to the public. Others, like the new Department of Transportation headquarters, remain mostly inaccessible to the public. These examples, drawn from the nation's capital, are replicated in public buildings throughout the United States.

After 9/11, Americans expected additional and increased security adequate to protect citizens against the frightening threat of terrorism. However, in our country, people also expect their government to be committed and smart enough to undertake this awesome new responsibility without depriving them of their personal liberty. These times will long be remembered for the rise of terrorism in the world and in this country and for the unprecedented challenges it has brought. Nevertheless, we must provide ever-higher levels of security for our residents and public spaces while maintaining a free and open democratic society. What we have experienced since Oklahoma City and 9/11 is no ordinary threat that we expect to be over in a matter of years. The end point could be generations from now. The indeterminate nature of the threat adds to the necessity of putting aside ad hoc approaches to security developed in isolation from the goal of maintaining an open society.

When we have faced unprecedented and perplexing issues in the past, we have had the good sense to investigate them deeply before moving to resolve them. Examples include the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9/11 Commission), the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (also known as the Silberman-Robb Commission), and the Kerner Commission, which investigated the riots that swept American cities in the 1960s and 1970s. In the aftermath of the Navy Yard shooting, I wrote to the President of the United States requesting the establishment of an independent panel to investigate issues raised by that tragedy and to evaluate how to secure federal employees who work in facilities like the Navy Yard that are a part of a residential or business community. However, this bill seeks a commission that would act not in the wake of events but before a crisis-level erosion of basic freedoms takes hold and becomes entrenched. Because global terrorism is likely to be long lasting, we cannot afford to allow the proliferation of security measures that neither require nor are subject to civilian oversight or an analysis of alternatives and repercussions on freedom and commerce.

With no vehicles for leadership on issues of security and openness, we have been left to muddle through, using blunt 19th-century approaches, such as crude blockades, unsightly barriers around beautiful monuments, and other signals that our society is closing down, all without appropriate exploration of possible alternatives. The threat of terrorism to an open society is too serious to be left to ad hoc problem-solving. Such approaches are often as inadequate as they are menacing.

We can do better, but only if we recognize and come to grips with the complexities associated with maintaining a society of free and open access in a world characterized by unprecedented terrorism. The place to begin is with a high-level commission of experts from a broad array of disciplines to help chart the new course that will be required to protect our people and our precious democratic institutions and traditions.

CAPITOL HILL OCEAN WEEK AND OCEAN PROTECTION

HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of smart and sustainable management of our country's oceans and fishery systems. America's ocean resources are an important part of our economy and environment and we must work to protect and maintain them.

The seafood industry plays a crucial role in communities across our nation. For example, the Mid-Atlantic region's seafood industry has generated over 137,000 jobs, $18 billion in sales, and $4 billion in income. More sales impacts were generated by importers in New Jersey than any other sector in any other state in the region at $5.5 billion. Employment impacts in New Jersey were the highest in the region with over 13,000 full- and part-time jobs generated by recreational fishing activities in the state.

As researchers, fisheries, and various ocean experts visit Capitol Hill in honor of Capitol Hill

Ocean Week we are reminded of the great benefit strong ocean management laws play in our environment and economy. These policies are necessary to protect our oceans from being overfished and putting various species in danger. With a future full of new and daunting challenges for our fishermen and coastal communities, now is the time we must act to maintain effective ocean management policies.

HONORING THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL AFL–CIO PRESIDENT, JOSLYN ''JOS'' WILLIAMS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of labor's strongest advocates in our region. Joslyn ''Jos'' Williams has been President of the Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO, for 32 years, serving as an advocate for working men and women throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Throughout that time, he has made history as the union's first African-American president.

Mr. Williams will be honored at the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL–CIO annual ''Salute to Leadership'' dinner on June 20, and it is an honor that is much deserved and well earned. Having risen through the ranks of the union's leadership over the course of his career as an organizer and activist, he has applied his knowledge, care, and experience each day to making sure that the organization's members are not only well represented in discussions with private and public sector managers but that they have access to opportunities that provide pathways to middle-class success.

Mr. Williams came to this country as an immigrant while still a teenager, arriving from Jamaica with the goal of pursuing his American Dream. After working for the Library of Congress and becoming active in his local chapter of the American Federation of Government Employees, Mr. Williams realized that his calling was to make sure that his fellow workers could pursue their American Dreams as well. Thanks to his leadership, membership in his local chapter grew from 100 to 600 members over the course of just two years.

Today, Mr. Williams oversees an organization that is 150,000-workers strong and that plays an important role in the life of the National Capital Region. He has fought for fair pay, safe working conditions, and access to affordable health care and secure retirement savings. His work has surely helped—and continues to help—so many workers and their families participate in growing our economy and strengthening our region's communities.

I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Mr. Williams on this well deserved honor, and I thank him for his service to workers in Maryland's Fifth District and throughout our region.

HONORING MAYOR PEGGY THOMSEN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Mayor Peggy Thomsen. Known throughout the San Francisco Bay Area as the Mayor of Albany, California, a consummate public servant, and as a dedicated wife and mother, Mayor Thomsen has left an indelible mark on our community. With her passing on June 8, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work and the inspiring role she played in our community.

Born on February 28, 1940 in St. Louis, Missouri, Mayor Peggy Thomsen and her family moved frequently around the United States, including to Denver, Colorado and Beaverton, Oregon, before settling in Fresno, California. Mayor Thomsen was passionate about education. After earning her Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts degrees at California State University, Fresno, she went on to earn a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of California, Berkeley.

Meeting her husband, John, at California State University, Fresno, they moved to Albany where Mayor Thomsen began her career teaching in Albany and Richmond schools. She also was an instructor, curriculum planner and seminar presenter at Heald College in San Francisco.

Mayor Peggy Thomsen was deeply committed to helping others. Prior to being elected as Mayor of Albany, her civic service and leadership manifested in various ways. She served on the Albany Unified School District School Board for 16 years and spent 14 years on the City Council. Additionally, she was President of the Parent Teacher Association Council, Albany Girl Scout Leader and a School Resource Volunteer Coordinator.

Dedicated to leadership in her community, Mayor Peggy Thomsen served on the Social and Economic Justice Committee, Albany Waterfront Committee and the Albany Charter Review Committee. Mayor Thomsen also served on numerous regional committees, including the California Elected Women's Association for Education and Research and the California School Board Association Delegate Assembly.

In addition to Ms. Thomsen's prolific career, she received numerous awards for her work in the community. She was the recipient of Service Awards from the Albany Unified School District, March of Dimes, California State Parent Teacher Association and Albany Jaycees. Furthermore, her commitment to her students was demonstrated in the Teacher Enrichment and the Teacher of the Year Awards she received from Heald College.

Today California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and community leader, Mayor Peggy Thomsen. As a 47 year resident of Albany, her dedication and efforts impacted so many lives throughout the Bay Area. Her legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of all of those whom she inspired. I join all of Peggy's loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.

HONORING THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the upcoming 75th birthday of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, formerly known as the Volunteer Reserve of the Coast Guard. Founded in June of 1939, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary has become one of the premier volunteer organizations in the country.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary was formed by an act of Congress in June 1939 and has provided direct support and assistance to the Coast Guard since. Four of the first five Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotillas were formed in the Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey regions, and we are proud to be the birthplace of this organization. The Coast Guard Auxiliary provides two million hours of volunteer service to the Coast Guard and the boating public annually, saving hundreds of lives and providing aid to countless more. This June, the Coast Guard Auxiliary will celebrate its 75th birthday on the banks of the Delaware River, where the first Coast Guard began its service in 1790.

I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary for this distinguished milestone in its already impressive history. May we all take this moment to thank the Coast Guard Auxiliary for its dedication and hard work in preserving the safety of our shores.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, June 17, 2014, I was absent and missed rollcall votes Nos. 313 and 314.

Had I been present, I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 313—''Yea.''

Rollcall No. 314—''Yea.''

IN RECOGNITION OF SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCILWOMAN BONNIE PANNELL

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Sacramento City Councilwoman Bonnie Pannell who has successfully served the people of Sacramento for the past sixteen years. As her family, friends, and colleagues gather to celebrate her outstanding career and numerous accomplishments, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Councilwoman Pannell as an outstanding public servant.

