The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of William D. Adams, of Maine, to be Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Humanities for a term of 4 years?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2363, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the motion as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is considered expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2363) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3469

Mr. REID. On behalf of Senator UDALL of Colorado, I call up amendment No. 3469.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the Udall of Colorado amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], and Mr. RISCH, for Mr. UDALL of Colorado, proposes an amendment numbered 3469.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify a provision relating to the non-Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range)

On page 14, line 25, insert ''use the funds apportioned to it under section 4(c) to'' after ''a State may''.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3490

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 3490 to amendment No. 3469.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, on line 1, strike the word ''the''.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 3491

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a motion to commit S. 2363, and it has instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read the motion as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to commit the bill to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources with instructions to report back forthwith the following amendment numbered 3491.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3492

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 3492 to the instructions to the motion to commit.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''3 days'' and insert ''4 days''.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3493

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 3493.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''4'' and insert ''5''.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 2363, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Kay R. Hagan, Patrick J. Leahy, Tim Kaine, Angus S. King, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Bill Nelson, Jon Tester, Patty Murray, Claire McCaskill, Mark Begich, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Harkin, Tom Udall, Joe Donnelly.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 438, S. 2244.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 438, S. 2244, a bill to extend the termination date of the Terrorism Insurance Program established under the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT

Mr. REID. I want the record to reflect how much I appreciate the hard work of the Senator from North Carolina, Senator HAGAN, working on this bipartisan bill. She did it with the ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator MURKOWSKI, and they have done good work coming up with this bill.

But the Senator from Alaska spoke this morning about her desire for consideration of amendments. Typical, typical, typical of the last 6 years here. This bill has 26 Republican cosponsors. This bill was brought up 2 years ago. They have worked hard to improve the bill since then, and you would think with 26 Republican cosponsors to this bill we could move forward on it. But, as usual, they come down here and they say, well, a good bill, but we want to have a bunch of amendments.

I am all for consideration of amendments on this bill. We all are. But the Republicans can't agree on what amendments they want.

I just met with a number of people earlier today about this and explained to them how we used to do things. There wasn't on virtually every piece of legislation a necessity to get cloture on a bill and now even to get on a bill we need cloture, as we find on the bill we just finished some procedural work on, the sportsmen's bill. It affects millions and millions of Americans, but they want amendments. They want amendments because they want to kill the bill as they have tried to kill everything in the last 6 years.

So I repeat, I am all for consideration of amendments. But as we have repeatedly done, we need to have a list of amendments from which to work. Senators have for decades and decades started with a list of amendments and worked through those lists. So I ask Republicans, if you want an amendment process, bring me a reasonable list that leads to passage of the bill.

They can't do that because they can't agree on what amendments they want, and there are so many examples. Energy efficiency is something similar to this, where the senior Senator from New Hampshire worked on a bill with—it doesn't matter if it was the senior or junior Senator—Senator PORTMAN. They worked together on this legislation for months and months—in fact, about a year—and we had a bill on the floor and we were moving forward. I was told before the bill, by the Republicans, let's get this done; it is a great bill.

So I am again reflecting on what happened with the history here.

They said before recess, we need a sense-of-the-Senate on Keystone. I said we have an agreement. Why do we need to do that? But I said OK, a few hours later, you want that, let's do it, because this bill is important.

We need to do that. The recess was a week. We came back. They said: Well, we want to change things a little bit. We want an up-or-down vote on Keystone. They keep changing things. That is not right.

I said: OK, we will vote on Keystone.

They couldn't take yes for an answer. We agreed for an up-or-down vote for Keystone. They wouldn't take it. It is the same thing on this, a bill the Republicans support. They oppose their own legislation. So we are going to move forward.

Now we have the terrorism insurance legislation that I just moved to proceed to. This is an important piece of legislation. Let's hope we can get this done. If we can't, construction in America—whether it is in Indiana, Nevada, Maryland, Iowa, Oregon or Mississippi; it doesn't matter where it is—won't go forward because people won't be able to get insurance.

So I would hope we can get this bill done, but we will see. There are discussions going on, and we will get the same: Yes, I think we can work something out. But when it comes right down to it, Republicans can't agree on what they want. I hope on that important piece of legislation we can get a list of amendments from the Republicans. I am told they are willing to do that. I hope that in fact is the case, because it would be a shame for our country if we couldn't get this done.

The economy is doing better. We added almost 300,000 jobs last reporting period. But if we can't get this done and we can't get the highway bill done, it is going to be a slam to our economy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to enter into a colloquy with my colleagues Senator WICKER and Senator HARKIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I have the honor of being the Senate chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and the ranking Republican Member is Senator WICKER. We join with our House colleagues in the work of the Helsinki Commission.

I mention that because this past week, from June 28 through July 2, the 23rd Annual Parliamentary Assembly was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in which over 300 parliamentarians participated. We had a very strong representation from the Senate and the House of Representatives representing the United States. I was proud to join with Senator WICKER and Senator HARKIN as well as Congressman SMITH, Congressman ADERHOLT, Congressman GINGREY, Congressman SCHWEIKERT, and Congressman SCHIFF in representing U.S. interests.

By way of background for some of my colleagues who may not be familiar, the Helsinki Commission is a U.S. participant in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This followed up on the Helsinki Accords which took place in 1975, when all the countries of Europe—including the Soviet Union—joined the United States and Canada and agreed to principles that recognized the importance of good governance, human rights, and economic opportunities, as well as territorial security, in order to have stability within the OSCE participating States. The United States has been an active participant in this process.

I think we saw the value of the OSCE directly when Russia invaded Crimea, and the OSCE mission there was our eyes and ears on the ground and helped restore some semblance of order in Ukraine as it now is moving forward.

In our work in Baku, we were representing the United States on some extremely important issues, and I will talk about some of those issues and my colleagues on the floor are going to talk about issues they championed.

But I must say, Russia sent a very strong delegation to Baku to represent their country. On behalf of the U.S. delegation, I brought forward a resolution in regard to violations entitled: ''Clear, Gross and Uncorrected Violations of Helsinki Principles by the Russian Federation.'' This resolution became the principal debate of the 23rd Parliamentary Assembly.

We held a plenary debate. We don't normally do that. We normally debate issues in different committees, but the entire assembly debated the issues concerning Russia's activities within Ukraine because of the seriousness of this matter.

Russia violated all 10 core principles of OSCE. We had that in the resolution. We were very clear about that. We believe that the best way to bring about compliance with these universal values is to put a spotlight on those who are violating them.

In Russia's invasion into Ukraine and taking over Crimea and in their interference in Eastern Ukraine, they have violated each of the 10 core principles including: sovereign equality, refraining from the use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, nonintervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, cooperation among states, and fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law.

Our delegation brought that forward. Russia countered with justifications we found totally unacceptable, but it was a very spirited debate. Many amendments were offered to our resolution because by the time we debated the resolution and the time we filed it, there had been some changes in Russia's behavior. So the resolution was actually made stronger through the amendment process, which is what we intended at the time.

Russia made various pleas to try to delete various sections of our resolution. By an overwhelming vote of the parliamentarians of Europe, Central Asia, the United States, and Canada, we passed this resolution that the United States brought forward pointing out the clear violation of Russia's commitments under the OSCE in its activities in Ukraine. It passed by over a 3-to-1 vote among the parliamentarians. We were very proud of the work we had done to bring forward that clear statement on behalf of the parliamentarians of the OSCE.

I am extremely proud of the role my colleagues played. We were involved in many other issues. Senator WICKER was one of the key spokesmen on several issues relating to our involvement within the OSCE. He was involved in bringing out our involvement in Afghanistan, which is of continued interest.

In addition to the 57 participating countries of the OSCE, we have partners of cooperation. These are countries not located within our geographical bounds but which have interests in the OSCE. Afghanistan is one of our partners for cooperation.

We just finished a hearing of the Helsinki Commission on our Mediterranean partners, which includes Tunisia, Algeria, Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, and we worked with Morocco—all partners for cooperation. So the reach of Helsinki is far beyond just Europe and Central Asia. In this parliamentary assembly, we took up issues that involved many of these other matters.

Mr. President, I yield for my colleague Senator WICKER for comments he might wish to make with regard to the work we did in Baku.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I thank my two colleagues from the other side of the aisle for joining with us today in this colloquy.

Let me say how proud I was as a Republican Senator from Mississippi to

stand shoulder to shoulder with my colleague from Maryland BEN CARDIN. There are probably many places in Maryland he would rather have been at the beginning of July 2014, but he is someone who year after year has taken the time to travel to sometimes some rather unknown capital cities such as Baku or Chisinau, Moldova, and represent the United States in our partnership with the OSCE on the Helsinki Commission.

As Senator CARDIN said, the 1975 Final Act of the Helsinki Commission recognized 10 principles that 57 countries in Europe and Eurasia said we believe we can stand by and live with and live under, issues such as territorial integrity, sovereignty, refraining from the use of force—very important cornerstones of peace, democracy, self-determination and the rule of law in Europe.

It is certainly a fact well known within the OSCE and the delegations that come from far and wide to attend these that BEN CARDIN is respected internationally, that his word carries weight, that he speaks on behalf of the United States of America, and on behalf of the OSCE countries with authority, evenhandedness, and fairness. So I think it meant a lot for someone of Senator CARDIN's stature to come forward and present these.

Indeed, we did have overwhelming support for the supplemental item authored by Senator CARDIN. The amendments to water it down by the Russian delegation were rejected time and again by overwhelming votes. In the end the final resolution was adopted by over 90 votes in favor of the Cardin resolution and only 30 votes against it. Of course, the delegates from the Russian Federation and several of their closest allies and neighbors voted against it. But country after country, delegation after delegation, small brave nation after small brave nation voted in favor of it because internationally we realized that the words of the resolution were correct.

The action of Russia in Crimea—invading this defenseless peninsula and annexing it illegally—that action violated all 10 principles of the Helsinki Final Act, and it needed to be said. It needed to be said not only by the United Nations, which has in effect said this in the General Assembly, and it needed not only to be said by a major power like the United States of America, through our State Department and through the Congress, but it also needed to be said by the collective body that represents these 57 countries from Europe and Eurasia.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the final supplemental item as adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BAKU DECLARATION AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AT THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

[Baku, 28 June to 2 July 2014]

RESOLUTION ON CLEAR, GROSS AND UNCORRECTED VIOLATIONS OF HELSINKI PRINCIPLES BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

1. Noting that the Russian Federation is a participating State of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and has therefore committed itself to respect the Principles guiding relations between participating States as contained in the Helsinki Final Act,

2. Recalling that those principles include (1) Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty; (2) Refraining from the threat or use of force; (3) Inviolability of frontiers; (4) Territorial integrity of States; (5) Peaceful settlement of disputes; (6) Non intervention in internal affairs; (7) Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; (8) Equal rights and self-determination of peoples; (9) Co-operation among States; and (10) Fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law,

3. Recalling also that the Russian Federation is a signatory, along with the United States of America and the United Kingdom, of the December 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, which was made in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

4. Concluding that the Russian Federation has, since February 2014, violated every one of the ten Helsinki principles in its relations with Ukraine, some in a clear, gross and thus far uncorrected manner, and is in violation with the commitments it undertook in the Budapest Memorandum, as well as other international obligations,

5. Emphasizing in particular that the 16 March 2014 referendum in Crimea was held in clear violation of the Constitution of Ukraine and the Constitution of Crimea as an autonomous republic within Ukraine, and was further conducted in an environment that could not be considered remotely free and fair,

6. Expressing concern that the Russian Federation continues to violate its international commitments in order to make similarly illegitimate claims in the eastern part of Ukraine, as it has done, and threatens to continue to do, in regard to other participating States,

7. Asserting that improved democratic practices regarding free and fair elections, adherence to the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Russian Federation would benefit the citizens of that State but also contribute significantly to stability and confidence among its neighbours, as well as enhance security and co operation among all the participating States,

8. Noting the particular vulnerability of Crimean Tatars, Roma, Jews and other minority groups, along with those Ukrainian citizens opposed to the actions undertaken or supported by the Russian Federation, to attacks, harassment and intimidation by Russian supported separatist forces,

9. Welcoming the efforts and initiatives of the OSCE to develop a presence in Ukraine, including Crimea, that would support de-escalation of the current situation and monitor and encourage respect for the Helsinki principles, including the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Ukrainian citizens, as well as the work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR),

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:

10. Condemns the clear, gross and uncorrected violation of the Helsinki principles by the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine, including the particularly egregious violation of that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity;

11. Condemns the occupation of the territory of Ukraine;

12. Considers these actions, which include military aggression as well as various forms of coercion designed to subordinate the rights inherent in Ukraine's sovereignty to the Russian Federation's own interests, to have been unprovoked, and to be based on completely unfounded premises and pretexts;

13. Expresses unequivocal support for the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine as defined by the country's Constitution and within its internationally recognized borders;

14. Affirms the right of Ukraine and all participating States to belong, or not to belong, to international organizations, to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance, or to neutrality;

15. Views the 16 March 2014 referendum in Crimea as an illegitimate and illegal act, the results of which have no validity whatsoever;

16. Calls upon all participating States to refuse to recognize the forced annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation;

17. Also calls upon all participating States further to support and adhere to mutually agreed and fully justified international responses to this crisis;

18. Deplores the armed intervention by forces under the control of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, and the human rights violations that they continue to cause;

19. Calls on the Russian Federation to end its intervention in Ukraine and to bring itself into compliance with the Helsinki principles in its relations with Ukraine and with all other participating States;

20. Demands that the Russian Federation desist from its provocative military overflights of the Nordic-Baltic region, immediately withdraw its military forces from the borders of the Baltic States and cease its subversive activities within the ethnic Russian populations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania;

21. Supports continued efforts and initiatives of the OSCE to respond to this crisis, and calls on all OSCE states to provide both resources and political support and to allow the OSCE to work unhindered throughout Ukraine, including Crimea;

22. Urges the Russian Federation to contribute to regional stability and confidence, generally enhance security and co-operation by engaging its civil society and all political forces in a discussion leading to liberalization of its restrictive laws, policies and practices regarding freedom of the media, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly and association, and abide by its other commitments as a participating State of the OSCE;

23. Encourages Ukraine to remain committed to OSCE norms regarding the building of democratic institutions, adherence to the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens;

24. Exhorts the Russian Federation to fully utilize the expertise and assistance of the OSCE and its institutions, including the Parliamentary Assembly, to enact meaningful improvements in its electoral laws and practices;

25. Congratulates the people of Ukraine and commends the authorities of that country for successfully holding presidential elections on 25 May 2014 which were conducted largely in line with international commitments and characterized by a high voter

turnout despite a challenging political, economic and, in particular, security environment;

26. Expresses a continued willingness to provide the substantial assistance to Ukraine in these and other matters at this critical time.

Mr. WICKER. It may be that Senator HARKIN will want to touch on this issue also, but I think it is significant that we have such great leadership in both bodies—in the Senate and in the House—with the OSCE, people who are willing to take the time to get to know our European neighbors at the parliamentary level and have that exchange there, people such as Congressman ROBERT ADERHOLT, who is a vice president of the Parliamentary Assembly and who has been very diligent, again, in traveling to some of these exotic locations that nobody perhaps envies; and Congressman CHRIS SMITH, a veteran House Member who speaks out so eloquently and so firmly not only for the rule of law and human rights internationally, but he has actually been recognized by the Parliamentary Assembly as a special representative on the issue of human rights and trafficking. I commend our colleague from the House of Representatives Chairman SMITH for his leadership in getting passed a resolution condemning the trafficking of minors internationally and getting the Parliamentary Assembly to make a strong statement on the record on this very serious problem that faces, not only us here domestically, but also on the international front.

Mr. CARDIN. Will my colleague yield on that point.

Mr. WICKER. Indeed.

Mr. CARDIN. I appreciate the Senator mentioning Congressman SMITH's resolution on child sex trafficking. That was a separate resolution that was approved by the parliamentary assembly. The Helsinki Commission has been in the forefront on trafficking issues. The Trafficking in Persons Report that is prepared annually is used by the State Department and is known globally as the document on evaluating how States have proceeded on trafficking issues.

The work started in the parliamentary assembly of the OSCE, to the leadership of our commission and Congressman SMITH who has been our champion. It led to the passage of legislation in 2000 that had the Trafficking in Persons Report and followed up with this year's parliamentary assembly on child sex trafficking. I do congratulate Chairman SMITH and our delegation for continuing the sensitivity. The OSCE now has a special representative in trafficking. So you do provide technical assistance in each of our participating States to deal with the trafficking issue.

I wanted to point out that we do a lot of our work in the three committees, and one of those committees is where Senator HARKIN was extremely valuable in pointing out that the original document prepared by the committee did not mention the very important human rights concerns of people with disabilities. There is no stronger voice in the Senate than Senator HARKIN with regard to the rights of people with disabilities. I must tell you, I heard from many of my colleagues in the parliamentary assembly how honored they were that Senator HARKIN was in that room to bring this issue to the attention of the parliamentary assembly, to give it its proper attention, and the matters he brought forward were overwhelmingly adopted at the parliamentary assembly.

If I might yield for Senator HARKIN to talk a little bit about the work he did in that group.

Mr. HARKIN. First, I want to thank my colleagues Senators CARDIN and WICKER for their leadership in the OSCE.

I was honored to join my colleagues Senator CARDIN and Senator WICKER last week at the 23rd annual session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, in Baku, Azerbaijan. It's important that Members of Congress uphold our shared interests and responsibilities in this vital organization, whose mission is to address issues of national and regional security, to promote mutual economic prosperity, and to improve the lives of citizens in all OSCE member States, especially through promotion of human rights.

I was proud to be part of the eight-member delegation from the United States led by Senator CARDIN, who is Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, our lead entity for participation in the OSCE. I congratulate Chairman CARDIN and the U.S. Commission's co-chairman, Representative CHRIS SMITH, on their accomplishments in advancing security and human rights last week. Chairman CARDIN was able to pass a needed resolution holding Russia accountable for violating OSCE principles and its own international commitments through its destabilizing actions in Ukraine. And Representative SMITH achieved passage of a key measure at the Assembly to help combat child sex trafficking.

As my colleagues have stated, the OSCE and thus also the U.S. Helsinki Commission were formed to ensure there is long-term security for the Europe and its allies and to promote cooperation among member States. Part of that cooperation is to foster economic development and growth, and it was within this area of cooperation that I sought to direct my efforts last week as a U.S. delegation member.

The Assembly's Second Committee, the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, is charged with promoting activities that will enhance the economic development of member States. It was there that I was able to offer three amendments to this year's committee resolution focusing on individuals with disabilities.

I am grateful that all three amendments were adopted. The economic health of all nations is tied to equal opportunity and equal protection for all citizens.

Our own Americans with Disabilities Act recognizes the importance of opportunity and access in daily life for all citizens, particularly those with disabilities. Without access, without equal opportunity, people with disabilities are relegated to poverty and second class citizenship.

My amendments to the Second Committee resolution called for three things: ensuring equal opportunity and access for all persons with disabilities in daily activities of all member states; the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by all OSCE members; and the prohibition of discrimination against people with disabilities in employment and the workplace.

As I mentioned, I am happy that these amendments could pass with overwhelming support and were added to the final resolution of the Second Committee. They were then subsequently adopted by the full Parliamentary Assembly as part of what will now be known as the ''Baku Declaration.''

I thank our leader Senator CARDIN for inviting me to this important meeting and allowing me the opportunity to offer these amendments which focus on the issue of equal opportunity for people with disabilities in the member States and across the globe.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I congratulate my colleague from Iowa, a senior Member of this body, someone who is respected around the globe for being willing to meet fellow parliamentarians and to successfully put forward language that was adopted by consensus.

If I could mention a couple of other matters that pertain to this trip, First of all, it is interesting that the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, would be the host of this parliamentary assembly.

Azerbaijan is an important ally of the United States. I think it is important for Americans and for Members to know that their neighbor to the north is Russia and their neighbor to the south is Iran. This is a very tough neighborhood that our ally exists in. Yet they are oriented to the West. They are oriented to the United States. They want to be allies of ours. They were steadfast friends of ours in Afghanistan and have been during the entire time we have been there. They are steadfast allies of the Nation of Israel. Again, I think for a majority Muslim State such as Azerbaijan to take that stand in a troubling neighborhood speaks well of them. There are steps we wish they would take further toward transparency and openness and the rule of law, and maybe their elections weren't all we hoped for in the past, but they are an ally that continues to make progress. So I salute our host nation.

