

govern benefit equivalency between nonimmigrant visa holders and their U.S. counterparts. It is also not Congress's intent to impact or diminish in any way an employee's rights under title VII of the Civil Rights Act or any other antidiscrimination protections or to preempt any relevant State law governing employees' rights.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of this bill and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward on this issue.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a statement in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act be printed in the RECORD.

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

STATEMENT OF SENATORS WYDEN, HATCH, HARKIN, ALEXANDER, SESSIONS, CARPER, TOOMEY, COONS, AND RUBIO IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

The undersigned submit the following Statement for the Record in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, as amended by Senators Carper, Toomey, Coons, and Rubio.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of Division M and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward.

The purpose of this bipartisan and technical bill is to ensure that U.S. health insurers who provide expatriate health insurance plans encounter the same legal requirements and expectations as foreign expatriate health insurers. Further, it is important to clarify that the intent of the language regarding the application of section 4980I of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to "qualified expatriates" who are "assigned" to work in the United States means that, notwithstanding other provisions in the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, the excise tax continues to apply in the case of highly skilled qualified expatriates, as defined by this legislation, who are newly assigned to

work within the United States in a specialty occupation and should not apply with respect to qualified expatriates working in the United States with L, E, O, and R visa classifications. Furthermore, this legislation is not intended to expand the universe of eligible employer-sponsored coverage to which section 4980I applies.

The Department of the Treasury will be drafting regulations to implement the portions of Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act that fall within its responsibility. It is important to highlight the definition of "qualified expatriates" who are "assigned" to work in the United States because it is the intent of Congress that the Treasury regulation relating to Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, and code section 4980I, in particular be promulgated and implemented in a timely and workable manner.

NOMINATION OF DR. VIVEK MURTHY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I urge the Senate to schedule an immediate vote on the nomination of Dr. Vivek Murthy to serve as the next Surgeon General of the United States. One year ago, President Obama nominated Dr. Murthy to serve as our next Surgeon General. Ten months ago, Dr. Murthy's nomination was approved by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, Committee. Since then, his nomination has stalled. I, along with many of my colleagues, have written to Senate leadership, requesting an immediate floor vote. Yet—here we are—still no vote.

The Surgeon General serves as "America's Doctor." He ensures Americans are receiving the very best scientific information available in order to improve their health and reduce risk of injury or illness. The Surgeon General also oversees the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a group of 7,000 men and women who are uniformed public health professionals working throughout the federal government to protect, promote, and advance our Nation's health. Finally, the Surgeon General is responsible for chairing the National Prevention Council.

The urgent need to have a Surgeon General in place and at-the-ready is never more evident than when we are confronted with a public health crisis, as we are now. Over the past many months, our global community has struggled to respond to the Ebola epidemic plaguing West Africa and threatening communities nationwide. The United States has been rightly focused on dealing with the epidemic at its epicenter in West Africa, protecting our ports of entry, and protecting America's public health. Yet, our response has been hindered because we do not have a confirmed U.S. Surgeon General in place.

Households across our nation were flooded with misinformation and confusion when Ebola was first diagnosed in the United States. If Dr. Murthy had been in place as Surgeon General, he would have been responsible for in-

creasing public understanding about Ebola; providing accurate, important, and timely medical information; and helping to ease fears. As "America's Doctor" he would have provided an additional trusted voice that could have communicated with the public and helped address their concerns. Instead, "America's Doctor" was sitting on the sidelines awaiting a Senate vote on his nomination.

Like so many of us, Dr. Murthy is the son of immigrant parents. He completed his early education in Miami, FL, and attended college at Harvard University where he received a bachelor's degree in biochemical sciences. He went on to receive an MD from the Yale School of Medicine and an MBA in Health Care Management from the Yale School of Management. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

As a physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Dr. Murthy has cared for patients with a range of illnesses from diabetes and cardiovascular disease to cancer and infections. As a researcher, he has worked on vaccine development and he has studied the inclusion of women and minorities in clinical trials. As a teacher at Harvard Medical School, he knows what issues face our next generation of doctors. As a public health educator, Dr. Murthy created HIV/AIDS education programs for thousands of young people through an organization he cofounded. He built a rural community health partnership in India to train young women to be health care educators and leaders. As an organizational leader, Dr. Murthy cofounded a national medical organization, Doctors for America, to improve communication between physicians, patients, and policy makers. Finally, as a leader in prevention, he served on the Advisory Group to the National Prevention Council and helped develop the nation's first National Prevention Strategy. I think it is pretty clear that Dr. Murthy has the background and the boots on the ground expertise to serve as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General.

Doubts about his ability to serve as Surgeon General are not the problem holding up his nomination. I fear that policy matters outside the scope of this position are actually to blame. I hope that my colleagues do not let public policy debates unrelated to the position in which he would serve stall his nomination any longer.

Dr. Murthy's nomination has received widespread support from local, State, and national public health organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and American Public Health Association.

It is time to confirm Dr. Murthy as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General. It is time to take "America's Doctor" off the sidelines and put him into the game. Thank you.