Prior to being elected to the Sacramento City Council, Councilwoman Pannell was a

community activist in her South Sacramento neighborhood. Outside of elected office, she spent twenty-two years working for Unilab Medical Laboratories and Pacific Bell. Councilwoman Pannell was elected to the Sacramento City Council in June of 1998, succeeding her late husband, Samuel Pannell. As a Councilwoman, she has been re-elected to four-year terms in 2000, 2004, 2008 and again in 2012. She served as the City of Sacramento's Vice Mayor in 2001 and served with distinction for multiple years on the Board of Directors of the Sacramento Area Flood Central Agency, Sacramento Regional Transit District and with a number of other special agencies.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Councilwoman Pannell to ensure the that South Sacramento Streams Group flood protection project gets completed and expensive flood insurance is no longer mandatory for our shared constituents. An unwavering champion of public transportation, Councilwoman Pannell's steadfast support for the light rail extension to Cosumnes River College has helped make that project a reality and it will be completed by September of next year.

Councilwoman Pannell represented the City of Sacramento well, serving the communities of Meadowview, Parkway, North Laguna Creek, and Jacinto Creek. Her priorities included economic development, education and recreational programs for her constituents, as well as a steadfast commitment to create safer neighborhoods. Councilwoman Pannell was able to bring to her community the Valley Hi-North Laguna Library, which opened in 2009. The beautiful full-service library has brought high-tech services and additional educational opportunities to a part of Sacramento that long had been underserved.

She also helped turn around the neighborhood of Franklin Villa, and saw it transformed into Phoenix Park. Councilwoman Pannell has always put her constituents first and her record of accomplishments is long and will not be forgotten. It is very fitting that to mark her retirement from the City Council that her colleagues have voted to rename Meadowview Community Center in honor of her and her late husband.

Mr. Speaker, as Councilwoman Bonnie Pannell's family, friends, and colleagues gather to commemorate her for her service to the people of Sacramento, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging this dedicated public servant, and true partner of mine, for helping make Sacramento a better place for families to live and prosper.

LADY RANGERS BASKETBALL COACH WINS TOP STATE AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Melissa Fields, the Terry High School Lady Rangers basketball coach, who was named the 2014 4A Outstanding Coach of the Year in Texas. Coach Fields received the Dean Weese Outstanding Coach Award from the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches. The Lady Rangers were 22–10 on the season and reached the regional semifinals, the furthest the team has ever gone in playoffs. To be named the 4A Outstanding Coach of the Year in Texas recognizes more than just her success on the court. As a former high school and college basketball player, I know what a difference an outstanding coach can make in a player's life. Looking back on it now, I know it wasn't our record that was most important, it was the lessons I learned from playing the game. Coach Fields just finished her 18th year at Terry High School in Rosenberg, Texas. She has been teaching and coaching for 23 years. Congratulations to Coach Fields on this recognition and thank you for your dedication to the Lady Rangers Basketball team.

RECOGNIZING DR. STANLEY CAHILL

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Stanley Cahill for his 28 years of service at Salem State University, in Salem, Massachusetts, and to congratulate him on his retirement.

Since 1986, Dr. Cahill has served the students and broader community at Salem State University. He joined the university as the Dean of Student Life where he created the university's first professional student affairs program and laid the foundation for the program that exists today.

Most recently, Dr. Cahill served as the University's Executive Vice President. In this role, he led the university's enterprise risk management program and coordinated the majority of university contracts and memoranda of understanding between the university and other agencies with which the university collaborates.

It is not surprising that after nearly three decades with the university, Dr. Cahill has become well known to many in the Salem community. He has fostered relationships with local officials and university neighbors and strengthened the partnership between the university and the City of Salem.

Dr. Cahill served Salem State University at a time of dynamic growth and increased diversity, and he had a decidedly positive influence on the institution's growth and enhanced reputation. On a personal note, and as one who is a Salem State alumnus and former trustee, I add my appreciation for all that Dr. Cahill has done for the university and the surrounding communities.

Dr. Cahill has had a remarkable career in higher education that has spanned more than 40 years and four universities and colleges. I congratulate Stan on this achievement and wish him all the best in his retirement.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF LOAVES & FISHES

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Loaves & Fishes 7th annual Day Without Hunger. Over the past thirty years, the Loaves & Fishes team has been committed to providing a hand up to those most in need in DuPage County with food assistance and other services.

This organization has grown exponentially in size and scope in order to realize their vision of ending hunger in DuPage County. In 1984, the year of their founding, the Loaves & Fishes team assisted eight households in the Naperville area, providing them with food to sustain their families. Today, Loaves & Fishes has expanded to serve all of DuPage County, helping thousands of families. Last year alone, Loaves & Fishes distributed over 3,200,000 pounds of food, serving 18,564 individuals.

The Loaves & Fishes team has helped close the gap for children who rely on school food services. Since 2004, they have assisted with school nutrition programs, ensuring that Naperville students get meals during the summer months. Additionally, breakfast assistance programs which they support give students a proper meal to start the school day.

In addition to food assistance, Loaves & Fishes has expanded to do even more to support the community. Since 2011, Loaves & Fishes has supported Pathways to Empowerment programs which provide assistance with various services, from health care enrollment to support in starting a job search.

The Loaves & Fishes team not only provides food for those in need, but they also provide an opportunity for individuals to serve their friends and neighbors by volunteering. Truly, this organization empowers both recipients and volunteers.

Today, I am proud to recognize Loaves & Fishes for the invaluable service the organization has provided and the thousands of lives they have touched.

HONORING BLANCHE IONE JONES

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of Mrs. Blanche Ione Jones, a loving and compassionate parent, sister, aunt and friend to many throughout the country, and particularly in Jackson and Detroit, Michigan. I am joined in this tribute by Representative JOHN CONYERS of Michigan. Mrs. Jones was a strong, kind and gentle woman who cared for others and deeply loved her family and community. With her passing on June 11, 2014, we look to her contributions to others, both big and small and remember her with great joy.

Blanche Jones graduated from Jackson High School in Jackson, Michigan in 1949. She continued her education at Jackson Junior College and received the Associate of Arts Degree from Mercy College in Detroit, Michigan. Following graduation she became a dental hygienist for her cousin, Dr. Archie Millben, Sr., then the first and only African American dentist in Jackson, Michigan.

In 1958 she met and married Mr. George W. Jones, Jr. and moved to Detroit. Blanche Jones demonstrated on a daily basis, her compassion and devotion to her late husband of 34 years and their children. She admired and was especially proud that her cousin, Dr.

Ethelene Jones-Crockett, Michigan's first female African-American obstetrician and gynecologist—who was also the wife of former Congressman George W. Crockett, Jr.—delivered her youngest three children.

Mrs. Jones devoted her career at Detroit Public Schools as a para-professional teaching assistant to ensuring that all children have the opportunity to receive a quality education. She was raised in the Church of Christ and remained an active member throughout her life teaching Bible class and serving on numerous committees.

Mrs. Blanche Jones was a close confidant to my mother, Mildred Massey and me. Regardless of her health condition, she was always positive and upbeat. There was no question about her love and she generously shared it with everyone.

Blanche Jones was a ''woman of distinction and grace''. She loved clothes and I will always remember wearing a white wool coat and hat that she loved. I shopped all over the country looking for one to give her and regrettably could not find one. I did give her a white wool jacket—and my hat. The twinkle in her eyes and her words of gratitude were reminders of her thankfulness for the small things in life.

Blanche was a brilliant woman. She read, kept up on current events and politics and had her own very strong opinions about issues which we discussed many times. Her family describes her as the Chairwoman on BNN: the Blanche News Network.

There is a tremendous void in my life now and I will miss her deeply. She touched the lives of many and leaves a legacy with her work and compassion that will long endure. In her memory, let us live our lives as Mrs. Blanche Jones did and would want us to do—as loving and supportive human beings.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District joins Michigan's 13th Congressional District to salute and honor a remarkable woman, Mrs. Blanche Ione Jones. We will miss her tremendously and know that her legacy and spirit will live on forever.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE JOHN VASCONCELLOS

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, Congresswoman KAREN BASS, Congressman XAVIER BECERRA, Congressman AMI BERA, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY, Congresswoman LOIS CAPPS, Congressman TONY CÁRDENAS, Congresswoman JUDY CHU, Congressman JIM COSTA, Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS, Congressman SAM FARR, Congressman JOHN GARAMENDI, Congresswoman JANICE HAHN, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, Congressman MIKE HONDA, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY, Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ, Congressman ALAN LOWENTHAL, Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI, Congresswoman GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO, Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congressman SCOTT PETERS, Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, Congressman RAUL RUIZ, Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, Congressman BRAD SHERMAN, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, Congressman ERIC SWALWELL, Congressman MARK TAKANO, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, Congressman JUAN VARGAS, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, and Congressman HENRY WAXMAN to honor the life of our friend who distinguished himself for 38 years in public service, the Honorable John Vasconcellos, who died on May 24, 2014, at his home in Santa Clara, California.

John was born on May 11, 1932, in San Jose, California, to a Portuguese father and German mother. He graduated from Bellarmine College Preparatory High School with top honors, and attended Santa Clara University, graduating magna cum laude. After two years of service to his country in the Army, he graduated again at the top of his class from Santa Clara University's Law School. He practiced law before joining Governor Pat Brown's staff, and was soon recruited by his many friends and admirers to run for a seat in the California State Assembly in 1966. This began almost forty years of public service. John was a legislator's legislator. He had a brilliant intellect and a compassionate heart. He became the Chairman of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, one of the most powerful assignments in the California Legislature. He proposed the State Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem in October 1986, and in 1989, Speaker Willie Brown appointed him to Chair the Select Assembly Committee on Ethics. He was elected to the California State Senate in 1996, representing the heart of Silicon Valley, and served as Chairman of the Public Safety, Education, and Economic Development Committees.

John Vasconcellos' 38 year tenure in the California Legislature was reflective of the innovative Silicon Valley District he represented. He was a disruptor and a pioneering public servant who was ahead of his time. His legislative work is widely recognized for its groundbreaking innovations in public safety, state budgets, ethics, health and human services, as well as in education. He wrote first-of-its-kind legislation addressing AIDS research, medical marijuana, and family health. He wrote legislation combating toxic chemicals in our atmosphere; he paved the way for midwives to practice; and he promoted child care at all public colleges. He saw the need before others to modernize our education system and make it affordable for all. He involved young people in the political process, launching programs like shadowing legislators in the State Capitol.

John was an avid subscriber to the human-potential movement therapies to deal with the rage, tension and fear that continued to grow in our society. We called John our friend, and we were very proud to do so, but he was also a brother and a mentor to many of us and we will miss him always.

Mr. Speaker, we ask the entire House of Representatives to join us in honoring Senator John Vasconcellos, a brilliant visionary with a giant heart who served his constituents, his state and his country with integrity and respect for building the politics of trust. We extend our condolences to his brother Jim Vasconcellos, his sister Margaret Brindle, his niece Beth Brindle, his Hawaiian family, including his chosen son Mitch Saunders, his daughter-in-law Cindy and his two beloved grandchildren Megan and Briana, as well as his devoted staff, his large circle of extended friends and family in California, Hawaii and around the world.

FISCAL YEAR 15 TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (H.R. 4745). This bill provides $1.8 billion less than the FY 14 omnibus. It underfunds too many critical investments that maintain and support our infrastructure and housing.

Specifically, I strongly oppose the dramatic cut and new restrictions on the TIGER program. House Republicans included only $100 million for TIGER grants, an 80 percent cut from FY 14. While this extreme cut in funding is disappointing, more concerning are the restrictions placed on the grant program. H.R. 4745 specifically states that only highway, bridge, freight rail and port projects are eligible for TIGER grants. Public transit, including light rail and passenger rail, would no longer be eligible for these critical dollars. Republican leaders repeatedly stated that the provision was inserted to focus TIGER grants on what they call ''essential projects.'' In my district and many other communities across the country, public transit is an essential project. My communities depend on these dollars to help support passenger rail and multimodal projects, such as light rail, streetcars and dedicated Bus Rapid Transit.

In addition to TIGER, other transit initiatives were cut, including New Starts (a 13 percent cut) and Amtrak (a 14 percent cut). This ongoing attack on public transit is unacceptable.

Unfortunately, the investments in housing in this bill are also insufficient. HOME Investment Partnership Grants were cut by 30 percent, to near historic lows. In my district, the HOME program is used to help first time homebuyers with the cost of a down payment and closing cost, which can be prohibitive for many buyers looking for a first home of their own. Another program supported by HOME finances maintenance to preserve federally supported housing, especially important considering the shortage of affordable housing. A 30 percent cut to these programs means fewer homebuyers helped and critical repairs to decaying affordable housing are unaddressed.

Transportation and housing are the backbone of our communities. Stable, affordable housing and access to jobs helps to stabilize communities and promote economic growth. H.R. 4745 fails to sufficiently invest in our communities and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

RECOGNIZING JIM VANCE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jim Vance, who this week is observing 45 years in the District of Columbia at NBC4 Washington, where he has provided outstanding service to Washington, DC and the national capital region.

For more than four decades, Jim Vance has been the man the Washington region turns to on their NBC4 television screens. Jim has brilliantly made himself the preeminent anchor the region can trust to get the news straight, and at the same time, he has managed to become the friend people turn to because they like him. So great are Jim's talents and captivating personality, that NBC4 owes part of its success to Jim Vance.

A graduate of the historically black Cheyney University, Jim Vance was a teacher in Philadelphia before he decided to become a reporter. His first reporting jobs were at The Philadelphia Independent newspaper and at radio station WHAT–AM. Jim later accepted his first television position as a reporter for WKBS–TV in Philadelphia in 1968, and one year later, he moved to the nation's capital to be a general assignment reporter at NBC4. Jim made a fast rise to the anchor desk in 1972, where he remains to this day.

Jim Vance continues to thrive in his career. He can be seen daily on News4 at 6 p.m. and News4 at 11 p.m. with his co-anchor Doreen Gentzler. As a veteran television reporter, Jim's work has taken him across the United States and to locations around the world. Jim has been the recipient of a host of honors, including 17 Emmy Awards and induction in 2007 into the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress are familiar with Jim's excellence, too, here in the nation's capital. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jim Vance for 45 years of extraordinary work as news anchor and reporter with NBC4 Washington and a favorite of the national capital region.

HONORING ELI TAKESIAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eli Takesian, former associate pastor of the Vienna Presbyterian Church and decorated military chaplain.

Eli served in Korea and Vietnam, eventually earning the position of Chief Chaplain of the Marine Corps at Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC. He passed away on May 20, 2014, at the Walter Reed National Medical Center.

I submit the following program notes from Eli's funeral. He was a true patriot.

Eli Takesian died on May 20, 2014 at the Walter Reed National Medical Center.

Born on February 28, 1932 in Methuen, Massachusetts, the son of Stephan and Koharig Takesian and uncle to many loved nephews and nieces. Eli is survived by his sister, Helen Hagopian. His brothers, Raffi, Jack and Vartkes predeceased him.

Eli served in Korea with the 1st Marine Division from November 1951 to November 1952. Following his discharge from the Marine Corp, he graduated from Baylor University in 1957. He then continued his education at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland and Princeton Theological Seminary, receiving a master's degree in theology in 1960. The same year Eli was ordained a minister by the United Presbyterian Church. After serving a pastorate in Amsterdam, Ohio, Eli returned to the military as a Navy Chaplain.

Chaplain Takesian served two tours of duty in Vietnam and then spent 20 years as a senior chaplain, becoming Chief Chaplain of the Marine Corps at Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC. While in Vietnam in 1968, even though he was not assigned to the unit, Chaplain Takesian joined the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Regiment, 1st Marine Division on the battlefield in Hue City—one of the most famous and bloodiest Vietnam War battles. Eli brought prayers, support and hope to the wounded and the dying. In 2007, in his home town of Methuen, men of the 1st Battalion 5th Marines had a monument built in remembrance of his bravery.

During his service in the military, Chaplain Takesian was awarded a number of combat decorations including the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars with Combat Vs and four Presidential Unit Citations.

He retired from naval service in 1987 and became an associate pastor of the Vienna Presbyterian Church retiring in 1995. Until his death, Chaplain Takesian continued to provide ministerial services to military retirement communities and churches in Northern Virginia.

While studying in Scotland, Eli discovered his passion for music and the arts. When serving as Chaplain on Governor's Island in New York, he met and fell in love with Broadway actress and vocalist, Margaret Broderson, who studied at Julliard. They were married in 1978 in the Chapel on Governor's Island. Eli and Margaret moved to Flacons Landing in December 2012.

In lieu of flowers, the family request donations be made to the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation and the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

HONORING DR. EDWARD W. WRIGHT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Dr. Edward W. Wright. Known throughout the Bay Area as a physician, mentor, active community member, and devoted husband and father, Mr. Wright has left an indelible mark on our community. With his passing on May 29, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of his life's work.

Born on June 2, 1922 in Fayette, Howard County, Missouri, Dr. Edward Wright was the fourth child born to William Marion Wright and Lunie K. Cameron. When Dr. Wright was five years old, he caught scarlet fever and was hospitalized for a long period of time. At this young age, Dr. Wright was inspired to become a doctor. He later moved to El Paso, Texas to live with his aunt and uncle after losing both of his parents in an unfortunate tragedy. In El Paso, he graduated Douglas High School with honors, and he then went on to attend Sam Houston College in Austin, Texas. In 1943, Dr. Wright graduated Magna Cum Laude as a Pre-Medical student with a Bachelor of Science Degree.

In 1945, Dr. Edward Wright attended Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he partook in an accelerated program in Internal Medicine. At the age of 25, he graduated with honors and went on to complete his residency at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. He became Chief Resident and served as a full-time staff physician until 1955.

Dr. Edward Wright and his family relocated to California in 1955, where Dr. Wright served as a Medical Officer for the Armed Forces at Ford Ord. After he completed his service, they relocated to Oakland, where Dr. Wright began a private practice in December 1958. Seven years later, he established and built a medical facility to serve families throughout Oakland.

In addition to his prolific career, Dr. Wright was an active member in the community. He volunteered at the East Oakland Boys Club, providing physical exams, counseling and financial assistance for camperships and uniforms. For the next 40 years, Dr. Wright served as a physician, mentor and father-figure to more than 1,200 boys at the North and East Oakland Boys Clubs. Dr. Wright was also active with the Oakland Chapter of the Lions Club, providing countless hours of Loyal Lions Service.

In 1969, he joined the Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Club and then served as President of the Board from 1980 to 1982. He was presented with the Man and Boy Trophy Award for his work with the Boys and Girls Clubs in 1964. Later, he received the Boys and Girls Clubs Service Award Medallion and then was honored during a formal tribute in 2000 at the First Annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner.

On a personal note, I have known Dr. Wright, or "Piggy" as my mother, Mildred Massey, called him, since I was a child. He and my mother attended school together and were very close. We loved "Piggy" and will miss him tremendously. He was one of my earliest supporters when I first ran for public office in 1989 and, for that, I am deeply grateful.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual, Dr. Edward W. Wright. As an Oakland resident, Dr. Wright's contributions have truly impacted so many lives throughout the Bay Area. I join all of Edward's loved ones in celebrating his incredible life. He will be deeply missed.

CONGRATULATING GREYHOUND ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Greyhound Lines on the 100th anniversary of its founding in 1914.

Greyhound is the nation's largest bus transportation system, serving communities nationwide with modem and environmentally friendly

bus facilities at affordable prices. From Greyhound's founder, Eric Wickman, to the current CEO, Dave Leach, the company has grown from a humble three man operation, based out of a seven person van, transporting coal miners to a transcontinental business employing 7,500 staff to one of the most recognizable and well-respected bus carriers.

An immigrant from Sweden, founder Eric Wickman began a bussing transportation system in the rural town of Hibbing, Minnesota after losing his mining and drilling job that same year. Operating as Mesaba Transportation Company and various other names until the official incorporation of the Greyhound name in 1930, Wickman built his company from the ground up, expanding services and locations and acquiring smaller lines until cementing the company's status as the largest intercity bus and transportation system in 1987.

Based out of Phoenix, Arizona, Greyhound Lines' fleet of 1,735 buses, travelling to more than 3,800 destinations and serving 17.6 million passengers annually, is now operated by FirstGroup. With the classification as the safest mode of transportation by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Greyhound buses contribute to a safer driving environment for others, taking an average of 19 cars off the road each trip.

Most people are unaware, but our domestic private bus companies transport more passengers each day than airlines and Amtrak combined. In Florida, Greyhound serves many of our communities and provides employment for hundreds of workers. Greyhound is a publicly traded corporation that pays significant local, state and federal taxes. The private transportation carrier actually makes a profit and does not rely on federal subsidies.

As the former Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, it has been my honor to work with many Greyhound officials and employees and it is my pleasure to congratulate each of them and the Greyhound Lines Family on this occasion. I know my colleagues join me in saluting a great American transportation carrier and all the fine people at Greyhound on this significant milestone.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, June 17, 2014, I was unavoidably absent due to a spousal medical emergency. On rollcall vote No. 313, on H.R. 3375, had I been present, I would have voted "yea." On rollcall vote No. 314, on H.R. 1671, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 18, 2014, I unavoidably missed rollcall vote No. 315, on H. Res. 628 due to a spousal medical emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

CONGRATULATING RAVENSWOOD MANOR IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION ON THEIR CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association located in Chicago, Illinois.

For over 100 years, Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association has been an influential part of Chicago. When William E. Harmon began to sell houses for the Ravenswood Manor subdivision, the community was fewer than a hundred individuals strong. Now 100 years later, Ravenswood Manor has flourished into a substantial subdivision within the city.

The Association has worked diligently to promote the welfare of the community by consistently maintaining public and private lands. They have enhanced the community by hosting annual neighborhood events, as well as thoroughly representing community interests working alongside their elected officials, City Departments, Chicago Police Department, Chicago Park District, local schools, and businesses. On September 5, 2008, Ravenswood Manor was listed as a National Register Historic District.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association on their 100th Anniversary. I am truly honored to represent such as outstanding association.

HONORING GREYHOUND LINES, INC., OF DALLAS, TX ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

Whereas the company that became Greyhound Lines, Inc., was started in 1914 by a Swedish immigrant, Carl Eric Wickman, who began by transporting miners from Hibbing to Alice, Minnesota in a 7-passenger "Hupmobile" for 15 cents;

Whereas in ensuing decades, Greyhound pioneered many bus industry innovations including the "Super Coach" (1936), the first bus with an all-metal body and rear-mounted engine; the fluted aluminum "Silversides" with air conditioning and diesel engines (1940); the most iconic Greyhound bus, the two-level "Scenicruiser" with onboard restrooms and under-floor baggage and express compartments (1954);

Whereas Greyhound played a crucial role in many historical events including transporting troops from coast to coast in World War II and carrying Freedom Riders through the Deep South to protest state-sponsored segregation in interstate transportation facilities;

Whereas Greyhound is the only nationwide intercity bus transportation company in the United States serving, along with its interline partners, over 2700 communities in all 48 continental states, and providing the only form of intercity public transportation in many of those communities;

Whereas Greyhound efficiently operates a complex network of services extending from Canada to Mexico, including services in both of those countries;

Whereas Greyhound has been a leader in safety innovations including developing and installing on all its new buses starting in 2009 radically redesigned new bus seats that provide the protection of lap/shoulder safety belts while retaining the benefits of compartmentalization;

Whereas Greyhound continues to provide innovative new services such as the Greyhound Express and BoltBus point-to-point services while retaining its full nationwide network and provides all of its services in state of the art, 50-passenger motorcoaches with amenities such as expanded leg room, WiFi and electric plug-ins; and

Whereas Greyhound continues to do what Carl Wickman began 100 years ago, that is, providing affordable, safe, comfortable, and reliable intercity transportation to all members of the traveling public: Now, therefore, be it resolved that the United States House of Representatives:

(1) Honors the centennial anniversary of the founding of Greyhound Lines, Inc operated;

(2) Applauds and honors the president and CEO, executive staff, and all employees of Greyhound Lines, Inc. for a century of innovations in intercity travel, and it expresses hope that said service will continue for many years to come; and,

(3) Congratulates Greyhound Lines, Inc. of Dallas, Texas, for 100 years of outstanding service to the people of the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that I inadvertently voted incorrectly on the Gosar amendment to H.R. 4745, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015. This amendment prohibits the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rule entitled "Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing", published by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development on July 19, 2013, in the Federal Register. It was my intention to vote "aye" on Rollcall vote 285.

HONORING DR. MAYA ANGELOU

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Dr. Maya Angelou. Her vast body of work, which spans over six decades, as a dancer, actress, author and activist has stood the test of time.

As a leader in the civil rights movement, a poet laureate, a college professor, Broadway actress and the first female African American cable car conductor in San Francisco, Maya Angelou was the spirit and conscience of generations. With her passing on May 28, 2014, we continue to be inspired by her life's work.

Born on April 4, 1928, Dr. Maya Angelou was raised in Stamps, Arkansas and St. Louis, Missouri. At a young age, Dr. Angelou experienced the brutality of racial discrimination which drove her passion for justice and equality.

In the early 1950s, Dr. Maya Angelou began her career as a performer. She toured with the production Porgy and Bess through Europe for two years. While living in Ghana, Dr. Angelou met with Malcolm X who encouraged her to move back to the United States to help him build the Organization of African American Unity. After the assassination of Malcolm X, Dr. Maya Angelou worked with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., serving as the Northern Coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Her autobiography, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, was nominated for a National Book Award in 1970 and remained on The New York Times paperback bestseller list for two years.

In addition to Dr. Angelou's prolific career, she has been honored with many prestigious awards. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Arts in 2000 and received over 50 honorary degrees. President Bill Clinton asked her to compose a poem for his inauguration in 1993, making her the second poet to ever read a poem at a Presidential Inauguration.

President Barack Obama bestowed Dr. Maya Angelou the 2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award of the United States of America.

I will forever cherish the private moments I had the privilege to share with Dr. Maya Angelou. I was very moved when several years ago Maya called me and invited me to her beautiful home to talk. We spoke in her living room as sisters, about our lives, our struggles and our passion for improving the human condition. I confided in her about the many challenges I faced after voting against the Authorization for the Use of Military Force following the 9/11 attacks. I can never repay the encouragement and affirmation she gave me during that trying time as she reminded me that we all embody attributes of scripture's Proverbs 31, virtuous woman. And that our worth is far beyond rubies, we speak with wisdom and are clothed with strength and dignity.

I was humbled that she insisted I write my autobiography. Once I finally garnered the courage to do so, she invited me to discuss it on her radio show and encouraged me to speed up the release of my paperback edition so that more people, especially young women, could have access to my story.

Dr. Maya Angelou was passionate about helping young women achieve their fullest potential. Her example of grace, class and humility will continue to inspire young women to define themselves through a lens of self-love, humanitarianism and how they use their talents to change the world.

She lived life to its fullest and shared with the world the essence of a purposeful life. I will hold her words, ". . . be certain that you do not die without having done something wonderful for humanity" close to my heart, knowing that she was one of humanity's greatest gifts.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and leader, Dr. Maya Angelou. While the world grieves in Dr. Maya Angelou's passing, we can take comfort in the fact that her words and her legacy live on in the generations of people who have been touched, challenged and inspired by her work. We will miss her tremendously, but Dr. Maya Angelou's legacy and spirit will live on forever.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BILLY MANES

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month, to recognize Billy Manes. Billy Manes is senior staff writer for Orlando Weekly, an alternative newsweekly dedicated to giving the deserved breadth, character and feeling to stories that are often overlooked.

Immediately after graduating from the Florida State University, Manes began a career in journalism, helping to launch an alternative weekly out of the Tallahassee Democrat offices in 1995.

In 1997, Manes moved to Orlando and began freelancing for Orlando Weekly, soon developing a following as a pop-cultural raconteur and nightlife columnist. In 2005, he ran for Mayor of Orlando in a special election which was later cancelled. Nonetheless, Manes caught the political bug, and soon became a full-time news reporter for Orlando Weekly.

In 2007, Manes detailed the difficulties facing gay couples who were seeking legal validation for their relationships in the face of an imminent marriage ban in Florida. Controversy arose when a photo of Manes and his longtime partner kissing was used as the cover photo of Orlando Weekly for the article.

In 2012, that story would prove all too prescient, when Manes' partner of 11 years, Alan Ray Jordan, passed away, setting off a string of horrible events pitting Manes against both his partner's family and the laws of the State of Florida.

Manes went on to document that fight in what would become a globally circulated story and later, a documentary. He traveled to Tallahassee two years in a row to fight for a statewide domestic partnership registry so that others might not have to experience the pain that he had.

In addition to numerous awards over the years from the Association of Alternative Newsmedia, the Sunshine State Awards, and the Florida Press Club, Manes was named a 2013 Voice of Equality by Equality Florida.

He would like to dedicate this honor to his family and, most especially, to the man who taught him the most, Alan Ray Jordan.

I am happy to honor Billy Manes, during LGBT Pride Month, for his contributions to the LGBT community and the State of Florida.

MARKING THE PASSING OF WILLIAM ROTH

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, our country has lost a great visionary, civic leader, businessman and dedicated public servant, William Matson Roth. Mr. Roth passed away on May 29th in Petaluma, California at the age of 97, surrounded by his loving family

Bill Roth was born into a prominent and respected family in San Francisco, grandson of Captain William Matson, founder of the Matson Navigation Company, and son of Luriline and William Philip Roth. He chose to use the opportunities afforded by his privileged family to make life better for his community, his state and his nation.

He was widely known for the redevelopment, with his mother Luriline, of the popular Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco, buying the property as a dilapidated factory and growing it into a world-renowned collection of shops and restaurants that has been one of our City's top attractions and has been imitated in cities across the country. It is now considered a forerunner of what urban planners call "adaptive reuse," and is listed on the National Historic Register.

Mr. Roth served the public throughout his long life, including as a Cabinet-level Trade Ambassador in "the Kennedy round" of negotiations under President Lyndon Johnson. Mr. Roth was appointed to the University of California's Board of Regents by Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, where he served for 16 years. He helped found the Ploughshares Fund, an advocacy group working for the elimination of nuclear weapons. He was President of the Board of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, a director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and president of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR). He was a proud and progressive Democrat who ran for Governor of California in 1974.

I hope that it is a comfort to his beloved wife Joan, his daughters Anna, Jessica and Maggie, and his grand and great-grandchildren that so many people throughout the world share their grief and mourn the loss of a generous, civic-minded and visionary leader.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF ERIC METZGER

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedicated service of Chief Eric Metzger of the Flower Mound Fire Department. After almost 4 decades in public service, Chief Metzger's exemplary career is coming to an end.

Eric Metzger's passion for public service and fire fighting started at a young age; when growing up in Pleasanton, California, his next door neighbor was the Chief of the Oakland Fire Department. His 39-year fire service career began in Wimer, Oregon, where he

served as a volunteer firefighter at age 15. He then proceeded to join the Rogue Five Fire Department as a volunteer Lieutenant and served there for the next three years. During the notoriously fire prone west coast summers in Oregon, Chief Metzger served as a Fire Warden for the Oregon State Forestry, and at age 18 he was assigned his own crew and truck. In 1979, he worked with other young firefighters to establish a private-for-profit fire department for the County of Josephine, Oregon. From 1979–1982, he served as a lieutenant in that department.

In 1982, he moved to Midland, Texas seeking to expand his career with a ''big city'' fire department where he served for five years. In his free time, he continued his commitment to public service and his profession. Chief Metzger became the charter president of the Greenwood Volunteer Fire Department, spearheading the opening of its initial station in 1985. In 1986, he seized the opportunity to oversee the Fire Prevention Division of the Town of Flower Mound. He was promoted to Chief in 1992 and has capably led the Fire Department for 22 years.

The Flower Mound Fire Department's sterling reputation is a reflection of the dedicated, ethical supervision of Chief Metzger. His professional legacy will continue to benefit the citizens and businesses of Flower Mound for years to come. I join his colleagues and the community in commending Flower Mound Fire Chief Eric Metzger for his outstanding record and extend best wishes upon his retirement. It is my privilege to represent the Town of Flower Mound in the U.S. House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF BOYD LINDSLEY

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month, to recognize Boyd Lindsley. Lindsley openly identified as a gay cisgender male as a teenager. By allowing himself to be authentic, he was able to find his voice for activism. Since identifying, he has been a stalwart advocate for the LGBT community and women's reproductive rights.

Lindsley serves on the Board of Directors for Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando. He is also the founding President of the Pride Faculty and Staff Association (PFSA) at the University of Central Florida (UCF), where he is a faculty member and the assistant director of the Nicholson School of Communication.

As president of PFSA he oversaw the official incorporation of the organization, the creation of bylaws for the organization, the recruitment of a significant membership, the execution of events, and initial fundraising for PFSA's operational costs and student scholarships. In this role, Lindsley advocated for domestic partner benefits for UCF employees, met with the UCF police department to address safety concerns for UCF's LGBT community, and petitioned the Orange County Mayor and Orange County Commissioners to support a Domestic Partner Registry for all Orange County residents.

Lindsley is also an active member of Equality Florida (EQFL), the state of Florida's largest LGBT civil rights advocacy organization. He attends events throughout the state of Florida supporting EQFL and serves on the host committee for the Greater Orlando Equality Florida Gala (the annual fundraiser for the organization). Additionally, he volunteers on campaigns for pro-LGBT leaders on the local, state and national stage.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Advertising-Public Relations with a minor in Psychology, and a master's degree in Communication with a concentration in Interpersonal Communication from UCF. He is currently pursuing his doctorate in Executive Leadership.

I am happy to honor Boyd Lindsley, during LGBT Pride Month, for his activism on behalf of women's reproductive rights, and his contributions to the LGBT and Central Florida communities.

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, June 19, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JUNE 24

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for Homeland Security.

SD–138

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine less student debt from the start, focusing on what role the tax system should play.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy, and Global Women's Issues

To hold hearings to examine combating violence and discrimination against women, focusing on a global call to action.

SD–419

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Subcommittee on Children and Families

To hold hearings to examine the challenges of prevention and identification in child trafficking and private re-homing.

SD–430

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the economic impact of increased natural gas production.

SH–216

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine certain nominations.

SD–226

11 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for Financial Services and General Government.

SD–138

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1804, to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to establish an Aviation Security Advisory Committee, S. 1893, to require the Transportation Security Administration to implement best practices and improve transparency with regard to technology acquisition programs, S. 2030, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, S. 2338, to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, S. 2444, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 through 2016, S. 2482, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Tokyo on February 24, 2012, S. 2484, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Auckland on November 14, 2009, and S. 2485, to implement the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, as adopted at Lisbon on September 28, 2007.

SR–253

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine moving toward greater community inclusion, focusing on Olmstead at 15.

SD–106

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold hearings to examine the AT&T and DIRECTV merger, focusing on the impact on competition and consumers in the video market and beyond.

SD–226

JUNE 25

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Financial Stability Oversight Council annual report to Congress.

SH–216

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of D. Nathan Sheets, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary, and Ramin Toloui, of Iowa, to be Deputy Under Secretary, both of the Department of the Treasury.

SD–215

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 2449, to reauthorize certain provisions of the Public Health Service Act relating to autism, proposed legislation to amend The Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the nominations of William D. Adams, of Maine, to be Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Robert M. Gordon, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, and any additional nominations cleared for action.

SD–430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider an original bill entitled, ''Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014'', an original bill entitled, ''National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center Act of 2014'', an original bill entitled, ''Protecting American Chemical Facilities From Attack Act of 2014'', H.R. 1232, to amend titles 40, 41, and 44, United States Code, to eliminate duplication and waste in information technology acquisition and management, S. 1691, to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the security of the United States border and to provide for reforms and rates of pay for border patrol agents, H.R. 4194, to provide for the elimination or modification of Federal reporting requirements, S. 2061, to prevent conflicts of interest relating to contractors providing background investigation fieldwork services and investigative support services, S. 231, to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp, S. 1214, to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government, S. 2117, to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, S. 1347, to provide transparency, accountability, and limitations of Government sponsored conferences, H.R. 1376, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 369 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Jersey City, New Jersey, as the ''Judge Shirley A. Tolentino Post Office Building'', H.R. 1813, to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 162 Northeast Avenue in Tallmadge, Ohio, as the ''Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin, Jr., Post Office Building'', S. 2056, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the ''Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office'', S. 2057, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 198 Baker Street in Corning, New York, as the ''Specialist Ryan P. Jayne Post Office Building'', and the nomination of Shaun L. S. Donovan, of New York, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine S. 1945, to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, focusing on updating the ''Voting Rights Act'' in response to Shelby County v. Holder.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security

To hold hearings to examine NextGen, focusing on a review of progress, challenges, and opportunities for improving aviation safety and efficiency.

SR–253

2 p.m.

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine trade enforcement, focusing on using trade rules to level the playing field for United States companies and workers.

SD–215

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine how early and absentee voting can benefit citizens and administrators, focusing on election administration.

SR–301

2:15 p.m.
Special Committee on Aging
To hold hearings to examine brain injuries and diseases of aging.
SD–562

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To receive a closed briefing on United States nuclear deterrence policy.
SVC–217

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold hearings to examine young workers and recent graduates in the United States economy.
SD–538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power
To hold hearings to examine S. 1971, to establish an interagency coordination committee or subcommittee with the leadership of the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior, focused on the nexus between energy and water production, use, and efficiency.
SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia
To hold hearings to examine the path to efficiency, focusing on making FEMA more effective for streamlined disaster operations.
SD–342

Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine economic development, focusing on encouraging investment in Indian country.
SD–628

3 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the future of United States-China relations.
SD–419

JUNE 26

2 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Alfonso E. Lenhardt, of New York, to be Deputy Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and Marcia Denise Occomy, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the African Development Bank.
SD–419

CORRECTION

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3773–S3824

Measures Introduced: Nine bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2486–2494, and S. Res. 478. **Page S3811**

Measures Passed:

Omnibus Territories Act: Senate passed S. 1237, to improve the administration of programs in the insular areas, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S3821–23**

Reid (for Murkowski) Amendment No. 3288, to remove certain sections. **Pages S3822–23**

Measures Considered:

Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 4660, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, post-cloture. **Pages S3776–S3805**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, post-cloture, at approximately 10:30 a.m., on Thursday, June 19, 2014, and all but two hours of post-cloture debate time be considered expired. **Page S3824**

House Messages:

Pay Our Guard and Reserve Act: Senate disagreed to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3230, to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Senate insisted on its amendment, agreed to the request for a conference with the House thereon, and the Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: Senators Sanders, Rockefeller, Murray, Brown, Tester, Begich, Blumenthal, Hirono, Burr, Isakson, Johanns, McCain, Coburn, and Rubio. **Page S3805**

Messages from the House: **Page S3810**

Measures Referred: **Pages S3810–11**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S3811, S3824**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S3811**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S3811–12**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S3812–14**

Additional Statements: **Pages S3807–10**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S3814–20**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Pages S3820–21**

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S3821**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:09 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 19, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3824.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Defense, after receiving testimony from Chuck Hagel, Secretary, and General Martin Dempsey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, both of the Department of Defense.

HIGH FREQUENCY TRADING'S IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment concluded a hearing to examine high frequency trading's impact on the economy, after receiving testimony from Hal S. Scott, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Jeffrey M. Solomon, Cowen and Company, LLC, New York, New York; and Andrew M. Brooks, T. Rowe Price Associates, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland.

E-CIGARETTE MARKETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine e-cigarette marketing and potential consequences for youth, after receiving testimony from Susanne E. Tanski, Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine, Lebanon, New Hampshire, on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Matthew L. Myers, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and Scott D. Ballin, both of Washington, DC; Jason Healy, blu eCigs, Charlotte, North Carolina; and Craig Weiss, NJOY, Scottsdale, Arizona.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1771, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon;

S. 1800, to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1946, to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations, with an amendment;

S. 1965, to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services;

S. 2010, to amend the Water Conservation and Utilization Act to authorize the development of non-Federal hydropower and issuance of leases of power privileges at projects constructed pursuant to the authority of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2019, to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act, with amendments;

H.R. 1963, to amend the Water Conservation and Utilization Act to authorize the development of non-Federal hydropower and issuance of leases of power privileges at projects constructed pursuant to the authority of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

An original bill to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline; and

The nominations of Suzette M. Kimball, of West Virginia, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey, and Estevan R. Lopez, of New Mexico, to be Commissioner of Reclamation, both of the Department of the Interior, Monica C. Regalbuto, of Illinois, to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management, and Norman C. Bay, of New Mexico, and Cheryl A. LaFleur, of Massachusetts, both to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety concluded a hearing to examine climate change, focusing on the need to act now, after receiving testimony from Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange, Montgomery; former Governor Christine Todd Whitman, The Whitman Strategy Group, Oldwick, New Jersey, William D. Ruckelshaus, Madrona Venture Group, Seattle, Washington, William K. Reilly, TPG Capital, San Francisco, California, and Lee M. Thomas, Jacksonville, Florida, all a former Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; Daniel B. Botkin, University of California, Santa Barbara, New York, New York; and Joseph R. Mason, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

U.S. AFGHANISTAN POLICY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States policy in Afghanistan and the regional implications of the 2014 transition, after receiving testimony from James Dobbins, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Department of State; and Kelly E. Magsamen, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs.

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded open and closed hearings to examine the intelligence community, focusing on keeping watch over its contractor workforce, including additional actions needed to improve reporting on and planning for the use of contract personnel, after receiving testimony from Stephanie O'Sullivan, Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence; and Timothy J. DiNapoli, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office.

NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAM BILLS

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 1948, to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program, and S. 2299, to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize a provision to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages, after receiving testimony from William Mendoza, Executive Director, White House

Initiative on Indian and Alaska Native Education; Lillian Sparks Robinson, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services; Montana State Representative Clarena M. Brockie, Harlem; Thomas Shortbull, Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, South Dakota, on behalf of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium; Ed Delgado, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Oneida; Namaka Rawlins, 'Aha Punana Leo, Inc., Hilo, Hawaii; and Sonta Hamilton Roach, Shageluk, Alaska.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights approved for full committee consideration S.J. Res. 19, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

GROWING SMALL BUSINESS EXPORTS

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee concluded a hearing to examine growing small business exports and growing United States Jobs, after receiving testimony from Mark Calhoon, Washington State Department of Commerce Business Services Division Senior Managing Director, Seattle; Jennifer Verdon, Idaho Department of Commerce International Business Division Manager, Boise; Eric Hahn, General Plastics Manufacturing, Tacoma, Washington; Donald F. Tyler, Corfin Industries LLC, Salem, New Hampshire; Bob Campbell, Alliance Solutions Group, Inc., Newport News, Virginia; and W. Dan Hendrix, World Trade Center Arkansas, Rogers.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the reduction in face-to-face services at the Social Security Administration, after receiving testimony from Nancy Berryhill, Deputy Commissioner for Operations, Social Security Administration; Tammy DeLong, Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, Presque Isle, Maine; Scott Hale, National Council of Social Security Management Associations, Washington, DC; and Brenda Holt, Gadsden County Commissioner, Quincy, Florida.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 14 public bills, H.R. 4885–4898; and 1 resolution, H. Res. 630 were introduced. **Pages H5493–94**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5494–95**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 629, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4413) to reauthorize the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to better protect futures customers, to provide end users with market certainty, to make basic reforms to ensure transparency and accountability at the Commission, to help farmers, ranchers, and end users manage risks to help keep consumer costs low, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–476). **Page H5493**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative LaMalfa to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5401**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H5404**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Rabbi Michael Lotker, Temple Ner Ami, Camarillo, CA. **Page H5404**

Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014—Motion to go to Conference: The House agreed by voice vote to the Miller (FL) motion to concur in the Senate amendment to the title of H.R. 3230, to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and concur in the Senate amendment to the text of H.R. 3230 with the amendment printed in H. Rept. 113–475. Subsequently, the House agreed by voice vote to the Miller (FL) motion that the House insist upon its amendment to the Senate amendment, and request a conference with the Senate thereon. **Pages H5413–15**

Rejected the Sinema motion to instruct conferees by a yea-and-nay vote of 198 yeas to 220 nays, Roll No. 316. **Pages H5425–29**

Subsequently, the Chair appointed the following conferees on H.R. 3230: For consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Representatives Miller (FL), Lamborn, Roe (TN), Flores,

Benishek, Coffman, Wenstrup, Walorski, Michaud, Brown (FL), Takano, Brownley (CA), Kirkpatrick, and Walz. **Page H5425**

H. Res. 628, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4870) and providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 3230), was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 244 yeas to 163 nays, Roll No. 315, after the previous question was ordered without objection.

Pages H5407–13

Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015: The House began consideration of H.R. 4870, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015. Consideration of the measure is expected to resume tomorrow, June 19th. **Pages H5407–25, H5429–87**

Agreed to:

Lee amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $5,000,000 for multiple sclerosis research; **Pages H5446–47**

Jackson Lee amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $500,000 for post-traumatic stress disorder research;

Pages H5448–50

Lamborn amendment that increases funding, by offset, for Operation and Maintenance, Army National Guard by $5,000,000; **Page H5450**

Jeffries amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $10,000,000 for post-traumatic stress disorder research; **Page H5450**

McKinley amendment that redirects $21,000,000 in funding within Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide for the National Guard Youth Challenge Program; **Pages H5450–51**

McGovern amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $3,000,000 for therapeutic service dogs;

Pages H5451–52

Benishek amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $2,000,000 for Alzheimer's disease research;

Page H5452

Ellison amendment that redirects $10,000,000 in funding within Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide; **Pages H5454–55**

Runyan amendment that increases funding, by offset, for Other Procurement, Air Force by $6,000,000; **Page H5455**

Delaney amendment that reduces funding for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide by $24,000,000 and increases funding for the Fisher House Foundation, Inc. for the construction and furnishing of additional Fisher Houses; **Pages H5455–56**

Lowenthal amendment that redirects $5,000,000 in funding within Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide; **Page H5456**

Grayson amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $10,000,000 for Gulf War Illness research;

Pages H5456–57

Murphy (PA) amendment that reduces funding for Environmental Restoration, Air Force by $37,000,000 and increases funding for the Defense Health Program by $10,000,000 for mental health treatment; **Pages H5457–58**

Jackson Lee amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $5,000,000 for breast cancer research; **Pages H5461–62**

Nugent amendment that redirects $10,000,000 in funding within Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force; **Pages H5463–64**

Grayson amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $10,000,000 for prostate cancer research;

Pages H5464–65

Holt amendment that redirects $1,000,000 in funding within the Defense Health Program for research on financial stress and its relation to suicide;

Page H5465

Langevin amendment that redirects $30,000,000 in funding within the Defense Health Program for spinal cord injury research; **Pages H5465–66**

7Holt amendment that redirects $2,000,000 in funding within the Intelligence Community Management Account for the Intelligence Community Whistleblowing & Source Protection Directorate;

Pages H5466–77

Daines amendment that strikes the portion of section 8132 which requires the provisions of the section to continue in effect through the date of enactment of an Act authorizing appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense; **Page H5477**

Grayson amendment that prohibits funds from being used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if that offeror has (1) within a three-year period preceding this offer, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for commission of a fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or (2) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1); or (3) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount

that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied; and **Page H5483**

Nolan amendment that prohibits funds from being used for the ''Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund''. **Page H5485**

Rejected:

Lamborn amendment that sought to redirect $5,000,000 in funding within Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide; **Pages H5447–48**

Kildee amendment that sought to increase funding, by offset, for the Defense Health Program by $20,000,000; and **Pages H5459–61**

Coffman amendment (No. 5 printed in the Congressional Record of June 17, 2014) that sought to reduce funding for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force by $15,722,000 and apply the savings to the spending reduction account. **Page H5463**

Withdrawn:

Kildee amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have increased funding for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide by $10,000,000 and reduced funding for Aircraft Procurement, Navy by $50,000,000; **Pages H5452–53**

Garamendi amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have reduced funding for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force by $15,600,000 and applied the savings to the spending reduction account; and **Pages H5462–63**

Cole amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have prohibited funds from being used to provide housing on a military installation to an alien (as defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act) who is an unaccompanied minor and is not a dependent of a member of the Armed Forces. **Pages H5482–83**

Point of Order sustained against:

Gohmert amendment that sought to increase, by offset, funding for National Guard Personnel, Army by $41,492,000; **Page H5445**

Gohmert amendment that sought to increase funding for National Guard Personnel, Army by $41,492,000 and reduce funding for operation and maintenance of activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) by $57,000,000; **Pages H5445–46**

Garamendi amendment that sought to prohibit funds from being used for research, development, test, or evaluation for the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter to modify the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter in a manner that provides B–61 delivery capability until the date that a report has been delivered to the Congressional defense committees outlining costs and capabilities; **Pages H5481–82**

Grayson amendment that sought to prohibit funds from being used by an officer, employee, or contractor of the intelligence community to subvert or interfere with the integrity of any cryptographic standard that is proposed, developed, or adopted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and **Pages H5483–84**

Grayson amendment that sought to prohibit funds from being used to make aircraft, armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, toxicological agents, launch vehicles, guided missiles, ballistic missiles, rockets, torpedos, bombs, mines, or nuclear weapons available to local law enforcement agencies through the Department of Defense Excess Personal Property Program. **Pages H5486–87**

Proceedings Postponed:

Gohmert amendment that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Defense by $35,956,000 for the National Guard counter-drug program; **Pages H5453–54**

Blumenauer amendment (No. 4 printed in the Congressional Record of June 17, 2014) that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites by $3,400,000; **Pages H5458–59**

Nadler amendment that seeks to strike section 8132, which prohibits funds from being used to reduce, convert, decommission, or otherwise move to nondeployed status any Minuteman III ballistic missile silo that contains a deployed missile as of the date of the enactment of this Act; **Pages H5477–81**

Walorski amendment that seeks to prohibit funds from being used to transfer or release to the Republic of Yemen (or any entity within Yemen) a detainee who is or was held, detained, or otherwise in the custody of DoD on or after June 24, 2009, at the United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; and **Pages H5484–85**

Miller (MI) amendment that seeks to prohibit funds from being used to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, or prepare to divest, retire, transfer, or place in storage, any A–10 aircraft, or to disestablish any units of the active or reserve component associated with such aircraft. **Pages H5485–86**

H. Res. 628, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4870) and providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 3230), was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 244 yeas to 163 nays, Roll No. 315, after the previous question was ordered without objection. **Pages H5407–13**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H5406.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear

on pages H5412–13, H5429. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a markup on Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill FY 2015. The bill was ordered reported, without amendment to the Full Committee.

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee held a markup on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations FY 2015. The bill was ordered reported without amendment.

GM IGNITION SWITCH RECALL: INVESTIGATION UPDATE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''The GM Ignition Switch Recall: Investigation Update''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Semi-Annual Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau''. Testimony was heard from Richard Cordray, Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION WITHIN THE CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU, PART THREE

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Allegations of Discrimination and Retaliation within the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Part Three''. Testimony was heard from Ali Naraghi, Examiner, Southeast Region, Division of Supervision, Enforcement and Fair Lending, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; and Kevin Williams, former Quality Monitor, Office of Consumer Response, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a markup on H.R. 4653, to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes; H. Res. 503, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the need to bring the South Sudan conflict to a sustainable and lasting end and to promote reconciliation of longstanding and recent grievances to allow for a peaceful society with good governance; and H. Res. 588, concerning the suspension of exit permit issuance by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo for adopted Congolese children seeking to depart the country with their adoptive parents. The bill and resolutions were ordered reported, as amended.

BERGDAHL EXCHANGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade; and Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a joint subcommittee hearing entitled ''The Bergdahl Exchange: Implications for U.S. National Security and the Fight Against Terrorism''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN NORTH KOREA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''Human Rights Abuses and Crimes Against Humanity in North Korea''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CRITICAL ROLE OF FIRST RESPONDERS: SHARING LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST ATTACKS

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Critical Role of First Responders: Sharing Lessons Learned from Past Attacks''. Testimony was heard from John Miller, Deputy Commissioner, Intelligence and Counterterrorism, New York City Police Department; James Schwartz, Chief, Arlington County Fire Department, Virginia; James Hooley, Chief, Boston Emergency Medical Services; and a public witness.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 3086, the ''Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act''; and H.R. 4874, the ''Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act of 2014''. The bills were ordered reported without amendment.

AMERICAN ENERGY JOBS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR STATES AND LOCALITIES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held an oversight hearing entitled ''American Energy Jobs: Opportunities

for States and Localities''. Testimony was heard from Ron Black, Vice-Chairman, Lea County Commission, New Mexico; Kevin Carter, Director, Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration; Rodney Arbuckle, Sheriff, DeSoto Parish, Louisiana; and public witnesses.

POISED TO PROFIT: HOW OBAMACARE HELPS INSURANCE COMPANIES EVEN IF IT FAILS PATIENTS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Poised to Profit: How ObamaCare Helps Insurance Companies Even If It Fails Patients''. Testimony was heard from Senator Sessions; Mandy Cohen, M.D., Acting Deputy Administrator and Director, Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and public witnesses.

CUSTOMER PROTECTION AND END USER RELIEF ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 4413, the ''Customer Protection and End User Relief Act''. The Committee granted by a record vote a structured rule for H.R. 4413. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–47 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Lucas; and Representatives Peterson, Waters, Lynch, and Jackson Lee.

FUTURE OF SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Research and Technology held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Surface Transportation''. Testimony was heard from Gregory D. Winfree, Assistant Secretary, Department of Transportation; Troy Woodruff, Chief of Staff, Indiana Department of Transportation; and public witnesses.

MAINTAINING COAST GUARD READINESS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''Maintaining Coast Guard Readiness''. Testimony was heard from Vice Admiral Charles Michel, Deputy Commandant for Operations, United States Coast Guard; Michele Mackin, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office; Ronald O'Rourke, Specialist in Naval Affairs, Congressional Research Service; and a public witness.

AIRPORT FINANCING AND DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Aviation held a hearing entitled ''Airport Financing and Development''. Testimony was heard from Benito ''Ben'' De Leon, Deputy Associate Administrator for Airports, Federal Aviation Administration; Gerald L. Dillingham, Director of Civil Aviation Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

NON-VA CARE: AN INTEGRATED SOLUTION FOR VETERAN ACCESS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Non-VA Care: An Integrated Solution for Veteran Access''. Testimony was heard from Randy Williamson, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; Philip Matkovsky, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Administrative Operations, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

MEDICARE PAYMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION'S JUNE REPORT TO CONGRESS

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on Medicare Payment Advisory Commission's (MedPAC) June Report to Congress. Testimony was heard from Mark Miller, Executive Director, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission.

Joint Meetings

EMPOWERMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine empowerment in the workplace, after receiving testimony from Diana Furchtgott-Roth, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research Economics21, Barbara Gault, Institute for Women's

Policy Research, Rachel Greszler, The Heritage Foundation Center for Data Analysis, and Heidi Shierholz, Economic Policy Institute, all of Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: business meeting to markup proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, and the Legislative Branch (H.R. 4487), 10:30 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Laura Junor, of Virginia, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Gordon O. Tanner, of Alabama, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Air Force, Debra S. Wada, of Hawaii, to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and Miranda A. A. Ballentine, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment, and Energy, all of the Department of Defense, and Monica C. Regalbuto, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on the security situation in Iraq, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine resources for export, domestic consumption, and transportation fuel, 2:30 p.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and its Protocol, signed at Madrid on February 22, 1990 (Treaty Doc. 113–04), and the Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on February 13, 2013, at Warsaw (Treaty Doc. 113–05), 11 a.m., SD–419.

Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on an update on Iraq, 2 p.m., SVC–217.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 2454, to amend title 17, United States Code, to extend expiring provisions of the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act of 2010, and the nominations of Julie E. Carnes, of Georgia, and Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Andre Birotte, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, John W. deGravelles, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana, Randolph D. Moss, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, Robin L. Rosenberg, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, Ronnie L. White, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, Leslie Joyce Abrams, Mark Howard Cohen, Leigh Martin May, and Eleanor Louise Ross, all to be a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, and Nancy B. Firestone, of Virginia, and Thomas L. Halkowski, of Pennsylvania, both to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, 9:30 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive closed briefings on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, Forestry, hearing on a review of the Interpretive Rule regarding the applicability of Clean Water Act agricultural exemptions, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled "P5+1 Negotiations over Iran's Nuclear Program and Its Implications for United States Defense", 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled "Unmanned Carrier-Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike (UCLASS) Requirements Assessment", 3:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled "EPA's Proposed Carbon Dioxide Regulations for Power Plants", 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, markup on the following legislation: H.R. 4771, the "Designer Anabolic Steroid Control Act"; H.R. 4250, the "Sunscreen Innovation Act"; H.R. 4701, the "Vector-Borne Disease Research Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014"; H.R. 594, the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research and Education Amendments of 2014; H.R. 669, the "Sudden Unexpected Death and Data Enhancement and Awareness Act; and H.R. 4290, the "Wakefield Act of 2014", 4 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 4871, the "TRIA Reform Act of 2014"; H.R. 4881, to place a 6-month moratorium on the authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council to make financial stability determinations; and H.R. 4387, the "FSOC Transparency and Accountability Act", 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa, markup on H. Res. 109, condemning the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights; and H. Res. 435, calling on the government of Iran to fulfill their promises of assistance in this case of Robert Levinson, one of the longest held United States civilians in our Nation's history, 9:45 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa; and the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations joint subcommittee hearing entitled "One Year Under Rouhani: Iran's Abysmal Human Rights Record", 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet, hearing entitled ''GSA's Failure to Meet the Needs of the Judiciary: A Case Study of Bureaucratic Negligence and Waste'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on the following legislation: H.R. 2455, the ''Nevada Native Nations Lands Act''; H.R. 3716, the ''Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe—Fish Springs Ranch Settlement Act''; H.R. 4049, the ''Ashland Breakwater Light Transfer Act''; H.R. 4283, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to maintain or replace certain facilities and structures for commercial recreation services at Smith Gulch in Idaho, and for other purposes; H.R. 4489, the ''World War I Memorial Act of 2014''; H.R. 4508, to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services; H.R. 4527, to remove a use restriction on land formerly a part of Acadia National Park that was transferred to the town of Tremont, Maine, and for other purposes; H.R. 4562, to authorize early repayment of obligations to the Bureau of Reclamation within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska; and H.R. 4873, the ''Cabin Fee Act of 2014'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Whistleblower Reprisal and Management Failure at the U.S. Chemical Safety Board'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, June 19

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond one hour), Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 4660, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, post-cloture.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, June 19

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Continue consideration of H.R. 4870—Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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