I think it should also be said, and I will yield to Senator CARDIN on this point, that we stopped back by Chisinau, Moldova, on our way back from Baku, a member of the OSCE, a nation that is also in a troubling neighborhood that feels the breath of Moscow breathing down their collars and the threats by people from the Russian Federation who would like to exert undue influence on that great little nation.

It happened that we were there on the day the Moldovan Parliament ratified the agreement associating Moldova with the European Union. This was a wonderful day for the friends of freedom and the European-oriented citizens of Moldova. It was great to see the young people walking through the city with the flag and hear Beethoven's Ode to Joy, the European anthem, as it were, and to be there for this very significant, pivotal day in the history of Moldova and to say we will continue to stand with the great people of that country. I know Senator CARDIN was thinking of those things when he scheduled that stop.

Mr. CARDIN. First, the Senator was able to meet with the President of Azerbaijan. We thank him for that. He was able to adjust his calendar to do that and we appreciate it because it was very important to hear the message the Senator gave on the floor of the Senate.

Azerbaijan is an important ally to the United States. They have issues they need to deal with on human rights. We were clear about that. We met with the NGO community while we were there. But I think the Senator's leadership and the way the Senator balanced that presentation was very important.

There is also the energy issue with Azerbaijan that is very important to us in that region as an energy source for Europe. It is an important, strategic country.

And, yes, they do have issues on human rights. We did meet with the NGOs and we will continue to voice those concerns.

I am glad the Senator from Mississippi mentioned Chisinau and Moldova. We also on the way visited Georgia, and Georgia and Moldova have some common interests: They are both moving toward Europe with the association agreements. They recognize their economic and political future is with Europe and they both have Russian troops in their country, and they are both very much concerned about what is happening in Ukraine. We got tremendous interest about what we did in Baku on taking on the Russians directly about their violations of the OSCE principles in their activities in Ukraine. Moldova, as you know, is in the Transnistria area which borders the Ukraine. There are Russian troops there, and the independence of Moldova is very much impacted by Russia's presence in Transnistria. Even though there is no border between Moldova and Russia, they still have that real threat that Russia could use its force to try to dictate policy in Moldova. And Georgia, of course, with the territories being controlled by the Russians—you saw what happened there, the bloodshed—is a country that is very much concerned about being able to control their own destiny. They want to be independent and they don't want to be dominated by Russia's intimidation. I think our presence in both of those countries was a clear signal that the United States stands for an independent Georgia and an independent Moldova. We want them to make their own decisions. We believe their future is clearly with integration into Europe. They believe their future is with integration into Europe and we will continue to be very supportive of those activities.

I have one more comment in regard to our work in Baku. There were a lot of issues that were taken up through declaration. For example, our delegation brought forward a resolution on the 10th anniversary of the Berlin conference dealing with antisemitism. Congressman SMITH and myself were both involved in the original Berlin issues.

My colleague has already put into the RECORD the resolution concerning Russia and Ukraine.

I must tell you I was so proud of my participation in this forum. I think the United States learned a lot more about the OSCE during the Ukraine crisis when they saw it was the OSCE mission that was on the ground giving us independent information about what was happening in Ukraine, the importance of our participation, and what Senator WICKER said in the beginning, our work here knows no political boundaries. This is not a partisan effort. It has been Democrats and Republicans working over the last 40 years to use the Helsinki principles to advance good governance, economic opportunity, and human rights throughout not just the OSCE countries but globally.

It has been a real pleasure to work with Senator WICKER on these issues and I thank him for his dedication and leadership. There has been no stronger voice on the floor of the Senate in regard to human rights issues. I have been on the floor listening to Senator WICKER as he talked about individual cases of human rights violations in Russia and other countries. He speaks his mind on these issues and I am proud to be associated with him on the Helsinki Commission.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I will let Senator CARDIN have the last word on this matter, and I see there are others who want to speak on other issues. Let me emphasize to everyone within the sound of our voices that diplomacy and foreign policy are carried out not only through the executive branch, the State Department, the other good offices that we have in the executive branch. Foreign policy is alive and well through the participation of Members of the House and Senate, the parliamentary assembly, and in the OSCE. It is important we keep our role there.

My hat is off to the leaders of this Congress—House and Senate—who have, over the years, been willing to exercise leadership and to earn credibility in the OSCE. I am proud to have stood with them this year in this delegation. I believe we came back with a better understanding.

I appreciate the role of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in covering our participation there and getting that out to the rest of the world.

I am proud to have stood with this delegation—eight Members from the House and Senate, senior Members and relatively new ones. We stood for the principles of the rule of law and transparency and democracy among our allies in Europe and Eurasia.

I yield for my friend.

Mr. CARDIN. I wish to be identified with Senator WICKER's comments, and again I thank all the participants, the eight Members who took their time to participate on behalf of the United States.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, I rise to pay tribute to a few Hoosier leaders who played important roles in the passing of this landmark legislation.

The story of the Civil Rights Act can be told through the leadership and vision of a long list of extraordinary Hoosiers, including many in the Indiana congressional delegation who supported the bill regardless of party. Yet to truly understand the Indiana leadership behind the Civil Rights Act, we need to start back home.

During World War II, Rev. Andrew Brown vowed to dedicate himself to social justice while in a hospital bed after being told by a doctor that one of his legs would need to be amputated. Brown promised God that if his leg was saved, he would spend the rest of his life fighting for justice for all people.

Later, recalling this moment during an interview, Brown said:

> That's the miracle in my life. That's the commitment that I made. . . . I'll keep fighting until I fall, because that's what I told God I would do.

Brown did just that. He went on to fight for civil rights as a young pastor at St. John's Missionary Baptist Church in Indianapolis in the 1950s and 1960s. Brown organized African Americans to show voting strength in 1963. He was the founder of the Indiana Black Expo, started Operation Breadbasket—a radio show devoted to promoting economic and social justice—and served as the president of the Indiana chapter of the NAACP.

He marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Selma, AL, in 1965. He welcomed King directly into his home during trips to Indianapolis. He worked closely with Martin Luther King, Jr., on the national civil rights movement, and he was at the home of Dr. King's parents on the night of Dr. King's tragic assassination in April 1968.

Another renowned, homegrown Indiana leader was Willard Ransom. They are all featured here. After graduating from Harvard Law School as the only African-American member of his class, he was drafted into the military during World War II. While serving, Ransom spent much of his time in Alabama, where he was distraught by the discriminatory manner in which fellow Americans were being treated.

Resolving to see these practices come to an end, Ransom returned to his home community of Indianapolis, where he quickly became a leader in the fight for greater civil rights. He spoke against housing discrimination and school segregation. He played a role in drafting civil rights bills before the State legislature. He served as the State President of the NAACP five times, and he was the first African American to run for Congress in Marion County.

Henry Johnson Richardson, Jr., moved to Indianapolis from Alabama to attend Shortridge High School and went on to attend law school at Indiana University in Indianapolis. Richardson became a judge in Marion County and then a State representative during the struggle for civil rights.

He actively fought to desegregate schools and university housing and helped change the State Constitution to allow African Americans to serve in the Indiana National Guard.

These men brought together Hoosiers from every corner of the State, every socioeconomic class, race, and religion to further their efforts. They knew if we wanted to improve together, we have to work together.

In 1959 University of Notre Dame president Father Theodore Hesburgh and his fellow members of the Civil Rights Commission found themselves in Shreveport, LA, while conducting hearings across the country on voting rights. Noticing the Commission was uncomfortable in the heat of the Shreveport Air Force Base, Father Hesburgh made arrangements for the Commission to move their work to Notre Dame's research facility in the Presiding Officer's home State of Land O'Lakes, WI.

While the Commissioners relaxed and enjoyed the flight to their new location, Father Hesburgh reportedly sat in the back of the plane drafting resolutions that would come to make up the core of the Commission's report.

After an evening of fishing together in Land O'Lakes, WI, Father Hesburgh strategically presented the Commission with his 14 resolutions, 13 of which were approved unanimously.

After learning of how Father Hesburgh brought the potentially divided Commission together, President Eisenhower remarked, ''We have to put more fishermen on commissions and have more reports written at Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin.''

Congress would later go on to enact approximately 70 percent of the Commission's recommendations, including the recommendations in legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Father Hesburgh knew that if we want to improve together, we have to work together.

A like-minded Indiana leader serving in the Senate in 1964 was Senator Birch Bayh, who was also the father of Evan.

On June 19, 1964, exactly 1 year after President John Kennedy submitted the Civil Rights Act to Congress, Senator Bayh helped the Senate pass the most important and sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction.

The clerk announced the bill passed 73 to 27 at 7:40 p.m. According to a copy of a draft press release amongst Bayh's papers at Indiana University, Senator Bayh stated:

> Reason replaced emotion. Respect for another's view replaced blind refusal to hear a differing opinion . . . and when this bill is signed into law, we shall have established the basis for fulfillment of Thomas Jefferson's hope for a nation in which all of the people are treated equally under the law.

Indiana's other Senator, Vance Hartke, also helped to pass the Civil Rights Act out of the Senate on the evening of June 19, 1964. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote Senator Hartke after the vote, saying:

> The devotees of civil rights in this country and freedom loving people the world over are greatly indebted to you for your support in passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I add to theirs my sincere and heartfelt gratitude.

Senators Bayh and Hartke brought to the Senate a belief that if we want to improve together, we have to work together.

Another Hoosier who stepped up to help shepherd through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was then-minority leader of the House, Congressman Charles Halleck, from Rensselaer, IN.

While working to move civil rights legislation forward, President Kennedy and leaders in the House went to Minority Leader Halleck to ask for his help to get the bill through the Judiciary Committee. Congressman Halleck, despite having a small percentage of African-American constituents and despite receiving some criticism, agreed to help.

When the Civil Rights Act came to the Judiciary Committee, some committee members took issue with several of its provisions. After working with other committee members to take out some of the controversial provisions in the bill, Congressman Halleck and others went to work to convince their colleagues to support a more moderate version of the bill.

In the end, the bill passed the committee with bipartisan support. No one got 100 percent of what they wanted, but thanks to Congressman Halleck, the Judiciary Committee was able to move forward a strong bill of which both Republicans and Democrats could be proud.

In private conversations shortly thereafter, Congressman Halleck admitted that his vocal support for the Civil Rights Act was endangering his position as House minority leader. He said he would likely lose his position after the next elections because of his support, and he was right.

Despite the personal cost and consequences, Congressman Halleck's work to bring Republicans together with Democrats to support the Civil Rights Act was key to its success. He showed if we want to improve together, we have to work together.

On August 28, 1963, another Indiana Congressman stood behind Martin Luther King, Jr., on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and bore witness to a speech that would change the arc of American history. John Brademas came from Mishawaka, IN, and grew up hearing stories of the KKK boycotting his father's restaurant simply because he was Greek Orthodox.

These stories, coupled with John's progressive Methodist faith, instilled in him a deep sense of social justice that guided him throughout his career in public service. Congressman Brademas became an instrumental supporter of civil rights during his 22 years in Congress.

After witnessing Dr. King's ''I Have a Dream'' speech, Congressman Brademas welcomed King to speak in Indiana's Third District. Years later, Coretta Scott King remembered his work and helped campaign for Brademas' last bid for reelection.

A pioneer in Federal education policy, Congressman Brademas worked hard to both integrate schools and increase their funding across the entire country.

Minority Leader Halleck and Congressman Brademas were not alone in supporting the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Indiana U.S. Congress Members Madden, Adair, Roush, Roudebush, Bray, Denton, Harvey, and Bruce all supported the Civil Rights Act to help it pass the House with bipartisan support on July 2, 1964. They knew that if we want to improve together, we have to work together.

The list of Hoosiers involved in fighting for civil rights is long, and we should not forget the everyday Hoosiers, the men and women who did their part in their daily lives to broaden opportunities for all Americans. We may never read their names in history books or know what the United States would be like if they had not done what they did, but what we do know is they understood that if we truly want to improve our country, to strengthen who we are as a people, we have to all work together.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 would not have passed without leaders who were willing to set aside their differences and work together. No one got everything they wanted, but America got what was so crucially needed. Our

country took a monumental leap forward.

This 50th anniversary is a powerful reminder that if we truly want to improve our country, we have to work together.

I am honored to follow in the footsteps of these and many more great Hoosiers who fought for civil rights. I am humbled to have the chance to talk about them today.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT

Mrs. HAGAN. Madam President, it is with great pride that I rise to speak about the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014.

Before proceeding, I wish to thank Senator MURKOWSKI for being a true partner in developing and building support for the sportsmen's package. I am proud to say that by working together, the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act is cosponsored by 18 Democrats, 26 Republicans, and 1 Independent. It is endorsed by a very diverse group of more than 40 different stakeholders.

When I became cochair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus in early 2013, I was committed to advancing bipartisan legislation that would benefit our hunters, our anglers, and our outdoor recreation enthusiasts in North Carolina and around the country. Taken together, I believe the 12 bills included in this bipartisan act accomplish that objective and do so in a fiscally responsible manner. This package does not add a dime to our deficit. It actually raises $5 million over the next 10 years for deficit reduction.

Outdoor recreation activities are part of the fabric of North Carolina. From the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the West to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore in the East, North Carolinians are passionate about the outdoors—me included. Hunting, fishing, and hiking are a way of life, and many of these traditions have been handed down through my own family.

According to a recent report, 1.4 million sports men and women call my State home, and that is nearly 20 percent of the State's entire population. In 2011 a total of 1.6 million people hunted or fished in North Carolina. To put that in perspective, that is roughly the same amount of people who live in the Raleigh and Durham metropolitan areas.

Nationwide, over 37 million people participate in these activities. That is the equivalent of the population of the State of California. While many of these men and women live in our rural areas, they are just as likely to hail from some of our much more urban areas.

To ensure that future generations have an opportunity to enjoy our great outdoors as we do today, this act, the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014, reauthorizes several landmark conservation programs. For example, the package includes legislation to reauthorize NAWCA, which is our North American Wetlands Conservation Act. This voluntary initiative provides matching grants to organizations, States and local governments, and to private landowners to restore wetlands that are critical to our migratory birds. These partnerships actually generate $3 in non-Federal contributions for every dollar of Federal NAWCA funds, and they have actually preserved more than 27 million acres of habitat over the last two decades.

The benefits of this program to outdoor recreation enthusiasts nationwide cannot be overstated. The abundance of migratory birds, fish, and mammals supported by these wetlands translates into multibillion-dollar activities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. In North Carolina, NAWCA has advanced numerous projects to improve waterfowl habitats and to enable the acquisition of thousands of acres of land used for increasing public opportunities for activities of hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-associated recreation.

Here is a photo of the Cape Fear Arch region. As part of the Southeastern North Carolina Wetlands Initiative, the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust, Ducks Unlimited, the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission, and the Nature Conservancy received a $1 million NAWCA grant to protect wetlands and associated uplands in this Cape Fear Arch region. The Federal grant then is matched by close to $3 million in non-Federal funding.

The Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act also includes legislation sponsored by Senators HEINRICH and HELLER that reauthorizes the FLTFA, which is the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, which enables the Bureau of Land Management to sell public land to private owners, counties, and others for ranching, community development, and other projects. This ''land-for-land'' approach has created jobs and generated funding for the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service to help those entities acquire critical inholdings of land from willing sellers. This takes place in 11 Western States as well as Alaska.

Our sportsmen's package also contains Senator WICKER's bipartisan bill that will enable hunters in all States to purchase duck stamps electronically. Currently, eight States are now participating in a private program that enables the issuance of e-duck stamps. Since that program began, hunters in those eight States have actually purchased 3.5 million electronic duck stamps.

I can personally vouch for the benefits of enabling hunters in all States to actually purchase duck stamps online. There have been occasions when members of my own family were unable to take a visitor hunting because we couldn't find a physical stamp. Let me give an example. Our son-in-law came to visit last year. My husband had planned to take him duck hunting. Unfortunately, three different places my husband visited were out of duck stamps. So now when my husband buys his duck stamps for the season, he purchases two or three extra just in case a family member or a visitor decides to go hunting with him.

Enabling all hunters to purchase these duck stamps online will not cost taxpayers any money, and it will help preserve additional wildlife habitat across the country because a portion of the proceeds of duck stamps goes to protecting the habitat.

Another bipartisan bill in this package reauthorizes the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, NFWF. This poster actually shows the number of different habitats that are included in the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. For example, in Florida right now there are 658 different preserves and projects.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is a nonprofit that preserves and restores native wildlife species and habitats. Since its inception, NFWF has awarded over 11,600 grants to more than 4,000 different organizations nationwide. Funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation consistently generates $3 in non-Federal funds for every $1 in Federal funds.

One priority that NFWF is currently working on is designed to introduce America's youth to careers in conservation. In addition to employing youth, NFWF is also exploring ways to expand conservation employment opportunities for our Nation's veterans.

Our package also includes regulatory reforms and enhancements that will benefit sports men and women across the country. Another example is bipartisan legislation that was introduced by Senator MARK UDALL of Colorado. His bill is included, and it will enable States to allocate a greater portion of the Federal Pittman-Robertson funding to create and maintain shooting ranges on public lands. There is currently a shortage of public shooting ranges across the country. In North Carolina, a principal impediment to target range development is the initial cost of acquiring the land and then constructing the facility. By reducing the non-Federal match requirement from 25 percent currently to 10 percent and then allowing the States to access funds over a greater period of time, this legislation will enable the States to move forward with new public ranges.

The Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act will also help improve access for hunting and fishing and wildlife viewing on public lands. Right now nearly half of all the hunters conduct a portion of their hunting activity on public lands, and a lack of access to these public lands is cited as a primary reason people stop participating in these traditional activities; they just can't get

there. The Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act would require that at least 1.5 percent, or $10 million, of annual Land and Water Conservation Fund money be used to improve access to our public lands.

The State of North Carolina is home to four national forests that comprise 1.25 million acres. Our outdoor recreation enthusiasts regularly have problems with actually getting access to this gorgeous place depicted here, which is the Pisgah National Forest. I probably spend more time backpacking in this forest than any other one. This legislation will help dedicate funding to expanding the access here and on public lands across the country.

Outdoor recreation activities are not only engrained in North Carolinians' way of life, they are also huge economic drivers in my State and in States across the country. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has found that hunting, fishing, and wildlife-related recreation activities contribute $3.3 billion annually to North Carolina's economy. Nationwide, the same report found that 90 million Americans participate in this wildlife-related recreation, resulting in close to $145 billion in annual spending. That is shown on this chart, the actual economic impact for wildlife-related recreation. In 2011 sports men and women spent a total of about $34 billion on hunting, which is depicted on the chart, $41 billion on fishing, and $56 billion on wildlife watching. The biggest amount of money spent while enjoying the outdoors is on wildlife watching. An extra $14 billion is spent on other activities.

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, all of these activities support over 192,000 jobs just in North Carolina and a total of 6.1 million across the country. So this really does have a huge economic impact across our Nation.

I often say I don't care if an idea is a Democratic idea or a Republican idea, only that it is a good idea, and I will put work behind that. I believe this bill embodies that spirit.

The Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014 is a balanced, bipartisan plan that is endorsed by more than 40 stakeholders, from Ducks Unlimited to the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and it is fiscally responsible. I urge my colleagues to approve this legislation for the benefit of our economy and the more than 90 million sports men and women across the country.

Thank you, Madam President. I 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. MCCAIN. 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. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to address the Senate as in morning business and engage in a colloquy with the Senator from Arizona and the two Senators from the State of Texas, Mr. CORNYN and Mr. CRUZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, as my colleagues know and the Senator from Texas and the Senator from Arizona both understand, we are facing a crisis on our border. It has been changed now to a ''situation.'' I understand that it is no longer a crisis but a situation, according to the White House.

The Senator from Texas has been to the border. I have been to our border. We have seen this veritable flood of young people who have come to our country under the belief that they will be able to stay.

The real human tragedy here of many, as my colleague from Texas and my friend from Arizona know, is that the trip from Central America to the Texas border, which is the closest place of arrival, is a horrible experience for these young people. Young women are routinely violated. Young men are mistreated. It is a terrible experience for them. Those who are for ''open borders,'' those who think this is somehow acceptable ignore the fact that this is a human rights issue of these young people who are enticed to come to our country under false circumstances and suffer unspeakable indignities and even death along the way.

The President of the United States, who initially stated that they would—and I would quote him—he said that we had to stop this and initially said that we needed to reverse the legislation that has encouraged the people to come here. I quote him:

> Kids all over the world have it tough, he said. Even children in America who live in dangerous neighborhoods. . . . He told the groups [that he was addressing that] he had to enforce the law—even if that meant deporting hard cases with minors involved. Sometimes, there is an inherent injustice in where you are born, and no president can solve that, Obama said. But presidents must send the message that you can't just show up on the border, plead for asylum or refugee status, and hope to get it.
>
> Then anyone can come in, and it means that, effectively, we don't have any kind of system, Obama said. We are a Nation with borders that must be enforced.

Unfortunately, the proposal—and I would ask my friend from Texas—that has come over for $3.7 billion has nothing to do with dispelling the idea and the belief in the Central American countries that they can come here and if they get to our border they can stay. They cannot stay. They cannot stay. If they believe they are victims of persecution, they should go to our consulate, go to our embassy. But we cannot have this unlimited flow of individuals.

Finally—I will yield for my colleagues—what about people in other parts of the world? Do they not need this kind of relief? Are they not persecuted? What about the Middle East? What about Africa? This is selective morality that is being practiced here, I would say to my friend from Texas.

We want people to come to this country legally. We want them to come if they are persecuted. But we want an orderly fashion. Finally, could I just say and remind my friends that despite what may be said, the fact is—and the numbers indicate it—for young people these terrible coyotes are bringing them for thousands of dollars. The Los Angeles Times reports: In fiscal year 2013, 20,805 unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras were apprehended by the Border Patrol and only 1,669 were repatriated.

I ask my friend from Texas: What kind of message does that send?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to the distinguished senior Senator from Arizona that the administration has been sending mixed messages. First they called this a humanitarian crisis. Then they called it—I think the Senator said—a ''situation.'' They are sort of walking this back. But I just wanted to remind my colleagues from Arizona of what the President said a few years ago in El Paso when people said we needed better border security measures in place.

He ridiculed people. The Senators may remember this. He said—this is the President talking in El Paso in May 2011—he said:

> You know, they said we needed to triple the Border Patrol. Now they are going to say we need to quadruple the Border Patrol, or they will want a higher fence, or maybe they will need a moat, or maybe they want alligators in the moat. They will never be satisfied. I understand that. That is politics.

But the truth is, the measures we put in place are getting results. The truth is, they are not getting the kind of results the American people expect—nor these children who are being subjected to horrific conditions as they are smuggled from Central America up through Mexico to the United States. One of the most puzzling things to me—I see my colleague from Texas here. I know Governor Perry has implored the President to come visit the border.

Now he said: Well, I will invite the Governor to an immigration roundtable—where I doubt the Governor will get in a word because the President will probably just deliver another lecture. He is pretty good at that. But that is 500 miles from where the problem is. How can you have a humanitarian crisis, as the White House has called this, and not want to go see it for yourself? Maybe you will actually learn something.

I agree with the Senator from Arizona. In the bill the administration sent over, they stripped out all of the reforms that would actually go to solve the very problem we all know needs to be solved here and instead asked for a blank check.

Mr. MCCAIN. Could I ask the Senator a question? The first thing that needs

to be done is to amend the legislation which basically would then make every country treated the same way contiguous countries would be. That has to be the first step. Again and again, I think it is important to emphasize here that this is a humanitarian issue, but it is a humanitarian issue about these children who are taken—for how many days? Fifteen, twenty days on top of a train they are being taken and exploited by these terrible coyotes.

So should we not have a system where if someone deserves asylum in this country we could beef up our consulates, beef up our embassies, and have them come there and make their argument, and then be able to come to this country, I would argue?

Mr. CORNYN. The Senator is exactly right. What we need is a legal system of immigration, not an illegal system, because the people who control illegal immigration are the cartels and the coyotes the Senator mentioned earlier and the criminal gangs. By the way, they have discovered a new business model. They treat these children as commodities, and they hold them for ransom. They sexually assault the young women, as the Senator pointed out.

We do not know how many of these children start this perilous journey from Central America, some 1,200 miles away, and never make it to the United States because they simply die along the way. So this is a horrific situation.

I know both the Senators from Arizona might want to speak to this. The President has acknowledged that even under the Senate immigration bill that passed the Senate, none of these children would qualify. I would ask maybe the junior Senator from Arizona if he would care to comment.

How did this situation get created where even under the law that the President has advocated for, the Senate immigration bill, none of these children would be able to stay?

Mr. FLAKE. That is correct. The Senator from Texas is correct. Neither the President's deferred action program nor legislation passed by the Senate would allow people coming now to have some type of legal status. In the case of the President's DACA, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, you would have to have been here by 2007. Under the Senate legislation you would have to have been here by 2011 at a minimum. So it would not apply.

The problem here—the root of it or the main part of it—is that people coming from noncontiguous countries to the United States, meaning Central American countries like Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, are treated differently than kids who come from Mexico or Canada. In the case of kids coming—unaccompanied minors—from Mexico or Canada, the average is 3 days that we take care of them and then repatriate them or send them back.

Here in this case, partly because of the law we have under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, kids who come here need to be placed with a guardian or family. The President's proposal is asking nearly $2 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services, which has no role in border enforcement at all—none. It has no role in deportation or to repatriate these children back. It is simply to settle these children with families or guardians around the country.

I should note that HHS does no due diligence whatsoever to ensure that the people they are placing them with are here legally. So the net effect is, when a child goes to a legal guardian or a parent, it is very unlikely that they will then show up later for deportation hearings.

So, in effect, you are telling the cartels and the human smugglers and others: Keep doing what you are doing because it works. When those unaccompanied minors get here, they will be able to stay. They will be taken care of.

As Senator MCCAIN said, that is the least human thing we can do—to encourage parents and relatives in these countries to send their children or put them in the care of smugglers and others. If we want to stem the tide here, the way to stem the tide is to have parents and relatives in these countries seeing these children come back to these countries as we do to children in Mexico or Canada who come across the border.

So I thank the Senator from Arizona for arranging this colloquy. We have to take action.

Mr. CORNYN. If I may, the junior Senator from Texas had visited Lackland Air Force Base recently and observed some of these 1,200—if I am not mistaken—children who are being essentially warehoused because we do not have any other place to put them. If he might comment on what we are going to do if the numbers continue to grow at the level they are growing now. I know in 2011 there were about 6,000 unaccompanied minors detained at the southwestern border.

This year since October, it is somewhere in the 50,000 range. If that number continues to escalate, where are we going to put all of these kids?

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend the senior Senator from Texas. I am honored to stand here with the senior Senator from Texas and the Senators from Arizona as we speak out together against the humanitarian crisis that is unfolding on our border.

President Obama today is down in the State of Texas. But, sadly, he is not visiting the border. He is not visiting the children who are suffering as a result of the failures of the Obama policies. Instead, he is doing fundraisers. He is visiting Democratic fat cats to collect checks. Apparently, there is no time to look at the disaster, at the devastation that is being caused by his policies.

Just a couple of weeks ago, as the Senator from Texas observed, I was down at Lackland Air Force Base where there are roughly 1,200 children being housed. There is one thing President Obama had said about what is happening that is absolutely correct. This is a humanitarian disaster. But it is a disaster of the President's own making. It is a disaster that is a direct consequence of President Obama's lawlessness. A quick review of the facts makes that abundantly apparent.

In 2011, just 3 years ago, there were roughly 6,000 unaccompanied children apprehended trying to cross illegally into this country. Then in 2012, in the summer of 2012, right before the election, President Obama illegally granted amnesty to some 800,000 people who were here illegally who had entered the country as children.

The direct, predictable, foreseeable consequence of granting that amnesty is the number of children—unaccompanied children—immediately began to skyrocket. This year, the estimates are that 90,000 unaccompanied children will enter this country illegally. That is up from 6,000 just 3 years ago—6,000 to 90,000. Next year the estimate is 145,000.

This explosion is the direct consequence of the President's lawlessness. It is worth underscoring. The people who are being hurt the most are these kids. The coyotes who are bringing them in are not well-meaning social workers trying to help out some kids. These are violent, hardened transnational criminal cartels. These mothers and fathers, sadly, are handing over their children to violent criminals who are physically abusing and who are sexually abusing small children.

When I was down at Lackland Air Force Base, a senior official there described to me how those cartels—with some of these children after they have taken them and after they have begun coming to this country to take them here illegally—would hold these children captive, hold them hostage to extract additional money from the families.

If the families did not send them additional money, as horrifying as it is, these drug cartels would begin severing body parts of these children. I listened to the senior official at Lackland describe how the cartels would put a gun to the back of the head of a little boy or little girl and force that child to cut off the fingers or the ears of another little boy or little girl. If they do not do so, they will shoot them and move to the next one.

So on our end, we are having children come to this country whom we are having to deal with who are maimed. They have been maimed by the brutality of these criminal cartels. Others of them have deep, deep psychological trauma from a child forced to do something so horrific. This is a tragedy that is playing out. It is happening in real time.

Now, the administration has suggested the cause of this is violence in Central America. I would suggest to my friends, the senior Senator from

Texas and the Senators from Arizona, that argument is a complete red herring. With violence in one country, you would expect to see the number of immigrants from that country to go up. But there is no reason unaccompanied children would go up. That is something unique and distinct.

There have always been countries across the world, sadly, that have been plagued by violence. When that happens, we have always seen an influx in immigrants, both legal and illegal, from those countries. What we are seeing here is particular, though. It is particularized towards children. The reason it is particularized towards children is because the President granted amnesty in a way that was particularized towards children.

If you want to understand just how false the administration's talking point is for the cause of what is happening, you need to look no further than a report which was prepared by our border security that Senator CORNYN and Senator FLAKE and I all saw in the Senate Judiciary Committee. A couple of weeks ago we had a hearing on this humanitarian crisis, and a whistleblower at the Border Patrol handed over this confidential document to a number of Senators on the Judiciary Committee.

It described how the Border Patrol interviewed over 200 people who have come here illegally—adults and children—and asked them a simple question: Why did you come? Ninety five percent said: We came because we believe if we get here we will get amnesty. We believe we will get a permiso is what they said; that once they get here, once a child gets here, that little boy, that little girl is scot-free. I would suggest to my friend, this is what amnesty looks like.

I would suggest to my friends this is what amnesty looks like. Amnesty looks like dangerous drug cartels entering this country wantonly. Amnesty looks like thousands of young children being housed in military bases. Amnesty looks like hundreds of immigrants who came here illegally being transported to cities and towns amid opposition from the citizens who lived there. Amnesty looks like a complete and utter disregard of our rule of law. Amnesty is unfolding before our very eyes.

I would suggest that the only response that will stop this humanitarian disaster is for President Obama to start enforcing the law, to stop promising amnesty, to stop refusing to enforce Federal immigration law, and, finally, to secure the borders. Indeed, I would call upon our colleagues in this body in both parties to come together and secure the border once and for all and to stop holding border security hostage for amnesty.

Mr. CORNYN. If I could ask a question, really, of all three.

I think we have described the catastrophe that continues to unfold and indeed grow. I know, speaking for myself—and I venture to say, I bet, for all four of us—we are actually interested in trying to solve this problem.

The President sent over an appropriations request that is essentially a blank check. The junior Senator from Arizona appropriately acknowledged that the majority of the money is for health and human resources to continue to warehouse these kids with no actual solution.

The Senator from Arizona said we need to change that 2008 law. I agree with that. We need to make sure the children are detained and then get whatever process they are entitled to, perhaps even appear before an immigration judge—that is something we should talk about—before they are repatriated.

But I want to ask the senior Senator from Arizona, because of his long distinguished service on the Armed Services Committee, I was troubled to read and hear some of the testimony of General Kelly, the head of Southern Command, who is the combatant commander for the world south of the Texas border, Mexico and into Central and South America—or actually I guess Mexico is Northern Command. But he said they sit and watch 75 percent of the cartel activity involving illegal drugs and they simply don't have the assets to do anything about it.

I asked him: Do you think trying to figure out how to adequately fund and resource Southern Command, how to get our U.S. military to perhaps work more closely with the Central American military forces and the Mexican military forces, is that part of the solution to this problem?

Mr. MCCAIN. I would say to my colleague, yes. Also, the commander of Southern Command believes there is an increasing inflow of people entering our country illegally who are not from Mexico or from Central America. They are from other countries around the world, and there is a real and imminent threat of people coming to the United States of America not just to get a job with a better life but to commit acts of terror. We are seeing increasing numbers.

I say to my friend from Texas, it is my understanding—tell me if I am correct—that now 82 percent of the people coming across the border illegally are other than Mexican, a majority from Central America but then China, India, Africa—from all over the world they are coming.

Mr. CORNYN. I would say to the Senator I have been in Brooks County near Falfurrias, TX, to see some of the rescue beacons they have there with some of the language written in Chinese. This is in Brooks County near Falfurrias, TX, where I guarantee nobody who lives there speaks Chinese—or not many people.

So the Senator's point is well taken. Out of the 414,000 people detained coming across the southwestern border last year, they came from 100 different countries. Most of them were from Mexico and Central America, but the Senator is exactly right; we have seen a huge influx from Central America up through Mexico, and that is the primary source today.

Mr. MCCAIN. I just mentioned, and we all know—and I certainly would like my friend from Arizona to comment on this—we have a proposal that came over from the President of the United States to spend some $3.7 billion. I think all of us are for finding a way to pay for it but agree with measures that need to be taken, such as beefing up our consulate and embassy capabilities, such as increasing the number of refugee visas for citizens of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala by 5,000 each next year, do what is necessary to try to address this from the humanitarian standpoint.

But the President of the United States failed, even though he had stated with the proposal that came over, there is not a request to amend the Trafficking Victims Prevention Act. In other words, we could be in an unending funding for treatment of people who came illegally unless we address the fundamental problem that is driving it.

I would ask my friend from Arizona—and, by the way, could I also point out that legislation he and I were part of and spent hundreds if not thousands of hours on called for 90-percent effective control of the border and 100-percent situational awareness, some $8 billion being spent. It was amended on the floor for an additional 20,000 Border Patrol, that a fundamental element of immigration reform, as we proposed it, was to get 90-percent effective control of the border, and, in addition to that, that we would have that funding come out of fees people would pay as they moved on a path to citizenship, not subject to appropriations.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator for making that point with regard to the legislation. We propose to truly put border security first, and I continue to hope the House will take that up.

But one of the points that has been made is we have to stem this humanitarian crisis in a way that will actually solve the problem, and that will be solved when parents and relatives in these countries realize that sending their children, unaccompanied minors, is futile, that they will spend a lot of money and it won't work.

There is a good example of how we can give effect to this from a couple of years ago. In 2005, the country of Mexico allowed Brazilians to come in on kind of a visa waiver-type program. What happened is a lot of Brazilian nationals came through Mexico and used it as a conduit to come into this country. So we had a huge number of so-called OTMs or other-than-Mexicans coming up, Brazilians, and we were doing what can best be described as catch and release. We would take them back across the border and let them go.

That wasn't solving the problem, so the Bush administration decided we

needed to solve this problem. The way to actually solve it is to detain these individuals and then send them home to Brazil. We did that. It was an operation called Texas Hold 'Em. After that operation, within 30 days, the number of Brazilians coming through Mexico into this country dropped by 50 percent; within 60 days, that number dropped by 90 percent.

So we can do this, but it needs to involve us changing the law with regard to trafficking, to allow us to treat children in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador the same way we treat children who come from Mexico or from Canada and allow us to repatriate and to take these children back. Once that happens, when we actually do that, then we have a chance to stem this tide. It is the best thing we could do on a humanitarian basis as well, to not have these children subject to the cartels and human smugglers who are preying on them right now.

Mr. CORNYN. I would ask the junior Senator from Texas, surely the President understands the facts as we have laid them out here, the problems with the 2008 law, really, the flaw in that law. They have created a business model out of it because they realized these immigrants who come across will not be detained, either the children or many adults, women traveling with minor children, because there are not adequate detention facilities.

I wonder if the Senator has an opinion why, if the President—surrounded as he is with some pretty smart policy people, people such as Secretary Jeh Johnson, the Secretary of Homeland Security, whom I have had a conversation with about this very topic—hasn't sent over a request to actually fix the problem, as opposed to continuing to warehouse people?

Mr. CRUZ. The senior Senator from Texas is exactly right that the President has effectively admitted he has no intention of stopping this problem. The supplemental request he has submitted, $3.7 billion, the majority of that goes to HHS's social services, providing care to these kids, rather than stopping and solving the problem.

The Senator and I have both spent a lot of time down on the border of Texas and all four of us have spent time down on the border of Texas or Arizona. The consistent answer from local leaders, from local law enforcement, from local elected officials about what is effective securing the border—the most consistent answer is boots on the ground; that if you want to effectively secure the border—boots on the ground, particularly combined with technology.

It is striking, out of $3.7 billion, a tiny percentage of that is directed toward boots on the ground. This is an HHS social services bill, and it is unfortunately a pattern we have seen with the Obama administration of bait-and-switch. They are calling this a border security bill. It is reminiscent of the 2009 stimulus, which we will all recall was sold to the American people. The 2009 stimulus was about building roads, infrastructure, and shovel-ready projects, all of which are good ideas. Then when over $800 billion was spent by the Obama administration, very little of it actually went to roads, infrastructure, or shovel-ready projects. Instead, it paid off liberal interest groups such as, in this case, the administration calls the $3.7 billion border security and yet almost none of the money goes to border security.

Indeed, I would note for all of the Democrats who are seeing this humanitarian crisis unfold, who are discovering suddenly the need for border security—and I would note my friend the senior Senator from New York stood on this floor as we were debating immigration last year and said: The border is secure today.

President Obama stood in El Paso in 2010 and said: The border is secure today.

I would note, for everyone who says now they are focused on border security that when the Senate Judiciary Committee was considering immigration reform, I introduced an amendment—the senior Senator from Texas supported it—that would have tripled our Border Patrol, that would have increased fourfold the fixed-wing assets, the technology that would have provided the tools to finally solve this problem, and every single Senate Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee voted against it. So we shouldn't be surprised the President's proposal that is labeled border security doesn't actually secure the border, doesn't do anything about the lawlessness or the amnesty, which means the Obama administration is effectively admitting they expect these children to continue coming—hundreds of thousands of them in years to come, hundreds of thousands of little boys and little girls being subjected to horrific physical abuse, sexual abuse, and they intend to do nothing to fix the problem, to stop it, to secure the borders, to uphold the law. That is heartbreaking, and that is not the responsibility of a Commander in Chief.

Mr. CORNYN. I would ask the senior Senator of Arizona, who is also a national well-known security expert but who also knows a little bit about this big world we live in, what is it we can do with some of the money slated to go to countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, and even Mexico?

Historically, we have had a successful partnership, for example, with the Colombian Government to help them build their capacity under Plan Colombia. Admittedly, that is a different scenario.

In Mexico we have the Merida Initiative, where we train and provide equipment to help build their police and law enforcement capability.

Are there things we ought to try to tie the money that goes to these countries to right now that would be productive programs and help solve the problem at its source?

Mr. McCAIN. Absolutely. And I think, as we mentioned earlier, beefing up our embassy and consulate capabilities to hear these cases in the country of origin—particularly Central America—is very important.

I would also point out an article entitled ''Deportation data won't dispel rumors drawing migrant minors to U.S.'' It is a very interesting piece.

Organized crime groups in Central America have exploited the slow U.S. legal process and the compassion shown to children in apparent crisis, according to David Leopold, an immigration attorney in Cleveland.

He said smugglers, who may charge a family up to $12,000 to deliver a child to the border, often tell them exactly what to say to American officials.

''The cartels have figured out where the hole is,'' he said.

As it now stands, the 2008 law guarantees unaccompanied minors from those countries access to a federal asylum officer and a chance to tell a U.S. judge that they were victims of a crime or face abuse or sexual trafficking if they are sent home. If the claim is deemed credible, judges may grant a waiver from immediate deportation.

''Word of mouth gets back, and now people are calling and saying, 'This is what I said in court' '', said a senior U.S. law enforcement official, who was not authorized to speak on the record. ''Whether it is true or not, the perception is that they are successfully entering the United States. . . . That is what is driving up the landings.''

Of course, the numbers are staggering, as we have pointed out.

The President himself spoke in the Rose Garden last week.

Speaking in the Rose Garden last week, Obama said he was sending a ''clear message'' to parents in Central America not to send their children north in hopes of being allowed into America.

''The journey is unbelievably dangerous for these kids,'' Obama said. ''The children who are fortunate enough to survive it will be taken care of while they go through the legal process, but in most cases that process will lead to them being sent back home.''

Unfortunately, his statement is not backed up by the actual numbers. We are talking about one-tenth of these children actually being sent back, as they are being coached by these coyotes who are giving them the story to tell.

I wish to emphasize on the part of all of us on this side of the aisle and every American we represent that we have compassion for these people. We care about a humanitarian crisis. We care about these children. It is not a matter of fortressing America. We are all for legal immigration. We are from every part of the world. We will be portrayed by the open border people, very frankly, as those who want to stop these poor children from being able to come to our country. It is not that. We are trying to stop the human abuses, the terrible things being perpetrated on these children under the false pretenses—they should be false pretenses but now not so false—that they can come to this country and stay.

Mr. CORNYN. I think the senior Senator has accurately described how the cartels have figured out how to game the system.

Indeed, with all the advertising we do down in Central America saying ''don't come,'' as the junior Senator from Arizona indicated, as long as they get a call saying ''I made it'' and the cartels realize that for every migrant child they shuttle up through the smuggling corridors it is going to be another $5,000 or more in the bank, there is every incentive to continue.

But I ask the senior Senator and perhaps our other colleagues—the President has said that he has a pen and he has a phone, and he is going to do things without Congress. He said that because he is frustrated. I know we all have experienced a level of frustration during the immigration debates from time to time and over the years. But he says he is going to consider issuing another order relative to deportation policy, which strikes me as doubling down on his message that he is not going to enforce the law; he is going to try to circumvent the law and basically welcome more people here outside of legal avenues. So I ask my colleagues, doesn't that make things worse, not better?

Mr. MCCAIN. Well, the other aspect of this that makes things worse: Of course, the President on the one hand agrees with us that they can't stay. I don't know how many times I have quoted him here. But at the same time, as any objective observer would indicate, the proposal that came over for $3.7 billion has nothing that would dispel the incentive and the magnet creating this flood of young people whose trip we have been talking about, I ask my friend from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator. I have to run to a hearing, but I wish to say yes. I, Senator MCCAIN, Senator FEINSTEIN on the other side of the aisle, and many others—I think everyone here—signed a letter to the President asking him to make a clear statement that children coming now will be deported. He did so, and so did the Secretary of Homeland Security. Our State Department has relayed that message. And you can say that until you are blue in the face, but if the reality is that unaccompanied minors who get here are then placed with guardians or families around the country and we appropriate $1.8 billion to do so, then the message being sent is exactly the opposite of what the President is saying.

I think that is what we are all here today to say—that we have to not just say the right thing, we have to do the right thing. And the right thing is to change the law that allows the loophole for people to stay here indefinitely and send the message by actually sending children—as we do with unaccompanied minors from Mexico and Canada—back because that will send the message clearer than any words we could say to those tight-knit communities who hear by word of mouth. And nobody is going to pay another $5,000 or $6,000 or $7,000 to send a child through those dangerous conditions to the border if they know they are going to be returned home.

Mr. MCCAIN. If I could finally add that this proposal that came over for $3.8 billion—and I can only speak for myself, but unless there are provisions in that legislation which would bring an end to this humanitarian crisis, then I cannot support it. I cannot vote for a provision which will then just perpetuate an unacceptable humanitarian crisis that is taking place on our southern border. I don't know if my colleague would agree.

Mr. CRUZ. I would note that the confirmation and message of amnesty received by the parents entrusting their children to these drug dealers is the Border Patrol report, which said that 95 percent of those coming believe they would get a permiso. They believe they would be allowed to go scot-free. That is the message being heard. It is why these children are being subjected to violence.

A Lackland Air Force Base senior official described a young Hispanic child who is a quadriplegic, who is paralyzed from the neck down, and the drug cartels abandoned him on the Texas side of the Rio Grande. They found him lying by the river, on the other side of the river. That is the sort of care and consideration they are providing for these children. What is happening to these children is horrific.

We are a compassionate nation. We have always been a compassionate nation. But any policy that continues children being abused by violent drug cartels is the opposite of compassion.

So I ask two questions to my friend the senior Senator from Arizona.

This afternoon I had lunch with the attorney general of Texas, Greg Abbott, who described that the attorney general of Texas and the U.S. Attorney's Office have recently arrested an alleged terrorist in Texas with ties to ISIS—with ties to the radical Islamic terrorists who are right now wreaking havoc across Iraq and Syria.

The first question I would ask the senior Senator from Arizona is, how significant does he see the threat of terrorists crossing our porous border and targeting the homeland?

Then, of the $3.7 billion President Obama has requested in the supplemental bill, just $160 million is directed to Border Patrol agents and immigration judges—both. So less than 5 percent of the total actually goes to boots on the ground.

The second question I would ask of the senior Senator from Arizona is, in his judgment, is devoting less than 5 percent of the resources from this bill to boots on the ground a serious effort at securing the border and solving the problem?

Mr. MCCAIN. I would say to my colleague, the answer to the second question is obviously no. It is my understanding that if you break this legislation into individual illegal immigrant, it is like $80,000 per individual—a remarkable sum. I will be glad to be corrected for the record if that is not true.

But concerning the Senator's first question, about a month ago, for the first time in Syria, an American citizen blew himself up as a suicide bomber in Syria.

There are now thousands and thousands of Europeans—we believe there are as many as 100 U.S. citizens, although that number varies—who are fighting in Syria on behalf of the most radical terrorist organization: ISIS. These many hundreds of Europeans who are fighting there have—guess what. As European citizens of these countries in Europe, they have a visa. They can go to a European country, get on a plane tomorrow, and fly to the United States of America because they are a citizen of one of the European countries with which we have a visa-free agreement.

Our Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation have all said unequivocally that the events that are transpiring now in the largest, most wealthy, most influential, and largest center for terrorism, between Syria and Iraq, is breeding these people who have said they want to attack the United States of America.

Baghdadi, who is now the leader of ISIS, whom we saw on television apparently preaching at a mosque in Mosul the other day, despite the fact that there is $10 million on his head, when he left our prison camp Bucca in Iraq, he said: See you in New York. And I don't think he was joking.

So this also is clearly a national security issue over time as well, I say to my friend from Texas.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REFUGEES

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, we are here today to address a refugee crisis in America. I never thought I would have to use those words on the floor of the Senate, but there is no other way to describe what is happening on our southern border.

What is happening in Central America—the violence, the kidnappings, the failure of the rule of law—is the root cause of the problem and it is threatening tens of thousands of families and thousands and thousands of children. It is causing a refugee crisis that is simply unacceptable in America and unacceptable in our hemisphere. Let's be clear. It is being caused in large measure by thousands in Central America who believe it is better to run for their lives and risk dying than stay and die for sure. It is nearly a 2,000-mile journey from these countries to the U.S. border. These families are not undertaking this journey lightly.

My Republican colleagues make it sound as though parents are willingly choosing to risk their children's lives, send them on a 2,000-mile journey fraught with smugglers, thieves, child abductors, and sex traffickers as if that is a choice. They are parents, just as we are parents. I, as a parent, cannot imagine having to make that choice—to send them on a perilous journey with no guarantees of survival except out of an absolute fear for their lives if they stay. To politicize the decision to send a child away as opportunistic, as a way to take advantage of American law, is as cynical a position as I have ever heard.

First of all, there is no deferred action. Nothing we did for DREAMers in this country would help any of these people. They don't qualify under any elements of that provision. The immigration reform that passed here in the Senate by a broad bipartisan vote—68 votes—would not help any one of these people because they would have had to have been in the country by December 31, 2011. Nothing in that law is an attraction—nothing.

Yet the Republicans in the House of Representatives will not even take a vote on immigration reform. Frankly, my Republican friends cannot have it both ways. They cannot criticize the President—in fact, sue the President—for abusing his Executive authority and at the same time come to this floor and criticize him for a lack of leadership when they will not even cast a vote. That is nothing if not totally and transparently political.

This is not about a welcome mat. It is a desperate effort on the part of thousands of parents to do what parents instinctively do, and that is to do what you must do to protect your child from the threats of violence and death at home even if it means sending them away.

Let's be clear. First and foremost, violence and crime are a pandemic that has sadly become part of life in Central America—in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Honduras has the highest per capita murder rate in the world. El Salvador and Guatemala are in the top five in the world.

Second, more than 80 percent of the illicit drugs coming from South America to the United States travel through Central America. Drug traffickers and local gangs harass and extort local residents, and they are able to use their profits to corrupt the police, judicial system, and government institutions.

Third, the rates of poverty and inequality in these countries are sky high, while levels of economic growth and development lag far behind other countries in Latin America.

A recent report by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees found the majority of the minors they interviewed here in the United States had left their home country out of fear. The bottom line is we must attack this problem from a foreign policy perspective, from a refugee perspective, and from a national security perspective. We need to do all we can to stabilize the situation in Central America and stop the flow of children and refugees to our border.

After a full year of squandering every conceivable opportunity to pass commonsense immigration reform, Speaker BOEHNER has admitted his party has killed any prospects for reform. Now we have to deal with the political consequences of the Republican leadership's obstructionism.

I fully support the President's efforts to fix some of the most urgent problems facing our Nation's broken immigration system, and I look forward to seeing those families who are here and eligible receive relief from deportation as we continue to advocate for a permanent legislative solution.

In the meantime, we need to provide emergency funding to deal with this refugee crisis. To begin with, the President's supplemental appropriation request is a very tough pro-enforcement legislation.

By the way, as we talk about more money for enforcement, we are actually doing a good job in enforcement of the border. Why do I say that? Because the reason we know of the size of the refugee challenge we are facing is because we are interdicting and apprehending these people at the border and then putting them in detention facilities. It is not that the Border Patrol is not doing their job. They are doing their job.

Yet we have a supplemental request on the appropriations bill that includes $3.7 billion for enforcement, Homeland Security, and other resources. It provides critical funding to prosecute traffickers who are bringing these kids here, and that is what my Republican colleagues have been asking for.

Let's be clear. We need to keep the supplemental clean and free of riders and authorizing language. If we don't keep it clean, it will never get passed. One person will want to add an item to immigration reform, and then another person will want to add an item to immigration reform. The bottom line is this body already passed—with over 68 votes—comprehensive immigration reform. We don't need to have a debate on a bill we have already passed. We need to deal with the emergency.

I love it when my Republican friends scream for action. This is emergency funding, and it is as conservative as it gets, focused almost entirely on enforcement. The bill is giving Republicans what they have always asked for—more money for border enforcement, especially in the border States.

We need to provide the President with the money so he can handle the refugee crisis. It is what we expect of nations around the world. It is what we tell other nations around the world. The history of America is to treat refugees appropriately and according to international standards.

Some of these children and families are refugees and some of them are not. The children who have claims should be able to pursue those claims with a day in court under existing U.S. law. If they lose, they will be deported. We have a legal system to address the crisis. Let's use it, and let's give the President the resources he needs to enforce it.

The President's supplemental appropriations request, in my mind, is an essential beginning, but I hope the administration will consider the 20-point plan I laid out that deals, in part, and I think importantly, with the root causes. Because if we spend $3.7 billion for enforcement and spend what we have been spending, which is about $110 million among five countries in Central America to create citizen security so people don't flee in the first place, it seems to me we have this equation a little wrong. We are going to spend $3.7 billion to deal with the consequences, but we are going to spend $110 million to deal with the cause. If we don't deal with the cause, guess what. There will never be enough money, and there will always be a continuing challenge of refugees fleeing the violence in their countries.

I hope we will increase aid for citizen security directed to help them with our law enforcement entities, to deal with the security of their country, to deal with the drug traffickers, to deal with the gangs. I hope we will increase aid to be able to create a sense of security in neighborhoods so people don't flee the country; so it isn't likely that your mother or father will be killed in front of you or your brother will be killed or your sister will be raped, which is increasingly the stories heard from these individuals, and that we will do it while implementing humane reforms that don't put innocent children in harm's way.

South of our border, we are seeing unprecedented violence, unprecedented suffering, unprecedented abuse. This is far more than an immigration issue, it is a refugee issue, much as we have seen in other parts of the world, and we must stop it. It will not be easy. There are no easy answers and no easy fixes, but I, for one, believe we should muster all the outrage we can to come up with a short-term fix and a long-term solution, as well as a strategy that does the following:

First, we have to identify the root causes of this far-reaching refugee problem. Second, we have to put pressure on governments in the hemisphere that are not handling crime and violence in their Nations in a way that prevents families from sending their children across the border in the first place. Third, we need to combat the smuggling and trafficking rings in Central America. That is in our own national security interests. Fourth, we have to effectively deal with the situation at hand and meet the humanitarian needs of these children—and I mean children, 8 years old, 7 years old—no matter what it takes, without placing them in jail in the process.

Fifth, we have to deal with the overriding issues and basic causes from a foreign policy point of view. Then, we can deal with the join-or-die gang recruitment and the gang threats against children and their families in the hemisphere—in Honduras and in Guatemala. Six, we have to do all we can to combat international crime, working with our neighbors to end the violence, threats, and crime activity that is destabilizing the region. Seventh, we need to crack down hard on the explosion of gangs and smugglers forcing families apart and preying on young children.

I can tell my colleagues, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I am seeing day after day violence in so many countries spreading to so many countries, but I have never seen or thought I would see refugees from this hemisphere spilling over our borders. We need to act, and we have to deal with the immediate crisis at hand.

This is not just a challenge here. Asylum claims in the region, meaning to other countries in the Central American region, have skyrocketed by 700 percent in recent years. Current law protects the ability of those children under our system who apply for asylum and trafficking protection and other specialized forms of relief to have their day in court. Not every child will have a valid claim, and those who do not will ultimately be deported and reintegrated back to what is obviously a violent set of circumstances as it exists today, but that will be the case. But it is critically important that every child be given the chance to have due process under our existing law so we don't inadvertently return them to death and violence. There are better ways to deal with this population than through detention or expedited proceedings that don't undermine that due process.

I would like the administration to explore the use of alternatives to detention for families we want to monitor and make sure they show up at their court proceedings. This supplemental appropriations bill should also include the opportunity to make sure we look at those systems and that the representation of children in court is an adequate one.

While the short-term needs are very pressing, we must also not ignore the long-term importance of shoring up our regional security in Central America. Congress should increase funding for CARSI, the Central America Regional Security Initiative, to assist with narcotics interdiction, institutional capacity building, and violence prevention.

State and USAID must develop a long-term strategy that includes increased development budgets to support sustainable growth. The Millennium Challenge Corporation should accelerate engagement in the region. I also think the State Department should designate a high-level coordinator to establish an office to be the focal point for policy formulation and a response to humanitarian concerns facing children escaping this region. Lastly, State and USAID should work together to establish effective repatriation and reintegration programs for children who are returning to their home countries.

If we don't deal with the root causes, this is what is going to happen: We will expedite the process, we will deport, and when they go home and face the same violence we have done nothing to change, their option will still be the same, flee or die. And they will take the risk all over again, and we will have the challenge all over again.

There are no easy answers, but I truly believe, at the end of the day, immigration reform—which had very significant border protection provisions, very significant antitrafficking and smuggling of individuals—in terms of assistance to deal with those challenges, would have been and is still incredibly important.

Convincing our Republican colleagues in the House that if we continue to do nothing, then there will continue to be trouble on our borders and the refugee problem will only get worse seems to be a difficult proposition. The fact is the Senate-passed bill actually contains important border security measures. If it had been passed in the House 1 year ago when the Senate passed it and sent it over there, then maybe we would have preempted a good part of the challenge we have today. It contains antismuggling, antitrafficking measures. It contains provisions to address criminal activity. Yet the House Republican leadership cannot bring itself to marginalize the extreme rightwing and do what is right and just and fair.

The bottom line is that we have to attack this problem from a refugee perspective, a foreign policy perspective, and a national security perspective. We need to do all we can to maximize our effort to fight the criminals, increase development opportunities, and provide the type of economic statecraft that can provide relief. We have to give families a chance to fight back economically and politically against those who are causing the violence and the illicit trafficking, the gang and drug violence, and those running criminal networks in the region.

I am concerned and I am angry and it is time to fight back, but it is also time to deal with the crisis that is upon us, and we can only do that if we give the President the resources to meet the challenge. Failure to be willing to support the resources to do that will rest on those who cast a negative vote and, therefore, from my perspective, will risk the national security along the border of the United States, will risk the consequences of the humanitarian and refugee crisis that will continue to flow, and will risk the consequences of the drug traffickers in Central America, the gangs in Central America, all who use that as a route to come to the United States.

It is easy to say no. It is far more difficult to be constructive. So far what I have heard in response to this crisis is the negativity of no, the criticism of the President for using Executive powers when the Congress of the United States fails to act in its own right. You can't have it both ways. This is a moment to call for the greater interests of the Nation than to play partisan politics that I have seen so far.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the humanitarian situation on our southern border.

Over the last year, we have seen a flood of unaccompanied children come from Central American countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. In fact, the number of children has more than doubled in the past year to nearly 60,000. This is a humanitarian crisis, and it is heartbreaking.

Sadly, there are some who believe they have found a simple solution to this problem—that we can somehow just round up these young children and send them back on a plane where they came from immediately. I disagree.

The United States has always been a leader in providing aid and assistance to those in danger and in need. These are values our country and Congress have overwhelmingly endorsed. In fact, the current procedures for dealing with children from these countries were set in a 2008 law. The law was signed by President Bush and unanimously passed by both the House and the Senate. These procedures are in place because our values as a nation dictate that we do what we can to protect children from violence and trafficking.

It saddens me that there are some who have even called for changing this underlying protective law, presumably so we can just ship these children back to where they came from without the due process protections this law affords. Of the thousands of children showing up at our doorstep, many of whom were at risk in the hands of criminal smugglers during their trip, 40 percent of them are young girls. Many are under the age of 12 and have been sent on their own without the protection of their parents or other family. These children aren't coming here because of President Obama or Democrats or Republicans. They are coming to our border because of the terrible violence and conditions they face in their home countries. In fact, there is a direct correlation between growing violence in these home countries and the increasing waves of children coming to the United States.

For example, many face join-or-die gang recruitment situations which amount to forced conscription such as we saw with the child soldiers in other countries. They are subjected to sexual violence and brutality. It is hard for someone from our country to imagine how severe this violence is, but data from the United Nations offers some perspective.

The U.N. estimates that the murder rate in Honduras in 2012 was 30 percent

higher than U.N. estimates of the civilian casualty rate at the height of the Iraq war. That is a staggering level of violence for any nation to endure. We all agree the current situation is unsustainable and needs to be addressed, but simply sending children back into harm's way is not the answer. We should be working together to address the root causes that are pushing these children to make these dangerous journeys.

I am proud to have worked with my colleague Senator MENENDEZ, from whom we just heard, to introduce a comprehensive plan to address this issue. That plan is a bit more complicated than simply rounding up children and shipping them out, but it is clear this crisis requires action on several fronts.

First, we should continue to crack down on human smuggling and criminal activity in concert with the children's home countries. Second, we have to honor our domestic and legal requirements related to the treatment of children, refugees, and asylum seekers. This means supporting the administration's efforts to provide humane treatment to these children. Third, we have to redouble our efforts to support peace, economic growth, and social development in Central America.

I look forward to discussing more of the details of our plan with any of my colleagues who want to work together constructively to solve this problem. Only by focusing on addressing the root cause of this crisis can we truly address it.

The President has been managing a coordinated response to handle this very difficult, heartbreaking situation. I hope we can work together to provide adequate resources to professionals on the ground. We must also continue pressing for comprehensive immigration reform so our system will not be so overwhelmed in times such as these.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, as you do now, I recently had the honor of presiding over this Chamber and had the opportunity in the hour I just finished presiding to listen to our colleagues as they have come to this floor, as you just have, Madam President, to speak to the humanitarian crisis unfolding on the southern border of our country. And sadly—I think truly sadly—I have listened to a whole series of our Republican colleagues use this opportunity to line up on the floor and to whale upon our President and claim that this humanitarian crisis is his fault, that it is solely the fault of the President that there are tens of thousands of children coming to the American border unaccompanied, seeking refuge in this country, that it is solely his fault. It is tough to even know where to begin in responding to these suggestions, but let me try. Let me start from my perspective as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

It is important first to remember that this is no ordinary issue of border security or of immigration enforcement. This is a humanitarian and a refugee crisis. The tens of thousands of children—young children—presenting themselves alone at the border of the United States are not dangerous criminals who threaten our national safety. They are so often children who have traveled thousands of miles from their home countries at enormous risk and expense, and they have come not because our border is wide open, not because it is unsecure. In fact, virtually all of them are being interdicted at the border by our effective border security. The challenge is that these children are being sent on these incredibly long and expensive and dangerous and difficult trips in the first place.

Our Republican colleagues have suggested that this is solely caused by our President's lawlessness, that somehow either a law that was proposed and passed here in the Senate, a comprehensive immigration reform bill, or the President's deferred action program with regard to those who are so-called DREAMers is what is causing this flood of child refugees to this country.

But as has been said by other of our colleagues just in the last hour, neither of those two things—neither the comprehensive immigration bill passed on a bipartisan basis by this Chamber nor the deferred action program of the administration—would create really any legal opportunity for these child refugees to stay in the United States. Neither of them applies. In order to get access to the benefit and the opportunity to be in the United States under those two provisions, you would have to have been here years ago. The problem is really instability, violence, the tragic collapse of governance and safety in three Central American countries.

If the magnet drawing thousands of refugees to this country were the actions or inactions of the President, would not we see a huge surge in refugees from elsewhere in Central America, from Panama or from Belize or from Costa Rica or everyone closer to us from Mexico as well? But we have not.

In the last 5 years child migrants from Mexico have stayed relatively flat, while children from the three countries that are the focus of current violence—El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala—have surged out of control. In 2009 child migrants from those three countries made up just 17 percent of all the children trying to come across the American border. This year, three-quarters are coming from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

Why are they coming from these three countries? Why these three countries?

Well, if you ask them, they will tell you. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees surveyed, last year, 404 child refugees and asked: Why have you made this long and dangerous and difficult trip to the American border? Only 9 of 404 surveyed said because they believed the U.S. would ''treat them well.'' More than half said they came out of fear because they were ''forcibly displaced.'' They are refugees, not criminals.

We need to deal with the source of the problem in these three countries, not make this a partisan game on the floor of this Chamber. I think the evidence is clear that these children are being sent on this difficult, long, and expensive trip by their parents in desperation—because they have no other choice. If they stay in their home countries, the levels of violence, of gang activity, of murder have skyrocketed off the charts. They are fleeing not just to America but to Mexico, to Nicaragua, to Costa Rica as well. Children are fleeing the violence in these three countries in every direction—not because they are drawn by the magnet of some failure of immigration policy here but because they are driven by the centrifugal force of violence in these three countries. In fact, asylum applications from children are up by more than 700 percent in the countries of Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Belize—the countries immediately around these three that are at the very center of the violence.

It is my hope that with the emergency supplemental request submitted by the President, as we consider it and debate it in a hearing in the Appropriations Committee tomorrow and as we debate it here on the floor, we will see more and more ways in which this emergency supplemental provides resources needed to ensure that these children are given the fair hearing they are entitled to under the law—a law signed by President Bush, passed unanimously by this Chamber; that we will honor our international commitment and allow these children their day in court, and if they have no legitimate claim to refugee status, they will be deported, but if they have a legitimate claim, that they are treated fairly.

Families and children are fleeing these Central American countries because conditions have become unbearable. Gangs, narcotics groups, and corrupt officials have weakened security situations and created an environment where innocent civilians are targeted by gangs.

In Honduras, for example, as has been mentioned earlier today, in the city of San Pedro Sula, the murder rate is four times higher, the chance of dying through murder is four times higher than faced by American troops in the highest years of combat deaths in Iraq. It has one of the highest murder rates on the planet.

In Guatemala, a weak government lacks the capacity to address insecurity and poverty, and these forces continue to drive Guatemalans to flee and to send their children to seek some peace outside their country.

In El Salvador, after a failed truce, gangs have divided up territory and are

challenging control of the state, while bringing violence into every neighborhood.

Despite these significant issues, we can and we should contribute and invest more in partnership with these three countries to hold them accountable for delivering on stability for their citizens.

Visits by the Vice President, by the Secretary of State, and meetings with the leaders of these three countries have laid out a path forward and a plan, and funding in this emergency supplemental will help contribute to the prosecution of the coyotes and the criminal gangs who are profiting off of the trafficking of these children, to increasing the capacity of these countries to receive back those children and adults who are being repatriated, and to leading a media campaign to make sure parents understand that children sent to the United States are not automatically entitled to stay in the United States.

We have to strengthen our efforts to counter corruption, to hold these governments accountable, and to assist in building stronger security, judicial, and governing institutions in these three Central American countries.

I am also a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee. From those seats, I know how important it is that we make sure resources are available to our badly overstretched immigration enforcement system. This provides additional resources for immigration judges, for the Legal Orientation Program, and for providing counsel to minors. As has been mentioned earlier today on this floor, we have an international obligation, when children fleeing violence present legitimate claims for refugee status, to make sure they have their day in court before either repatriating them to their country of origin or allowing them refugee status here.

This emergency supplemental would increase the funding so there would not be such an enormous backlog of cases, so there would be a Legal Orientation Program, which has a proven record of success. While it does not provide personal counsel to everyone awaiting trial, it gives out basic information so legitimate claims can be made and illegitimate claims do not waste the time of our immigration courts.

Last, providing counsel to minor children it is a small portion of this total supplemental, but if you have a child who is a victim of child trafficking, who has a valid asylum claim, they have to be given the opportunity to present a valid claim.

We already know funding in these areas is insufficient to meet this surge in refugee minors seeking the relief of the American country and court system, and I think we have to do both: invest in ensuring stability in the three countries in Central America from which tens of thousands of children are fleeing and invest in ensuring that our border security, our immigration courts, and the reasonable and appropriate process for separating out those who are legitimate refugees from those who are seeking access to our country illegally is done in a fair and an appropriate way.

A refugee crisis is not the time for us to abandon our laws or our values. It is the time for us to enforce and abide those laws—fairly and efficiently. To do so, I think, frankly, our best solution would be to have the House take up, consider, and pass the comprehensive immigration bill, the bipartisan immigration bill that was taken up and passed by this Chamber over a year ago. Frankly, I think this crisis is in no small part because of a critical opportunity that we missed a year ago to legislate in a responsible, bicameral, and bipartisan way to invest more in the border, to invest more in stabilizing the region, and to invest more in ensuring that we have the resources in our courts to deliver justice in this country appropriately.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Connecticut.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, the matter before this Chamber is the sportsmen's bill. Most of us, including myself, support and encourage sportsmen and sportsmanship. This bill has many laudable provisions. Among other provisions, it expands opportunities for sportsmen to use guns on Federal property with the encouragement of Federal law.

I voted in favor of this bill, in effect, when the issue was clotured almost 2 years ago because I support sportsmen and think that Federal law should, in fact, encourage them. I voted against cloture just a few days ago and I oppose this bill now because since that first vote, this Nation has experienced the horrific and unspeakable horror of Sandy Hook, coming after decades of horror and unspeakable violence resulting from the illegal use of guns and the illegal purchase of guns in this Nation. There are too many guns illegally in the possession of criminals and other people dangerous to themselves or others.

I have worked on this issue for decades, first as attorney general and now as a Senator. I cannot vote for this bill expanding the use of guns on Federal property with the encouragement of Federal law, so long as this great institution has done nothing—absolutely nothing—to make America safer from the kind of carnage and killing that is epitomized by the terrible and unspeakable tragedy that occurred at Sandy Hook.

I have spoken often about that tragedy. I have continued to meet with the loved ones of those 20 wonderful and beautiful children and 6 great educators. They are with me, as is the terrible tragedy of that day when I went to the firehouse where they learned for the first time that their loved ones would not be coming home. But I have stood also with loved ones from urban areas of Hartford, New Haven, and elsewhere from all other the country—victims of gun violence who perished unnecessarily and avoidably.

They are the survivors of this continuing carnage that just this past weekend took tens of victims from around the country, including many in Chicago—as has been described so eloquently by Senator DURBIN—and two alone in the east side of Bridgeport, CT, just this past weekend.

I have stood with the family of Lori Jackson, her mom and dad. She was a young woman with two small children—twins—murdered by her estranged husband when he was under a restraining order, a temporary restraining order, literally the day before a permanent one would go into effect and he would have been barred under current law from possessing or buying a firearm of exactly the kind he used to kill her.

Lori Jackson's mom was almost killed. A bullet went through her jaw and part of her head. Another went through her arm. As she stood with me, she was still bandaged from that wound. They stood with me because they want to save others from the terrible tragic fate that befell her that early morning as she sought refuge in their home—her parent's home—knowing her estranged husband was treacherously, dangerously, perilously, searching for her.

But the law could not protect her. Federal law was powerless to do it because of a loophole that, in effect, exempted temporary restraining orders from the same protection that is provided to permanent restraining orders. Yet we know from her experience and from so many others that the initial period—those 10 days to 2 weeks when there is a temporary order—are the most dangerous and perilous times to women and others who are threatened by their intimate partners, spouses or former spouses. It is the most dangerous time because it is when the intimate partner, often the estranged husband, learns that she is leaving. It is over. She is seeking a divorce. She is taking the kids because it has become too dangerous. The threats have become too real and immediate.

That was Lori Jackson's situation. I have offered a bill to close the loophole that rendered Federal law useless to her. I called it the Lori Jackson bill. I am offering an amendment that is identical to that legislation I introduced with my great colleague and friend Senator MURPHY, who has been a teammate in this effort against gun violence.

The Lori Jackson bill has nine other cosponsors: Senators DURBIN, MURRAY, BOXER, HIRONO, WARREN, MARKEY, BALDWIN, MENENDEZ, and KAINE. The identical amendment that I propose today is supported by Senators MURPHY, DURBIN, MARKEY, WARREN, MARKEY, FEINSTEIN, HIRONO, and BOXER.

Lori Jackson was so brave. There is really no other word for it. She was brave, courageous, resolute, and strong—trying to escape the cycle of domestic violence which is a scourge across this country. We must continue the effort to fight domestic violence. But we know that a woman who is a victim of domestic violence is five times more likely to die if there is a gun in the house.

In her name and her memory, so that her legacy will be one of hope and courage, I offer this amendment to the sportsmen's bill. Let us do something to make the Lori Jacksons of America safer from gun violence, if we are going to expand the use and opportunity for guns on Federal property or under Federal law. Because it is Federal law that failed to protect them now—a simple loophole, that a modest change can close. Let's do it in her name and in the name of Jasmine Leonard, who also had a temporary protection order against her husband and who died at his hand; Chyna Joy Young, who celebrated her 18th birthday just days before she was shot and killed by her estranged boyfriend; Barbara Diane Dye, who was granted a temporary restraining order and then fled to safety in Texas, returning only for a hearing on the permanent restraining order when her husband cornered her in a parking lot, and shot her repeatedly with a .357 Magnum revolver, killing her—and in the name of all of the other victims of domestic violence whom we can protect with this sensible, commonsense, modest measure that offers them some protection. I know that this amendment and the others that I supported offered by my colleagues such as that of Senator DURBIN, who has been such a steadfast champion, and Senator FEINSTEIN, who likewise spearheaded this cause well before I came here, while I was attorney general working in the State of Connecticut on this cause.

I know that this measure will not alone solve the problems of gun violence in this country. But it is a step. It will save some women and men who may be victims of domestic violence. It is to be regarded as a companion to legislation proposed by Senator KLOBUCHAR—very important legislation that I support as well, to prevent stalkers from accessing firearms. These kinds of measures are steps in the right direction. We should take those steps, put them first, and give safety the priority it deserves before we create more opportunities, and expand more access to Federal land for the use of guns. Gun safety should come first. We can send that message but also very practically and really help save lives, injuries, and dollars.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. I know we have some other colleagues on the way down to the floor to speak, so I will be brief. I just want to join Senator BLUMENTHAL and thank him for his tremendous leadership, as he noted, going back to his days as Connecticut's attorney general and now as a member of the Judiciary Committee. There have been few people in this country, frankly, who have led more on taking on the fight against gun violence, especially when it comes to protecting victims of domestic violence, than Senator BLUMENTHAL. I am proud to join him in offering this amendment.

After being married for a number of years, Zina Daniel and her husband Radcliffe Haughton became estranged. In October of 2012 she got a restraining order against him, telling a court that he had slashed her tires and had threatened to throw acid in her face and burn her and her family with gas.

She told the court that his threats against her terrorized her every waking moment. She got a permanent restraining order, but even that permanent restraining order was not enough. He went on line—her estranged husband—went around our background check system, as is currently part of Federal law, and posted a ''want to buy'' ad on Armslist, one of the biggest online marketers of firearms. Within hours he found a seller. He bought a Glock handgun for $500 cash in a McDonald's parking lot. There was no background check. There were no questions asked by our seller. It was a simple transaction that was allowed because of our lax gun laws.

The next day he stormed into the Brookfield, WI, spa where his estranged wife worked and he murdered her and two other women. He injured four others and then he killed himself. This story is a caution both about our laws that protect victims of domestic violence but then also our unreasonable laws right now around how we conduct background checks in this country.

He was prevented from going into a store and buying a handgun only because Zina had gotten a permanent restraining order. But had she had a temporary restraining order, there would have been no such protection. That is what the amendment Senator BLUMENTHAL and I have will cure. It will give spouses, girlfriends, partners, protection during that moment of intense rage right when the husband is expelled from the house for violence, when that temporary restraining order is being taken out.

But this story also tells us that we have miles to go when it comes to the other protections that are necessary to reduce the incidents of gun violence. In this case she had one protection surrounding the permanent restraining order, but because we do not require background checks for online purchases, her husband was able to buy a gun within a day and go and murder her and two others.

If we had background checks required for online purchases, it is likely that Zina Daniel and her two coworkers would still be alive today. So that is why we are on the floor today. Senator BLUMENTHAL and I and many others of our colleagues believe that if we are going to have a weeklong debate about guns, we should be talking about what actions are actually going to reduce the epidemic rates of gun violence across this country, in particular the epidemic rates of gun violence when it comes to people who are victims of domestic abuse.

Senator BLUMENTHAL probably covered the landscape in terms of the statistics.

But it is pretty stunning the risks that women in particular are put in when their spouse has easy access to a firearm. Abused women are five times more likely to be killed by their abuser if their abuser owns a firearm, and one of the few moments we can prevent that abuser from obtaining that firearm is when the court gets involved at that moment of separation between the wife and the husband, between the abused and the abuser, that moment of the temporary restraining order.

Senator BLUMENTHAL and I think this is an amendment that could get broad bipartisan support. I wish we could get 60 votes for background checks, but I am realistic that it is not likely that five minds have changed since the last time we took this vote.

But just as we came together after a period of disagreement to pass the Violence Against Women Act, we can certainly make the decision that in those limited circumstances, during those limited days of a temporary restraining order, that abuser shouldn't be able to go out and buy a weapon.

Our amendment builds in protections so that this isn't a denial of due process; that the judge actually has to make a finding that there is a threat of violence. Those are fairly limited circumstances, but if this amendment is passed, we will save lives.

Senator BLUMENTHAL closed, and I will close in the same vein, by noting that while this amendment will save lives, it is not going to dramatically change the reality in this country, which is 80-plus people killed every day by guns. But everybody has a role to play in trying to reduce the rates of gun violence.

A young man in New Haven, CT, by the name of Doug Bethea, lost a close friend of his this summer, a 16-year-old boy named Torrence Gamble, whom he saw at a funeral for another friend of theirs who had been killed by gun violence. Torrence said he wanted to get off the streets and start setting his life straight.

He wanted to set up a time to meet with his friend Doug Bethea to try to find a way out. It was only a couple of days after saying, ''Doug, don't forget about me''—in fact, the very next day—that Torrance was shot in his head and died of his injuries at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

So Doug decided to do something about it, and he spent the summer going out bringing information to house-to-house to tell families and kids

in New Haven about their options to get off the streets, to do something productive with their time this summer, all of the rec leagues, arts programs, and dance programs that kids can invest positive energy in.

Target did their part a couple weeks ago by asking their customers to refrain from bringing guns onto their property, and we can do our part this week. If we are going to talk about guns this week, let's make sure we do something that reduces the rates of gun violence all across this country. This is a commonsense amendment, an amendment I am sure can gain broad bipartisan support. We hope we can do our part this week to try to stem the plague and scourge of gun violence on the streets of America.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I support S. 2363, the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014. I am pleased to join 45 of my colleagues—23 Republicans and 23 Democrats in total—as a cosponsor of this legislation.

This package of bills supports a variety of important conservation priorities while protecting access to public lands for hunters and anglers. It reauthorizes annual funding for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, two public-private matching grant programs that have provided wildlife habitat, flood protection, and land and water conservation benefits across Virginia. For instance, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Chesapeake Stewardship Grants leverage annual Federal support with private funds for projects that incur agricultural, stormwater, and habitation restoration benefits in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In 2013, Virginia received $2.5 million for 12 projects throughout its portion of the watershed.

I have long supported measures to conserve open space in Virginia. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 3.3 million people participate in hunting, fishing, and wildlife-watching in the Commonwealth. As Governor, one of my proudest environmental achievements was meeting an ambitious goal of preserving 400,000 acres for recreation and conservation by the end of my 4-year term.

While I am an avid hiker and outdoorsman, conservation is not just important to me for the intrinsic enjoyment of Virginia's beautiful lands and waters. Conservation is also good for business. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation generates $13.6 billion in consumer spending, 138,000 jobs, $3.9 billion in wages and salaries, and $923 million in State and local tax revenue in Virginia every year.

It is no small feat to put together a bill supported by nearly half the U.S. Senate in equal partisan proportion. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Washington State is recognized.

THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Ms. CANTWELL. I appreciate the comments made by the Senator from Connecticut, and I come to the floor to talk about a very important issue, U.S. manufacturing jobs and what the Senate needs to do to make sure we are protecting U.S. manufacturing jobs.

I am speaking of the need to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, a credit agency that helps U.S. manufacturers and small businesses sell their products to overseas markets.

Some of you may have read recently comments by some of our colleagues where they have shifted their position. The agency is set to expire on September 30 of this year, and it is so critical that we reauthorize this program because it is such an important tool for U.S. manufacturers.

Over the last few weeks, fringe organizations and activists have suddenly tried to turn this into a political casualty, saying we should kill the program, and I am here to advocate that it is a win-win situation for American manufacturers, for American taxpayers, and for the jobs it creates. That is because the Export-Import Bank supports about 1.2 million jobs, it returned $1 billion to the U.S. Treasury last year alone, and it supports between 35,000 suppliers of manufactured parts, and that was just in the year 2011. As this chart shows, the Export-Import Bank helps us generate export sales and supports 1.2 million jobs. That is between 2009 and 2013.

One would think a program that doesn't cost the taxpayers any money, actually helps us pay down the deficit, helps create that many export sales and that many jobs would be something we would want to reauthorize and give predictability to businesses all across the United States.

In fact, if the credit agency is not reauthorized, nearly 90 percent of the companies that would be harmed are small businesses. Sure, there are big companies such as Boeing or General Electric or Caterpillar that help sell products around the globe, and some of my colleagues want to criticize that somehow we should be apologizing for the fact that we actually make expensive products and sell them.

I am quite proud that we sell products from the United States to China and various parts all around the globe that are actually expensive products. We should be proud we are making something worth millions of dollars that people want to buy. So I am glad that ''Made In the USA'' is actually closing deals all across the globe.

Today we also want to highlight that all of these companies that are in the manufacturing sector are part of a manufacturing chain. We know this well, because in the State of Washington, when we look at who makes aerospace products, while we can say there is a company in Everett, WA, named Boeing, there are hundreds of companies, thousands of companies across the United States that are part of what is called the supply chain.

Behind every 777 or Caterpillar tractor there are thousands of workers who are working every day to refine their product, stay competitive, retrain, and refocus to make sure we build the very best products in the United States and that we are competing on a global basis.

When these larger companies and small businesses they work with try to win deals overseas, they run into lots of different challenges. That is why we are here today to say making sure we reauthorize this program is critically important to small business manufacturers and suppliers throughout the United States.

So with all of these small businesses and companies—30,000 to 35,000 companies across the United States—there is actually a supplier in every State in the United States, but let's look at some of the numbers.

In Georgia, there are over 833 different companies, such as United Seal and Rubber Company and other important companies, that make products just for aviation or for Caterpillar or for other products.

In the State of Florida, there are over 1,252 different small businesses and manufacturers that are helping to produce products that are sold on an international basis, and those companies want the Export-Import Bank reauthorized.

In the State of Wisconsin, there are over 1,397 different suppliers, such as Hentzen Coatings in Milwaukee, which provides primer, sealer, and wing coating. These are companies that also want to see the reauthorization of this important tool that helps products they help manufacture and build be sold in international markets.

Of course, there are places, such as Texas, which have a lot of people in the supply chain. Here are just some of the companies that are involved in manufacturing that take advantage of this important export-created agency by building products into final assembly. They are all over the State of Texas.

In fact, here is another continued list of these companies from Texas that are part of building products that are then using the Export-Import Bank to sell their products around the globe. But we can't go over all of those in Texas because there are actually 4,355 different companies in the State of Texas that are involved in the supply chain of companies that are selling products through the export credit agency and its assistance.

So we can see this is not a program that just affects one State or one region; it is an example of small business manufacturers working everywhere to stay competitive, to sell products, and win in the international marketplace.

Personally, having visited many of these companies in the State of Washington, I find it very frustrating, as

these people are working night and day to make the best airplanes, to make the best manufactured product, to take the risk to go and sell in overseas markets, to compete with international competitors, to retrain and reskill a workforce, that we have people in Congress who don't have the good common sense to understand what an important tool the Export-Import Bank is in helping U.S. manufacturers sell into new emerging markets.

I know there are other States—we are not going to show charts about them—but in Ohio—I know the Presiding Officer is from Ohio—there are over 1,700 suppliers.

These companies are companies such as Hartzell Propeller. They are a family-owned propeller manufacturer in Southwest Ohio. Hartzell is part of the Dayton aviation economy that dates back to the Wright brothers. In fact, it was Orville Wright who suggested that the Hartzell family build an airplane propeller.

Today the Wright brothers are gone, but this company is still here and they are still innovating. In fact, I think they are part of the spirit of innovation in America that makes it so great.

I am so frustrated that people here don't understand that innovative spirit, don't understand what it takes, don't understand that they are hampering—truly right now almost torturing—small businesses by not giving them the certainty and predictability for the export assistance program.

This company builds crop-dusting plane propellers. Hartzell has grown its company from about 13 to about 300 people in the last 3 years, and that is because these crop-dusting planes have been sold using the Export-Import Bank. The loans haven't come directly to Hartzell as part of the Ex-Im supply chain, but companies similar to them that make these propellers are important companies to making sure we win in the international marketplace.

The President of this company, Joe Hartzell, I thought said it best. He said:

> If you take Ex-Im away from my customers, you might as well bring unemployment checks to their offices, because you're going to put people on the street. If they're not building as many airplanes, then I'm going to have a jobs problem.

Here is a manufacturer—I heard the same thing in Seattle a few weeks ago when I was there—a company in Ohio saying if we don't get this program reauthorized, we are going to have bigger problems. So people such as Hartzell are trying to tell everyone here we need to keep working to make sure we get this reauthorized.

We need to make sure companies throughout the Midwest, such as in Wichita, KS, or people in the West, such as in Tempe, AZ, or companies in Irving, TX, everywhere where we are part of this huge supply chain, are doing the work we need to do.

Another area that is big on the supply chain is in the general area of aviation, and it supports over 200,000 jobs. So 200,000 jobs represents the number of people who are involved in aviation today, and those are individuals, businesses that are doing their best to stay competitive in aviation, even though we have incredible competition.

This incredible competition comes from the fact that there are so many different companies around the globe that also want to build airplanes. There is a demand for 35,000 new airplanes over the next 20 years. So we can imagine every country wants to try to build airplanes. China wants to build airplanes. Brazil is already in the business, Canada, the Europeans. Everybody wants to build airplanes.

The good news for us is we actually have a supply chain in the United States, and this chart represents that supply chain of 15,000 manufacturers and over 1.5 million jobs.

These are all companies throughout the United States of America who are involved in using the Export-Import Bank to make sure their products are sold on an international basis. There are actually jobs in companies in every State of the Union that take advantage of being part of this supply chain.

And why it is so important to keep the supply chain? Because if you keep the supply chain in your country, then you have the skill set it takes to keep innovating, because each of these companies is working on the individual parts and making them the best they can possibly be. That way we get the efficient airplane of today. This innovation is taking place all across the country, and we have to stay competitive.

Now, get rid of the Export-Import Bank and over time this supply chain will start to disappear. Why? Because in Europe they will still have an Export-Import Bank, and companies such as Airbus will continue to use that product and they will have a supply chain, and over time all these small businesses and all this expertise in aviation will move out of the United States of America to somewhere else. Then what manufacturing jobs will we have in the United States?

Aviation is one of the best sectors for manufacturing that we have today. With over 1.5 million employees, we need to keep aviation manufacturing competitive in the United States of America. That is why we need to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

There are other sectors of aviation, such as Gulfstream, which is another company, based in Savannah, GA, and has been one of the foremost makers of business jets. They have watched their international competition increase steadily over the last decade, and the Export-Import Bank has helped them be competitive. The Gulfstream supply chain has about 3,500 different businesses and about 13,000 employees, and all those employees are working hard to try to stay competitive. They are working to make sure we keep those jobs in the United States of America. But they also have to have the Export-Import Bank so they can then continue to win in the international marketplace. Gulfstream actually sells product to China. So jobs in Georgia and throughout the supply chain are helping us win in the international marketplace.

Whether they are composite companies or light industrial or fuselage skins, all of these things are helping people be competitive.

Right now, Gulfstream and the supply chain has sold 8,000 planes to China. That helped support 2,100 jobs, and most of those jobs were right in the Savannah, GA, area. So if we are going to cancel the Export-Import Bank, how are they going to get these products financed and how are they going to get them sold?

While we are very appreciative of both sectors of aviation—the commercial sector and general aviation sector, and we haven't even talked about the others, such as the defense sectors of aviation—these are two big components to our economy. Some people might think, well, there is a way to get these planes sold, or these are big companies, these are integral parts to our U.S. manufacturing base, and we need to keep it. The demand of the United States, as I said earlier, is for 35,000 new planes over the next 20 years, and 80 percent of those planes will be delivered outside of the United States. That means if we want to keep winning the race for airplane sales, we are going to have to work outside the United States.

Yesterday, Standard & Poor's reported that if the Export-Import Bank is not reauthorized, it would be a huge benefit to Airbus. In fact, they said:

> . . . Airbus would still be able to offer . . . financing, and this could be a deciding factor for some new aircraft contracts, especially in emerging markets and for sales to start-up or financially weak airlines.

In other words, we would be sending U.S. jobs overseas, and that is not what we want to do. Countries are building up their investment to try to compete with us, and the Export-Import Bank is a key tool for U.S. manufacturers to compete.

Trade is a critically important part of our economy. In 2013, U.S. exports reached $2.3 trillion worth of goods, and a key part of that export growth can be attributed to this program. The Export-Import Bank supported $37.4 billion worth of U.S. exports which supported over 200,000 jobs in the United States. That alone is enough information for me to say the Senate ought to act quickly to reauthorize this program.

There are many other aspects of the Export-Import Bank that help small businesses and manufacturing. In fact, there are about 12 million manufacturing jobs in the United States, and 1 in 4 jobs is tied to exports. That is why, when I think my colleagues try to portray the Export-Import Bank as an issue that maybe a few big companies

would benefit from, I think they have it totally wrong. This is an issue about the competitive nature of manufacturing and the supply chain of manufacturers all across the United States, and whether we want to keep manufacturing jobs—because they are high-wage, high-skilled jobs—in the United States.

While my colleagues would like to talk about other things in the economy, I think it is important to realize how manufacturing jobs are a higher wage. They are a higher wage than service-sector jobs, they help stabilize the middle class, they help the U.S. economy grow because of those large export numbers, and they help the United States continue to innovate and stay ahead in a global marketplace. All of these are reasons why the Export-Import Bank is such a viable tool.

Think about it from the perspective of being a critical part of manufacturing, and these are the high-wage jobs and it supports that supply chain I just went through. Then we can see why it is so important that this get done before the end of September.

Right now, what is happening is my colleagues not only want to threaten to not reauthorize this program, they actually want to kill it. My guess is they would like to say: OK, we will agree to a short-term extension of a few months, only in hopes of killing it later.

I want to make sure all my colleagues know how important it is not only that we reauthorize this, but we reauthorize it for several years so companies have the predictability and certainty to know the program is going to be there and they have the support.

The Export-Import Bank has four primary tools. It has loan guarantees that provide security to commercial lenders who make loans to foreign buyers of American products. For example, the loan helped Goss International in New Hampshire sell their printing presses in emerging markets in Brazil.

We have export credit insurance, and companies such as Manhasset in Yakima, in my State of Washington, used it to help get their music stands sold across the globe and make sure there was credit insurance to protect them.

There are loan programs, for example, to help foreign buyers of U.S. products such as FirmGreen in Newport Beach, CA, which is run by a disabled veteran who helped to sell their goods in Brazil.

It also provides working capital like in Morrison Technologies manufacturing in South Carolina which used the tools to purchase materials needed for a recent surge in business that couldn't have been met without that financing.

So here they are, all these companies throughout the country using the Export-Import Bank and staying competitive. I personally would make the Export-Import Bank bigger. When we look at what China is doing or what Europe is doing, they are making a bigger financial investment in helping their businesses become exporters.

In the United States, the Export-Import Bank finances less than 5 percent of U.S. exports. A significant portion of the capital of exports is done in the private sector, but this tool helps commercial banks and helps commercial manufacturers get their product when other avenues aren't available in the private sector.

Here is an example of one of the programs and how the Export-Import Bank works. We can see the U.S. exporter sells to the foreign buyer and that commercial financing is still part of the equation. The Export-Import Bank is only used as a safety net to make sure that financial commercial obligation is secure in this situation. So it is not as if we are replacing commercial banking, it is not as if we aren't even making market rates. We are for products such as aerospace.

The issue is, we need to make sure commercial banks are willing to guarantee these kinds of sales. We are providing a safety net with the Export-Import Bank. And what has the cost been to the U.S. Government? Well, we have had incredible success, because everybody pays fees into this system, and those fees and the success of the program has helped us pay down the Federal deficit. That is right; it has actually made money for U.S. taxpayers and helped us pay down the Federal deficit.

It supports 1.2 million export-related jobs, it has helped support $37 billion in exports from the United States, which helps our economy, and it has returned more than $1 billion to U.S. taxpayers. I would call that a win-win situation for American jobs and American taxpayers.

We have 73 days left until that program expires. I don't want to let that happen. So today we are announcing that over 200 different supply chain companies are sending a letter to the Senate and House of Representatives asking them to urgently support the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank.

We are also hearing from lots of businesses and business organizations that also support the immediate reauthorization: the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Roundtable, National Association of Businesses, the International Association of Machinists, National Grain and Feed Association, and many more organizations. All of them want to be able to say ''Made in the USA,'' and have their products sold overseas.

I hope my colleagues will be there to help ensure this program gets reauthorized in a short amount of time. I personally hope the Senate will take up this legislation in the next few weeks before we adjourn for the August recess. I would hate to see what happens to all the business deals these manufacturers have on the table if they go home in August and people are saying: Well, the bank only has a few days left to be reauthorized; I am not going to do business with you until I know. Or if somebody tries to stick a 5-month reauthorization on some bill, and then everybody still says: When is this program going to be reauthorized? Otherwise, I am not going to do a deal with U.S. manufacturers.

Of all the things we are doing in sending a message to the actual competitors of creating jobs in today's economy, why are we sending such a message of uncertainty in this situation? These are real jobs in a marketplace that is growing.

The middle class is going to grow from about 2.3 billion to about 5 billion people outside the United States over the next 15 years. We are going to see a doubling of the middle class. That is where products are going to be sold in emerging markets. Those emerging markets don't all have the financial tools to make those deals a reality, but the Export-Import Bank can help. They can help make sure a customer pays, that U.S. manufacturing wins, and that we keep our marketplace.

We hope all our colleagues will support this legislation. Time is running out. Know that this program has returned over $1 billion to the U.S. Treasury. That is a pretty good deal for us. If somebody on the other side has a better way of growing jobs and paying down the Federal deficit, I would like to hear it, because this is an important tool, and time is running out. I urge my colleagues to help support the Export-Import Bank.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from companies asking to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, and I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

July 9, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, LEADER REID, LEADER PELOSI AND LEADER MCCONNELL: We are writing today to ask you to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank without further delay. The Export-Import Bank is absolutely essential to our companies. While many of us don't access the Bank's services directly, our customers do. We sell goods and services of all kinds to American businesses that rely on the Export-Import Bank to sell their products abroad.

Recent reports on the uncertainty of the Bank's future may have already impacted sales, which can negatively impact our bottom line. Our customers need the certainty of export credit to successfully pursue many of their commercial sales abroad. The ongoing defense budget uncertainty compounds this threat for many of our companies with commercial and defense customers.

Reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank should not be a partisan political game. Until recently, it never has been. In fact, the Bank has been reauthorized more than a dozen times, and recently it was reauthorized with broad bipartisan support. Reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank also helps reduce the deficit. The Bank earns money on its fees and interest, and last year returned over one billion dollars to the U.S. Treasury. It is time for Congress to schedule a vote, and reauthorize the bank.

More than 95 percent of the world's consumers live abroad. We need our customers to have the ability to sell to those consumers. If they do, many of our businesses will grow, allowing us to hire more employees and re-invest in our economy. If they no longer have the Bank's support, it is our foreign competitors who will reap the benefits of greater exports.

We urge you to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank immediately, helping to reduce our deficit, provide certainty to our economy, and invest in America's middle class.

Sincerely,

Advanced Welding Technologies, LLC, Wichita, KS; Aero-Flex Corp., Jupiter, FL; Aero-Plastics Inc., Renton, WA; Aerospace Fabrications of GA Dallas, GA; Aerospace Futures Alliance of Washington, Kent, WA; Air Industries Group; Aircraft Maintenance & Support; AIREPS INC., Anaheim, CA; Airready MRO Services Inc., Melbourne, AR; Alarin Aircraft Hinge, Inc.; Altek, Liberty Lake, WA; American Aerospace Controls, Inc., Farmingdale, NY; Amerisips of the Carolina's, Charleston, SC; Amphenol APCBT, Nashua, NH; Andrews Tool Co., Inc., Pantego, TX; Arizona Industrial Hardware, Chandler, AZ; Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Cincinnati, OH; Aviation Partners Boeing; Aviation Technical Services, Everett, WA; B/E Aerospace, Inc. Consumables Management, Tulsa, OK; Bedard Machine Inc., Brea, CA; Boise Inc., Boise, ID; Bradham Consulting, LLC, Midlothian, VA; Brogdon Machine Inc., Blue Springs, MO; Buyken Metal Products, Inc.; Cascade Columbia Distribution, Seattle, WA; Central Sales & Service, Inc., Waverly, TN; Certified Inspection Service Co., Inc., Phoenix, AZ; CFAN, San Marcos, TX; Chapel Steel, Portland, OR; Clampco, Sedro Woolley, WA; Clark Manufacturing, Inc.; Wellington, KS; CMS2, LLC, North Las Vegas, NV; CO Maintenance, South Jordan, UT; Coalition Solutions Integrated (CSI); Columbus Jack Corporation, Columbus, OH; Commercial Aircraft Painting Services LLC, Portland, OR; Consolidated Truck & Caster Co., Saint Louis, MO; Council for U.S.-Russia Relations, Seattle, WA; CPI Aerostructures; Crace, Inc., Bellevue, WA; Cv International, Bend, OR; D&S Septic Tank and Sewer Service Inc., Pacific, MO; David Mann Lean Consulting, Grand Rapids, MI; Davis Door Service, Inc., Seattle, WA; Delva Tool and Machine Coiporation, Cinnaminson, NJ; Denezol Tool Co., Inc., Salem, OR; DESE Research Inc., Huntsville, AL; Deuro, The Woodlands, TX; Diamond Machine Works; Distribution International SW, Inc., Houston, TX; Diversified Industrial Services, Mukilteo, WA; Dyer Company, Lancaster, PA; E-SUV LLC/DBA E-Ride Industries, Princeton, MN; E.D. Powerco, Lake Elsinore, CA; East Coast Electronics & Data, Rockaway, NJ; EffectiveUI, Inc., Denver, CO; El-Co Machine Products, Inc., Inglewood, CA; Electroimpact, Mukilteo, WA; Elite Tool LLC, Moscow Mills, MO; Elk Creek Lumber Co., Wilkesboro, NC; Ellwood Group, Irvine, PA; Esterline Technologies, Bellevue, WA; Eustis Co., Inc., Mukilteo, WA; EWT-3DCNC, Inc., Rockford, IL.

Exelis Inc., McLean, VA; Exotic Metals, Kent, WA; Fabrisonic LLC, Columbus, OH; Farwest Aircraft Inc., Edgewood, WA; Ferguson Enterprises, Inc., Seattle, WA; Flanagan Industries, Glastonbury, CT; FlightSafety International, Broken Arrow, OK; Fluid Engineering Associates, Port Ludlow, WA; Fluid Mechanics Valve Company, Houston, TX; Frank V Radomski & Sons, Inc., Colmar, PA; Frontier Electronic Systems Corp., Stillwater, OK; Gary Jet Center, Inc., Gary, IN; Gasline Mechanical Inc., WA; Gastineau Log Homes, Inc., New Bloomfield, MO; Global Consulting & Investments, Inc., Issaquah, WA; Global Machine Works, Inc.; Global Trade Insurance; GM Nameplate, Seattle, WA; Growth Nation, Scottsdale, AZ; Hapeman Electronics Inc., Mercer, PA; Harris Group, Seattle, WA; Henkel Corporation, Bay Point, CA; Herndon Products, O'Fallon, MO; Hexagon Metrology, Inc., North Kingstown, RI; Hirschler Manufacturing Inc.; HITCO Carbon Composites, Gardena, CA; Hobart Machined Products, Inc., Hobart, WA; HOME INC., Hermann, MO; Horizon Distributing, Yakima, WA; Houston International Trade Development Council, Inc.; Hubbs Machine & Manufacturing, Inc., Cedar Hill, MO; Hughes Bros. Aircrafters, Inc., South Gate, CA; Hurricane Electronics, Inc., Pompano Beach, FL; HVAC R Services LLC, Auburn, WA; HySecurity, Kent, WA; IHS Inc., Englewood, CO; Illinois Chamber of Commerce, IL; IMS-CHAS, INC., North Charleston, SC; Independent Machine Company, Gladstone, MI; Industrial Sales & Mfg., Inc., Erie, PA; Industrial Supplies Company, Trevose, PA; Iridium Communications, Tempe, AZ; J. Maxime Roy, Inc., Lafayette, LA; Janicki Industries, Sedro Woolley, WA; Jet Systems, Inc., Wilbur, WA; JWD Machine, Fife, WA; Kaas Tailored; Kemeny Associates LLC dba Middleton Research, Middleton, WI; Kenmore Air, Kenmore, WA; Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc., Lancaster, PA; Kubco Industrial Equipment, Inc., Houston, TX; Lamsco West Inc., Santa Clarita, CA; LKD Aerospace, Snoqualmie, WA; LMI Aerospace, St. Charles, MO; Lockheed Martin, Chelmsford, MA; LORD Corporation, Cary, NC; Luma Technologies, LLC, Bellevue, WA; Magna Tool Inc., Cypress, CA; Maney Aircraft, Inc., Ontario, CA; Marketech International, Inc., Port Townsend, WA; Master CNC, Inc., Washington Twp, MI; Maverick Enterprises, Monroe, NC; Meyer Tool Inc.; MFCP Inc—Fluid Connector Products, Portland, OR; MGL Energy, LLC, Destin, FL; Micro-Coax, Inc., Pottstown, PA; Microsemi Corporation; Millitech, Inc.

NaviTrade Structured Finance LLC, Barrington, IL; Neenah Enterprises, Inc., Neenah, WI; NewAgeSys, Inc., Princeton Junction, NJ; North Star Aerospace, Inc., Auburn, WA; NovaComp Engineering, Inc., Bothell, WA; Object Computing, Inc. (OCI), St. Louis, MO; Officemporium, Seattle, WA; Olympic Tool & Machine Corp., Aston, PA; Onboard Systems, Vancouver, WA; Orbit International Corp., Hauppauge, NY; Orion, Auburn, WA; Pacific Consolidated Industries LLC, Riverside, CA; Papé Material Handling, Seattle, WA; PAS MRO, Irvine, CA; Philips Screw Company; PhoenixMart LLC, Scottsdale, AZ; Pioneer Aerofab Corp.; Pioneer Human Services, WA; PM Testing, Fife, WA; ProTek Models, LLC, Rancho Cucamonga, CA; ProtoCAM, Allentown, PA; R & S Machining, Inc., St. Louis, MO; R&B Electronics, Inc., Sault Ste. Marie, MI; Robert Schneider & Associates, Inc., Kankakee, IL; Russell Investments, Seattle, WA; S & S Welding, Kent, WA; SEA Wire and Cable, Inc., AL; Service Steel Aerospace; Sigmatex High Technology Fabrics, Benicia, CA; Silicon Designs, Inc., Kirkland, WA; Silicon Forest Electronics, Vancouver, WA; SKF Aerospace, Indianapolis, IN, Skills Inc., Auburn, WA; Sound Machine Services, LLC., Suquamish, WA; Spirit AeroSystems, Wichita, KS; StandardAero, Tempe, AZ; SteelFab, Inc., Arlington, WA; Sunshine Metals Inc., Wichita, KS; System Heating and Air Conditioning Co Inc., Seattle, WA; System Integrators LLC. Glendale, AZ; Tech Manufacturing, LLC, Wright City, MO; Technical Aero, LLC, WA; Telephonics Corporation, Farmingdale, NY; Telepress, Inc., Kent, WA; The Complete Line LLC, Redmond, WA; The Entwistle Company, Hudson, MA; The Graeber Group Ltd, Kirkland, WA; The Industrial Controls Company, Sussex, WI; The Rockford Agency, Inc., Manhattan Beach, CA; Thick Film Technologies, Inc., Everett, WA; Titan Spring Inc., Hayden, ID; Toray Composites America, Inc., Tacoma, WA; Trade Acceptance Group, Ltd., Edina, MN; Transmet Corporation; TRICOR Systems Inc.; Triumph Actuation Systems—Valencia, Valencia, CA; Triumph Composite Systems, Spokane, WA; TSI Incorporated; TTF Aerospace, Auburn, WA; UEC Electronics, Hanahan, SC; Umbra Cuscinetti Inc., Everett, WA; United Risk Consultants, Dallas, TX; US Aluminum Casting, LLC, Entiat, WA; Valley Machine Shop Inc., Kent, WA; Ventower Industries; Verde Wood International, Carrboro, NC; Vosky Precision Machining Corp., Ronkonkoma, NY; Wallquest Inc., Wayne, PA; Welded Tubes, Inc., Orwell, OH; Wheeler Industries, Inc., North Charleston, SC; Will-Mor Manufacturing, Inc., Seabrook, NH; Wood Group Mustang Inc., Houston, TX; Wulbern-Koval Co., Charleston, SC; Zodiac Aerospace, WA; Zyxaxis Inc., Wichita, KS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

EPA RULE CHANGES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to speak for a few minutes about the EPA rules on water. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy is in Missouri today to discuss the EPA's proposed rule which would significantly expand the authority of the United States under the Clean Water Act.

In a conference call with reporters yesterday, Administrator McCarthy called some of the questions about the rule ''silly'' and ''ludicrous'' and said that her trip to Missouri was part of a broader campaign to reassure the agricultural community and set the record straight. I hope she is spending at least as much time in my State listening as she is talking. If she does that she will find out that some of these concerns are very real but they have lots of impact and not just for the farm community across the country but for lots of people who are affected in lots of different ways by what happens if you expand the authority of the Federal Government as this rule would to deal with water almost everywhere and almost all water.

Not only did she say that these questions were silly and ludicrous, but the Missouri farm bureau expressed the concern that ''virtually every acre of private property potentially falls under the Clean Water Act jurisdiction. . . . Things that you normally do on a farm would be called into question.'' According to the Springfield News-Leader, ''McCarthy says that's hog wash.''

If the way to actually deal with the people we work for is to say your ideas are silly, they are ludicrous, and your comments are hog wash, I think once

again we are certainly seeing the Federal Government at its worst, not at its best.

This is a big organization. It is a well-run organization. It has represented Missouri's agricultural interests for a long time. There are folks who stand and say virtually every acre of private property potentially falls under the Clean Water Act jurisdiction if this rule is finalized, and at least 40 members of this body believe that to be the case. That is what they said, and she said it was hog wash. According to the paper, she rattled off what she said were ''some of the most dubious claims made by the rule's critics.''

This is a rule which has critics because it is a rule that deserves to have critics. It draws concerns from farmers. In fact, just today I said: Before I come over, let's be sure I know that we haven't had an epiphany of understanding here and suddenly Administrator McCarthy said: I have listened and you are right. These are problems to which we need to find the answers.

But what I found when I looked was that the farmers she met with today—there was no press in the meeting that included the farmers and there were no farmers in the meeting that included the press. So farm families were concerned that when you take the press out, away from everybody else, and you go out on this farm and talk about—I assume—all the great benefits that more Federal control of that farmland would produce, but then when you have a meeting with the farmers, no press is in that meeting where anybody can hear the concerns that these farmers have.

I think the Members of the Senate have been pretty clear as we cosponsored bills that would require the EPA to withdraw this rule and try again. It is clear that this is really a blatant overreach into the private lives and private property rights of the American people by the administration—and not just farmers but anybody who owns land anywhere. If I were just hearing from farmers, I would be concerned, but I am hearing from farmers, I am hearing from builders, I am hearing from realtors, I am hearing from local governments: What happens if the Federal Government has this most broad definition of waters of the United States?

The proposed rule would give the EPA, the Corps of Engineers, the most extreme of environmental groups a powerful tool to delay almost anything to prevent development, to prevent land use on property owned by municipalities, property owned by individuals, property owned by farming families and by small businesses, because all that property includes water in some way or another.

The law was clear when it was written that the EPA under the Clean Water Act would have authority ''over the navigable waters of the United States.'' This rule, in fact, makes the jurisdictional assertion that navigable waters now means ''any water that could go into navigable waters.'' Any water that could eventually flow into the Missouri River, the Mississippi River, the Ohio River, the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and all water everywhere, eventually some of it heads to those places. So every drop of water everywhere is potentially under the jurisdiction of the EPA.

Navigable waters means what it means.

There was an editorial today in the Washington Post which actually supported the rule, but I thought the most interesting sentence in that editorial today that supports the rule was right in almost the exact middle of the editorial. It said: ''It's true that the agency's plan would expand the scope of the Clean Water Act regulation.'' Now, the way it expands the scope of the Clean Water Act regulation is it expands the scope of the Clean Water Act.

We actually have a procedure for that. It is the procedure that everybody who took a civics class learned when they took that civics class. The House passes a bill or the Senate passes a bill. The two come together. I know this doesn't happen as often as it needs to anymore, but that is not the way it has to happen. The two come together. They agree on a bill. It goes back to both Houses. They vote on that bill one final time. It goes to the President's desk and gets signed into law. That is how you expand the Clean Water Act.

You don't expand the Clean Water Act by somebody saying: You know, we just really think that the Congress should have done something here that they didn't do, and so we are going to do it. Then your friends who actually support the goal are so lulled into the idea that the government won't work that they even forget the constitutional process and say: Well, there is no question; the truth is this expands the regulations under the Clean Water Act.

If you ask anybody at the Washington Post or anybody else that uses words all the time to define navigable waters of the United States, nobody would say that is any water that flows into any water that might eventually flow into water that you can navigate. Nobody would say that. Nobody would say those are the navigable waters of the United States. But that is the authority that the EPA has.

Now we are talking about the authority the EPA would like to take. That is why I and a number of my colleagues—I think 29 of us—joined Senator BARRASSO in a bill that would say you can't do this. We are going to protect the water and property rights and stop the EPA from going beyond the wall.

Senator BARRASSO is also going to file that as an amendment that I intend to support on the bill before us now, the sportsmen's act. That has lots of water implications, many of which I have supported—the wetlands act. There are many things in there that I can be supportive of, but I am not supportive without any congressional authority of the EPA's deciding they are just going to take property rights from people who have those rights. I am particularly not supportive of that when the law was designed to define what the EPA could do.

If anybody wants to go out and do any kind of survey of the American people—let alone the legislators who voted for the Clean Water Act—and ask what ''navigable waters'' is, nobody thinks that is every drop of water that eventually flows to a source that could at some point in the distant distance be navigable.

We know what the law says. We know the authority the EPA has been given. I think we can have a legitimate debate about whether that authority has been properly used or not. But there is no legitimate debate about whether the EPA is trying to go way beyond what the Congress has authorized.

This idea the administration has that the pen and the phone will replace the Constitution of the United States is not worthy of this country. It not worthy of what we do. It is a disastrous course to set, to believe: OK, Congress, you deal with immigration for the next 60 days or I will just do it on my own. Congress, you change the Clean Water Act or we will just change the Clean Water Act with regulation. Congress, you change the Clean Air Act or we will change the Clean Air Act.

There is a reason for the constitutional process, and I hope Missourians in the next 24 hours are given the chance to remind Administrator McCarthy of what that reason is. And there are reasons that the Congress is looking for ways to remind the President of what that is. That is why I am supporting the Enforcement Law Act that has already passed the House of Representatives. What the Enforcement Law Act would do is give individual Members of Congress standing if a majority of either House of the Congress believes the President wasn't enforcing the law as written to go to a court and ask the court to decide if the President is enforcing the law as written.

In my view there is no way in the world that you could look at this proposed rule by the EPA and believe that the EPA and this administration is in any way complying with what is the clear intent of the law. If they don't like the law, there is a way to come to the Congress and ask it to change the law. That is their job. It is not their job to do the job of the Congress. That job the Constitution left to somebody besides the Executive, whose job it is to execute the law—not to improve on the law, not to write the law, not to make the law. And we see all those things being attempted by people who believe they know what is better for the United States of America than the people of the United States believe is good for the United States of America.

I would yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues in a very important discussion with regard to the waters of the United States and the proposed rule by the EPA.

The good Senator from Missouri, I, a Senator from Wyoming and—as has been already said on the floor—about 30 of us in total are proposing an amendment to the sportsmen's bill which is currently under consideration on the floor—an amendment that would address the regulatory overreach by the EPA and, specifically, their proposed waters of the U.S. regulation.

The amendment we have is very simple, very straightforward. It is relevant to the legislation that is currently on the floor and should be brought forward for a vote. It is amendment No. 3453, and as I said it deals with the waters of the United States.

I am going to take just a minute to read it because it is very simple and very straightforward and could be dealt with in a very expeditious way. Obviously with 29 Senators supporting it, it is an amendment that we should be voting on. This is a clear example of an amendment where this body needs to take a stand, and it is one that should receive a vote as part of this sportsmen's legislation.

So I will read from the amendment:

In General. Neither the Secretary of the Army nor the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall—

(1) finalize the proposed rule entitled ''Definition of 'Waters of the United States' Under the Clean Water Act'';

(2) use the proposed rule described in paragraph (1), or any substantially similar proposed rule or guidance, as a basis for any rulemaking or any decision regarding the scope of the enforcement of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

(b) RULES. The use of the proposed rule described in subsection (a)(1), or any substantially similar proposed rule or guidance, as the basis for any rulemaking or any decision regarding the scope or enforcement of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act shall be grounds for vacation of the final rule, decision, or enforcement action.

So very simply, what we provide is that the EPA cannot move forward with the proposed waters of the U.S. rule. It is appropriate because in essence, as my colleague from Missouri very accurately described, the EPA has gone way beyond its jurisdiction on this rule.

EPA alleges that it is responding to confusion in regard to the proposed Waters of the U.S. rule that it is getting from farmers and ranchers across our country. The fact is that is not the case. What EPA is doing is they are expanding their jurisdiction dramatically under an argument that the Supreme Court did not make, but an argument, rather, that the EPA is making that under what they call ''significant nexus'' they are empowered to regulate waters far beyond navigable bodies of water.

This is something I think affects almost every industry sector, but I am going to bring it back to a discussion of our farmers and ranchers and private property rights, which are, in fact, impacted by this proposed rule to talk about why it is so important that we have an opportunity to vote on this amendment and to defeat the proposed rule.

America's farmers and ranchers and entrepreneurs go to work every day to build a stronger Nation. Thanks to these hardworking men and women, we live in a country where there is affordable food at the grocery store and where a dynamic private sector offers Americans the opportunity to achieve a brighter future. In these difficult economic times the Federal Government should be doing all it can to empower those who grow our food and create jobs. Yet instead regulators are stifling growth with burdensome regulations which generate costs and uncertainty.

The proposed rule by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate the waters of the United States is exactly the type of regulation that I am talking about. The waters of the United States rule greatly expands the scope of the Clean Water Act with regulations over America's streams and wetlands.

If we look at the chart I brought, we can see it is not just affecting our farmers and ranchers, it goes far beyond that. For example, it affects the power industry, the oil and gas industry, the construction industry, and the manufacturing industry. Almost anything you can think of is impacted by this regulatory overreach. It is clearly a power grab by the EPA, and it needs to be checked.

The Supreme Court has found that Federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act extends to navigable waters. We are not arguing with the EPA's ability to regulate something like the Missouri River or a lake that is a navigable body of water, but the Supreme Court has also made it clear that not all bodies of water are navigable or under the EPA's jurisdiction.

What has our farmers and ranchers so concerned is that the Corps and the EPA went far beyond lakes and rivers. This new proposed rule would bring EPA permitting, reporting, enforcement, mitigation, and citizen lawsuits to ephemeral streams. Ephemeral streams are really dry land most of the time. To a farmer, an ephemeral stream is simply a low area across the field. It brings tributaries into it—tributaries which are all ditches that carry any amount of water that eventually flows into a navigable body of water. Think about that. Ditches. All waters that are deemed adjacent to other jurisdictional waters, including dry ditches and ephemerals, plus any other waters that the EPA has determined to have a significant nexus. In real-world terms, these categories could bring burdensome regulations to a vast number of small, isolated wetlands and ponds. It is hard to see, but that is what we tried to depict on this chart. It is almost any type of water anywhere you find it.

For those of you who have not had the opportunity to visit with a farmer from my State of North Dakota, know that dealing with excess water is a common issue, to say the least, particularly in recent years. Most farmers could tell you that just because there is water in a ditch or a field one week doesn't mean there is going to be water in that field or ditch the next week. It certainly doesn't make that water worthy of being treated the same as a navigable river or lake. It defies common sense. A field with a low spot that has standing water during a rainy week and happens to be located near a ditch does not warrant Clean Water Act regulation from a legal or, as I have said, commonsense perspective.

The Corps and the EPA have responded to these concerns by saying they are going to exempt dozens of conservation practices, but these exemptions are extremely limited and they do not cover many Clean Water Act rights. For example, the farmer with a low spot in his field next to the ditch described above—as I just explained—may now be sued under the Clean Water Act's section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. Think about that. Now the farmer faces the risk of litigation and litigation costs for using everyday weed control or fertilizer applications among other basic and essential farming activities.

Let me get this right. The EPA is saying: We are doing this because this is going to help farmers somehow understand what they have to do.

So the EPA goes beyond navigable bodies of water—let's take a State such as Ohio, for example. They are going to go beyond the Great Lakes and beyond the Ohio River, and the EPA is now going to extend their regulatory jurisdiction to water wherever they find it—in a ditch or on a farm—and they are going to regulate that, and they might give that farmer or rancher an exemption, and somehow they are helping and clarifying things for that farmer or rancher? It defies common sense.

Farmers and ranchers have to work through uncertain weather and markets to ensure that America is food secure, and they do an amazing job of it. They are the best in the world. Sixteen million people in this country are either directly involved in agriculture or indirectly involved in agriculture. We have a positive balance of payments in agriculture. We have the lowest cost, highest quality food supply in the world. Now the EPA by its own volition is going to go out and make it harder and more expensive and more difficult for our farmers and ranchers to do what they do better than anyone in the world. Farmers and ranchers have to work through uncertain weather and markets to ensure that we have food security. They don't need the burden of additional regulations and litigation,

and they certainly don't need that burden under the auspices of the EPA saying that somehow this is going to help. Well, that is not the case.

I offered a very similar amendment in the Appropriations Committee in the energy and water section. The night before we were to have our full Appropriations Committee meeting, at 7:30 that night, that bill, the Energy and Water bill, got pulled, so we didn't have our appropriations vote the next morning.

The amendment I had prepared simply would have defunded this proposed regulation, but because there was bipartisan support for this amendment, we are not going to get a chance to vote on it.

Twenty-eight other Senators and I have been here on the floor this afternoon. The Senator from Missouri was just here. The Senator from Wyoming was here earlier. Others have been here. I am here now. There will be more. So here we stand. We are on a sportsmen's bill, this is a relevant amendment, and the question is, Why aren't we voting on it? It has bipartisan support and 29 cosponsors. It is something that is clearly important not just to our farmers and ranchers but really to businesses and industry across this great country. So why aren't we voting on it? If somebody wants to come down and make an argument that they are for it, they can do so. But when all is said and done, the way this body works is by voting and determining where the majority falls.

I ask my colleagues, why in the world are we not voting on this amendment that is incredibly important to our farmers and ranchers and to businesses and to industry and to the people of this country? As I said, we didn't get a chance to vote on it in committee, and here we are on a bill where it is relevant. Are we going to get a chance to vote on it now? And if not now, when?

The majority rules, so let's have a vote. Let's give everybody a chance to stand and be counted. Let's have our vote, and let's stand up for the American people and make sure we strike down this proposed waters of the United States regulation.

With that, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VA HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I have received a number of calls in recent weeks, as we all have, about what is happening at the Veterans' Administration. Over the July 4th week, back in Ohio, I heard from lots of veterans at roundtables in communities all over the State, from Steubenville to Dayton, and lots of places in between: What are we going to do about the VA? I heard outrage. I heard disillusion over the VA. There is outrage about a system charged with caring for those who defend our Nation that falls short. There is frustration and disillusion because our veterans are waiting too long. We need to fix that.

But I also saw letters to the Cincinnati Enquirer and the Cleveland Plain Dealer and I had conversations with veterans who defended and bragged about the service they are getting, the care they are getting, whether it is the VA in Cincinnati or Dayton or Cleveland or Columbus or Chillicothe—the hospitals we have in my State—or whether it is the community-based clinics in places such as Mansfield and Zanesville and Lima and Springfield—those smaller community-based outpatient clinics, so-called CBOCs, that serve veterans who need less acute care but still need service from a doctor, from a nurse, from a physical therapist.

We can only conclude a couple of things. We can conclude there are, in fact, serious problems with the VA that need to be fixed. The Presiding Officer is a prominent member of the Veterans' Committee, and from his veterans hospitals in Connecticut he hears the same. We can also conclude that those who get in the system overwhelmingly are getting good care. There are 6.5 million veterans who are using VA health care with 85 million patient visits a year. That was in 2013. I assume there is a similar number this year. They are getting good care.

The problem is access to the system. The waiting times are simply unacceptable and outrageous and the disillusionment for those veterans is worse. We know what waiting times mean, especially in mental health treatment, where far too many veterans commit suicide.

With costs of war—and particularly this last round of wars over the last decade where we went to war as a nation, wrongly, in Iraq—we didn't pay for that war—and then the President and the Congress a decade ago made a fateful mistake, mostly out of arrogance, assuming that these two wars would be so short we didn't need to scale up the VA, we didn't need to increase funding, we didn't need to expand services, we didn't need to hire more doctors and nurses—two things happened. One, a whole bunch of new veterans, new soldiers and sailors and marines and air men and women, came home from Iraq and Afghanistan. A whole lot more were in the war than President Bush and the Congress thought would happen or cared to think would happen a decade ago.

The second thing is they came home in much worse shape than in previous wars. Soldiers who would have died on the battlefields—the Presiding Officer is a veteran himself and he knows and we all know that the illnesses and physical and mental injuries are much greater in this war because they survived the battlefield when they might not have survived these same kinds of explosions 20 or 30 years ago.

The third thing—I said two. The third thing that happened is because of a decision Congress made that was right a couple of decades ago—I believe it was President Clinton who signed that bill; it might have been President Bush 1—in passing a bill which included a provision called presumptive eligibility for Agent Orange. Before presumptive eligibility, when a veteran came home from Vietnam right after the war or developed an illness many years later, that veteran would have to fight with the VA to prove that Agent Orange was the reason he or she had that illness. After Agent Orange presumptive eligibility, what that meant is that these soldiers and these veterans, 20 years later, if they had 1 of the 20 or so illnesses defined by the law that were connected to Agent Orange, they automatically were eligible. That is called presumptive eligibility, meaning they were eligible for VA services and health care. That was a great thing.

However, what that meant is that as more and more veterans moved forward from Vietnam, as they aged into their fifties and sixties and some into their seventies, they have had a huge influx of patients into the VA. That is why this veterans conference report—the bill that passed the House and the bill that passed the Senate with almost no ''no'' votes—is so important, because our commitment to our veterans must match their commitment to our Nation.

I am the first Ohioan to serve a full term ever on the Senate Veterans' Committee. I have been lucky enough to be appointed to the joint House and Senate conference committee. We need to iron out the differences in these bills. We need to do three things. First, increase the accountability in the VA. VA employees, senior employees in particular, who don't do their jobs should lose their jobs; that if it is proven in fact they did not do their jobs, if they altered information, if they explained away delays incorrectly or dishonestly, that they be held accountable, period.

Although let's keep in mind the vast majority of VA employees, whether they are in Hartford or whether they are in Cleveland, are dedicated public servants to our Nation and to our veterans. These are men and women who chose to serve veterans, to work in Chillicothe, in Zanesville, and in Columbus, and so many of them are veterans themselves. They chose a career to serve veterans and they are veterans themselves. Whether it is a police officer at the Dayton VA, a claims processor at the Cleveland VARO, a nurse

at the Toledo CBOC, our veterans rely on them. We shouldn't condemn the VA at large for the wrongdoings of a relative few.

Second, the compromise bill will provide an option for veterans who are experiencing long wait times. In the Presiding Officer's State of Connecticut and in mine, few veterans are all that far from a CBOC or from a hospital, and this new proposal says that for veterans more than 40 miles away from a CBOC or hospital, they can go elsewhere to a local hospital or a local community-based health center instead of the VA because they are closer. We don't have too many places in my State—and I believe there are none in the Presiding Officer's State—where that is the case. But those veterans who have had to wait 30 years or 30 days should have that option because care for the veteran, our commitment to veterans must match their commitment to our Nation.

Third and last, the compromise bill will expand and enhance the VA's ability to provide veterans with the care they deserve. It will allow the VA to hire more doctors and nurses and physical therapists, to build more beds, to build more capacity at these VA centers and CBOCs to make sure they have the staff necessary. With the end of these two wars, thousands of our newest veterans will be joining the ranks of VA health care.

The shortage of care providers has been especially pressing for vets struggling with a brain injury—the so-called invisible injuries. That is when a soldier in the Army gets a head injury and it might be considered a minor head injury. A number of combatants have told me they get their ''bells rung'' is the term they use. It is an invisible injury, a minor concussion—often not reported but a minor concussion—and then another one and then another one. Look at what the stories have told us about the NFL players. The same holds true, only in a more serious way, for soldiers and for marines, what happens to them down the road. Thirty years later they go to the VA, their behavior has changed, their families are calling. The VA has no documentation of these injuries. They have to struggle to show these injuries, to prove these injuries to the VA, to the doctors for a diagnosis and to the VA for the coverage of the disability.

That is why my tracker bill, the Fairman Significant Event Tracker Act—or SET Act—is so important. Instead of the burden being on the veteran to show here were my concussions, here were my injuries, I should be eligible for disability; here is what happened to me, diagnose me with the right diagnosis, the Army itself should be keeping those records, and they should follow the health care of the veteran when they are in the military, when they are in the VA. The interface has to take place much more smoothly, so when a soldier turns in her gear and she comes back to Ravenna, OH, or she comes back to Wauseon, OH, or she comes back to Maple Heights or Garfield Heights, the VA locally will know what has happened to her.

These are the challenges. I will finish with a couple of troubling notes I received from a couple of people in Ohio. One came from Gary in Franklin County, which is the home of the State capital: My brother was a Vietnam vet and survivor of a major battle in Vietnam. He never discussed his experiences. He took his life in 1992. This bill will provide important mechanisms to help reduce the rate of suicides among our veterans. Every Member of Congress should support it. It is not a political issue, but a part of our sincere and legitimate commitment to our veterans.

I couldn't have said it better.

Christine from Miami County, the county just north of Dayton in southwest Ohio: This bill will remove the redtape that our veterans encounter at a time when they are least able to deal with it. My son died at his own hands after a tour in the Middle East. He sought help from the VA and was diagnosed with PTSD shortly before dying. I know his mental state at the time, and he would not have been able to handle providing proof that he experienced traumatic events or remember the duties he performed.

In other words, he had these injuries. The military didn't have the records of these injuries because he wasn't injured so badly that he was sent back to Germany or to Bethesda or to Walter Reed, but the military should have kept these records so he knew what, in fact, was wrong. He was not able, in his condition, to put together and find his old buddies that were with him 6 or 8 years earlier that could kind of recall the incidents of what happened.

Christine writes that this bill is a simple, effective solution.

We need to address the issues facing our veterans. Our commitment to our troops must match their commitment to our Nation.

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. 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 am here for the 73rd ''time to wake up'' speech that I have done to urge my colleagues to wake up to the growing threat of climate change. The changes we are seeing, driven by carbon pollution, are far-reaching—from the coast lines of States such as Rhode Island and the Presiding Officer's State of Connecticut, to the great plateaus and mountain ranges out West; from pole to pole; from high up in the atmosphere to deep down in the oceans.

In Rhode Island, we know the oceans are ground zero for the effects of carbon pollution. Since the Industrial Revolution, the oceans have been absorbing our carbon dioxide emissions—roughly a quarter of the total excess emissions—which, by the laws of chemistry, has caused rapid changes in ocean acidity, the pH level of the oceans, changes not seen for a long time. When I say ''a long time,'' I mean at least 25 to 50 million years, potentially as many as 300 million years. To put 300 million years into perspective, we homo sapiens—the human species—have been on the Earth for about 200,000 years. So 300 million years goes way back into geologic time, back before the dinosaurs. So a change that is unprecedented in that much time is something we should pay attention to.

Recently, four Republican former EPA Administrators testified before my Environment and Public Works subcommittee on the dire need for congressional action to curb this carbon pollution that is causing these effects in our oceans.

Here is how the EPA's very first Administrator, William Ruckelshaus, put it. He said:

> Since the ocean absorbs 25–30 percent of the carbon from stationary or mobile sources we thought the ocean was our friend. It was keeping significant amounts of carbon from the atmosphere. But our friend is paying a penalty.

As carbon dissolves in water, it makes the water more acidic—a fundamental chemical proposition—and that can upset the delicate balance of ocean life. Again, that is just basic physics and chemistry.

Ronald Reagan's EPA chief Lee Thomas—Ronald Reagan's EPA chief—warned us that thanks to the profuse carbon pollution we have emitted, oceans are now acidifying at a rate 50 times greater than known historical change—50 times.

Of course, my colleagues in the minority did not seem inclined to listen to their fellow Republicans. Instead, they took a page out of the polluters' playbook, and as usual their routine was to call into question widely accepted science.

Well, I recently visited communities around the country. I will mention my trip recently along the southeast coast—the Atlantic coast—where researchers, elected officials, and business and home owners are seeing the effects of climate change firsthand.

It does not matter what somebody thinks on the Senate floor. They are seeing it firsthand. They know better than what the polluting special interests are trying to sell. Indeed, recently the United States Conference of Mayors unanimously adopted a resolution calling for natural solutions to fight the effects of climate change to ''protect fresh water supplies, defend the Nation's coastlines, maintain a healthy tree and green space cover, and protect air quality.'' Unanimously, by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, a bipartisan organization.

So there are a lot of people who know better than the nonsense the polluting special interests are trying to sell.

I flew out during this trip to where sea level rise is gnawing away at the Outer Banks. When you fly over the North Carolina coast, you see a lot of investment along the shoreline. You see houses, big houses, nice houses. You see hotels, you see restaurants, you see roads and infrastructure, you see an entire seafront economy.

I met down there with the North Carolina Coastal Federation at their Coastal Education Center in Wilmington. This is a bipartisan group. It has joined together in concern over the exposure of their coastal communities, their homes, to rising seas. What would my colleagues here in the Senate tell this bipartisan group in North Carolina about climate change? What would they tell the United States Conference of Mayors, a bipartisan group, about climate change? Do not worry, it is not real; run along now, do not concern yourself.

Good luck with that. People know better.

King Canute could not decree that the tide not come in. Republicans in Congress cannot legislate away the changes we are seeing in our oceans. When I was down in Florida, fishermen there told me about the northward migration of species they are used to catching in Florida, species such as redfish and snook, moving north because of warming ocean temperatures.

Fishermen in South Carolina told me snook are now being caught off the coast of Charleston. I have heard that redfish are being caught as far north as Cape Cod. I believe that because Rhode Islanders are catching tarpon and grouper off the shore of Rhode Island. I have had Rhode Island fishermen tell me they are catching fish their fathers and grandfathers never saw come up in their nets.

As one Rhode Island fisherman told me, ''Sheldon, it's getting weird out there.''

It is not just Rhode Island. The Maine legislature just established a bipartisan commission to study and address the harm from ocean acidification to ecosystems and to their shell fisheries—again, bipartisan.

Once you leave this building, people are taking bipartisan action. It is only here that the polluters hold such sway.

In Virginia, which is also a coal State, a bipartisan group, including Republican U.S. Representatives SCOTT RIGELL and Democratic Governor Terry McAuliffe, are working together to prepare communities such as Hampton Roads, VA, for several feet of sea level rise.

A State commission that was first assembled under the administration of our Virginia colleague TIM KAINE, back when he was Governor, has reconvened to address the threat of climate change in the oceans.

These Virginia leaders are not wasting time quarreling and denying basic science. They are working to protect commerce and homeowners in their communities threatened as the seas continue to rise. While our Republican colleagues in Congress try their best to ignore the problem of carbon pollution, there are very serious conversations going on outside these walls.

For example, former President George W. Bush's Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson invoked ocean warming and sea level rise in a recent editorial he wrote, calling for a fee on carbon pollution. Here is the cover of this week's Newsweek: ''Deep end. What rapid changes in oceans mean for Earth.''

This would not be the first one. Last year, National Geographic came out with this issue entitled ''Rising Seas.''

Now perhaps my colleagues on the other side who pretend that climate change is a hoax will agree that Newsweek is part of the hoax; National Geographic is part of the hoax; U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is part of the hoax; the U.S. Navy is part of the hoax. We are bedeviled in this Chamber by preposterous ideas. What the Newsweek cover article highlights is the unprecedented effects of pumping all of that excess carbon into our oceans, ranging from coral bleaching to dissolving larval shellfish, to the disappearance of entire species.

BloombergView just published a recent editorial titled ''Climate Change Goes Underwater.''

I ask unanimous consent that this document be printed in the RECORD at the end of my comments.

This is not wild speculation. This is good old-fashioned reporting of things that are happening around us that people see. I have talked before about the humble pteropod, so let's talk a little about the pteropod, a funny type of snail which is about the size of a small pea.

The pteropod is known sometimes as the sea butterfly because its small foot has adapted into two little butterfly-like wings which propel it around in the ocean. These images show what can happen to the pteropod shell when the creature's underwater environment becomes more acidic and therefore lacks the compounds that are necessary for this little creature to make its delicate shell. It is not good for the pteropod. This is the pteropod in action with the little butterfly wings that help it to swim. Here is a clean shell from proper water. Here is a dissolving shell from exposure to acidified ocean water. This obviously is not good for the pteropod.

Recent research, which was led by NOAA scientists, has found that ocean acidification off our west coast, in what is called the California current ecosystem, is hitting the pteropod especially hard.

Let me take a minute and read from the publication of this report in the Proceedings of the Royal Society, a respected publication.

> The release of carbon dioxide (CO_2) into the atmosphere from fossil fuel burning, cement production and deforestation processes has resulted in atmospheric CO_2 concentrations that have increased about 40% since the beginning of the industrial era.

Now, the measure of that—we have always had atmospheric carbon concentrations between about 170 and 300 parts per million—we have broken 400. April was the first month when we were consistently, on average, above 400 parts per million.

When you think that the 170 to 300 parts per million range has lasted for thousands of years, for millennia, for longer than our species has been on the planet, the fact that we are suddenly outside of that range is a signal that ought to call our attention. That is what they are referring to.

Continuing:

> The oceans have taken up approximately 28% of the total amount of CO_2 produced by human activities over this time-frame, causing a variety of chemical changes known as ocean acidification (OA).

The rapid change in ocean chemistry is faster than at any time over the past 50 million years.

They go on to say, toward the end of the report, that one of the chokepoint areas, what they call the first bottleneck: ''The first bottleneck would primarily affect veligers and larvae''—which are early stages of the shell before its shell has hardened. The larvae is little, and the veliger is when it has kind of a shroud around it, but not yet a shell. It helps it to move and to consume food.

Continuing:

> The first bottleneck would primarily affect veligers and larvae, life stages where complete shell dissolution in the larvae can occur within two weeks upon exposure to undersaturation.

They also note that:

> Significant increases in vertical and spatial extent of conditions favouring pteropod shell dissolution are expected to make this habitat potentially unsuitable for pteropods.

So if the California current ecosystem habitat becomes unsuitable for pteropods, we have a little problem on our hands because pteropods are food for important fish like salmon, like mackerel, like herring. Pteropods are the base of the food chain. No pteropods means crashed salmon fisheries, crashed mackerel fisheries, crashed herring fisheries, crashes throughout polar and subpolar fisheries.

Dr. William Peterson is an oceanographer at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center. He is the coauthor of the study, and he said: ''We did not expect to see pteropods being affected to this extent in our coastal region for several decades.''

These ecosystems, these ocean ecosystems, are crumbling before our eyes and yet this Congress hides behind denial. In the face of inertia in Congress and in the face of the relentless truculence of the deniers, the Obama administration is trying to do what it can to push responsible policies.

Last month Secretary of State John Kerry held the State Department's ''Our Ocean'' Conference and I attended that conference for 2 days. One of the presenters there was Dr. Carol Turley

of the Plymouth Marine Laboratory. She described her research on ocean acidification, including using this graph of ocean acidity over the past 25 million years. That is today minus 25 million years, today minus 20 million years, minus 15 million years, minus 10 million years, minus 5 million years, and now.

Look at how little variation there has been in ocean pH across that 25-million-year time scale. Remember, we have been on the planet around 200,000 years. We go back to about here.

The rest of this is geologic time. That is a long span of time. If we put that against what is happening now, look how sudden that change is in ocean pH, the basic acidity of the oceans.

Why is this happening? We know that human activity releases gigatons of carbon every year. That is undeniable. We know that carbon dioxide acidifies seawater. That is basic chemistry. You can do that in a high school lab.

We know the ocean's pH is changing in unprecedented ways in human history. No one in their right mind can say this is natural variability.

This acidification of our seas will have devastating effects on ecosystems such as tropical coral reefs, which, as Dr. Turley pointed out, are home to one in every four species in the marine environment. If you wanted to drive a bulldozer through God's species on this planet, it would be hard to do much better than allowing this rampant ocean acidification.

My colleague and cochair of our Senate Oceans Caucus, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, and I have had the chance to address the oceans conference together. She told the conference that the waters off her Alaskan shores are growing more acidic.

I agree with Senator MURKOWSKI that we need to understand what ocean acidification means for our fisheries and ocean ecosystems much better than we do now.

Secretary Kerry delivered a clear challenge. On this planet, with all of its many peoples, we share nothing so completely as we share the oceans. And if we are going to honor our duty to protect the oceans, to honor our duty to future generations, we are going to have to work together. These are painfully clear warnings. The facts speak volumes.

The denial propaganda has shown itself to be nonsense, to be a sham, which ought to come as no surprise because the machinery that produces the climate denial propaganda is the same machinery that denied tobacco was dangerous, the same machinery that denied there was an ozone hole, the same machinery that has always fought public health measures for industry, and has always been wrong. It has always been wrong because it is not its job to be right. It is its job to protect industry and allow them to continue to pollute and make money. That is its job. So it ought to come as no surprise that the argument it makes about climate change is nonsense and is a sham. It is time to unshackle ourselves from that machinery.

History is going to look back at this, and it will not be a shining moment for us. History will reflect that the polluters are polluting our democracy with their money and their influence just as badly as they are polluting our oceans and our atmosphere with their carbon.

We have to wake up. It will disserve our grandchildren and their grandchildren, and it will disgrace our generation to have allowed this democracy to miss this issue and to fail to act because of the propaganda machinery that has over and over again proven itself to be wrong. Our ocean economies, our ocean heritage, are all at stake.

As Secretary Kerry put it, it is our ocean, and it is our responsibility. Let us please wake up before we have completely disgraced ourselves.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Bloomberg View, June 29, 2014]

CLIMATE CHANGE GOES UNDERWATER

(By The Editors)

When it comes to climate change, almost all the attention is on the air. What's happening to the water, however, is just as worrying—although for the moment it may be slightly more manageable.

Here's the problem in a seashell: As the oceans absorb about a quarter of the carbon dioxide released by fossil-fuel burning, the pH level in the underwater world is falling, creating the marine version of climate change. Ocean acidification is rising at its fastest pace in 300 million years, according to scientists.

The most obvious effects have been on oysters, clams, coral and other sea-dwelling creatures with hard parts, because more acidic water contains less of the calcium carbonate essential for shell- and skeleton-building. But there are also implications for the land-based creatures known as humans.

It's not just the Pacific oyster farmers who are finding high pH levels make it hard for larvae to form, or the clam fishermen in Maine who discover that the clams on the bottom of their buckets can be crushed by the weight of a full load, or even the 123.3 million Americans who live near or on the coasts. Oceans cover more than two-thirds of the earth, and changes to the marine ecosystem will have profound effects on the planet.

Stopping acidification, like stopping climate change, requires first and foremost a worldwide reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions. That's the bad news. Coming to an international agreement about the best way to do that is hard.

Unlike with climate change, however, local action can make a real difference against acidification. This is because in many coastal regions where shellfish and coral reefs are at risk, an already bad situation is being made worse by localized air and water pollution, such as acid rain from coal-burning; effluent from big farms, pulp mills and sewage systems; and storm runoff from urban pavement. This means that existing anti-pollution laws can address some of the problem.

States have the authority under the U.S. Clean Water Act, for instance, to set standards for water quality, and they can use that authority to strengthen local limits on the kinds of pollution that most contribute to acidification hot spots. Coastal states and cities can also maximize the amount of land covered in vegetation (rather than asphalt or concrete), so that when it rains the water filters through soil and doesn't easily wash urban pollution into the sea. States can also qualify for federal funding for acidification research in their estuaries.

Such research can hardly happen fast enough. It's still not known, for instance, exactly to what extent acidification is to blame for the decline of coral reefs. And if the chemical change in the ocean makes it harder for sea snails and other pteropods to survive, will that also threaten the wild salmon and other big fish that eat them?

Better monitoring of acidification would help scientists learn how much it varies from place to place and what makes the difference. This calls for continuous readings, because pH levels shift throughout the day and from season to season. Engineers are designing new measuring devices that can be left in the water, and it looks like monitoring will eventually be done in a standardized way throughout the world.

In the meantime, researchers are finding small ways to give local populations of shellfish their best chance to survive—depositing crushed shells in the mudflats where clams live, for instance, to neutralize the sediment, or planting sea grass in shellfish habitats to absorb CO2. Such strategies, like pollution control, are worthwhile if only to help keep shellfish populations as robust as possible in the short term, perhaps giving natural selection the opportunity to breed strains better suited to a lower-pH world.

These efforts also give humans more time to learn about ocean acidification. And maybe they will help their political leaders better understand the urgency of international cooperation on limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield the floor and I 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF NORMAN C. BAY TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 839.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Norman C. Bay, of New Mexico, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented