(Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 606, a bill to extend the right of appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board to certain employees of the United States Postal Service.

S. 607

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 607, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a five-year extension of the rural community hospital demonstration program, and for other purposes.

S. 650

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 650, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 665

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 665, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, is missing in connection with the officer's official duties, or an imminent and credible threat that an individual intends to cause the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer is received, and for other purposes.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 743, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 747

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 747, a bill to prioritize funding for an expanded and sustained national investment in basic science research.

S. 753

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 753, a bill to amend the method by which the Social Security Administration determines the validity of marriages under title II of the Social Security Act.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 854

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 854, a bill to establish a new organization to manage nuclear waste, provide a consensual process for siting nuclear waste facilities, ensure adequate funding for managing nuclear waste, and for other purposes.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 884

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 884, a bill to improve access to emergency medical services, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 950

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 950, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. CON. RES. 10

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 10, a concurrent resolution supporting the designation of the year of 2015 as the ''International Year of Soils'' and supporting locally led soil conservation.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 974. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit employment of children in tobacco-related agriculture by deeming such employment as oppressive child labor; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the important issue of child labor in tobacco fields. I want to tell you about Calvin, a 17-year-old boy just over five feet tall, who migrated to the United States by himself at age 13, leaving his family behind in Mexico. Calvin never enrolled in school.

Instead, he joined a migrant crew that travels between several states to work in different crops. He migrates to Kentucky in August to work in the tobacco fields. Calvin has worked in tobacco farms since he was 16, and he experiences headaches and nausea from nicotine poisoning.

Calvin said he got sick while working in a curing barn. ''I got a headache and nausea. I was vomiting,'' he said. ''It happened when I was hanging the tobacco in the barn.''

I wish that Calvin's experience was unusual. But in May of last year, the Human Rights Watch published a report based on interviews with over 140 children who worked on U.S. tobacco farms in 2012 or 2013. The majority of those children were working for hire, and not on a family farm. Some of the findings are staggering and show that Calvin is not along.

Human Rights Watch found that child tobacco workers began working on tobacco farms at age 11 or 12. During peak harvest periods, children can work as many as 50–60 hours a week. The majority of these children experience symptoms like nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, dizziness, lightheadedness, headaches, and sleeplessness while working on tobacco farms. These symptoms are consistent with acute nicotine poisoning, which happens when you absorb nicotine through their skin.

Furthermore, in these conditions, children work in high heat and humidity and in some instances, they use dangerous tools that include sharp spikes to spear tobacco plants and climb to dangerous heights to hang tobacco in curing barns. These children are exposed to pesticides that are known toxins. Long-term effects of this exposure include cancer, neurological deficits, and reproductive health problems.

In his first summer in the field, 12-year-old Miguel was topping tobacco plants on a farm in North Carolina wearing shorts and a short-sleeved shirt, his torso draped with a black plastic garbage bag to cover himself from the summer's heavy rainstorms. Miguel wore only socks—because he did

not have shoes that could withstand the thick mud from the heavy rain.

Miguel lives with his mother, 13-year-old brother, and 5-year-old sister in a rural town in North Carolina. He attends a public school full-time, and works in the fields during his summer break to help cover the costs of food, clothes, and school supplies for the family.

Miguel was hired by a farm labor contractor to work on different farms planting sweet potatoes one day, topping tobacco the next. When asked which crop was harder work, Miguel said, ''tobacco, because you have to walk, and you have to use your hands all the time. It's really tiring.''

It is tiring. By the time Miguel got home, he would have trouble walking because his legs and feet were so sore from working all day. Not only was 12-year Miguel physically overworked, he, like Calvin, also had to deal with frequent headaches, caused by nicotine poisoning, from working in the tobacco fields. He said, ''It was horrible. It felt like there was something in my head trying to eat it.''

I am introducing legislation today, with Senator REED of Rhode Island, Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BROWN to take children like Calvin and Miguel out of the tobacco fields. Our bill would make it illegal to allow children under the age of 18 to handle tobacco plants or dried tobacco leaves.

Currently, U.S. law prohibits children under the age of 18 from buying cigarettes . . . but allows children as young as 12 to work in tobacco fields. In most other jobs in the U.S., children are not allowed to work before the age of 15.

Today, there are no specific restrictions protecting children from nicotine poisoning or other risks associated with tobacco farming in this country. The United States is the 4th leading tobacco producer in the world, behind China, Brazil, and India. Even Brazil and India prohibit children under 18 from working in tobacco production.

It's time for the United States to adopt similar restrictions. Our children shouldn't be working long hours with a plant that makes them sick. I encourage my colleagues to work with me to pass S. 974, the Children Don't Belong on Tobacco Farms Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 974

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

SECTION 1. TOBACCO-RELATED AGRICULTURE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN.

Section 3(l) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(l)) is amended—

(1) in this first sentence—

(A) by striking ''in any occupation, or (2)'' and inserting ''in any occupation, (2)''; and

(B) by inserting before the semicolon the following: '', or (3) any employee under the age of eighteen years has direct contact with tobacco plants or dried tobacco leaves''; and

(2) in the second sentence, by striking ''other than manufacturing and mining'' and inserting '', other than manufacturing, mining, and tobacco-related agriculture as described in paragraph (3) of the first sentence of this subsection,''.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 975. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 975

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''American Business for American Companies Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON AWARDING CONTRACTS TO INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATIONS.

(a) CIVILIAN CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 47 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 4713. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations

''(a) PROHIBITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an executive agency may not award a contract for the procurement of property or services to—

''(A) any foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity; or

''(B) any joint venture if more than 10 percent of the joint venture (by vote or value) is held by a foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity.

''(2) SUBCONTRACTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of an executive agency shall include in each contract for the procurement of property or services awarded by the executive agency with a value in excess of $10,000,000, other than a contract for exclusively commercial items, a clause that prohibits the prime contractor on such contract from—

''(i) awarding a first-tier subcontract with a value greater than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract to an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1); or

''(ii) structuring subcontract tiers in a manner designed to avoid the limitation in paragraph (1) by enabling an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1) to perform more than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract as a lower-tier subcontractor.

''(B) PENALTIES.—The contract clause included in contracts pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide that, in the event that the prime contractor violates the contract clause—

''(i) the prime contract may be terminated for default; and

''(ii) the matter may be referred to the suspension or debarment official for the appropriate agency and may be a basis for suspension or debarment of the prime contractor.

''(b) INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a foreign incorporated entity shall be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if, pursuant to a plan (or a series of related transactions)—

''(A) the entity completes before, on, or after May 8, 2014, the direct or indirect acquisition of—

''(i) substantially all of the properties held directly or indirectly by a domestic corporation; or

''(ii) substantially all of the assets of, or substantially all of the properties constituting a trade or business of, a domestic partnership; and

''(B) after the acquisition, either—

''(i) more than 50 percent of the stock (by vote or value) of the entity is held—

''(I) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic corporation, by former shareholders of the domestic corporation by reason of holding stock in the domestic corporation; or

''(II) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic partnership, by former partners of the domestic partnership by reason of holding a capital or profits interest in the domestic partnership; or

''(ii) the management and control of the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States, as determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, and such expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR CORPORATIONS WITH SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRY OF ORGANIZATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A foreign incorporated entity described in paragraph (1) shall not be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if after the acquisition the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity has substantial business activities in the foreign country in which or under the law of which the entity is created or organized when compared to the total business activities of such expanded affiliated group.

''(B) SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall establish regulations for determining whether an affiliated group has substantial business activities for purposes of subparagraph (A), except that such regulations may not treat any group as having substantial business activities if such group would not be considered to have substantial business activities under the regulations prescribed under section 7874 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as in effect on May 8, 2014.

''(3) SIGNIFICANT DOMESTIC BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B)(ii), an expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities if at least 25 percent of—

''(i) the employees of the group are based in the United States;

''(ii) the employee compensation incurred by the group is incurred with respect to employees based in the United States;

''(iii) the assets of the group are located in the United States; or

''(iv) the income of the group is derived in the United States.

''(B) DETERMINATION.—Determinations pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be made in the same manner as such determinations are made for purposes of determining substantial business activities under regulations referred to in paragraph (2) as in effect on May 8, 2014, but applied by treating all references in such regulations to 'foreign country' and 'relevant foreign country' as references to 'the United States'. The Secretary of the

Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) may issue regulations decreasing the threshold percent in any of the tests under such regulations for determining if business activities constitute significant domestic business activities for purposes of this paragraph.

''(c) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an executive agency may waive subsection (a) with respect to any Federal Government contract under the authority of such head if the head determines that the waiver is—

''(A) required in the interest of national security; or

''(B) necessary for the efficient or effective administration of Federal or Federally-funded—

''(i) programs that provide health benefits to individuals; or

''(ii) public health programs.

''(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The head of an executive agency issuing a waiver under paragraph (1) shall, not later than 14 days after issuing such waiver, submit a written notification of the waiver to the relevant authorizing committees of Congress and the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

''(d) APPLICABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section shall not apply to any contract entered into before the date of the enactment of this section.

''(2) TASK AND DELIVERY ORDERS.—This section shall apply to any task or delivery order issued after the date of the enactment of this section pursuant to a contract entered into before, on, or after such date of enactment.

''(3) SCOPE.—This section applies only to contracts subject to regulation under the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

''(e) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms 'expanded affiliated group', 'foreign incorporated entity', 'person', 'domestic', and 'foreign' have the meaning given those terms in section 835(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)).

''(2) SPECIAL RULES.—In applying subsection (b) of this section for purposes of subsection (a) of this section, the rules described under 835(c)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)(1)) shall apply.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 47 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4712 the following new item:

''4713. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations.''.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 2338. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations

''(a) PROHIBITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may not award a contract for the procurement of property or services to—

''(A) any foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity; or

''(B) any joint venture if more than 10 percent of the joint venture (by vote or value) is owned by a foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity.

''(2) SUBCONTRACTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of an executive agency shall include in each contract for the procurement of property or services awarded by the executive agency with a value in excess of $10,000,000, other than a contract for exclusively commercial items, a clause that prohibits the prime contractor on such contract from—

''(i) awarding a first-tier subcontract with a value greater than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract to an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1); or

''(ii) structuring subcontract tiers in a manner designed to avoid the limitation in paragraph (1) by enabling an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1) to perform more than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract as a lower-tier subcontractor.

''(B) PENALTIES.—The contract clause included in contracts pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide that, in the event that the prime contractor violates the contract clause—

''(i) the prime contract may be terminated for default; and

''(ii) the matter may be referred to the suspension or debarment official for the appropriate agency and may be a basis for suspension or debarment of the prime contractor.

''(b) INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a foreign incorporated entity shall be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if, pursuant to a plan (or a series of related transactions)—

''(A) the entity completes before, on, or after May 8, 2014, the direct or indirect acquisition of—

''(i) substantially all of the properties held directly or indirectly by a domestic corporation; or

''(ii) substantially all of the assets of, or substantially all of the properties constituting a trade or business of, a domestic partnership; and

''(B) after the acquisition, either—

''(i) more than 50 percent of the stock (by vote or value) of the entity is held—

''(I) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic corporation, by former shareholders of the domestic corporation by reason of holding stock in the domestic corporation; or

''(II) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic partnership, by former partners of the domestic partnership by reason of holding a capital or profits interest in the domestic partnership; or

''(ii) the management and control of the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States, as determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, and such expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR CORPORATIONS WITH SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRY OF ORGANIZATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A foreign incorporated entity described in paragraph (1) shall not be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if after the acquisition the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity has substantial business activities in the foreign country in which or under the law of which the entity is created or organized when compared to the total business activities of such expanded affiliated group.

''(B) SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall establish regulations for determining whether an affiliated group has substantial business activities for purposes of subparagraph (A), except that such regulations may not treat any group as having substantial business activities if such group would not be considered to have substantial business activities under the regulations prescribed under section 7874 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as in effect on May 8, 2014.

''(3) SIGNIFICANT DOMESTIC BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B)(ii), an expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities if at least 25 percent of—

''(i) the employees of the group are based in the United States;

''(ii) the employee compensation incurred by the group is incurred with respect to employees based in the United States;

''(iii) the assets of the group are located in the United States; or

''(iv) the income of the group is derived in the United States.

''(B) DETERMINATION.—Determinations pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be made in the same manner as such determinations are made for purposes of determining substantial business activities under regulations referred to in paragraph (2) as in effect on May 8, 2014, but applied by treating all references in such regulations to 'foreign country' and 'relevant foreign country' as references to 'the United States'. The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) may issue regulations decreasing the threshold percent in any of the tests under such regulations for determining if business activities constitute significant domestic business activities for purposes of this paragraph.

''(c) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may waive subsection (a) with respect to any Federal Government contract under the authority of such head if the head determines that the waiver is required in the interest of national security or is necessary for the efficient or effective administration of Federal or Federally-funded programs that provide health benefits to individuals.

''(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The head of an agency issuing a waiver under paragraph (1) shall, not later than 14 days after issuing such waiver, submit a written notification of the waiver to the Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

''(d) APPLICABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section shall not apply to any contract entered into before the date of the enactment of this section.

''(2) TASK AND DELIVERY ORDERS.—This section shall apply to any task or delivery order issued after the date of the enactment of this section pursuant to a contract entered into before, on, or after such date of enactment.

''(3) SCOPE.—This section applies only to contracts subject to regulation under the Federal Acquisition Regulation and the Defense Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

''(e) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms 'expanded affiliated group', 'foreign incorporated entity', 'person', 'domestic', and 'foreign' have the meaning given those terms in section 835(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)).

''(2) SPECIAL RULES.—In applying subsection (b) of this section for purposes of subsection (a) of this section, the rules described under 835(c)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)(1)) shall apply.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

''2338. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations.''

(c) REGULATIONS REGARDING MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall,

for purposes of section 4713(b)(1)(B)(ii) of title 41, United States Code, and section 2338(b)(1)(B)(ii) of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsections (a) and (b), respectively, prescribe regulations for purposes of determining cases in which the management and control of an expanded affiliated group is to be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States. The regulations prescribed under the preceding sentence shall apply to periods after May 8, 2014.

(2) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall provide that the management and control of an expanded affiliated group shall be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States if substantially all of the executive officers and senior management of the expanded affiliated group who exercise day-to-day responsibility for making decisions involving strategic, financial, and operational policies of the expanded affiliated group are based or primarily located within the United States. Individuals who in fact exercise such day-to-day responsibilities shall be treated as executive officers and senior management regardless of their title.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 983. A bill to amend the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to designate high priority corridors on the National Highway System in the State of North Carolina, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am introducing the Military Corridor Transportation Improvement Act of 2015, which would amend the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, ISTEA, of 1991 to begin the process toward eventually making the US–70 Corridor in North Carolina part of the Interstate system, and to help fully upgrade the corridor to interstate standards. My colleague, Senator RICHARD BURR has agreed to cosponsor the bill. In addition, Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD will be introducing a companion bill in the House of Representatives.

The Military Corridor Transportation Improvement Act of 2015 would designate the following as high priority: U.S. Route 117/Interstate Route 795 from U.S. Route 70 in Goldsboro, NC, to Interstate Route 40 west of Faison, North Carolina; U.S. Route 70 from its intersection with Interstate Route 40 in Garner, NC, to the Port at Morehead City, NC.

If the U.S. 70 corridor becomes part of the Interstate system, it would improve access to military bases in eastern North Carolina and the Port at Morehead City, as well as ease traffic congestion between Raleigh and eastern North Carolina.

This bill helps advance the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Strategic Transportation Corridors Vision, which aims to provide North Carolina with a network of high priority corridors to promote economic development and enhance interstate commerce. Federal High Priority Corridors are eligible for federal funds to assist states in the coordination, planning, design and construction of nationally significant transportation corridors for the purposes of economic growth and international and interregional growth.

In midst of a sluggish national economy, North Carolina has been a bright spot for growth and innovation, and one of the keys to sustaining that economic success is through continued investment in transportation, infrastructure, and our military. The Military Corridor Transportation Improvement Act is a true bipartisan effort to support North Carolina's military installations and complement the State's 25 year transportation improvement plan, which in turn will generate economic development, provide a boost for local communities and create good-paying jobs.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 987. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow deductions and credits relating to expenditures in connection with marijuana sales conducted in compliance with State law; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am here today standing up for the people of Oregon and recognizing their decision to legalize and regulate marijuana for recreational use in the State.

Together with Senators MERKLEY and BENNET, I am introducing the Small Business Tax Equity Act, which will provide more equitable Federal tax treatment for small marijuana businesses who comply with State law. This comes after more than 56 percent of Oregonians voted for marijuana legalization. Congressman BLUMENAUER is introducing a companion bill in the House.

Unlike its treatment of all other legal businesses, the tax code currently denies these marijuana businesses, legitimate businesses, the ability to deduct ordinary expenses. Expenses, such as employee pay and rent, that are essential to operating any successful small business.

This is one piece of the equation as Federal tax inequalities for marijuana businesses extend beyond deductions. For example, other businesses are also eligible for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for hiring veterans. Therefore the inability to make deductions, combined with other lost credits, often leads to these businesses paying an effective tax rate ranging from 65–75 percent; compared with other businesses who pay between 15–30 percent.

This issue is not unique to Oregon. Oregon is one of four States, along with the District of Columbia, where voters have passed measures that permit the legal adult use and retail sale of marijuana. Oregon is one of 23 States, along with the District of Columbia, have passed laws allowing for the legal use of medical marijuana.

Unfortunately, Federal law has not caught up with changing State laws, creating contradictions, and leaving these legal businesses in a tough position.

Today, I am introducing a bill to fix this problem. Marijuana businesses operating legally under state law should be able to deduct ordinary business expenses just like any other businesses. Voters have legalized their product, now let's help create a more level playing field that recognizes their business operations.

It is the right thing to do. It is only fair that Federal tax law respect the decision Oregonians, and citizens from other States and the District of Columbia, made at the polls.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 987

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Small Business Tax Equity Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. ALLOWANCE OF DEDUCTIONS AND CREDITS RELATING TO EXPENDITURES IN CONNECTION WITH MARIJUANA SALES CONDUCTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 280E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', unless such trade or business consists of marijuana sales conducted in compliance with State law''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to taxable years ending after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 988. A bill to promote minimum State requirements for the prevention and treatment of concussions caused by participation in school sports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in Illinois and all over the country thousands of high school students are participating in spring sports, including the national pastime: baseball and softball.

As with any sports team, these students are training their growing bodies to compete in a worthy endeavor, but with that comes some risk. They put on helmets, they put on pads, but unfortunately some of them will still get hurt.

Injuries are a part of all sports, but as we learn more about the long term effects of concussions and how frequently they are ignored, it is clear we have to step up our game to confront this health risk.

The National Federation of State High School Associations estimates about 140,000 students who play high school sports have concussions every year. Sports are second only to motor

vehicle crashes as the leading cause of traumatic brain injury among people aged 15 to 24 years.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the number of children age 19 and younger being treated in ERs for traumatic brain injuries went from 153,373 in 2001 to 248,418 in 2009—a 60 percent increase.

Some students stay in the game not recognizing the risks of playing hurt—especially when they have had a concussion. Many athletes do not know the signs and symptoms of concussion, which may cause many concussions to go undetected.

A 2010 Government Accountability Office study found many sports-related concussions go unreported. Athletes who continue to play while concussed are at risk for catastrophic injury if they sustain another concussion before recovering from the first one. This second injury can cause symptoms that can last for months and can even be fatal. Youth athletes are at the greatest risk from sports-related concussions because their brains are still developing and are more susceptible to injury.

According to the American Academy of Neurology, athletes of high school age and younger with a concussion should be managed more conservatively when it comes to returning to play because they take longer to recover than college athletes.

Since 2009, states have started implementing legislation guiding return to play procedures for student athletes who have sustained a concussion.

With a push from the National Football League, NFL, all 50 States and the District of Columbia have successfully passed some form of legislation with varying concussion safety measures.

Illinois has been a leader on this issue and passed legislation in 2011, recognizing the dangers associated with concussion. In Illinois, a student athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game is immediately removed from the game until he or she is cleared by a health care professional.

This is a great step forward for Illinois, and I commend the Illinois High School Association and its support of this legislation for its work protecting student athletes.

I would like to introduce the Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act, which would support the progress made by states like Illinois. The bill would, for the first time, set minimum State requirements for the prevention and treatment of concussions.

The legislation requires schools to post information about concussions on school grounds and on school websites and adopt a ''when in doubt, sit it out'' policy.

This policy requires that a student suspected of sustaining a concussion be removed from participation in the activity and prohibited from returning to play that day. They can return to play in future events after being evaluated and cleared by a qualified health care professional.

The ''when in doubt, sit it out'' policy is recommended by the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Academy of Neurology, which recommends that an athlete suspected of a concussion should not return to play the day of their injury—under any circumstance.

According to the Center for Injury Research and Policy in Columbus, Ohio, more than 40 percent of young athletes return to play before they are fully recovered.

Concussions are not always easily diagnosed, and symptoms that might indicate concussion don't always manifest themselves immediately. Athletes don't want to let down the team or the coach and are often eager to return to the game.

So helping athletes, school officials, coaches and parents recognize the signs and symptoms of concussion can make all the difference in putting a player's safety above winning.

This legislation will ensure that school districts have concussion management plans that educate students, parents, and school personnel about how to recognize and respond to concussions.

It asks schools to adopt the ''when in doubt, sit it out'' policy to be sure athletes are not put back in the game before they have recovered from an initial concussion.

I am pleased that a variety of organizations are supporting this bill, including the NFL, NCAA, NHL, NBA, American College of Sports Medicine, American Academy of Neurology, among others.

I look forward to working with the schools, athletic programs and others to build on the progress already made in protecting student athletes from concussions.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 988

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. MINIMUM STATE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.—Each State that receives funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and does not meet the requirements described in this section, as of the date of enactment of this Act, shall, not later than the last day of the fifth full fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act (referred to in this Act as the ''compliance deadline''), enact legislation or issue regulations establishing the following minimum requirements:

(1) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY CONCUSSION SAFETY AND MANAGEMENT PLAN.—Each local educational agency in the State, in consultation with members of the community in which such agency is located, shall develop and implement a standard plan for concussion safety and management that—

(A) educates students, parents, and school personnel about concussions, through activities such as—

(i) training school personnel, including coaches, teachers, athletic trainers, related services personnel, and school nurses, on concussion safety and management, including training on the prevention, recognition, and academic consequences of concussions and response to concussions; and

(ii) using, maintaining, and disseminating to students and parents—

(I) release forms and other appropriate forms for reporting and record keeping;

(II) treatment plans; and

(III) prevention and post-injury observation and monitoring fact sheets about concussion;

(B) encourages supports, where feasible, for a student recovering from a concussion (regardless of whether or not the concussion occurred during school-sponsored activities, during school hours, on school property, or during an athletic activity), such as—

(i) guiding the student in resuming participation in athletic activity and academic activities with the help of a multi-disciplinary concussion management team, which may include—

(I) a health care professional, the parents of such student, a school nurse, relevant related services personnel, and other relevant school personnel; and

(II) an individual who is assigned by a public school to oversee and manage the recovery of such student; and

(ii) providing appropriate academic accommodations aimed at progressively reintroducing cognitive demands on the student; and

(C) encourages the use of best practices designed to ensure, with respect to concussions, the uniformity of safety standards, treatment, and management, such as—

(i) disseminating information on concussion safety and management to the public; and

(ii) applying uniform best practice standards for concussion safety and management to all students enrolled in public schools.

(2) POSTING OF INFORMATION ON CONCUSSIONS.—Each public elementary school and each public secondary school shall post on school grounds, in a manner that is visible to students and school personnel, and make publicly available on the school website, information on concussions that—

(A) is based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence (such as information made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

(B) shall include information on—

(i) the risks posed by sustaining a concussion;

(ii) the actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of school personnel; and

(iii) the signs and symptoms of a concussion; and

(C) may include information on—

(i) the definition of a concussion;

(ii) the means available to the student to reduce the incidence or recurrence of a concussion; and

(iii) the effects of a concussion on academic learning and performance.

(3) RESPONSE TO CONCUSSION.—If an individual designated from among school personnel for purposes of this Act suspects that a student has sustained a concussion (regardless of whether or not the concussion occurred during school-sponsored activities, during school hours, on school property, or during an athletic activity)—

(A) the student shall be—

(i) immediately removed from participation in a school-sponsored athletic activity; and

(ii) prohibited from returning to participate in a school-sponsored athletic activity—

(I) on the day such student is removed from such participation; and

(II) until such student submits a written release from a health care professional stating that the student is capable of resuming participation in school-sponsored athletic activities; and

(B) the designated individual shall report to the parent or guardian of such student—

(i) any information that the designated school employee is aware of regarding the date, time, and type of the injury suffered by such student (regardless of where, when, or how a concussion may have occurred); and

(ii) any actions taken to treat such student.

(4) RETURN TO ATHLETICS.—If a student has sustained a concussion (regardless of whether or not the concussion occurred during school-sponsored activities, during school hours, on school property, or during an athletic activity), before such student resumes participation in school-sponsored athletic activities, the school shall receive a written release from a health care professional, that—

(A) states that the student is capable of resuming participation in such activities; and

(B) may require the student to follow a plan designed to aid the student in recovering and resuming participation in such activities in a manner that—

(i) is coordinated, as appropriate, with periods of cognitive and physical rest while symptoms of a concussion persist; and

(ii) reintroduces cognitive and physical demands on such student on a progressive basis only as such increases in exertion do not cause the reemergence or worsening of symptoms of a concussion.

(b) NONCOMPLIANCE.—

(1) FIRST YEAR.—If a State described in subsection (a) fails to comply with subsection (a) by the compliance deadline, the Secretary of Education shall reduce by 5 percent the amount of funds the State receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) for the first fiscal year following the compliance deadline.

(2) SUCCEEDING YEARS.—If the State fails to so comply by the last day of any fiscal year following the compliance deadline, the Secretary of Education shall reduce by 10 percent the amount of funds the State receives under that Act for the following fiscal year.

(3) NOTIFICATION OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—Prior to reducing any funds that a State receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) in accordance with this subsection, the Secretary of Education shall provide a written notification of the intended reduction of funds to the State and to the appropriate committees of Congress.

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect civil or criminal liability under Federal or State law.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CONCUSSION.—The term ''concussion'' means a type of mild traumatic brain injury that—

(A) is caused by a blow, jolt, or motion to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly in the skull;

(B) disrupts normal brain functioning and alters the mental state of the individual, causing the individual to experience—

(i) any period of observed or self-reported—

(I) transient confusion, disorientation, or impaired consciousness;

(II) dysfunction of memory around the time of injury; or

(III) loss of consciousness lasting less than 30 minutes; or

(ii) any 1 of 4 types of symptoms, including—

(I) physical symptoms, such as headache, fatigue, or dizziness;

(II) cognitive symptoms, such as memory disturbance or slowed thinking;

(III) emotional symptoms, such as irritability or sadness; or

(IV) difficulty sleeping; and

(C) can occur—

(i) with or without the loss of consciousness; and

(ii) during participation in any organized sport or recreational activity.

(2) HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.—The term ''health care professional''—

(A) means an individual who has been trained in diagnosis and management of traumatic brain injury in a pediatric population; and

(B) includes a physician (M.D. or D.O.) or certified athletic trainer who is registered, licensed, certified, or otherwise statutorily recognized by the State to provide such diagnosis and management.

(3) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY; STATE.—The terms ''local educational agency'' and ''State'' have the meanings given such terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(4) RELATED SERVICES PERSONNEL.—The term ''related services personnel'' means individuals who provide related services, as defined under section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401).

(5) SCHOOL-SPONSORED ATHLETIC ACTIVITY.—The term ''school-sponsored athletic activity'' means—

(A) any physical education class or program of a school;

(B) any athletic activity authorized during the school day on school grounds that is not an instructional activity;

(C) any extra-curricular sports team, club, or league organized by a school on or off school grounds; and

(D) any recess activity.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 993. A bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act, a bill I am introducing today with a number of my Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with Representative DOUG COLLINS, who is introducing this legislation in the House. This bipartisan, bicameral bill will improve outcomes for people with mental illness when they interact with the criminal justice system. The Judiciary Committee unanimously approved this bill by voice vote in the last Congress, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on the committee to move this legislation forward to consideration by the full Senate.

The Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act is meant to address a very serious problem: The United States has 5 percent of the world's population but has 25 percent of the world's prison population—in large part because we have effectively criminalized mental illness. People with mental health conditions disproportionately are arrested and incarcerated, but instead of providing people with adequate access to mental health treatment, we let them fall through the cracks and languish in prison. As my home county—Hennepin County—Sheriff Rich Stanek put it, ''Local jails are the largest mental health facilities in the state of Minnesota,'' and this holds true across our Nation.

Let's be clear. Using our criminal justice system as a substitute for a fully functioning mental health system doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense for law enforcement officers who often put their lives at risk when they are called upon to intervene in a mental health crisis. It doesn't make sense for courts which are inundated with cases involving people with mental illness. It doesn't make sense for people who have mental health conditions who often would benefit from treatment and intensive supervision than from traditional incarceration. It certainly doesn't make sense for taxpayers who foot the bill for high incarceration costs and overcrowded correction facilities and who must pay again when these untreated mentally ill prisoners are released back into society often in much worse shape than when they were locked up.

We can improve access to mental health services for people who come into contact with the criminal justice system, and we can give law enforcement officers the tools they need to identify and respond to mental health issues in the communities and the situations they confront.

In 2004, Congress passed and President Bush signed into law the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act—or MIOTCRA—which supports innovative programs that bring together mental health and criminal justice agencies to address the unique needs of people with mental health conditions. Former Ohio Republican Senator Mike DeWine, who now serves as that State's Attorney General, was the original sponsor of MIOTCRA.

The Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act reauthorizes and improves MIOTCRA. Let me talk a little bit about how the programs supported by this legislation protect law enforcement officers and save lives. I will give one example.

In 2013, I visited the police station in Columbia Heights, MN, a suburb of the Twin Cities. I talked with some of the officers who had been given crisis

intervention training for law enforcement officers to recognize when they are confronted or are entering a situation that involves someone who has a mental illness. The sheriff wasn't there that day, but the county attorney who was there on behalf of the sheriff said that the day after the sheriff had his training, he did not kill a guy he would otherwise have killed because he recognized what was going on. That was pretty dramatic.

So I turned to the other officers there who had also had this crisis intervention training and said to a policewoman: Can you give me a more garden-variety example?

She said: OK. About 3 months ago, I was on the street and I heard a woman screaming. I thought it was some domestic violence thing or something. I went to see what was going on, and she went over to a railing that if she had let go, she would have dropped to a playground below. She might not have killed herself, but she would have gotten very badly hurt. From my training, I realized I was in a situation with someone who was mentally ill, and I used my training to talk her back up. I spoke to the woman. She said she had been sexually abused as a child; that the perpetrator had left town and had left her life, but recently that man had come back.

She said: I think I know where I can get help for you. And she got her access to some treatment.

She said: A couple months later, I was working a street fair when this same woman came up to me, very calm, and said: You saved my life.

I said: OK. This is your garden-variety story?

She said: Yes, I use this training all the time. I will holster my gun maybe once in my career, but I use this all the time.

Now, the grants currently available that would be reauthorized through the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act—which fund programs such as local crisis intervention training—are the only ones offered by the Justice Department that address mental health issues in the criminal justice system. So passing this legislation is critically important, and the bill would improve and expand upon the law.

Here are some of the important things the bill does: It continues support for mental health courts and crisis intervention teams, both of which save lives and money. It includes new grant accountability measures and emphasizes the use of evidence-based practices that have been proven effective through empirical evidence. Our Presiding Officer is a physician, therefore a scientist, and therefore relies on empirical evidence. It authorizes investments in veterans treatment courts, which serve arrested veterans who have been arrested because they suffer from PTSD, substance addiction, which may be used to medicate their mental health or behavioral and other mental health conditions, other sometimes invisible wounds. It supports the development of programs, such as crisis intervention training, to train local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers how to recognize and respond appropriately to mental health crises. One of the new things the bill does is to support State and local efforts to identify people with mental health conditions at each point in the criminal justice system in order to appropriately direct them to mental health services.

Our bill also increases the focus on corrections-based programs.

I went to a prison in St. Cloud, MN, where they do intake in our State system. They said this crisis intervention training is incredibly important to them. They said: Do you watch TV on the weekends where they show prisoners, show the prison system, where you put on all the gear because some prisoner has gotten out of control and you have to go into the cell and tackle them? That could be avoided very often by understanding what is going on here. There is a lot of wear and tear when they have to go in like that. It is better to recognize what is going on and know how to deal with it.

The bill also increases the focus on things such as transitional services that reduce recidivism rates and screening practices that identify inmates with mental health conditions.

Finally, the bill gives local officials greater control over program participation eligibility. This again is for a program that already exists.

The current system is broken. It doesn't serve the interests of people with mental illness, and it doesn't protect the safety of law enforcement personnel. As one Minnesota judge wrote:

> While [inmates with mental illness] are sitting in jail, they often recede further into the depths of their illness. They present a danger to themselves; they present a danger to fellow inmates; and they present a danger to the . . . men and women who run the jails.

We have an obligation to ensure that people with mental illness receive the treatment and supervision they need and that the officers who put their lives on the line when they are called on to intervene in mental health crises are trained to respond in a way that protects their safety and that of their fellow officers and of the person with mental illness. This bill helps us better meet that obligation.

I am very pleased to introduce this bill with a bipartisan group of lawmakers who are committed to improving the ways in which people with mental health conditions interact with the criminal justice system—in particular, my fellow lead sponsor, Senator JOHN CORNYN, and Representative DOUG COLLINS, who is leading this effort in the House.

This legislation has always enjoyed bipartisan support. In 2004, it was introduced by Michael DeWine, Republican from Ohio, in the Senate. In the last Congress, the predecessor of this bill had 39 Senate cosponsors, including 25 Democrats and 14 Republicans. The House companion bill had 55 cosponsors, including 24 Democrats and 31 Republicans.

As you can see, this has always been a bipartisan effort, and I am pleased to continue that tradition in this Congress. I would like to thank Senators CORNYN, AYOTTE, BLUNT, and PORTMAN, as well as Senators LEAHY, DURBIN, WHITEHOUSE, KLOBUCHAR, COONS, BLUMENTHAL, BOXER, BROWN, WARREN, and BOOKER, for serving as original cosponsors of the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act. I look forward to adding more cosponsors in the days to come.

I would also like to recognize the many law enforcement, civil rights veterans, and mental health advocacy organizations—most notably the Council of State Governments—for standing in strong support of this legislation or its predecessor bill and advocating tirelessly for its enactment. More than 250 organizations endorsed this legislation in the previous Congress, including the American Legion, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Association of Counties, and the Wounded Warrior Project, just to name a few.

I look forward to working together with advocates and with my colleagues to get this bill enacted into law so that we can ease the burden of mental health problems on our criminal justice system and help a lot of people.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1006. A bill to incentivize early adoption of positive train control, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about Positive Train Control, a crash-avoidance rail safety system that can automatically stop trains in order to prevent impending collisions.

The Senate Commerce Committee recently voted to advance a bill that would give railroads a 5-to-7 year extension of the deadline to implement this life-saving technology.

In my view, a blanket extension is disastrous policy.

Fortunately, the members of the Commerce Committee have signaled their willingness to consider improvements to this bill, and today I rise to offer such an improvement.

This legislation, the Positive Train Control Safety Act, would provide a reasonable extension for the implementation of positive train control until 2018, on a case-by-case, year-by-year basis, for any railroad whose implementation plans were delayed by factors outside of their control.

This provision mirrors language that already passed the Senate in 2012 as

part of the transportation reauthorization bill with overwhelming support. It is a measured, realistic response to the delayed implementation we have witnessed. Overall, this bill strives to hold the railroads to their safety commitments.

To understand the importance of PTC, we must revisit a terrible tragedy in my State of California, near Chatsworth.

In 2008, a Los Angeles Metrolink commuter train collided head-on with a Union Pacific freight train, killing 25 people and injuring 135 more.

Testimony from the victims who survived the crash paint a gruesome picture of the aftermath. ''Severed limbs were strewn all about and blood was pooled everywhere.'' Victims' bodies, many torn to pieces, had to be extracted from heaps of steel and wreckage.

One passenger described coming across a man who had been crushed by an air vent: ''His mangled legs were all I could see, but his cries for help were very loud. Eventually he must have died, as he was calling out for his mother and then no more sounds. [. . .] I was trying to decide if I would die by fire or suffocation of smoke.''

Many victims suffered traumatic brain injuries and those sitting at tables suffered ''horrible abdominal injuries that cannot be medically resolved.'' As the National Transportation Safety Board found in its investigation, this terrible tragedy could have been prevented if the Positive Train Control technology had been in place.

Positive Train Control is a system for automatic train safety, which was originally recommended by the National Transportation Safety Board in 1970.

Using GPS and wireless technology, Positive Train Control can automatically put the brakes on trains about to collide or derail. Positive Train Control can monitor trains and stop them if they enter the wrong track or are about to run red lights.

In the Metrolink crash, it was later determined that the engineer was texting, causing him to miss a red signal and cause the deadly collision.

PTC could have prevented this, as it could have forced the train to stop before running onto the same track as the oncoming freight train.

This horrific accident became a rallying cry for Congress, which responded by passing the Rail Safety Improvement Act in 2008.

This legislation mandated the widespread installation of PTC by the end of 2015.

The railroad industry has fought PTC from start. Now, as the deadline rapidly approaches, railroads are again lobbying hard to delay installation. Many have not even begun installing PTC in any form—something that is particularly disturbing to me.

After its terrible accident, Metrolink in California has shown great leadership and plans to be the first railroad to be fully certified. Metrolink is on track do so by the federally-mandated deadline of December 31, 2015.

Several other railroad companies in California are also on track to begin using PTC this year, in demonstration mode, on the path to final certification. These include the North County Transit District in San Diego and Caltrain in the Bay Area.

In addition, new passenger rail services in California plan to operate with PTC from the first moment that they come on-line, including the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit line in 2016 and the first High Speed Rail segment in 2022.

California is committed to safe and efficient rail. I believe my State demonstrates that railroads around the country can and should be expected to implement Positive Train Control as soon as is feasible, without unnecessary delay.

The bill that the Senate Commerce Committee recently voted to advance is a no-strings-attached bill that would extend by 5 years the deadline by which PTC must be implemented.

On top of that, it offers railroads an optional extension of an additional 2 years on a case-by-case basis. Extending the deadline through until the outset of 2023.

Effectively, this is just kicking the can down road once more.

I am deeply concerned about this blanket extension. First, it rewards those that have chosen delay over action. More troubling, it could have deadly consequences for Americans across the country.

It has been 7 years since the collision at Chatsworth claimed 25 lives, and 45 years since the National Transportation Safety Board first recommended a system like Positive Train Control.

Unnecessary delay is simply not acceptable.

This is why I am introducing this bill today. I believe it will incentivize railroads to install PTC as quickly as possible.

My bill allows case-by-case, single-year extensions through 2018 for railroads that have demonstrated good faith efforts to implement PTC. It also instructs the Department of Transportation to only grant extensions if the Secretary determines that a railroad's efforts to implement PTC were delayed due to circumstances beyond their control.

In addition, the bill offers a number of other common-sense provisions relating to Positive Train Control requirements and railroad safety. These provisions reflect the lessons we have learned since the Rail Safety Improvement Act first required the implementation of PTC 6½ years ago.

These provisions include bolstering the transparency of railroads' implementation efforts, by requiring regular status reports; and ensuring trains carrying crude oil or ethanol run on tracks with PTC.

The provision requires better coordination between the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Communications Commission to ensure adequate wireless communications availability.

Requiring the Department of Transportation to evaluate the effectiveness of PTC at grade crossings.

Improving opportunities for railroad employees to report safety deficiencies.

Protecting employees in rail work zones.

Improving inspection practices on commuter railroads.

Riding our rails should not be a dangerous activity. It doesn't have to be. If we have the technology to prevent collisions, we must use it.

I urge my colleagues to carefully consider this proposal.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 136—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAY 1, 2015, AS ''SILVER STAR SERVICE BANNER DAY''

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 136

Whereas the Senate has always honored the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces;

Whereas the Silver Star Service Banner has come to represent the members of the Armed Forces and veterans who were wounded or became ill in combat in the wars fought by the United States;

Whereas the Silver Star Families of America was formed to help the people of the United States remember the sacrifices made by the wounded and ill members of the Armed Forces by designing and manufacturing Silver Star Service Banners and Silver Star Flags for that purpose;

Whereas the sole mission of the Silver Star Families of America is to evoke memories of the sacrifices of members of the Armed Forces and veterans on behalf of the United States through the presence of a Silver Star Service Banner in a window or a Silver Star Flag flying;

Whereas the sacrifices of members of the Armed Forces and veterans on behalf of the United States should never be forgotten; and

Whereas May 1, 2015, is an appropriate date to designate as ''Silver Star Service Banner Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the designation of May 1, 2015, as ''Silver Star Service Banner Day'' and calls upon the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 137—CONGRATULATING THE ADMINISTRATION, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI OF ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY ON THE OCCASION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to: