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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Peter Milner, chaplain of the North Carolina Senate in Raleigh, NC.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, You have been our dwelling place for all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, You were God. So we bow our heads and our hearts before You, and we seek Your guidance as a nation. We are crippled without Your help and helpless without Your steadfast love. Come to our assistance. Make haste to help us. Forgive us of our sin, O Lord, and wipe away the tears from our eyes.

We are so grateful for this day. We come boldly to Your throne of grace, and we bring our weaknesses, we bring our doubts and our requests, and we submit our pleas before You, a holy and a good God. Have compassion on the lonely, and grant peace to the brokenhearted.

Hear all these prayers, O Lord, and bless all of those Members assembled here. Pour out the oil of Your gladness down upon this Nation, upon these proceedings, upon this government, and towards every one of these hard-working representatives of Your people.

It is in Jesus's Name we pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The Senator from North Carolina.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome to this body a friend and a fellow North Carolinian, Peter Milner. Chaplain Milner serves the North Carolina General Assembly as the State's senate chaplain.

A fellow Demon Deacon and an alumna of Wake Forest, he received his undergraduate degree in sociology and religion. While at Wake Forest, Chaplain Milner was instrumental in the creation of the Wake Forest Volunteer Service Corps, which engages hundreds of students, faculty, and staff to participate in community-based organizations.

After completing his undergraduate work at Wake Forest, he went on to earn his master's in secondary social studies education to become a high school teacher. Called to the ministry after his first year of teaching, he attended Duke Divinity School, where he thrived in his role as resident coordinator of Emmaus House in Raleigh, which provides safe, affordable housing for working homeless men recovering from substance dependency. Chaplain Milner's devotion to and passion for helping the homeless is unwavering and very clear. I saw it for myself when I first met Peter a few years ago at a homeless center in Raleigh, NC.

Besides his tireless work on behalf of the homeless, Chaplain Milner has been instrumental in improving the lives of students, medical patients, and—a cause very important to North Carolinians, including me—our Nation's veterans. Because of his work as an outreach specialist for veterans at StepUp Ministry, Chaplain Milner established an important link between veterans in need and the business community. His hard work continues to help struggling veterans achieve stable lives through employment counseling and life skills training.

The North Carolina General Assembly is blessed to have a man who has devoted his life to causes much larger than himself. But of all that he has accomplished in life so far, he says his greatest accomplishment is being a husband to his bride of 13 years, Anna, and a father to their two beautiful children, Silas and Josie, who are all with us today.

Chaplain Milner, I thank you for leading our Chamber in prayer today, and I welcome you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I thank Chaplain Milner for being here.

I want to talk about a friend. He is somebody who blessed our legislature during the time I was speaker of the house.

I will not repeat all of the things Peter has done for the community. I want to speak specifically about what he has done for the State chamber and the general assembly, the part where I was speaker. He was a calm presence in an otherwise chaotic environment called the legislative body—not unlike the one we have here. He is always somebody you can look to for guidance, support, and for inspiration, and for that, I thank him.

I will also say—you notice he is a little bit tall. He played basketball at Wake.

We have this rivalry with South Carolina. We play basketball every year. We get together and we either travel down to South Carolina or the legislature comes here. I played on that basketball team for 4 years. In each of those 4 years, we were hopeful that Peter would play with us, but for some reason he didn't. Now, the only thing that I see differently—he is playing this year, since my departure.

I hope your decision to play isn't because of my exit, Peter.

I thank you for being here and for your contribution to the community. I welcome your family, who I believe is in the Chamber today. I hope you enjoy today.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

On behalf of all Members who benefit from your guidance and your spiritual presence and guidance in the State of North Carolina and the general assembly, thank you, and welcome.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

PACQUIAO-MAYWEATHER FIGHT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as some know, I fought a little bit. I was in the minor leagues for a couple of years.

As the Presiding Officer knows, in Nevada, on Saturday night, in Las Vegas, there is going to be a stunning athletic event, one of the most significant athletic events, actually, in the last 50 years. It is a wonderful occasion for Nevada to host the fight between Manny Pacquiao—I should say Congressman Pacquiao, who is a member of the Philippine Congress—and Floyd Mayweather. They will be battling for three separate titles. They are fighting for the 147-pound weight class—for all the people who think that is small, that is the class that—we have had some of our great fighters of all time who have fought that same weight level.

These are two great athletes. The winner of the match will be crowned as the greatest pound for pound fighter in the world, and they will go down as two of the finest fighters ever in the history of the world. So regardless of who wins, this bout is projected to shatter boxing records for not only being a significant boxing match—the focus of the world will be on this fight. People all over the world will be watching this fight.

They don't really know how many pay-per-view purchases are expected, but I made one last night. I was planning on going to the fight, but, as my friend the Presiding Officer knows, things have changed over the years. If we want to get one of those good seats, we have to pay for it. I have been willing to do that in the past, but the traffic was a little too heavy there, so I decided to watch it here with some of my family. But I am so happy that the pay-per-view purchases are expected to exceed 3 million people, and they won't get it any cheaper than I did—$99.95. So it is wonderful that all previous records will be broken as to revenue.

The only thing I don't like about it is the fight doesn't start back here until 9 o'clock and usually they don't end until midnight. I wish they would start a little earlier, but, as I have learned with my baseball, they just start them later back here.

I am very excited about this unforgettable fight. There is nothing like a championship fight. There is nothing like one that has all this attention.

After I started practicing law, I started judging fights. I was on the Nevada fight commission, and I judged fights. I judged lots of fights. I can remember the first big fight I went to. Oh, it was a big fight. I walked in there, and I couldn't imagine there would be that much attention on anything. Of course, there were thousands of people there. I was excited. I was going to judge one of the preliminary fights. It was stunning. You see ringside all of these glamorous, important people. These fights catch the enthusiasm of sports fans all over the world.

The eagerness that I have of watching this fight goes far beyond the sport of boxing or the spectacle of a marquis matchup. I am thrilled for Nevada. This fight will inject hundreds of millions of dollars into the State's economy. It will benefit Nevadans all—fighters and their teams, of course, hotels, restaurants, cab drivers, limousine drivers, parking valets, maids will get bigger tips than they usually get. It will be a great time for Nevada.

So I have done everything I can within my power here as a Member of the legislature to help in any way that I can. I have interceded on a couple of occasions to help make this fight move forward, and I was very happy to do so.

I love this sport. Some of my most prized possessions in my home are fight pictures. I have one picture of the great Joe Louis and Max Schmeling, and they both signed that picture before they died. I had the good fortune, when Joe Louis spent so much time at Caesars Palace, to have met him. I have pictures hanging on my wall of my dear father-in-law, who worked with fighters. I have a picture on the wall—they are all together—of him with Jack Dempsey, with Primo Carnera, who was 6 foot 7, a huge man—my father-in-law was about 5 foot 5—Sugar Ray Robinson. All these—not all of them, but many great fighters are there with my father-in-law. I love that picture, and it reminds me of my minor league experience in boxing.

I am very excited about watching this fight.

Las Vegas has been the entertainment capital of the world for a long time, and we are happy that, in fact, is the case. But a few short years ago, as the Presiding Officer knows, we were hit very hard. The debacle that took place on Wall Street hurt Nevada more than any other place. We have been recovering. We haven't recovered totally, but we have recovered significantly.

The 2008 economic collapse took a heavy toll on Nevada. A quarter of Nevadans are employed in the tourism and hospitality industry, and when the recession hit, they got hurt, as did all working classes—construction workers; everybody got hurt—but we fought our way back.

Last year, we welcomed to Las Vegas 41 million people—little Las Vegas, 41 million people. It is not so little, but the Presiding Officer and I remember when it was a little place. But now it is a community with a metropolitan area of over 2 million people. Forty-one million people have come to Las Vegas and produced an economic impact of more than $50 billion. We shattered previous records by attracting 1.4 million more visitors than we did—in 2014. So it is only going to get better, and the Pacquiao-Mayweather fight will keep that momentum going for Nevada.

I am not picking a winner. I wish both men the best of luck. But, admittedly, I am a little biased because of my relationship with Manny Pacquiao.

As the Presiding Officer will remember, one of my real campaigners in one of my difficult races was Manny Pacquiao. He campaigned for me. He broke training to come out of L.A., flew in for a big event I had one night. So you have to remember that kind of stuff. So I have a very good relationship with Manny Pacquiao. Certainly, I don't have a bad one with Floyd Mayweather, but I know Manny Pacquiao much better than I know Floyd Mayweather. He stood in my corner in the past, and he will always have my support.

Regardless, though, of which fighter reigns supreme on that Saturday night—and one of them will. They are alone. Nobody is there with them. Regardless of who leaves the arena with that big belt, Nevada's hard-working economy will have won the fight.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate will soon resume consideration of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. I expect we will consider several amendments today, and I continue to encourage Senators to come to the floor and offer them.

The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is bipartisan legislation that will ensure that Congress and the American people have a chance to review any comprehensive agreement reached with Iran, and it ensures they will be able to do so before congressional sanctions are lifted.

Here is why that is critical. First, these sanctions are a big reason why America was able even to bring Iran to the table in the first place. We shouldn't be giving up that leverage now without the American people, through the Members of Congress they elect, having a chance to weigh in. Quite simply, the American people expect us to have an opportunity to evaluate this agreement or not.

Second, Iran wouldn't just use the funds derived from sanctions relief to rebuild its economy. It is certain to use that money to fund proxy forces such as Hezbollah and to prop up the Assad regime. What is clear is that Iran is determined to use every tool—to use every tool—at its disposal to expand

aggressively its sphere of influence across the greater Middle East.

The regime's belligerent behavior in the Strait of Hormuz was just another reminder of that fact. But it reminds us of something else, too—our need to invest in the naval and seaborne expeditionary capabilities in the Persian Gulf, which will be necessary not just to retain dominance at sea but to contain Iran's military and irregular forces, as well.

Today, though—today—we are focused on one point above all else—that the American people and Congress deserve a say before any congressional sanctions are lifted. At the very least, sanctions should not be lifted before the Iranians fully disclose all aspects of research and development as it relates to the potential military dimensions of their nuclear program. Yet the interim agreement, as it has been explained to Congress, would bestow international recognition to Iran's research and development program, along with an international blessing for Iran to become a nuclear threshold state poised at the edge of developing a nuclear weapon. It is frightening to think what Iran might be able to achieve covertly in that context.

Now, to a lot of Americans this all sounds quite different from what they were led to believe a deal with Iran would actually be about—preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and dismantling Iran's enrichment capability. But that apparently has already been given away. So the American people deserve a say through their Members of Congress. The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act will ensure Congress gets a vote either to approve or disapprove of the comprehensive agreement.

Just as President Obama's successor will need to modernize our military to deal with the challenges posed by Iran's aggression, so will the President's successor want to consider Congress's view of any comprehensive deal. A failed resolution of approval, as the bill before us would permit, would send an unmistakable signal about congressional opposition to lifting sanctions. Let me say that again. A failed resolution of approval, permitted under this bill, would send an unmistakable signal about congressional opposition to lifting sanctions.

So now is the time for Congress to invest in the capabilities President Obama's successor may need to use to end Iran's nuclear weapons program if the Iranians covertly pursue a weapon or violate the terms of the ultimate agreement. And now is the time for Congress to pass the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

THE BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, on a different matter, Mr. President, I was glad to see yesterday's announcement of a budget conference agreement. That means Congress is now one step closer to passing a balanced budget that supports a healthy economy, funds national defense, strengthens Medicare, and begins to tackle our debt problems without taking more money from hard-working Americans.

It is a balanced budget that could help lead to more than 1 million additional jobs and boost our economy by nearly half a trillion dollars, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. In short, it is a balanced budget that is all about the future. That is also why it provides a tool for the Senate majority to repeal a failed policy of the past—ObamaCare—so we can start over with real patient-centered health reform.

This is a good balanced budget every Senator should want to support, and I look forward to the Senate taking up the budget agreement next week.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1191, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1191) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Corker/Cardin amendment No. 1140, in the nature of a substitute.

Corker/Cardin amendment No. 1179 (to amendment No. 1140), to require submission of all Persian text included in the agreement.

Blunt amendment No. 1155 (to amendment No. 1140), to extend the requirement for annual Department of Defense reports on the military power of Iran.

Vitter modified amendment No. 1186 (to amendment No. 1179), to require an assessment of inadequacies in the international monitoring and verification system as they relate to a nuclear agreement with Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my amendment No. 1149 to declare that any agreement reached by the President relating to the nuclear program of Iran is a congressional-executive agreement to be considered under the expedited procedure in both Houses of Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARDIN. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, we have been proceeding now for about a week. We have had a good debate on issues. Many Members are working with Senator CORKER and me to clear their amendments so they are consistent with the overall objective that was supported by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a 19-to-0 vote, and we are going to continue to work on that process in the orderly consideration of amendments.

For that reason, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Perhaps if the Senator from Maryland will listen to my explanation of what this amendment does, he will withdraw his objection.

During our debate on Tuesday, when I offered an amendment to deem the agreement between Iran and America—well, actually and the world—a treaty subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, the Senator from Maryland spoke about one of the objections to the treaty. He said:

Secondly, I don't know how we are going to explain it to our colleagues in the House of Representatives. The Presiding Officer served in the House. I served in the House. Senator Menendez served in the House. The last time I checked, we imposed these sanctions because the bill passed both the Senate and the House, and now we are saying that the approval process is going to ignore the House of Representatives, solely going to be a matter for the U.S. Senate on a ratification of a treaty? That does not seem like a workable solution.

Now, Mr. President, I appreciate the fact that the Senator from Tennessee and the Senator from Maryland did not object to my raising my first amendment to deem it a treaty. And of course this body then voted on that, and I appreciate that fact. And I accept the verdict of this Chamber that they did not want to deem this agreement a treaty—fair enough.

But I would like to quote, in addition to the Senator from Maryland, the Senator from Tennessee in arguing against deeming this a treaty. The Senator from Tennessee said: ''We think the President has the ability to negotiate things.''

Well, first off all, I agree with that. Article II, section 2 states: ''He [The President] shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur. . . . ''

So that actually is the constitutional method for making agreements between nations—having the President negotiate that. I completely agree. We can't have 535 negotiators. But we certainly should have this body involved in those agreements. We should have a role. We should have a robust role. And, of course, I believe it is so important, that this has such an effect and that it risks so much for this Nation, that I believe it should be a treaty. But again, fair enough—this body deemed it would not be a treaty. The Senator from Tennessee went on to say:

We had no idea this President would consider suspending these sanctions ad infinitum, forever—no idea. I think even people on the other side of the aisle were shocked.

We were shocked. Yes, we granted those waivers for national security. We did not believe those waivers would be abused the way they are being abused right now.

The Senator from Tennessee also went on to say: ''This is one of the biggest geopolitical issues that will potentially happen if an agreement is reached in our lifetime here in the Senate.''

Once again, I agree with the Senator from Tennessee. This is a huge geopolitical issue. And right now this administration deems that agreement on its own authority, an executive agreement, and really, at this point in time, we have no role. There is no involvement. The Senator from Tennessee went on to say: ''Look, I have strong agreement with the sentiment of our Senator from Wisconsin.'' Again, he is agreeing with the fact that this really should rise to the level of a treaty.

He also went on to say: ''Without the bill that is on the floor, the American people will never see it.''

Think of that. Think of an agreement between Iran, as it is being described—and, as I say, nobody really knows yet, but what I believe is being described to us—puts Iran on a path for a nuclear weapon. How many years has it been that Presidents from both parties and Members of Congress from both parties have stood and said very forcefully that we simply cannot allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon? Now we may be facing an agreement between this country, other nations of the world, and Iran that actually puts Iran on a path for a nuclear agreement.

The Senator from Tennessee is correct. I hope he is not correct, but I think he may be correct that right now this President has no duty to bring that agreement to the American people. I do happen to believe that public pressure would be so great that the American people would not tolerate that level of brazenness, that level of arrogance on the part of any administration or any President to do a deal, to make an agreement of such import that before implementing that agreement the President of the United States would not bring that agreement to the American people and subject it to, in some shape or form, the advice and consent of either this Chamber or Congress as a whole.

The final quote from the Senator from Tennessee is this. He said:

> Now, look, if I could wave a magic wand or all of a sudden donkeys flew around the Capitol, I would love for us to have the ability to deem this a treaty. I really would.

Well, if the agreement that President Obama is talking about in its current framework is agreed to between this administration and the other negotiating partners and Iran, we better all hope that donkeys start flying around the Capitol, because that agreement, as it is being described to us, would put Iran on the path to be a nuclear power. That would destabilize not only the region, but it would destabilize the world. It would lead to an enormous amount of nuclear proliferation within the region. It is a very bad deal. It is very risky for this Nation. It affects this Nation.

Let me just go through the three forms of international agreements. There are no set criteria in terms of what is a treaty, what is a congressional-executive agreement or what is simply an executive agreement. There are considerations. There is precedent.

I go to the Foreign Affairs Manual at the State Department, and they lay out the considerations; what should be considered in determining what an agreement is—a treaty, a congressional-executive agreement or just an executive agreement. The first consideration is the extent to which the agreement involves commitments or risks affecting the Nation as a whole.

The third consideration is whether the agreement can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by Congress.

Well, the fact that we have this bill proves the fact that it needs subsequent legislation by Congress.

The fifth consideration is the preference of the Congress as to a particular type of agreement. Well, that is what we are talking about here—the Congress weighing in, in the form of my amendment, to say we want a role, we want a more robust role than is currently offered in this bill.

The seventh is the proposed duration of the agreement. We are going to be living with the impact, the effect, the results, the collateral damage of this agreement between Iran and the other negotiating parties for a very, very, very long time. So based on those considerations, based on the fact that in the State Department's own Foreign Affairs Manual in determining whether something is a treaty or an executive agreement or a congressional executive agreement, there should be consultation with Congress. I consider this amendment consultation with Congress.

Again, all I am asking in this amendment is to provide a minimal—a minimal constitutional threshold, a minimum constitutional role for Congress in affirmatively approving a deal between Iran and the rest of the world and America.

So all this amendment really does, in effect, is just asks the President to bring the agreement before the American people, before this Congress, allow us to have input, to affirmatively approve this in both Chambers, both the House and the Senate, with a mere majority vote of both Chambers. Because what is currently on the floor in this bill—and, again, I have a great deal of respect for the Senator from Tennessee. I know in his heart he believes this Senate, this Congress, should have a far more robust role and involvement in such a consequential agreement, but I also realize the challenge he has had dealing with our friends on the other side of the aisle and how very little involvement they are willing to agree to for this Senate and for this Congress.

If the bill is passed, we need to clarify what that means in terms of approval. Probably the best way for me to point that out is I had a third amendment I tried to offer. It was an amendment that was going to specifically describe what this bill does with a vote of disapproval, what that threshold really means in terms of approval of this very consequential deal. So I offered an amendment: I called it a very low threshold for approval of a congressional-executive agreement. It would have allowed the agreement between Iran and the rest of the world to be approved by this body, by this Congress, with a majority vote in the House and a vote of only 34 Senators in this body.

Now, very appropriately, that amendment was ruled out of order. It was ruled unconstitutional by the Parliamentarian, as it should have been, because that is not approval of a process. That is not the way Congress should weigh in, have input, be involved in such a consequential agreement. But that is exactly—in a very convoluted process of votes of disapproval, that would have to be, first of all, voted on by 60 Senators. Then, of course, if that is vetoed, we would have to override that veto with 67 Senators and two-thirds majority in the House.

Again, what this bill does, it will allow a very bad deal—potentially very bad deal—between Iran and the rest of the world and America to be approved with a majority vote in the House and a vote of only 34 Senators in this Chamber.

Again, with that reality, with that clarity of what this bill does, the minimum role, the minimum role that this bill allows, I would urge all of my colleagues to support my amendment that provides for what should be the minimum involvement of Congress: a majority vote, an affirmative vote of approval in both the House and the Senate to any deal this administration concludes with Iran.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wisconsin for his great service on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I think he knows there is another amendment offered by another Senator, the Senator from Texas, that I think is very similar to this, and we are working right now with the other side to try to bring that up.

Mr. JOHNSON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORKER. Sure.

Mr. JOHNSON. The difference between the two, as I understand them, is the amendment of the Senator from Texas would actually have a higher threshold. I think it would rise to a 60-vote threshold. I am not asking that. I am actually asking something less than that, to again clarify what this

bill allows in terms of approval by this Chamber.

So even though we discussed this earlier, I don't believe I can combine the two because I think it is important to clarify the issue with an amendment that requires what I really do believe—truly believe—should be the minimum, the minimum role, the minimum affirmative approval of disagreement: a mere majority vote in both Chambers. That is so reasonable. That is the minimum role the American people ought to have in terms of having a say in this.

I have never insisted on an amendment in 4 years in the Senate. I feel so deeply about this that I really ask both the Senator from Maryland and the Senator from Tennessee, please, just allow a vote on this one amendment.

Mr. CORKER. If I could, Mr. President, the Senator is right; he doesn't offer many amendments, nor do I. But the very first amendment we voted on was the amendment of the Senator from Wisconsin.

We had a conversation yesterday which I thought led to us considering combining this request with the request from Senator CRUZ, and I know we are working on that particular issue. But I understand, and we are trying to process these. I think he knows we are trying to process votes, and the very first one we processed was the one from the Senator from Wisconsin.

I do appreciate his concerns. I think he knows I share his concerns about this agreement. I am trying to get done what is possible. Again, if I could wave a wand and cause the national security waivers that Senator JOHNSON, myself, Senator CARDIN, and others voted for years ago when we put the sanctions in place—if I could wave a wand and those would go away, then we would be in a position where we would actually need to have an affirmative vote.

But I do appreciate his concerns. I think he knows we are trying to work through amendments down here, and I appreciate his patience as we do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I join Senator CORKER. Senator JOHNSON is a very valued member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I enjoy working with him on U.N. issues. The two of us are the Senate representatives to the United Nations this year and I know his passion on these issues, but I just want to underscore a couple points.

Right now, as of last night, there were 66 amendments that had been filed to this bill that came out of the committee 19 to 0. The number of Republican amendments were 66; the number of Democratic amendments were zero.

I point that out because we are trying to maintain the bipartisan cooperation we have had through this process so the Senate can speak with a united voice, because that gives us the strongest possible message as to the congressional role.

I must state, this is a delicate balance how we brought this bill forward. I don't think I am underestimating the surprise we received from our colleagues when they heard there was a 19-to-0 vote in our committee.

There are so many Members who are working with us who have filed amendments—and I thank each one of them—trying to find areas where we, as we worked in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, can find a common spot to be able to advance those amendments. I am optimistic and Senator CORKER is optimistic that we are going to be able to deal with many of the issues the Republican Members have brought up and the amendments they have filed.

But in direct response to Senator JOHNSON, let me point out, the sanctions were imposed by the U.S. Congress, by votes of the House and the Senate, and the signature of the President. What is being negotiated between our negotiating partners, the United States, and Iran, is an agreement—if they are successful, if the deal is struck—that will prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state and will provide, over time, relief from Iran from the international and U.S. sanctions that have been imposed. That is the framework.

We know the sanctions brought them to the table. We all understand that, and we are very proud of the role we played, but it is Congress, and only Congress, that can permanently change or modify that sanctions regime.

We are going to have to act. So I just take exception with Senator JOHNSON's view that we are not going to act. We are going to act because only we can permanently change the regime. But what this bill gives us is an orderly way to consider the congressional review of this agreement or deal when it is finally reached.

I just wish my colleagues would not prejudge this. I have heard so many people say something is going to happen. We don't know what the agreement is going to be. We don't even know if they are going to be able to come in with an agreement, but I will say this about the Obama administration. When they came out with the framework agreement, there were many Members of this Chamber who said Iran will never live up to the commitments in the framework agreement; that they would break out, they would not pull back, as they are committed to doing, and the sanctions regime would not be able to stay in effect. And guess what. A year later they have complied with the framework agreement, and they have in fact—the sanction regime has held tight during this period of time with our negotiating partners.

Do I share many of the concerns of my friend from Wisconsin? I do. I do share those concerns. I am concerned as to whether the agreement will, in fact, be strong enough to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state. That is what we are going to look at in our committee, if we can pass this bill in the same bipartisan manner in which we did in committee—if we can do that, the Senator from Wisconsin, the chairman, the ranking member, all of us in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee are going to get all the documents, we are going to have time to review it and be able to answer those questions. The vote we are having on the floor this week is whether we are going to have that opportunity.

I know these amendments are well intended. I understand that. I understand the deep feelings each Member has. But the bottom line, if the amendment my friend is talking about got on the bill, we are not going to get that review, we are not going to have that orderly process. That is the fact.

So I think the debate on the floor is critically important. We have been debating this bill for a week. We started last Thursday, 19-to-0 vote in committee, not a single Democratic amendment. We think it is time to move this bill forward to the United States House of Representatives.

And, yes, Senator CORKER and I are going to accommodate the suggestions that have been made by Members. We are finding a way to do that, and we are going to continue to work that path. But at the end of the day, this is a very serious issue, and I agree completely with Senator GRAHAM and the comments he has made. This is an extremely important issue. It has to rise above our individual desires so, collectively, we can achieve something for the American people. That is what they want us to do. We have it in our grasps.

I applaud the leadership of Senator CORKER. He has to work with all the Republican amendments that have been filed. Believe me, there is a lot of frustration on the Democratic caucus, also as to why this bill is still on the floor and hasn't passed by now. But if we get everybody's patience, I am confident Senator CORKER and I will be able to work together so we can accommodate the reasonable requests of our Members and get this bill moving to the United States House of Representatives.

But let us maintain the balance that the Senator Foreign Relations Committee did, and let us do what the American people want us to do and that is to listen to each other. We have different views. I understand that. But the way we can reach common ground is to listen to each other and reach a reasonable compromise that doesn't compromise the principles of what we are trying to achieve. That is exactly what the Senate Foreign Relations Committee bill does. I urge my colleagues to exercise some restraint. Let's get this bill to the House of Representatives.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I wish to respond to the point frequently made by the supporters of this bill that this is the only way—the only way—that this body, the Congress, the Senate and the House, will receive the details of the deal. What the Senator from Maryland is saying is that this President, our Commander in Chief, will be so brazen, so arrogant as to negotiate and conclude an agreement of such import, of such consequence, and he would then keep it secret from the American people in this Congress. I hope that is not so. But if that is truly the belief, I would be happy to modify my amendment to require that same disclosure of the information of the details of the agreement. I would be happy to do that. I would be happy to work with the other side to do so. But barring that agreement, I am still urging my colleagues and I am urging this body to allow a vote on my amendment, to clarify what this bill is and what it is not. It is not advice and consent. It is the minimum—the minimum—threshold, the minimum involvement, the minimum input on the part of the American people through their elected representatives to pass judgment to approve affirmatively such a consequential agreement with a mere majority of votes of both Chambers of Congress. Is that asking so much?

It is true that we passed this bill out of the Foreign Relations Committee with a unanimous vote, because we were granted assurances. I realize this is a delicate negotiation. I realize our friends on the other side of the aisle simply refuse to have what I consider a minimum involvement.

Again, I appreciate and applaud Senator CORKER for doing a bipartisan agreement, for reaching that agreement. But our understanding was that this would be a completely open amendment process.

The Senator from Maryland points out that there are 66 amendments to 1. Let's start voting on them. We will vote on the one Democratic amendment. Let's start voting on ours. Eventually, we will tire. Eventually, we will have made our points. Eventually, we will convey to the American public what this bill is and what it is not.

Again, let me say, for a final time, what this bill provides. If passed, sure, we get the information which we should get, regardless, but it sets up a process—a very convoluted process—of votes of disapproval which would require 60 votes in this Chamber to pass. We assume it would be vetoed. Then it would require 67 votes in this Chamber to override the veto and two-thirds of a vote in the House to override that veto.

In effect—let me clarify one last time—instead of requiring the bare minimum of an affirmative vote of a majority of Members of both Chambers of Congress, this bill would allow approval of this agreement by a simple majority in the House and only 34 Senators providing that rubber stamp of approval to a bill that could be incredibly consequential and of which we will live with the consequences—the results—for many, many years to come.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, again, I thank the Senator from Wisconsin and appreciate his service and his support of this bill. I agree with him, and I wish it were different than it is. The fact is that we will have a right to vote whether to approve or disapprove the lifting in the normal way, but that will occur 4 or 5 years down the road. I think most of us want to weigh in now before the sanctions regime totally dissipates.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed as in morning business in order to introduce a bill.

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

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1141 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. BARRASSO pertaining to the introduction of S. 1140 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. BARRASSO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I send two amendments to the desk, one for my own and one on behalf of Senator RUBIO of Florida.

Mr. President, I have said time and again——

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, has there been a unanimous consent request?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The quorum call has been vitiated.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I have said time and again that a nuclear-armed Iran is the greatest threat this country faces. I have said time and again that the Senate needs to have votes on the merits of this agreement.

The President has taken us down a very dangerous path. The President has backtracked on his own words. He said that Iran needed to live up to all of its obligations under international law. Yet Iran still has not disclosed the past military dimensions of its nuclear program.

The President said, after this negotiating process began in December of 2013, that Iran has no need for a fortified underground military bunker in Fordow. Yet our negotiators have conceded the existence, with centrifuge cascades, of that underground military bunker.

The President has said we have to have fully verifiable, anywhere, anytime access to all sites in Iran to ensure they are not cheating on any agreement—to include their military sites. Yet the leaders of Iran continue to say that we won't be able to access their military sites. There will be no intrusive inspections.

I and the Senator from Florida, as well as many other Senators, have submitted multiple amendments to ask for votes on these points. We have been consistently blocked from bringing up these amendments for a vote.

It is fine if you want to vote no. If you think Iran should keep an underground fortified military bunker with centrifuge cascades. It is fine if you don't think they should have to disclose the past military dimensions of their nuclear program, but we need to vote. We need to vote now.

It is even fine if you agree with those points and that you think this is a delicate agreement that has to be prevented from being amended in any way. But we need to vote.

If you don't want to vote, you shouldn't have come to the Senate. If you are in the Senate and you don't want to vote, you should leave. As the Senator from Florida said yesterday, be a talk show host, be a columnist. It is time we have a vote at a simple majority threshold on all of these critical points.

We are talking about a nuclear Iran, the most dangerous threat to our national security.

So the amendment I am offering first would simply take the language of the bill that came out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and add those three points. First, that Iran shouldn't keep its nuclear facility before it gets sanctions relief; that Iran can't get sanctions relief until they disclose the past military dimensions of their nuclear program. They can't get sanctions relief until they accept a fully verifiable inspections regime.

We deserve a vote on this.

AMENDMENT NO. 1197

(Purpose: Amendment of a perfecting nature)

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1197 at the desk to the text proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1140.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. COTTON] proposes an amendment numbered 1197 to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1140.

Mr. COTTON. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

AMENDMENT NO. 1198 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1197

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I also call up for Senator RUBIO a second-degree amendment, amendment No. 1198 to amendment No. 1197.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. COTTON], for Mr. RUBIO, proposes an amendment numbered 1198 to amendment No. 1197.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a certification that Iran's leaders have publically accepted Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state)

On page 3, line 20, of the amendment, strike ''purpose.'' and insert the following: ''purpose; and

''(iii) the President determines Iran's leaders have publically accepted Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, again, these amendments would do two very simple things: First, they would require a vote on whether Iran should get sanctions relief before it discloses past military dimensions of its nuclear program, before it closes its underground fortified bunker at Fordow, and before it submits to a fully verifiable, anytime, anywhere, no-notice inspections regime. Second, they would require Iran to acknowledge Israel's right to exist as a Jewish democratic state before they get nuclear weapons because they continue to say that Israel would be wiped off the map, and if they get nuclear weapons, they will have the means to do so.

It is my intent to insist upon a recorded vote on these amendments at a simple-majority threshold. The Senate needs to vote. If you disagree with these policies, vote no. If you agree with these policies and you think this will upset a delicate compromise, then vote no and explain that. But we need to vote, and we should start voting.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me point out a couple things. There are now 67 amendments, all of which have been filed by Republicans, none by Democrats.

This bill passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee 19 to 0. Senator CORKER and I have been working with Republicans who have filed amendments to try to accommodate them, and we have been making progress. We have been trying to schedule additional votes. I thank Senator CORKER and those who are cooperating with us in a way that we can try to move this bill forward.

We are prepared to have votes, but I think some of the tactics that are now being deployed are going to make it much more difficult for us to be able to proceed in an orderly way. It is every Member's right to take whatever actions they want to take, but I want to tell you that for those of us who want to get this bill to the finish line, it gets a little frustrating.

We will continue to focus on a way forward on this legislation. But I want to make it clear that we have been prepared to find an orderly way to proceed with votes and to deal with the issues Members have been concerned about, but at times it becomes difficult with the procedures that are being used.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member and the ranking member's staff. I thank the minority leader's office for working with us on what was going to be a series of votes, tough votes. I have a sense that the context of this has just changed, and I regret that.

I have been working with numbers of Senators on some really controversial votes that we were willing to make, as we already have. As a matter of fact, the only two votes we have had thus far were considered poison pill votes. My friend from Maryland was willing to have more poison pill votes—if you want to call them that—tough votes, but I sense the context of this may have just changed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, let's talk about poison pill amendments. I would say these aren't poison pills; these are vitamin pills. They are designed to strengthen this legislation and to strengthen the U.S. negotiating position.

Who could object that Israel has a right to exist as a Jewish state and that Iran should not be allowed a nuclear weapon if they won't recognize that right? The President himself said they should close their underground fortified military bunker before they get sanctions relief. We are simply asking for a vote on what the President himself has said.

If the Senator from Maryland wants to talk about procedural tactics, let's be perfectly clear what has happened here. The very first amendment brought to the floor on this bill was designed to stop any other amendments from being offered.

For those of you watching, you should know that the only thing that amendment says is that any final agreement must be submitted in Farsi as well as English. That is a noncontroversial proposal which I am sure we could adopt by voice vote and move on in an orderly fashion to any other amendments. Yet, they continue to object to unanimous consent to bring up any other amendments, designed to stop the Senate from having to cast these votes.

The amendments we have offered are no more of a procedural tactic than what the Senator from Maryland himself is doing—an amendment that could have been offered in committee, an amendment that could have been voted on easily on Tuesday when it was offered but is being used to block consideration of any other amendment.

These are not tough votes. These should be easy votes. Again, if you want to vote no, vote no. If you want to vote no and say it is designed to protect a compromise, do that. But we should be voting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I know the Senator from Arkansas knows I have no issue with taking tough votes, and I would take them all day long.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD—VETO

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, under the previous order, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 8.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the veto message.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 8, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures.

(The text of the President's veto message is printed on page S2094 of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of April 13, 2015.)

The Senate proceeded to reconsider the joint resolution.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the amendment that I plan to submit. It is amendment No. 1173. It is my intention to work with the managers of the Iran bill to get this amendment filed and voted on soon. What I wanted to do is to talk about this amendment for a little bit.

I want to begin by complimenting Senator CORKER, Senator CARDIN, and others who have worked hard on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. It is a good start to a critically important issue for all of us and for the American people. The amendment that I am proposing and that I am offering today will make that bill stronger, will give leverage to our negotiators, and will make our country more secure. That is our No. 1 priority. That is what this amendment will help us do.

The simple question this amendment proposes is this. Should the United States—our government, we, this body—allow sanctions to be lifted on a country that our own State Department has designated a state sponsor of terrorism? It is a simple, straightforward question.

In my view, the answer is also simple. The answer is no. Sanctions should not be lifted on a state sponsor of terrorism, especially one with a track record like Iran.

My amendment requires the President of the United States to declare that Iran is no longer a sponsor of state terrorism before lifting sanctions and allowing billions of dollars to flood into that country's economy. It is that simple. We should not allow, facilitate or encourage billions of dollars to go to a country that sponsors terrorism, because I fear that we have been inured to the issue of state sponsor of terrorism. I would like to focus on what that means a little bit.

Let's first start with the states that are on the list: Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Iran. These countries are all on the list because governments in each state facilitate international terrorism. We are not talking about rogue elements within a country that are killing people within their own borders. We are talking about governments themselves, the bodies in charge of a country, the bodies making and enforcing a country's laws, supporting acts of international terrorism, including against our own citizens.

Why is Iran on the list? Since its founding in 1979, the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the government have been sponsoring terrorism. In fact, our State Department has called Iran the world's most active sponsor of terrorism. Since 1979, Iran has been responsible for taking American hostages, for bombing our and our allies' embassies, and for horrible acts of murder across the globe.

Here is the key point. It has not stopped. According to the State Department, Iran continues to support terrorism—Palestinian terrorist groups—and is actively fostering instability throughout the Middle East right now, today. Last month, March 2015, a U.S. Federal judge found Iran complicit in the 2000 bombing of the USS *Cole*, the deadliest attack on a U.S. Navy vessel since 1987.

Let's talk about Iran's involvement in Iraq. I am a Marine Corps Reserve officer. In 2005, I was recalled to Active Duty for a year and a half, serving as a staff officer to the commanding general of the U.S. Central Command, John Abizaid. During that time, I deployed to many parts of the CENTCOM area of responsibility. One of the biggest concerns—perhaps the biggest concern—that we saw in Iraq during that time was the increasing threat to our troops of improvised explosive devices, especially what was referred to as explosively formed projectiles, EFPs, the most deadly and sophisticated IEDs on the battlefield.

Almost every time I was in Iraq with General Abizaid, he and his staff were briefed on the details of this threat, showing captured weapons systems, the twisted, charred remains of military vehicles that had been hit by EFPs. Those EFPs killed more American troops per attack than any other roadside bombs. They blasted through tanks, humvees or anything they hit. They were deadly. They killed and maimed thousands of our troops.

I still remember the courage and trepidation I saw in the eyes of our brave military members who had to face this threat on a daily basis, even some members of this body. To this day, I deeply distrust the leadership of the regime that was responsible for these EFPs.

Make no mistake, that country was Iran. That much was confirmed by our intelligence agencies and the State Department. But Iran has never taken responsibility for these deaths, and it has not said that it will stop this kind of terrorism.

Let me provide an example. In 2007, CENTCOM and intelligence officials provided very detailed briefings on the fact that these EFPs were coming from Iran. At the same time, Iran's U.N. Ambassador wrote an op-ed in the New York Times and said that such charges and evidence were being fabricated by the United States. That was the U.N. Ambassador from Iran, Ambassador Zarif. In that op-ed he was telling a lie to the American people.

Why is that important? He is now the Foreign Minister of Iran. He is now in charge of negotiating this nuclear deal. He is certainly not a trustworthy man.

If sanctions are lifted, billions of dollars are going to flow from companies and banks from around the world to the economy and government of Iran. They are going to invest in businesses. They are going to invest in the oil and gas sector. They are going to invest in banks.

What will the Iranian leadership likely do with that money? Do we trust them to invest in schools and infrastructure and health clinics so they can provide their citizens better lives?

Let's use history as our guide. Everything about that country's leadership and everything about that country's history tells us that that money—billions—is likely to be used to pump up their terror machine around the world and target American citizens.

I know what we have heard from the administration: Do not worry. If there is a violation of this agreement, these sanctions will snap back into place. They will snap back—no problem, piece of cake.

After serving on Active Duty for that time I mentioned, I served as a U.S. Assistant Secretary of State. I helped lead the effort in the Bush Administration to isolate economically Iran, to go to our allies and say you have to divest out of the Iranian oil and gas sector, the Iranian financial sector.

There was no snap here. This was a slog. It took years to get companies to divest. Yet now this administration is talking that we will snap back. No problem, we will divest in a couple of days. It is a fantasy. The Administration knows it. They should stop using the term ''snapback'' because it is not accurate. It is not accurate.

What is the alternative? The alternative is simple. Before lifting sanctions on Iran, Iran needs to take the steps to get off the list of countries that sponsor terrorism around the world. These are not insurmountable steps. These would include having a clear record for 6 months. That is it, 6 months—not decades, not years—6 months of not sponsoring state terrorism.

It would also require Iran to renounce terrorism. Simple, don't engage in terrorism. Do not try to kill our citizens or the citizens of our allies. Do not send your forces around the world to blow things up or take hostages. Then we will consider lifting the sanctions. You do not have to be our ally. You do not have to like us. We do not have to like you. You do not have to change even the structure of your government. You just should not target our citizens for murder the way you are doing now as one of the biggest—the biggest—state sponsors of terrorism in the world.

It has been said that such a requirement and an amendment such as this

would be a poison pill, meaning that if this amendment is added to the Corker-Menendez bill, it will somehow signify the death of the bill. I have thought long and hard about that. Do I want to be a Member of this body who introduces a poison pill? Am I being unreasonable with this amendment?

What I came to is this. It is our job—the most important job we have in this body—to do everything we can to keep our citizens safe and to enact good policy. Sometimes that means taking difficult positions, and sometimes it means taking very reasonable positions, even though the political process might make it seem as if this were a complicated and difficult issue. This is not complicated. This is not difficult. This amendment is a simple amendment. It is not difficult.

I wish to conclude with the question I began with. Is it good policy for the United States of America to allow or even encourage countries and corporations to do business with a state sponsor of terrorism, particularly one that has a history of targeting and killing our citizens? Is that good policy?

I believe the vast majority of the American people—Democrat, Republican, any State in the Union—would say no, that is not good policy. I believe that if the question were posed directly to the American people, they would not consider this some kind of poison pill. They might even consider this some kind of vitamin pill, one that will make us stronger. It is a supplement to strengthen our negotiators' position.

Right now there is confusion. It is in the press. The Iranians are saying we have a deal that lifts sanctions immediately. The President has said no, that is not necessarily clear. We have to be creative on how this is going to happen.

This amendment will give the President and Secretary Kerry the leverage to solve this critical issue, one that the President and the Secretary of State should use and welcome to strengthen our position in the negotiations and not view it as some kind of poison pill.

Again, it is a simple amendment. Before sanctions are lifted, the President and the State Department need to make sure Iran is off the list of states that sponsor terrorism. Iran could take the simple steps to make that possible and the world would be a much safer place.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FDA TOBACCO DEEMING REGULATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, a number of my colleagues came to the floor yesterday to speak about the FDA's failure to release the tobacco deeming rule and the delays that have occurred with respect to that rule.

As difficult as the American people may find it to understand why there are these delays in issuing a rule that protects our citizens against tobacco use—most particularly our children—we should all understand that these rules have real-life consequences.

Tobacco, in fact, is the leading cause of preventable death. In this Nation, tobacco use kills more than half a million people every year. Most smokers and tobacco users begin as children, many under the age of 10. Each day, more than 3,200 people younger than 18 years old smoke their first cigarette, and the consequences are inevitable. Thousands of them will die early in life.

Cigarettes are the only product in the world that, when used as the manufacturer intends it, kills the customer. If smoking continues at the current rate among U.S. youth, 5.6 million of them are expected to die prematurely from smoking-related illness.

Tobacco use is a path to addiction and disease, and it is a public health epidemic. Yet laws that protect the public, laws that forbid marketing to children, laws that are designed to uphold the public trust have been unimplemented.

My fight against Big Tobacco began in the 1990s, when I was attorney general of the State of Connecticut. I helped to lead a lawsuit against tobacco companies for marketing to children. We succeeded in restricting tobacco companies from selling to and targeting children in their ads through sporting events, magazines, and point of sale methods. We helped reimburse the States for the enormous amount of taxpayer dollars spent on tobacco-related diseases, and those payments continue today. They are supposed to be used for prevention and cessation activities, but unfortunately and tragically, much of that money is now used to fill gaps in State budgets.

I have continued my fight against the tobacco companies in the Senate, alongside dedicated colleagues such as Senator MERKLEY and Senator DURBIN, who spoke yesterday, in urging the FDA to seek relief, to strive to do its job with the tobacco deeming rule in order to protect children and families from tobacco.

The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009 gave the FDA significant power and responsibility to achieve this goal. Now it is the FDA's responsibility to implement that law to prevent young people from becoming nicotine addicts, damaging their health, risking their lives, and costing the taxpayers hundreds of millions—in fact, billions—of dollars.

Six years have passed since that law was passed. The FDA has yet to implement it, and the reason is that it has yet to issue those regulations. It wasn't until last year, April 2014—5 years after the measure passed—that the FDA took the first step, issuing draft regulations known as the deeming rule that would formalize this authority. The rule would allow the FDA to control the regulation and sale—in particular, the sale to minors—of e-cigarettes, as well as dangerous combustible products, such as hookah, pipe tobacco, and cigars.

This past Saturday, April 25, was the 1-year anniversary of the release of the proposed rule. Over the past year, youth use of unregulated tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes and the hookah, has skyrocketed. E-cigarette use has tripled among 11- to 18-year-olds, while hookah use has almost doubled.

There is clear data, absolutely irrefutable evidence that the rate of use of these products has increased even as some of the use of tobacco products has diminished, and this chart illustrates that evidence. It indicates that use of the regulated products has diminished, while use of unregulated products has increased. So laws work. Rules have an effect. People can be saved from addiction and disease. And these products—cigars, pipes, hookahs, e-cigarettes—lead to tobacco use in cigarettes and addiction to nicotine. They create the same kind of public health menace that tobacco products do.

We know that nicotine addiction is surging through e-cigarette use, which is a disastrous tribute to the ingenuity of Big Tobacco. In fact, many of the big tobacco companies have bought the e-cigarette companies because they know they can use the e-cigarettes as a gateway nicotine-delivery device, addicting children so that they will then shift to cigarette tobacco.

I am joining my colleagues in urging that the FDA act as quickly as possible to implement these rules, to finalize the regulations, to get them out of the regulatory apparatus, the morass in which they are now trapped, and make sure that our children and our citizens are protected against the marketing and other abuses that are involved in the current sale of these nicotine-delivery devices marketed to children.

I am also proud to be introducing today a new measure, the Tobacco Tax and Enforcement Reform Act, which is supported by Senators DURBIN, REED, and BOXER. I am very grateful to them for their leadership not only on this measure but over many years in fighting this battle against nicotine addiction and tobacco use.

Congress has a continuing responsibility to combat cigarette smoking directly. Right now, there are a number of areas where loopholes and gaps exist in the enforcement structure. We need to do more to fight illegal tobacco trafficking. We need to eliminate the tax disparities between different tobacco products. These gaps in our laws and

law enforcement failures create opportunities and incentives for violations of those laws, at great cost to the State with regard to illegal trafficking.

Similar to the changes outlined in the President's budget proposal, this bill would also increase the Federal tax rate on tobacco products. In fact, these reforms would help the Federal Government and States collect nearly $100 billion at a time when our States are strapped fiscally and our Federal Government needs that revenue as well. These revenues would not only reduce tobacco consumption, they would also aid the fiscal well-being of our State and local governments.

Most importantly from the standpoint of law enforcement, it would force criminals who engage in illegal trafficking to comply with the law. It would combat those criminals who profit from the illegal sale of these products and trafficking across State lines, who are selling illicitly and gaining huge numbers of dollars from that legal noncompliance.

Economic research confirms that raising the price of tobacco reduces use among young people, who are particularly sensitive to pricing. They are sensitive to price increases because they have less disposable income and know they have fewer dollars to spend. They are more price-sensitive. In fact, every 10 percent increase in the real price of cigarettes will reduce the prevalence of adult smoking by 5 percent and youth smoking by 7 percent. Adults are price-sensitive, too. Increasing the cost of cigarettes makes people more likely to want to quit and to pursue tobacco cessation, to break the nicotine habit and seek help through quit lines, the nicotine patch, and other pharmaceutical measures.

The current tobacco tax code has many loopholes that enable even the least creative manufacturers to exploit them and incentivizes many manufacturers to manipulate products so they can be classified in a lower tax category. These tax incentives and loopholes not only sharply reduce Federal revenues, but they increase the overall use of tobacco and tobacco-related harms. Eliminating these tax disparities, along with the price, is one of the goals of the measure I am introducing today. By taxing all products at the same level as cigarettes, we can make progress against nicotine addiction and the illnesses and diseases associated with tobacco use.

The increase in tax rate on cigarettes by 94 percent per pack and setting the rates for other tobacco products to an equivalent amount would help people who are now addicted and would also help America because at the end of the day the real cost of cigarettes is not only to people who are addicted and who endure the suffering and the pain of cancer, lung disease, and heart problems, it is to their families and to all taxpayers. All of us—literally, all of us—pay for the diseases that result from tobacco use through our insurance policies and through Medicare and Medicaid. We are the ones who bear the financial burden.

Due to these current tax inequities, the GAO has projected $615 million to $1.1 billion in losses to Federal tax revenue right now, and tobacco-related health problems cost the country almost $170 billion a year in direct medical costs. We can save money and save lives through this measure. I hope my colleagues will support it.

Every day that goes by without FDA regulation harms children. It hurts people who become addicted. It hurts all of America. Every day that tax disparities exist, every day that illegal trafficking continues is a day when America pays in the casualties, human suffering, loss of productivity, and loss of revenue.

I hope my colleagues will support these efforts.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Thank you, Madam President.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

I rise today to discuss the negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program. Many of my colleagues have spoken at length about some of their concerns, which I share. Today, however, I would like to discuss my concern about the administration's increasing reliance on the idea that sanctions can be snapped back into place in the event that Iran violates an agreement.

In its press release on the framework agreed upon earlier this month, the White House stated:

> If at any time Iran fails to fulfill its commitments, these sanctions will snap back into place.

On April 11, 2015, President Obama stated:

> We are preserving the capacity to snap back sanctions in the event they are breaking any deal. . . . And if . . . we don't have the capacity to snap back sanctions when we see a potential violation, then we're probably not going to get a deal.

A week later, at a press conference with the Italian Prime Minister, President Obama played down the question of whether Iran would receive immediate sanctions relief and insisted snapback provisions were more important. He said:

> Our main concern here is making sure that if Iran doesn't abide by its agreement, that we don't have to jump through a whole bunch of hoops in order to reinstate sanctions. That is our main concern.

I agree with President Obama's goal. Who wouldn't want harsh measures reinstated the moment Iran fails to comply with this agreement? The problem is that reality is far more complicated than the simple phrase ''snapback'' suggests.

In a Washington Post column last week, former CIA Director Michael Hayden, former Deputy Director General of the IAEA Olli Heinonen, and Middle East expert Dr. Ray Takeyh laid out the long and circuitous path that any action to reinstate sanctions on Iran would have to take. Their conclusion? That it could take an entire year or even longer to simply confirm that Iran has actually violated its obligations and navigate the bureaucratic process necessary to restore the sanctions on Iran.

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal by Henry Kissinger and George Shultz made a similar point. In it, they write:

> Restoring the most effective sanctions would require coordinated international action. In countries that had reluctantly joined in previous rounds, the demands of public and commercial opinion will militate against automatic or even prompt ''snapback.''

Some may argue that past history is irrelevant and that the negotiations will produce a new process, allowing for a quick restoration of the sanctions regime. Such a process would still be far from automatic since significant time would be required to confirm Iran's violation, but recent comments by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov made clear that this idea is not in the cards. Speaking last week on the idea of snapping back sanctions, he stated: ''This process should not in any way be automatic.'' He went on to say that decisions on this matter should be taken in accordance with the procedures of the U.N. Security Council through voting in the Council and through the adoption of the appropriate resolutions. We must also bear in mind that sanctions take time to have effect.

The United States has had sanctions on Iran since 1979. One could argue that the heavy sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table—they began back in 2010. But even in that case it took years to create enough economic pressure for Iran to even sit down with negotiators. The idea that we will be able to swiftly reimpose sanctions and that those sanctions are going to swiftly cripple the Iranian economy and that they are going to force Iran to change its behavior—I believe that is simply implausible.

The point is the practical reality of this issue is much more complicated than the talking points suggest. To me, this underscores the importance of getting a good deal with Iran. It demonstrates why a bad deal is so much worse than no deal at all. It took many years to build the global sanctions regime that brought Iran to the negotiating table. The fact is that it can be dismantled much faster than it can be rebuilt.

We cannot afford to overlook key provisions or pretend that the precise terms of this agreement are of lesser importance. Of all the tools we can use to influence Iran, sanctions relief is the most important. It should only be provided as part of a deal that is clearly in American interests. The security of our country, our families, and the possibility of a nuclear Middle East hangs in the balance.

There will be no simple snapback if this agreement does not hold. We need to be honest with the American people and not rely on unrealistic notions to justify any deal with them.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak for a few minutes on the bill we are debating to provide some congressional oversight over a potential—though not yet signed—deal with Iran.

I wish to start simply with what we all agree on. We all agree we need to do whatever we can to ensure that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon. I have no doubt that 100 Members of the Senate would agree with that proposition. That is our guiding principle, and it should be our North Star. We may disagree on the best way to achieve a nuclear weapons-free Iran, but we can all agree on our goal.

So how do we get there is the question we are debating. I happen to be a member of the camp who believes our best hope of achieving this goal is through diplomacy, through a negotiated settlement that dramatically rolls back Iran's nuclear program in a transparent and verifiable way. While our negotiations still have a long way to go to get to that agreement, we are closer now than we have been in decades.

I, and many of my colleagues, strongly believe we should give our negotiators the space to do their jobs and to see if a deal is ultimately possible.

That is really what this bill does. It postpones a congressional vote on these negotiations, appropriately, until the negotiations are finished. That makes sense, right? There is no use on voting on a deal when we don't have a deal. And then it sets up time constraints for Congress's review of that potential deal, basically, about 30 days. That is a reasonable period of time for us to debate the agreement, and, if there is one, there is some certainty over our process to those who are at the negotiating table.

The President's critics seem to fall into two often overlapping camps. One strain of argument holds that this framework agreement we have right now is just too weak and that our side should walk away from the table, reimpose sanctions, and hold out for a better deal.

The second strain of argument—evidenced, frankly, by many of the amendments that have been filed to the underlying bill—holds that our negotiations shouldn't be just about Iran's nuclear program, that we should also be negotiating over all of the other bad things Iran does and supports.

Now, I don't think it is worth getting into a defense of a framework today since we are months away from a final deal. But to my mind, if the final deal does look demonstrably like the framework, we would be fools to reject it. Does it allow Iran to do nuclear research? Yes, it does. Does it allow them to keep some centrifuges? Yes. But anybody who thought we were going to sign a deal that would effectively be an unconditional surrender was living in a fantasyland. The framework accomplishes our goal of protecting Israel, the region, and the United States from a quick nuclear breakout. The plutonium pathway at Arak is ended. Their enriched stores basically go down to zero. Fordow and Natanz stay open, but they can no longer do substantial enrichment, and they are going to have international scientists and inspectors crawling all over their capacity. Inspections, on the entire nuclear supply chain, will be at a scale that is totally, completely unprecedented in the history of the nuclear age.

It is a good framework. But even if you don't believe this, I just think it belies common sense to think that walking away from the table now would get you a better deal. Yes, we could reinstitute sanctions, the United States could. Perhaps some of our partners would go along, but they would be weaker than before because lots of countries that think this is a good framework wouldn't go along with this. Just look at what Russia and China have announced in the past few weeks. They basically have telegraphed that they are looking to do business with the Iranians, notwithstanding what happens at the negotiating table. We know what happens when we apply weak sanctions against Iran, alongside a policy of isolating. They get stronger.

How do we know this? Because in 2002 we had a chance to cap Iran's centrifuges at a few hundred. Instead, after years of relatively weak sanctions and international isolation, Iran built 20,000 centrifuges and put in place a secret nuclear facility.

Now, our most recent round of tough international sanctions—in part because of the policies of this Congress—worked to get to the table, to the negotiating table, but only because there was a credible offer of a negotiated solution. We know exactly what happens, what sanctions and isolation get us, because we tried it for years. It gets us 20,000 centrifuges, no international inspections, and an increasingly hardline and inward-looking regime.

This last point and result is important because the people of Iran actually don't think like their Supreme Leader. His grasp on power isn't absolute, in large part because Iranians are much more moderate, much more internationalist, and much more pro-American than their leader, generally. Khamenei knows this, and that is why, when Iranian voters elected a moderate, Western-oriented President, the Supreme Leader allowed his team the space to negotiate this framework.

Now, no one can be certain, but it is certainly plausible to believe that moderate forces inside Iran are winning and that our policy toward Iran should consider whether our actions help the moderates or help the hardliners. We don't want another hard-line administration, but we are going to get one if we walk away from these negotiations now, when thousands of Iranians are cheering the opening of relations with the West. If we walk away, moderate voters are going to feel abandoned. Hard-liners will be proven right. The two groups will be merged. Politics inside Iran will shift inward and extreme again. For all of my Republican colleagues who were so forceful in their criticism of the administration, saying President Obama didn't do enough to support the Green Revolution, you would do far more damage to this cause by ending reformers' hopes of rapprochement with the West right now.

Now, for the second argument—that we should settle all of our grievances with Iran in one fell swoop right now, that this agreement is somehow illegitimate unless Iran renounces Hamas and Hezbollah, unless they get right with Israel, unless they end their other nonnuclear weapons programs, unless they release political prisoners, and so on and so on.

First, there is not a single person here who agrees with Iran's support for terrorism or its inflammatory rhetoric toward Israel. No one is pleased with the Iranian regime's record on human rights or its funding of Hezbollah.

But let's agree that an Iran that pursues these policies and has a nuclear weapon is a far worse outcome, one that should be avoided at all costs. The truth is that adding these issues into the nuclear agreement would mean no deal is possible.

In America, we are strong enough to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time. We can negotiate with an enemy or adversary on one issue and reserve the right to fight another day or simultaneously on other issues. For evidence of this, I would ask my Republican friends to simply look to their great, romanticized hero, President Ronald Reagan. When he was negotiating a nuclear weapons deal with the Soviet Union, he did not simultaneously try to address the USSR's support for proxies in Central America or the Middle East or their provocative naval activities in the Pacific Ocean, he knew that by taking one issue off the table it would make America and the world safer, even if it didn't address all of our grievances at once. He knew if he did put everything on the table all at once, then there would be no progress.

Just as a little kid can't eat a hot dog all in one bite no matter how hard he tries, we all have to make progress

one bite at a time. That is often how life and, in fact, negotiations tend to work.

So I hope my colleagues will oppose these well-meaning amendments that are being offered. They have laudable goals, but in the real world they are simply unrealistic within the confines of these negotiations, and they will have the effect of killing the deal entirely.

On a broader scale, I hope when this debate is done, we can also ask ourselves some bigger questions. Diplomacy is power. It is not weakness. Talking to your enemies has been part of our national security toolbox for as long as we have existed as a nation.

This country is tired. It is weary of war for good reason. Ten years of conflict in Iraq didn't make us any safer, and a lot of people—heroes—died in the process.

But when we spend all of this time—the majority of this Congress—engaged in detailed oversight over the President's diplomatic endeavors and absolutely no time engaged in detailed oversight over a war in Iraq and Syria that is still, months and months later, unauthorized and extraconstitutional, then we send a bad message to America and to the rest of the world. We seem to have a developing double standard when it comes to oversight. We are all over the President when he talks to our adversaries, but we stand down when he fights them—lots of oversight over peace, very little over war.

That is not where the American people are. They want their President to take extraordinary steps to avoid war. They don't want us to get dragged back into a ground war in the Middle East.

I am supporting this bill today because I will be first in line to reassert Congress's power to set foreign policy right alongside the President, but I don't support Congress sending a message that diplomacy is somehow more worthy of rigorous oversight than military action.

I don't think this is where the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee is coming from, but there are certainly some Members of his caucus who view power solely through a military lens. That is dangerous because, as we saw in Iraq, large-scale military operations kill a lot of terrorists, they kill a lot of bad guys, but they often create two for every one they kill.

In the end, it is nonkinetic intervention that solves extremism, building inclusive governments, lifting people out of destitution and poverty, countering radical propaganda, and showing an America that backs up all of its talk about American civil liberties with action.

I am so thankful to Chairman CORKER for taking the time to work on this bill with Senator CARDIN, Senator MENENDEZ, and others to make it something we can truly rally around today. That takes guts to show patience, to give ground, and to talk to people whom you don't agree with.

It is actually diplomacy that wins the day here more often than not. It is our guiding value as a body, as an institution. It is what makes this place work when it works, and we are best when we recognize that the value of diplomacy and the results we get from it do not expire at the edges of this Chamber.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE BUDGET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we are finally seeing the Senate do what we were elected to do, and that is the people's work. I am glad to see there have been some reports in the press saying the 114th Congress and the new majority are actually following through and keeping our promises by passing important legislation that helps make the American people's lives just a little bit better.

One of the actions we have taken is the House and the Senate have now met in a conference committee to agree on a budget. This is, unfortunately, an unusual event in recent history. It was 2009 when the last budget was passed by the U.S. Congress. That is a little embarrassing. It is actually very embarrassing. It is a scandal, really. But now we are finally getting back on track. I am glad to report, as the Presiding Officer knows, that this is a budget that balances in roughly 9 years. I wish it were sooner, but that is what it is. There are no tax increases. It also meets our obligation to keep the country safe and the American people secure by plussing up some of the defense accounts, which I believe is important. All of our colleagues on our side of the aisle believe this should be our No. 1 priority. There are some things that only the Federal Government can do, and national security is at the very top of that list.

So we will have a vote—perhaps as early as next Tuesday—on the budget conference report.

UNITED STATES-JAPAN ALLIANCE AND TRADE

Mr. President, yesterday, we had a joint meeting of Congress, and we heard from the leader of one of America's greatest allies, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan. I had a chance to meet the Prime Minister briefly before his comments, and I told him: Mr. Prime Minister, I actually graduated from high school in Japan. My dad was in the U.S. Air Force and was stationed at Tachikawa Air Force Base, and that is where I attended my senior year in high school.

It was an honor for all of us to listen to the Prime Minister. As were many of my colleagues, I was very encouraged to hear about his unwavering support for the U.S.-Japan alliance. This is one of the most important alliances the United States has in the world.

The Prime Minister spent a good amount of time talking about our shared values. He noted our mutual and unflinching commitment to democracy and freedom and our common goal of peace and prosperity.

One of the issues I was particularly glad to hear the Prime Minister speak about was the shared values of freedom and democracy and why the Trans-Pacific Partnership is so important not just to the United States, not just to Japan, but to all, I believe, 12 different countries that are negotiating this important trade agreement.

I couldn't agree more about the importance of trade. Texas is the No. 1 exporting State in the Nation, and that is one of the reasons we are doing relatively well compared to the rest of the country economically. I know the Presiding Officer comes from an oil-producing and gas-producing State that is booming as well. But one of the reasons my State is doing so well is because we figured out that the more people we can sell goods and services to that we grow or we raise or we make, the more jobs we have at home, the better our economy is, and the better our people are.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership fits right into that formulation because the United States occupies roughly 5 percent of the planet and we represent about 20 percent of the purchasing power of the planet. So that should tell us that 80 percent of the purchasing power lies outside and beyond our shores, and why in the world wouldn't we want to trade with those other countries and sell goods and services to consumers in Japan and all around the world, including the region of Asia on which the Pacific partnership is particularly focused?

The Prime Minister eloquently articulated that the Trans-Pacific Partnership promotes the spread of our values by reducing economic barriers. It has been observed by smarter people than I that countries that actually trade together are much less likely to go to war against each other. That just seems to be the way it works. And the more people we can improve our economic ties to around the world—it improves not only prosperity, it also improves the peace.

Prime Minister Abe understands how important this agreement is not only for the 12 nations that make up the TPP but for the entire global economy. This is at least in part because the 12 Asia-Pacific countries involved in the partnership make up 40 percent of the world economy. Thankfully, the Prime Minister assured us that he will continue to work with the United States to ensure the success of these negotiations.

In a short time—perhaps maybe next week or the week after—we will have

an opportunity to take up trade promotion authority. This is congressionally conferred authority to the executive branch to engage in negotiations and sets the parameters for those negotiations—very clear congressional direction for the President's negotiators, including Ambassador Froman, in negotiating this Trans-Pacific Partnership. Once the negotiations are concluded, then it will have to lie in public for up to 60 days, I believe the timeframe is, so the American people can read it, to be completely transparent, and I think that is a very important part of the process.

I would be remiss, as I suggested earlier, if I did not point out the important role of trade not only to the United States but also to my State of Texas. About $1.5 trillion of GDP is attributable to the State of Texas. If we were an independent nation—which we once were for 9 years; from independence to the time we were annexed to the United States in 1845—if we were still an independent nation, we would represent the 12th largest economy in the world. It would put us ahead of even robust economies such as those in Mexico and South Korea. It is primarily because of the role of exports.

Energy is an incredibly important part of our economy, but it is not all of our economy. If we could do what the Presiding Officer and others have advocated, which is to accelerate the export of liquefied natural gas and perhaps reconsider the ban on exporting crude under some appropriate circumstances, I think we could do even better.

According to a report released earlier this month by the Department of Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative, Texas was far and away the leader of goods exported in 2014, with $289 billion of goods exported—$289 billion. So, not to brag—well, Texans have been known to brag a little bit—but just to state the facts—let me put it that way. The State of California—the State with the second most goods exported by value—exported a sizable $174 billion worth. Now, that is a lot, $174 billion for California, but it is still $115 billion less than the No. 1 State of Texas. The same report revealed that Texas also boasts some 41,000 companies—many small- and medium-sized businesses—that export goods globally.

For years, this impressive amount of trade has helped our economy continue to grow, while providing jobs for Texans across the State. In fact, more than 1 million jobs in Texas are supported by global exports. So why wouldn't we want to do more and create more jobs and more prosperity and more opportunity?

I agree with Prime Minister Abe that the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal is vitally important to the United States, particularly at a time, as we learned—I guess it was yesterday, maybe the day before—that the gross domestic product of the United States had grown by an anemic .2 percent in the last quarter, essentially saying our economy has flatlined. That is dangerous, and it is also painful for the families of people who are out of work or who are looking for work or those who have simply dropped out of the workforce. We need to do better by growing our economy and creating those jobs so people can find work and provide for their families.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership would help Texas businesses. It would also help our farmers and ranchers, both big and small. Obviously, the agricultural exports and particularly the beef and poultry and pork exports to a country such as Japan would be very important.

As the President said the other day, if we don't enter into this Trans-Pacific Partnership deal where we will be setting the rules, along with these 12 countries—if we don't do this, what will happen is that China will, in essence, be setting the rules for Asia. That is a circumstance we should not sit by and let happen.

Increasing trade in the region will also provide a way forward for 21st-century industries that have made a home in Texas, including electronics and machinery. We are not as well known for electronics manufacturing and machinery as we are for the energy business or farming and ranching and agriculture. But, importantly, as Prime Minister Abe mentioned yesterday, the TPP goes far beyond just economic benefits; it also provides the United States an opportunity for greater influence in the region and in the process promotes not only prosperity, as I said earlier, but also stability and security.

Just last week, the Dallas Morning News made this point well by saying that TPP is ''not just about exports and imports; it's also about enhancing America's role among Pacific nations and standing strong against an assertive China.'' President Obama made that point as well, and I happen to think in this case he is absolutely right.

Texas and our entire country stands to gain a lot from this pending trade deal. I am happy to see the President is promoting this among some members of his own party, who are a little bit divided on this issue. I think it is fair to say that on this side of the aisle we are a little more unified on this issue. This is not, though, an objective we are going to be able to get done unless the President steps up and delivers votes from that side of the aisle from members of his own political party, and I hope he will roll up his sleeves and he will dive right in and engage and produce those votes. We can't produce those votes on that side of the aisle; only the President, the leader of his party, can do that.

So I am happy to see that this Chamber, this U.S. Senate, has continued in a spirit of bipartisanship by passing trade promotion authority out of the Senate Finance Committee, and I hope we will take it up here as a body very soon.

In conclusion, this legislation will open up American goods and services to American markets, which is good for our economy, good for jobs, and good for better wages for hard-working Americans, including Texas families.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act that is before the Senate today. I thank Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for their incredible work bringing people together on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill as written. We must move forward to pass this legislation as quickly as possible to ensure that Congress has a role in reviewing any proposed nuclear agreement with Iran.

This is a critically important bill at a critically important time. Preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is one of the most important objectives of our national security policy, and I strongly supported the sanctions every step of the way that brought Iran to the negotiating table.

I have also supported the diplomatic efforts to address the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program. The framework that was reached in Switzerland earlier this month is a positive step forward, but I think we all know that this process is far from complete.

There are so many unanswered questions on the military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program, on how its uranium stockpile would be handled, under what circumstances any sanctions relief would be provided, and the timing of that relief.

It is clear that there are still differences between Iran and the rest of the international community on these issues. I believe it is important that negotiations continue to pursue a final agreement by June 30 that comprehensively addresses the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program. Again, one of the most important objectives of the U.S. national security policy is to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

The bipartisan legislation before us today will set up a process for Congress to review any final nuclear agreement with Iran. It ensures that Congress, which through its actions brought Iran to the table, will have access to all the final details of the agreement. It preserves our right to have a final say in the potential lifting of the sanctions that we led on. That is how we were involved in compelling Iran to negotiate in terms of these sanctions.

Senators CORKER and CARDIN worked so hard to strike a careful balance between the Executive's prerogative to pursue the negotiations and Congress's role in reviewing any nuclear agreement. Their negotiations were a success, as I said. The bill passed the Foreign Relations Committee unanimously, 19 to 0, 2 weeks ago. That is a committee with a number of Senators with a broad range of views on every issue, including foreign relations and including these negotiations.

The President, who had long threatened to veto any such bill, has agreed to sign it. This is a significant victory for the Senate and also for congressional oversight of foreign policy, something many of us have been pushing for.

Any nuclear agreement with Iran will have significant long-term implications for the United States, for Israel, and for our allies in the region. So it is critical that Congress have the opportunity to review it.

This bill ensures that we have that opportunity. That is why it is so important that we act now to pass this legislation without delay and without amendments that undercut the bipartisan agreement on this bill.

Right now, I understand there are negotiations over a number of amendments that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to offer. I think we know that a number of these amendments appear to be written in a way that would undermine the bipartisan support for the bill or would somehow make this bill much more difficult in terms of having a process.

All this bill is, from my mind, is a process to review. Instead of having a haphazard process, this actually gives Congress something for which we have been asking for a long time. It has given us that ability to review this agreement and have a vote on it. I don't know how many times I have heard my colleagues from the other side of the aisle talk about it—and my colleagues on this side of the aisle. We finally have a bipartisan way to do it. So I think we need to be very careful when moving forward and look at some of these amendments.

I certainly share my colleagues' deep mistrust and skepticism of the Iranian regime. I am appalled by the continuing human rights abuses, the unjustified detention of American citizens—everyone, from the Washington Post reporter to a former marine to a Christian pastor. I abhor the vicious threats we are hearing against Israel and against Israeli leaders, the track record supporting anti-Semitism and the Holocaust denial. I am deeply concerned about the destabilizing actions in the region, including Iran's efforts to obtain more advanced missiles, and the support for militant forces and terrorists.

I think we all know the issues that are going on here. It is incredibly important that we work to address these issues, but there must be a recognition of the fact that what we are talking about here is a nuclear agreement. I think every Senator is going to want to look at that agreement and say: Does this make things safer or not? What effect does this have on Israel? Is it safer to have Iran have nuclear capabilities when they have shown the propensity to do all of these other things that I have just mentioned? I think many of us come down on the side that we want to see this agreement but we are pleased these negotiations are going on. We are particularly thankful that Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN were able to come to an agreement on a process and to get that agreement through a highly diverse committee in terms of their political views and to get that agreement through on a 19-to-0 vote.

Also, I might add that we don't want to revive the threat of a Presidential veto here. I know many of these amendments sound appealing to many of us but not if they are going to be used as a way to bring down this process, the review agreement, and that is essentially what would happen.

We do not want to be damaging our own ability to ensure that sanctions relief will only come from a strong agreement that prevents Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. I would think that outcome would certainly be fine with the Iranians, if that is what happens. As our Republican colleague from South Carolina, LINDSEY GRAHAM, pointed out recently, ''Anybody who offers an amendment that will break this agreement apart . . . the beneficiary will be the Iranians.''

So let's not give the Iranians a victory. Let's pass this bill on a strong bipartisan vote, and let's do it now so it is clear that Congress stands united and we want the ability to review this agreement. Our foreign policy is more effective when we speak with one voice. It may be simplistic to say that politics should stop at the water's edge, but when it comes to Iran, the fact is, we have been unified. The past three votes in favor of major sanctions legislation in 2010, 2011, and 2012 have been unanimous—99 to 0, 100 to 0, and 94 to 0 respectively. And now the Iranians are at the table negotiating a nuclear agreement. That is because we stood together across party lines.

We have stood together and been strong and unified as a country. The time has come to show we are serious again—serious about ensuring that a final agreement is strong and enforceable and, most importantly, blocks Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. We may not agree on everything, but we must certainly agree on something that so many of us have been talking about—a role for the Congress, a role for the Senate in having a say over this agreement. That is all this bill is about. Passing this bill will show our commitment to our country's security and the security of our allies and our partners. It transcends partisan politics, and that is something that, when it comes to foreign relations and when it comes to dealing with a country such as Iran, must stop at the water's edge.

I thank our colleagues, Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, for working so hard to negotiate this agreement—simply a process of review—so that we can finally have a say, and I ask my colleagues to support this.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, sometimes when I travel, people ask me what I do, and I tell them I am a retired Navy captain. And then they say: Well, what do you do now? And I tell them I am a recovering Governor. Then they say: Well, now that you are recovering, what do you do? I tell them I am a servant.

Once, one guy said to me on an airplane: What do you mean you are a servant?

I said: I serve the people of Delaware.

He said: Are you like a butler?

And I said: No, not really, but I do serve.

But I still think like a retired recovering Governor. I am proud to be able to serve here. I loved being in the Navy. But at heart, I still think and act a good deal like a retired Governor. Those others who serve here in this body who have served as the chief executive of their State sometimes feel the same way about how they approach their job. I love doing that. I feel really lucky to have that choice. I feel very lucky to be here to serve Delaware, the First State, in this capacity.

One of the key takeaways from my time as the chief executive of my State was that when we had to negotiate deals, whether with our neighboring States or with the Federal Government or actually with folks who were thinking of starting a business in Delaware or growing a business in Delaware, we had to do so with one unified voice in order to be effective.

Now, we were trying to bring AstraZeneca, one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, and convince them to put their North American headquarters in Delaware. We didn't have the whole legislature to negotiate that deal. My cabinet and I were involved in that negotiation, and we got a signoff from the legislature, at least indirectly. We just couldn't have competing messages coming from all the various elected officials, State senators, State representatives, and so forth. The reason is that this would have undermined in some cases very sensitive negotiations and hindered our ability to work through some already tough issues. While I would consult

with Delaware's other State and local officials, as appropriate—and I valued their insight and their opinions, even when I didn't necessarily agree with all of them any more than they agreed with me—at the end of the day, as chief executive of our State, I had to be the final decisionmaker in a lot of cases in negotiating or advocating on behalf of Delaware.

Now, as a U.S. Senator, I take really a very similar approach to negotiating on many issues, including matters of foreign policy. I support the idea that when the United States conducts diplomacy with foreign governments, the United States should speak to that government with a unified voice.

Our system is set up so that we do not have 535 Members of Congress serving as negotiators and diplomats—and for good reason. That is the case with trade deals—the kind of deal we are trying to negotiate today with 11 other countries that come from this hemisphere all the way over to Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Japan, and Vietnam. But if we fail to speak with a unified voice in most of those negotiations, including the one I just mentioned, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, then forging international agreements with other countries is going to be really tough and in some cases just about impossible.

When it comes to the negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program—the negotiations that involve not just Iran, not just us, but the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany as well—I have been a strong proponent of giving the President and his negotiating team the flexibility they need to achieve the best deal for our Nation.

I know many of our colleagues have strong views on the need for Congress to play a direct role in the negotiations and to make sure their voices are heard in this process. I understand that position, and I respect that position as well.

There are also some in the Senate who believe that the best deal with Iran is, frankly, no deal at all, and they are trying to maximize their ability to kill the nuclear deal with Iran before it is ever finalized.

Another key lesson I learned as Governor—and I am constantly reminded of it in the Senate—is that forging compromise is no easy task. Bridging the divide of competing interests is never easy, especially on issues as important as negotiations over nuclear weapons and Iran. But that is what my colleagues—our colleagues—in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently did.

Specifically, Senators CORKER of Tennessee and CARDIN of Maryland, one a Republican and one a Democrat, worked to forge a compromise that identifies an appropriate role for Congress in these nuclear talks. This compromise will enable the President to maintain his prerogative as our Nation's Chief Executive and Commander in Chief to negotiate on behalf of the United States, while also ensuring that Congress is able to weigh in on the final product of those negotiations should they come to fruition. In my mind, that is a reasonable compromise that we should all support regardless of our opinion on the prospect of the President reaching an acceptable deal with Iran.

Let me explain why. First of all, Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN's compromise satisfies one of my key goals of not undermining our negotiating team before any final deal can be reached with the Iranians.

Second, for those who insist that Congress be given a chance to weigh in on a final nuclear deal with Iran, this bill that we are debating today and will probably debate a little more next week will empower Members of Congress to cast a vote for or against any final deal before it is implemented.

Finally, for those Members who think that no deal is the best deal, this bill gives those Members the opportunity to make their case to our respective colleagues at an appropriate time.

Now, Senators CORKER and CARDIN should be commended for their tireless work to strike a compromise that should satisfy many of our colleagues—not all, but many. I know they worked with the White House to craft a bill that does not cut the legs out from underneath our negotiators as they work to finalize a deal with Iran, and I want to thank them for preserving the administration's ability to negotiate and the Congress's ability to weigh in on the final deal.

As we cast our votes on amendments and final passage of this bill, I would encourage us to consider the delicate nature of the compromise that Senators CORKER and CARDIN have struck.

Too often in Washington we focus on what divides us rather than what unites us. That is unfortunate and sometimes counterproductive for our country—not just on this issue but on a host of important policy matters. Compromise should not be a rare occurrence in our Nation's Capital. Rather, it should be one of our guiding principles.

We should seize this opportunity, colleagues, to advance a compromise that meets the needs of many of our colleagues, the President, and our Nation. I urge our colleagues to join me in supporting Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN's legislation.

Some of my colleagues have heard me say before, whenever I meet people who have been married for a long time, I love to ask those who have been married 50, 60, 70 years: What is the secret for being married 50, 60 or 70 years? I get a lot of different answers, as you might imagine. Some of them are very funny, and some are quite poignant.

Some of my favorites include a couple married over 50 years. I asked them not long ago: What is the secret to being married 50 years?

The wife said of her husband: He could be right or he could be happy, but he cannot be both.

More recently, with a couple who has been married over 60 years, I asked the husband and wife: What is the secret to being married over 60 years? And each of them gave a different answer. The wife said patience, and her husband of 60 years said a good sense of humor. That is pretty good advice as well.

I have asked this question hundreds of times over the years, but the best advice I have ever heard in asking that question is years ago from the answers of a couple who had been married 65 years or so.

I said: What is the secret of being married 65 years?

They both said almost at the same time: The two C's.

The two C's. I had never heard that one before.

I said: What are the two C's?

One of them said: Communicate.

That is good.

The other one said: Compromise.

Those are two pretty good C's.

Since then, I have invoked their words any number of times, including on this floor and here in Washington, DC, and in my own State of Delaware.

Over the years, I have added a third C to it. The third C is collaborate—collaborate. If you think about it, those two C's or those three C's—communicate, compromise, and collaborate—are not just the secret for a vibrant and long marriage between two people; they are also the secret to a vibrant democracy.

As one of the Members of this body, I wish to again express my thanks to Senators CORKER and CARDIN for communicating, for compromising, and for collaborating in a way that could bring about a better future for my kids, your kids, our grandchildren, and hopefully for the people of Iran and hopefully for the people of Israel and a lot of other nations that have a real interest in this issue—as we say in Delaware, a dog in this fight.

As I close, I thank you for this opportunity to speak today. I hope when we vote next week we will reward the efforts of those Senators with the two C's—CARDIN and CORKER—and further embrace the three C's—communicating, compromising, and collaborating—embrace their efforts with an ''aye'' vote.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FDA TOBACCO DEEMING REGULATIONS

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, technology can be transformative. The black rotary phones have given way to iPhones. Sunlight and wind have become electricity. Camera tripods have

begotten selfie sticks. There are certain things, however, that do not need to be reimagined, repurposed or redesigned. There are items that serve no societal benefit whatsoever.

Example No. 1, the cigarette. Yet new cigarettes have exploded into the marketplace, known as everything from e-cigs to advanced nicotine delivery systems, to vaporizers. Similar to many emerging technologies, these products are designed to appeal to young people, are more accessible to young people, and are explicitly marketed to young people, and because of this, we are being forced to write another dark chapter in the history books.

After more than four decades of research, there are several incontrovertible facts. Nicotine is addictive. It affects brain development, and in combination with tobacco, it is responsible for claiming millions of lives. These facts are true and were true decades ago, at the same time that Big Tobacco willfully, consistently, publicly, and falsely denied them.

Today, e-cigarette sales in the United States alone top $1 billion. The use of e-cigarettes among middle and high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014, accounting for upward of 13 percent of high school students. New data reports that nearly 2.5 million American young people currently use e-cigarettes.

This data is not at all surprising when we consider the way these nicotine delivery products are targeted at young people and how these products are available in a myriad of flavors from cotton candy to vanilla cupcakes, to Coca-Cola. Strawberry-flavored vape liquid can contain just as much nicotine, and sometimes more, as a traditional cigarette.

We know from years of research that flavors attract young people, and the younger a person is when they start tobacco use, the more difficult it will be for them to quit. That is why Congress explicitly banned the use of cigarettes with flavors like cherry and bubble gum because of their appeal to young people.

Over the past decade, we have made great strides educating children and teens about the dangers of smoking. We cannot allow e-cigarettes to snuff out the progress we have made preventing nicotine addiction and its deadly consequences.

E-cigarette use is growing as fast as the students who are using them, and we need to put in place the rules to ensure that we stop it. First, we need to ban the marketing of e-cigarettes to young people in the United States. Second, we need to ban the use of flavorings. The use of fruit- and candy-based flavors is clearly meant to attract children. Cherry Crush e-cigarettes pose the same addiction risk as the minty Kools of the 1970s. Third, we should ban online sales of e-cigarettes. The FDA should prevent online sales of these devices to keep the product out of the hands of children. Finally, last week marked 1 year since the FDA proposed long-overdue regulations to govern e-cigarettes. This is the first step to making sure children and teens can be protected from the harms of these devices. But 1 year later, these rules still have not been finalized. Until they are, new cigarettes will continue to target young people with appealing marketing, advertising, and product flavoring. Every day the FDA fails to act is another day young Americans can fall prey to harmful products pushed by the tobacco industry.

Last year, at a commerce committee hearing, I asked several e-cigarette company leaders to commit to ceasing the sale of these types of flavored products, and a few of them agreed, but the vast majority have not and will not stop this marketing campaign.

Today's electronic cigarettes are no better than the Joe Camels of the past because e-cigarettes, children, and teens do not mix. Young people are getting addicted to nicotine and putting their health and their futures at grave risk. It is time for the FDA to step in and stop the sale of these candy-flavored poisons, especially to the children of the United States.

My father started smoking two packs of Camels when he was 13 years of age. It was the cool thing to do. My father died from lung cancer. The tobacco industry denied that there was any linkage between tobacco and smoking and cancer and death. My father died from it. He started smoking at age 13 because it was the cool thing to do. Once you are addicted at the age of 13, 14 or 15 and smoking two packs of Joe Camels a day, it is hard to stop.

Here is something else we know: If a young person doesn't start to smoke until they are 19, they are highly unlikely to start at all because they have reached beyond the point where it is attractive to them from a peer pressure perspective. So what do these companies have to do? These companies have to find a way to market to young people by giving them flavored e-cigarettes and making it appealing to them because they have to get them when they are 13, 14, 15, and 16 years old. That is the marketing plan.

It has always been the marketing plan since my father started smoking when he was 13. He would say to me: Eddie, you have no idea how hard it is to stop. You have no idea how much I need to smoke and how much I need the nicotine. You could see it. He started when he was a kid, and that is the way it begins because people don't start smoking when they are 20 years of age. We all know that. Everyone listening to me knows that, and that is why this marketing campaign is so invidious. That is why what they are doing plays right into what we have known for a century is the business plan of the tobacco industry.

I urge the FDA to act. I urge the Members of this body to rise up to ensure that we do not have another generation that suffers the same fate as the previous generations have, in fact, had to live with, which is this addiction that was given to them at a very young age.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the opportunity to speak this afternoon, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I echo the voices of my friends and colleagues, the Senators from Oregon, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Rhode Island in calling on the FDA to act with all possible speed to issue final rules on regulating e-cigarettes. I want to thank especially my friend from Oregon, Senator MERKLEY, and my friend from California, Senator BOXER, who have been real leaders on this issue.

The Federal Government has an imperative to protect the public from dangerous products with commonsense restrictions. E-cigarettes are no exception. Their use among middle schoolers and high schoolers has skyrocketed—tripled among high schoolers according to a recent National Youth Tobacco Survey—and their risks are numerous.

E-cigarettes contain liquid nicotine, an addictive chemical which can impede brain development when consumed at a young age.

And these liquid nicotine containers are often sold without child protection caps in many parts of the country—and there have been far too many tragedies already of young children accidentally ingesting liquid nicotine. In Fort Plain, in upstate New York, a toddler of 18 months lost his life in such an accident—a terrible tragedy for two young parents. It is what propelled my home State to pass a requirement that all these liquid nicotine bottles be sold with child protection caps.

But, as my colleagues pointed out, the companies that sell these e-cigarettes are largely unregulated at the Federal level. In terms of Federal policy, e-cigarette companies are not even barred from selling to minors under the age of 18. So they market to children—on TV and on billboards and with child-friendly labels and flavors. According to a 2014 study, e-cigarette marketing exposure to children from 12 to 17 years old increased by 256 percent between 2011 and 2013. The FDA needs to be the adult in the room and put an end to these cynical marketing ploys. The FDA, including the new commissioner, seem ready and eager to use the Tobacco Deeming Rule to regulate e-cigarettes under the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. We strongly support their posture, but we need them to strengthen and finalize these rules. It is time for the FDA to put our children first and promulgate these rules.

Just yesterday, 31 prominent national organizations including, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Trust for America's Health, the American Lung Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, sent a letter to the President asking the FDA to finalize

these regulations. Cigarette use has drastically declined in the last decade and we have made great strides in educating children about their harmful effects. E-cigarettes, with their misleading and trendy marketing, are threatening to set back that progress. Now it is time to snuff out the tactics that try to put kids on the path to smoking.

Mr. MARKEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO DR. GORDON J. CHRISTENSEN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is an honor today to pay tribute to a renowned educator and a highly regarded prosthodontist, Dr. Gordon J. Christensen. Dr. Christensen has had a meaningful impact on dentistry across the Nation, and he continues to influence the field today through his wide-reaching publications.

Appropriately, the board of directors of the CR Foundation will be honoring Dr. Christensen for his contributions to the field at its upcoming 40th Anniversary Celebration on May 8, 2015.

Born on November 10, 1936, Gordon Christensen completed predental studies at Utah State University in 1956 and received a DDS degree at the University of Southern California in 1960. He completed a master's degree in restorative dentistry at the University of Washington in 1963 and earned a PhD in higher education and psychology at the University of Denver in 1972. Dr. Christensen has also received honorary doctorate degrees from Utah State University and Utah Valley University.

In 1976, Dr. Christensen and his wife, Dr. Rella Christensen—a well-respected dental consultant—started Clinical Research Associates, now known as the CR Foundation. He is presently serving as CR's chief executive officer and is a member of the board of directors. Dr. Christensen and his wife volunteer full-time for CR to conduct research in all areas of dentistry.

The Christensens publish the findings of their research in the Gordon J. Christensen Clinicians Report, a publication of the CR Foundation. The Clinicians Report is translated in 7 languages and distributed to more than 100,000 dentists across 92 countries. The Christensens have developed an expansive readership, and their groundbreaking research has positively impacted the dental health of hundreds of thousands of patients worldwide. Dental professionals who subscribe to Clinicians Report are unreserved in their praise of Dr. Christensen. I would like to share some of the appreciation Dr. Christensen recently received from three dental professionals. Richard K. Dimsdale, DDS, wrote: ''Dentistry would never have made the advances it has over many years without the help, guidance, & research you have contributed!'' Ted Cross, DDS, wrote: ''The Gordon J. Christensen Clinicians Report has not only saved me tens of thousands of dollars of purchasing mistakes, but has also immeasurably improved the care my staff and I offer our patients.'' And Bob Dolan, DDS, wrote: ''I recently retired after 54 years of practice. I believe I have been in contact with Gordon for 20 or 30 or more years and have really appreciated the great-unbiased information. Thank you Gordon (and your dear wife) for all you have done for me and for dentistry these many years.''

Dr. Christensen also founded and directs Practical Clinical Courses, PCC, in Utah, an international continuing education organization providing courses and videos for dental professionals. In connection with PCC, he has presented over 45,000 hours of continuing education throughout the world.

As a frequent contributor to professional journals, Dr. Christensen holds editorial positions with 10 dental publications. He is also the recipient of many fellowships, masterships, and diplomas from various dental specialties and organizations worldwide.

Early in his career, Dr. Christensen helped initiate the University of Kentucky and the University of Colorado Dental Schools. He also taught dentistry courses at the University of Washington.

For the Christensens, dentistry seems to run in the family. Both of Dr. Christensen's sons work in the field: William is a prosthodontist and Michael is a general dentist. The Christensen's lovely daughter, Carlene, is making her own contributions as a teacher.

After more than 55 years in private practice, Dr. Christensen remains active in treating patients. He continues to influence dentistry across the world through his continuing education lectures and the Clinicians Report. He is truly one of dentistry's great leaders, and it is with great respect, gratitude, admiration, and affection that I pay tribute to Dr. Gordon J. Christensen.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEVADA APPEAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the Nevada Appeal newspaper.

May 16, 2015, marks 150 years since E.F. McElwain, J. Barrett, Marshall Robinson, and editor Henry Rust Mighels published the first issue of the Carson Daily Appeal in Nevada's State capital, Carson City. Nevada had recently joined the Union, and the Daily Appeal soon began reporting on the important issues facing the newly established State.

For 150 years, the paper has demonstrated its resilience and withstood a number of name changes and owners. One notable owner was Henry Mighels' widow, Nellie Verrill Mighels, who inherited the publication following Henry's death in 1879. Covering local politics and a popular boxing match, Nellie earned her place among the Appeal's journalists. Though her ownership of the paper was short-lived, she propelled the paper forward during her tenure.

Today, the Appeal remains the longest continually running newspaper in Nevada and is among the oldest businesses in Carson City. Decades of committed staff and dedicated local readers have kept this important publication and piece of Nevada history alive. I applaud the Nevada Appeal on its 150 years of quality journalism and wish the paper much continued success for years to come.

REMEMBERING REX CARR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to pay my respects to a man who championed the underdogs of Metro East, IL. Rex Carr passed away on Monday at the age of 88. For over one-half century, people who were out of luck or injured could call on Rex Carr to be their champion. He did it with a style and grace that made him a legend in the community.

Rex grew up in my hometown of East St. Louis. He was the second youngest of five boys. His mother was a teacher and father was a firefighter with the Illinois Central Railroad. His family could not afford much and often had to move when they could not pay the rent. When Rex graduated from East St. Louis High School, he joined the Navy and served in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

Rex would go on to attend college and law school at the University of Illinois. During summers, he worked filling freight cars with ice and hitched a ride back and forth between home and the University of Illinois.

In 1949, Rex finished law school and started practicing in East St. Louis. He was so poor that his first office was in the chambers of a friendly judge, where he could only work when the judge was busy in court. He earned $500 his first year of practice. But he would keep an office in East St. Louis for the rest of his life.

In Harper Lee's To Kill a Mocking Bird, Atticus Finch defined courage, ''When you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what.

You rarely win, but sometimes you do.'' Rex did not win all his cases, but he won quite a few and always tried to see things to their end. Rex had that courage that Atticus Finch described.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Rex earned a reputation as a civil rights and labor attorney. He fiercely fought for equal rights for African Americans and represented teachers in East St. Louis.

By the end of the 1970s, Rex's practice had turned toward personal injury, and he became a legend. He won national acclaim as the best-prepared lawyer in Metro East and even made it into the Guinness Book of Records for three categories: the longest civil jury trial; the largest personal injury verdict at the time; and the largest libel verdict.

The longest trial also was one of his proudest moments of his career. A tanker car carrying wood preservative with a dioxin contaminant spilled in Sturgeon, MO, injuring many of the town's residents. He represented 65 of them. All but one of the parties settled with the residents. Chemical giant Monsanto, manufacturer of the dioxin, refused, and Rex took them to court.

Rex fought for three and a half years in the case. There were 182 witnesses, 6,000 separate exhibits, and over 100,000 pages in transcript. Rex's skill was on full display. He cross-examined a witness for 6 months and then another witness for 5 months. The jury awarded the plaintiffs $16 million. An appeals court would disappoint him and the residents by reducing the award to $1 million.

Rex went on to win many cases and mentor many young lawyers in Metro East. His career was about holding corporations responsible and ensuring his clients' rights. Rex's cross-examinations were the stuff of folklore. At 88 years old, he was still working out of his Missouri Avenue office in East St. Louis. It's where he was from, and he wanted people to be able to come to him for help.

Rex was a giant in Metro East. My thoughts and prayers go out to his four sons, Rex G. Carr of Vermont, Bruce Carr of Valparaiso, IN, Eric Reeve of Mack's Creek, MO, and Glenn Carr of Columbia, IL; a daughter, Kathryn Marie Wheeler of Los Angeles, CA; 16 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren.

THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH AND TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Last week, the Senate considered a very important amendment to S. 178, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. Senator COLLINS and I offered amendment No. 290, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, which was cosponsored by Senators AYOTTE, MURKOWSKI, BALDWIN, HEITKAMP, SHAHEEN, BENNET, MURPHY, MERKLEY, SCHATZ, KLOBUCHAR, and BOOKER.

As we crafted this legislation, Senator COLLINS and I listened to the stories of survivors of human trafficking and the service providers who help them rebuild their lives. So many of these stories began with a homeless or runaway teen, scared and alone, and in need of a safe place to sleep. These young people were completely vulnerable, and traffickers preyed upon their desperation. Survivors and service providers underscored the importance of preventing human trafficking from happening in the first place by reauthorizing the critical programs funded by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

With their feedback in mind, we crafted S. 262, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. We made important updates to ensure that homeless youth service providers are specifically trained to recognize victims of trafficking, address their unique traumas, and refer them to appropriate and caring services.

Our bill will improve services for these vulnerable children in several ways. We lengthen the time that youth can stay in shelters from 21 days to 30 days, so they are better able to find stable housing. Kids who are forced out of shelters and back onto the streets before they are ready are more likely to become victims of exploitation. Our bill prioritizes suicide prevention services and family reunification efforts and expands aftercare services. Providers know that such measures save children's lives and help them build a more stable future with families and trusted adults. Under our bill, service providers will collect data on the demographics of youth who are served by their shelters to help understand their needs and refine their services. It encourages grantees to examine the connection between youth who are victims of trafficking and any previous involvement in the foster care system or juvenile justice system in order to address the causes of youth homelessness. It further requires staff training on how to help youth apply for Federal student loans to help make college possible for youth so they can build a more stable future.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act also includes a crucial nondiscrimination provision that would prevent discrimination against youth based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. We offered this important legislation as amendment No. 290 to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

We were very disappointed that it received only 56 votes and failed to garner the 60 votes necessary for passage, but we are encouraged that it received a strong bipartisan vote from a majority of the Senate. I want to thank the 54 other Senators who voted for this legislation: Senators AYOTTE, BALDWIN, BENNET, BLUMENTHAL, BOOKER, BOXER, BROWN, CANTWELL, CAPITO, CARDIN, CARPER, CASEY, COONS, DONNELLY, DURBIN, FEINSTEIN, FRANKEN, GILLIBRAND, HEINRICH, HEITKAMP, HELLER, HIRONO, KAINE, KING, KIRK, KLOBUCHAR, MANCHIN, MARKEY, MCCASKILL, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, MIKULSKI, MURKOWSKI, MURPHY, MURRAY, NELSON, PAUL, PETERS, PORTMAN, REED, REID, SANDERS, SCHATZ, SCHUMER, SHAHEEN, STABENOW, SULLIVAN, TESTER, TOOMEY, UDALL, WARNER, WARREN, WHITEHOUSE, and WYDEN. We appreciate their support and their dedication to working to prevent vulnerable youth from becoming victims of human trafficking.

I especially applaud Senators COLLINS, HEITKAMP, AYOTTE, and MURKOWSKI for their help fighting to get a vote on this amendment. Their leadership on this issue is exceptional, and the Senate is better for having them as Members.

I also want to thank the tireless advocates who have worked so hard to help us improve the bill and urge support for the effort: Darla Bardine, with National Network for Youth; Jennifer Pike and David Stacy, with Human Rights Campaign; Cyndi Lauper and Gregory Lewis, with the True Colors Fund; Bridget Petruczok and Laura Durso, with the Center for American Progress; Melysa Sperber, with the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking; Holly Austin Smith, Jayne Bigelsen, and Kevin Ryan, with Covenant House; Calvin Smith and Kreig Pinkham, with the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs; Erin Albright, with Give Way to Freedom; Griselda Vega, with Safe Horizon; Susan Burton, with the United Methodist Church; and the many others who provided us with their feedback as we drafted this important legislation. They are the true experts in this field and their insights and contributions were invaluable.

This is not the end for the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. As I have said time and again, we must protect the most vulnerable among us, and we must do everything we can to prevent the heinous crime of human trafficking from occurring. It is vital that we update and reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. We will continue to fight to see the passage of the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act.

THANKING AMERICAN DIPLOMATS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to take a moment to honor the American diplomats who serve our country. Specifically, I want to thank the American diplomats who have been on the front lines working for America throughout the Iran nuclear P5+1 negotiations. They address so many vital issues on a daily basis, some of which we hear about in the news but many of which never reach the headlines.

The Corker-Cardin bill is now on the floor, addressing the role of Congress in a final deal with Iran. I hope there will

be deliberative, thorough debate around this important issue. I want to put aside the partisan bellowing and grandstanding, some of which has regrettably stooped to impugn our diplomats, and rather take a moment to recognize our diplomats for their efforts to find peaceful solutions to the Iranian nuclear menace that threatens the world.

For 2 years, America's diplomats have labored quietly, with no aspiration for personal accolade, to represent our Nation's best intersts and build the foundation for a possible P5+1 agreement with Iran. The United States has had little contact with Iran since 1979, but their shrewdness and duplicity at the negotiating table is well known. It has been a huge task with no certainty of outcome. There have been innumerable hurdles. There have been many setbacks, and there will be more. But our diplomats have stayed steady, focused on the task at hand.

Diplomacy is about understanding strategic motivations, applying fact and science to argument, and maintaining an unwavering commitment to American values and interests throughout complex talks with an untrustworthy and difficult foe. America's diplomats have done so with focus and integrity.

During the negotiations, American diplomats have also been supported and informed by a tremendous cadre of American experts: scientists, intelligence professionals, civilian experts, members of the military and academics. This process has been a collective effort that has drawn on the country's best and brightest.

There was once a time when politics ended at the water's edge, but in recent years we have seen the erosion of that principle and, instead, a rise in the practice of subsuming the interests of the country to tactical political objectives. The leadership of our diplomats is critical and needed now more than ever, and I want them to know—we value and appreciate you. Regardless of what you might think of the talks in the first place, the dedication of America's diplomats has made us all proud. For that, I thank them.

TRIBUTE TO MEAGHAN McCARTHY

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a devoted public servant and tireless friend of the people of Washington State as she moves on from the staff of the United States Senate. Meaghan McCarthy has dedicated nearly 13 years in service to the Appropriations Committee and is widely recognized for her expertise in housing policy. I know that back in Washington State, here in the Senate, and across the country—Ms. McCarthy's important work has helped so many people find affordable housing and get back on their feet. I know so many will miss her compassionate advocacy on behalf of those facing housing challenges, from veterans requiring supportive housing, to working-class families that need a helping hand to remain in safe and affordable homes, and so many more.

A Massachusetts native and graduate of Notre Dame and Johns Hopkins University, Ms. McCarthy began her career in public policy as an advocate for children, working at the Children's Defense Fund. She then joined the Appropriations Committee as professional staff, where she developed a keen understanding of complex Federal housing policy. As a top staff member on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, Ms. McCarthy has overseen and helped fund key affordable housing supports that make sure millions of people across the country have access to high-quality affordable housing. From tenant vouchers provided through the section 8 program to homeless assistance grants, supportive HUD-VASH vouchers for our veterans, and public housing funds, Ms. McCarthy has worked hand-in-hand with housing officials in my State to make sure Washington State families receive the resources they need.

It is so clear to me that Washington State has benefited from Ms. McCarthy's hard work, vast knowledge, and compassion for people and families fighting to make ends meet. During my time as the subcommittee's chair, I was always thankful that she was working on my State's behalf. Many of our housing advocates and authorities have reached out to my office to express their appreciation for her work. They have called her a ''critical bridge between Washington state's communities and our nation's big-picture, broad-stroke policy and budget machinery,'' someone who translated real-world neighborhood needs into action in a complex Federal bureaucracy.

Ms. McCarthy's work has had real and measurable impacts in Washington State communities. Stephen Norman, the executive director of the King County Housing Authority, was kind enough to share an anecdote wherein Ms. McCarthy pioneered a program to fund community facilities adjacent to public housing, which he called ''a cross-cutting initiative that recognized the importance of education success for low income children and the opportunities created by partnering schools and Housing Authorities.'' When HUD's draft rules effectively excluded suburban communities, which require a network of smaller facilities, Ms. McCarthy did what she does best: she went to work to solve the problem and change the rules. And change them she did. Now, King County has a network of 14 youth facilities, serving some of the poorest families in the region and helping children to reach their potential and to realize their dreams.

Today I join with others throughout the country, the State of Washington, and this body in thanking Ms. McCarthy for her years of service. I congratulate her on all of her accomplishments and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I commemorate World Press Freedom Day 2015 on May 3, 2015—a day reserved to celebrate the value of freedom of press and the critical role it serves in creating a more free and open society. In its highest forms, the press does not simply inform, but brings attention to atrocities around the world, provides checks on authoritarian governments, and catalyzes better governance.

The United States has recognized the great value of freedom of the press from its inception and in its Declaration of Universal Rights, the United Nations acknowledged the profound role of this fundamental right. On May 3, 1991, in the Windhoek Declaration, the U.N. recommitted itself to this important cause with a call to arms to protect the right of the press ''to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.''

A pluralistic and free press is essential to the development and maintenance of democracy as well as economic development. According to Freedom House's 2014 Freedom of the Press Index, only 14 percent of the world's citizens live in countries that enjoy a free press. In every other corner of the world, freedom of the press is threatened by governments that want to restrict freedom of expression and association by harassing and intimidating journalists. According to Reporters Without Borders, 69 journalists and 19 citizen journalists were killed in 2014 in connection with their collection and dissemination of news and information, and the Committee to Protect Journalists, found that in that same year the 3 deadliest countries for journalists on assignment were Syria, Ukraine, and Iraq. Today we honor all journalists who have been imprisoned or killed while seeking to tell a story that deserves to be told and needs to be heard.

The weekend of April 25 marked the 1-year anniversary of the arrest of three independent journalists and six bloggers in Ethiopia known as the ''Zone 9 bloggers.'' The reporters, who published articles criticizing the government, have been charged under Ethiopia's Anti-Terrorism Proclamation, seemingly in connection with their writings. They remain in jail to this day, their trial once again postponed until after the Ethiopian elections. Unfortunately, this sort of imprisonment is not an isolated incident in Ethiopia. According to Human Rights Watch, Ethiopia has the second largest number of journalists in exile and the largest number of imprisoned journalists and bloggers in all of sub-Saharan Africa.

I and a number of my colleagues wrote Secretary Kerry in March about our ongoing concern with efforts by the

Ethiopian government to restrict freedom of speech and association in Ethiopia. In recent months numerous media publications have closed amid widespread harassment, and the Ethiopian government continues to control most television and radio broadcasting content. Today, I again urge the Ethiopian government to respect freedom of expression and freedom of the press—especially in advance of the May 24 elections. Anti-terrorism laws must not be used for political gain or to stifle the expression of dissenting political views.

The continued imprisonment of Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, who remains in Iran on alleged espionage charges, is another example of the immense duress that journalists around the world endure. Mr. Rezaian, an esteemed and respected professional journalist, has been imprisoned in Tehran since July 22. As the United States and Iran continue to negotiate a nuclear agreement, it is important that we not forget about Jason Rezaian, an Iranian-American who deserves to be free.

And, finally, the world will never forget the brutal and barbaric murder of American reporter James Foley by the Islamic State this past summer. His death reminds us that it is not only oppressive governments that threaten journalists, but terrorist organizations as well. Foley's life's work chronicling the war torn countries of Afghanistan and Syria speaks to a deep commitment to the truth, a desire to tell the story of the world's most vulnerable and the right to freedom of the press even in the gravest of circumstances. This is what freedom of the press is all about.

As witnesses to the good that free press provides to society and the threat that it faces, we have a responsibility to stand against injustice, to tell the stories of these brave journalists and others in the hopes of securing their freedom and preventing future tragedies from occurring. As George Mason said in 1776, ''The freedom of the press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.'' On World Press Freedom Day 2015, the United States and governments around the world must recommit themselves to protecting press freedom in order to enable democracy to flourish and good governance to prevail.

NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOL 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, this year we commemorate the 50th anniversary of NOLS, the National Outdoor Leadership School. What started in Wyoming has now grown to 14 locations worldwide on six continents. NOLS locations stretch from the fjords of Norway and the Indian Himalayas to the Yukon and east Africa.

In the last 50 years there have been over 250,000 graduates ranging in ages from 14 to over 70 years old. They come from all walks of life, from all 50 States, and numerous countries around the world. They come to learn mountaineering, kayaking, horse packing, sailing, backcountry skiing, caving, and wilderness medicine skills, just to name a few.

As a doctor, I appreciate the importance NOLS places on outdoor medicine. The Wyss Wilderness Medicine Campus was designed and located to create an optimal learning environment for students of wilderness medicine. At the campus, classroom experience extends to the outdoors with real-life simulations in wild and realistic terrain.

I find it very appropriate NOLS has its beginning in Wyoming. Like Wyoming, NOLS supports a diverse economic portfolio that benefits from energy, agriculture, hunting and fishing, tourism, and outdoor recreation and education. Wyoming and NOLS both work towards a balanced approach to natural resource management that provides opportunities for a diversified energy portfolio while caring for Wyoming's world-class wildlife and wild places.

One need not look any further than Lander, WY, for an example of balanced natural resource management. Lander is home to NOLS and gateway to the Wind River Range. At times, Lander has been a steel town and a supply hub during the gold boom. Today, Lander continues to be rich with energy and agricultural production.

Wyoming and NOLS have shared strong leaders who work to find pragmatic and inclusive solutions to land management challenges. John Gans is one of those leaders. John has successfully carried on the tradition established by Paul Petzoldt, the founder of NOLS. After 20 years at the helm, he is the longest serving executive director of NOLS. Under John Gans' leadership, NOLS has been recognized nine times as one of the best places to work for. In 2012, he was recognized as a White House Champion of Change for his commitment to youth, wilderness and leadership.

While NOLS' international programs have grown immensely during his time, John values the connections that exist between the town of Lander, NOLS staff, and graduates. Phil Nicholas, Marc Randolph, and Tori McClure are just a few examples of many graduates who have gone on to become successful businesspeople, educators, and leaders in the community and the Nation. Phil Nicholas is the current Wyoming Senate president and a former NOLS instructor. Tori McClure was the first woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean and the first woman to ski to the South Pole. Marc Randolph is a Cofounder of Netflix.

One of the things that make NOLS alumni so successful is they have learned how to make decisions and face adversity. NOLS students suffer through extreme heat and cold and all types of weather conditions. NOLS students make decisions with consequences, and they apply these lessons to their lives. They come home with a new perspective on the world around them and their role within it.

In this day and age of selfies and instant gratification, we need more people—and especially the youth—to realize they may not be the center of the universe. A perspective of hard work, sacrifice, and an appreciation and respect for nature needs to be taught and needs to be learned. In previous generations, this perspective was provided on family farms and ranches across the country. Gratefully, thanks to all the hard work and dedication of the NOLS staff, NOLS courses continue to provide this perspective to future leaders. I am confident in the future leadership of our communities and Nation because I know tomorrow's leaders are receiving NOLS instruction and experience today.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the National Outdoor Leadership School on their 50th anniversary. We are looking forward to another 50 years of success.

RECOGNIZING FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor 423 high school seniors in 8 Northeast Ohio counties for their decision to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces. Of these 423 seniors from 120 high schools in 105 towns and cities, 97 will enter the Army, 127 will enter the Marine Corps, 42 will enter the Navy, 24 will enter the Air Force, 3 will enter the Coast Guard, 123 will enter our Ohio Army National Guard, and 7 will enter the Ohio Air National Guard. In the presence of their parents/guardians, high school counselors, military leaders, and city and business leaders, all 423 will be recognized on May 6, 2015, by Our Community Salutes of Northeast Ohio.

In a few short weeks, these young men and women will join with many of their classmates in celebration of their high school graduation. At a time when many of their peers are looking forward to pursuing vocational training or college degrees, or are uncertain about their future, these young men and women instead have chosen to dedicate themselves to military service in defense of our rights, our freedoms, and our country. They should know that they have the full support of this Senate Chamber and the American people, who are with them in whatever challenges may lie ahead.

These 423 young men and women are the cornerstone of our liberties. It is thanks to their dedication and the dedication of an untold number of patriots just like them that we are able to meet here today, in the Senate, and openly debate the best solutions to the many diverse problems that confront

our country. It is thanks to their sacrifices that the United States of America remains a beacon of hope and freedom in a dangerous world. We are grateful to them, and we are grateful to their parents and their communities for instilling in them not only the mental and physical abilities our Armed Forces require, but also the character, the values, and the discipline that lead someone to put service to our Nation over self.

I would like to personally thank these 423 graduating seniors for volunteering to risk their lives in defense of our Nation. We owe them, along with all those who serve our country, a deep debt of gratitude.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the names of the 423 high school seniors.

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

UNITED STATES ARMY—97

Abrams—Cleveland; Apathy—Brook Park; Ashford—Maple Heights; Axford—Elyria; Ballew—Akron; Barnett—Akron; Barton—Ravenna; Bate-Keck—Garfield Heights; Beckwith—Madison; Berry—Strongsville; Best—Bay Village; Black—Cleveland; Bodi—Parma; Borkowski—Akron; Brown—Elyria; Bures—Medina; Chesek—North Royalton; Colon—Parma; Corcino—Lorain; Currence—Geneva; Daley—Olmsted Township; Farmer—Cleveland; Fernandez—Bay Village; Fields—Ravenna; Forcier—Mantua; Garcia-Kilrain—Elyria; Gargasz—Amherst; Gerez—Garretsville; Gibson—Conneaut; Goan—Lakewood; Griffie—Brook Park; Gronowski—Parma; Grzelak—Barberton; Guest—Elyria; Hadden—Garfield Heights; Hathaway—Ravenna; Haught—Lorain; Heiser—Strongsville; Hill—Norton; Johnson—Akron; Jordan—Maple Heights; Kaur—Solon; Kerestly—Seville; Kessler—Wadsworth; Klimavicius—Garfield Heights; Lacey—Aurora; Lambert—Medina; Lemasters—Diamond; Leon Gonzalez—Lorain; Lindsey—Lyndhurst.

Loughridge—Brunswick; Lyons—Ravenna; Madeja—Cleveland; Marizek—Painesville; Mcgaha—Ravenna; Meacham—Akron; Miller—Parma; Mitchell—Brooklyn; Mitchell—Ravenna; Montas Correa—Elyria; Murphy—Painesville; Olavarria—Ashtabula; Palmer—Grafton; Privara—Barberton; Ray—Akron; Razo—Painesville; Reese—Cuyahoga Falls; Reinhardt—Amherst; Rhinehardt—Twinsburg; Rigda—North Olmsted; Rubsam—Brook Park; Ryman—Akron; Salvage—Strongsville; Sams—Wellington; Schoen—Medina; Shahan—Mantua; Sherrill—Elyria; Shorter—Wadsworth; Shumaker—Wellington; Simmons—Berea; Slusher—Mentor; Smiley—Cleveland; Steele—Cleveland; Storey—Chesterland; Szabo—Elryia; Torres—Cleveland; Tryon—Copley; Turley—Cleveland; Van Horn—Cleveland; Vong—Elyria; West—Cleveland; Wiley—Lorain; Williams—Solon; Wilson—Olmsted Falls; Winston—North Olmsted; Witherspoon—Olmsted Township; Zurowski—Macedonia.

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS—127

Abbenhaus—Brook Park; Angeles-Ballesteros—Solon; Bish—Streetsboro; Bodjanac—Stow; Boesken—Olmsted Falls; Brown—Cleveland; Brown—Lorain; Caraballo—Berea; Casey—Geneva; Choby—Concord Township; Christoff—Stow; Cook—Middlefield; Cool—Wadsworth; Cooney—Geneva; Cooper—Akron; Criddle—Akron; Cummings—Bedford; Curtis—Aurora; Dabney—Cleveland; Dautartus—Parma; Davis—Cleveland; Dean—Vermilion; Denton—Brunswick; Dolly—Kent; Douangpanya—Akron; Drope—Garfield Heights; Dudley—Akron; Estremera—Strongsville; Fatica—Willoughby; Faupelcresong—Uniontown; Fleshman—Akron; Folley—Lorain; Forester—Akron; Fox—Grafton; Garrett—Akron; Garrow—Columbia Station.

Geiss—Brunswick; Gilbert—Painesville; Gingell—Cleveland; Grimmett—Akron; Gump—Elyria; Haas—Copley; Hamilton—Hudson; Hathaway—Akron; Hawkins—Doylestown; Headen—Stow; Herrlinger—Akron; Hoover—Brunswick; Hopkins—Brunswick; Howes—Vermilion; Huff—Elyria; Huff—Solon; Huston—Brooklyn; Jackson—Chardon; Jennings—Hartville; Jerse—Cleveland; Johnson—Bedford Heights; Jones—Westlake; Jorgensen—South Euclid; Kellogg—Brunswick; Kelly—Medina; Kerestesy—Jefferson; Kinds—Cleveland Heights; Kravchuk—Mayfield; Ksajikyan—Parma; Lahtonen—Tallmadge; Lamatrice—Garfield Heights; Larson—Lakewood; Llamas—Painesville; Lowry—Eastlake; Lundmark—Bay Village; Lunsford—Cuyahoga Falls; Mariner—Parma; Marks—Geneva; Matejovich—Solon; McKenna—Elyria; Mencke—Austinburg; Midkiff—Amherst; Moore—Cleveland; Myers—Shaker Heights.

Nowak—Brunswick; Nystrom—Euclid; Oberstar III—Ashtabula; O'Donnell—Lakewood; O'Keefe—Solon; O'Neill—Elyria; Payne—Parma; Peterson—Independence; Pilar—Homerville; Prosen—Peninsula; Rahe—Westlake; Rakovec—Painesville; Rall—Cleveland; Rios—Vermilion; Robishaw—Seville; Rosado—Cleveland; Sabo—Akron; Salyer—Chagrin Falls; Santi—Lakewood; Scott—Euclid; Seditz—Brook Park; Seredich—Strongsville; Smiechowski—Wadsworth; Smith—Cuyahoga Falls; Smith—Uniontown; Solon—Brook Park; Sprague—Mentor; Stergar—Lakewood; Stewart—Wellington; Susakheil—Parma; Swails—Painesville; Sylvester—Westlake; Tinch—Barberton; Trevino—Akron; Turkovich—Geneva; Turner—Mayfield; Van Pelt—Painesville; Vasquez—Lorain; Walters—Wellington; Weimer—Lodi; Whitney—Norton; Willett—Strongsville; Williams—Shaker Heights; Woodruff—North Olmsted; Wright—Rome; Zindash—Jefferson; Zuchowsky—Wadsworth.

UNITED STATES NAVY—42

Adorno, W.—Lorain; Adorno, Z.—Westlake; Ainsworth—North Ridgeville; Beebe—Ashtabula; Botez—Hartville; Cassity—Painesville; Darby—Cleveland; DeJesus—Northfield; Eddleman—Akron; Elliot—Uniontown; Esparza—Tallmadge; Giddens—Cleveland; Green—Cleveland; Hanna—Ashtabula; Hennessey—Bloomfield; Hutchinson—Cleveland; Johnson—Akron; Kobernik—Jefferson; Krendick—North Canton; Kusar—Kirtland; Maillis—Copley; Malon—Chardon; Marrero—Cleveland; Mayberry—Ashtabula; Miller—Elyria; Moore—Lorain; Morey—Solon; Morgan—Conneaut; Morrison—Akron; Navarro—Cleveland; Panteloukas—Cleveland; Pasko—Ashtabula; Patterson—Wadsworth; Pechatsko—Eastlake; Quaider—Medina; Root—Conneaut; Sayre—Akron; Scheier—Brunswick; Sutton—Orwell; Wallish—Northfield; Winters—Roaming Shores; Zahorai—Brunswick.

UNITES STATES AIR FORCE—24

Burgess—Cleveland; Butcher—Madison; Dolan—Elyria; Duffield—Westlake; Dunstan—Elyria; Ewing—Elyria; Fitzgerald—Medina; Hill—South Euclid; Lewis—Mentor; Loper—Parma; Lunato, Jr.—Grafton; Merriweather—Wickliffe; Miranda—Elyria; Moran—Medina; Paalz—Berea; Richter—Eastlake; Rivera—Berea; Ryder—Strongsville; Searight—Bedford; Smith—Bedford; Smith—Kirtland; Thomas—Madison; Washington—Berea; Yehl—Chardon.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD—3

Chiyam—Fairview Park; Mullis—Akron; Tryon—Eastlake.

OHIO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD—123

Abrams—Ashtabula; Alicea—Cleveland; Bascomb—Cleveland; Becker—Dorset; Bernardo—Ashtabula; Blackburn—Beachwood; Boston—Hartville; Brown—Shaker Heights; Brown—Ashtabula; Brown, Jr—New Franklin; Burgos—Cleveland; Burks—Chagrin Falls; Camera—Wakeman; Cavett—Cleveland; Christian —Elyria; Collins—Richmond Heights; Crider—Maple Heights; Cronan—Hudson; Dean—Akron; Dennis—Twinsburg; Denson, Jr.—Barberton; Drawkulich—Springfield; Dvorak—Chagrin Falls; Eckenrode—Madison; Endsley—Amherst; Eshelman—Chagrin Falls; Evans—Richmond Heights; Flowers—Wakeman; Friend—Wellington; Frolo—North Royalton; Funk—Akron; Gautschi—Geneva; Gonzalez—Lorain; Gray—Lakewood; Greene—Twinsburg; Gruszka—Northfield; Guardo—Chardon; Guerra—Lakewood; Hammond—Berea; Hancock—Canton; Hensal—Clinton; Hernandez—Cleveland; Hernandez—Parma; Hodges—Strongsville; Hunt—Brooklyn; Hurtt—Cleveland; Jancik—Lakewood.

Johnson—Stow; Kirby—Mentor-on-the-Lake; Ladow Ferguson—Akron; Leski—Avon; Lewis—Windham; Locklear—Cleveland; Losey—Painesville; Lostetter—Cuyahoga Falls; Maldonado—Cleveland; Mallory—Rome; Marino—South Euclid; Mason—Cleveland Heights; McEntee—Valley View; McGraw—Tallmadge; McMullen—LaGrange; Miller—Conneaut; Miller—Grafton; Miller—Wadsworth; Minor—Hudson; Mollick—Ashtabula; Moore—Barberton; Moore—Cleveland; Moore—Uniontown; Moreno—Cleveland; Mullins—Cleveland; Myers—Akron; Ness—Painesville; Novah-Avila—Brooklyn Heights; Novello—Burton; Ogden—Barberton; Panar, Jr.—Akron; Parsons—Elyria; Patterson—Elyria; Perkins—Jefferson; Plants—Ashtabula; Player—Cleveland.

Powers—Cleveland; Prater—Medina; Priem—Orwell; Pruitt—Garfield Heights; Raser—Mentor; Reinhart—Uniontown; Rinas—Olmsted Township; Rivers—Akron; Rondeau—North Olmsted; Rose—Elyria; Rowe—Hartville; Ruyf—Olmsted Falls; Sanders, Jr.—Akron; Semak—Painesville Township; Shiner—Kent; Singh—Brooklyn; Smith—Akron; Somerville—Stow; Sporcich, Jr.—Ashtabula; Stallworth—Copley; Starling—Barberton; Stokes—Lakewood; Sturgill—Valley City; Sudyk—Painesville; Sundman—Rock Creek; Tabler—Cuyahoga Falls; Taylor, G.—Cleveland; Taylor, J/—Cleveland; Tester—Elyria; Thompson—Akron; Thompson—Cleveland; Turner—Cleveland; VanHorn—Elyria; Vaughn—Hudson; Wadesisi—Cleveland; Walls—Euclid; Weigel—Painesville; Wheeler—Hiram; Whitten—Lorain; Woodward—Akron.

OHIO AIR GUARD—7

Allen—Middleburg Heights; Birchler—Navarre; Day—Norton; Handwerk II—Medina; Little—Norwalk; Wehrmeyer—Ryan; Wooley—Boardman.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING JOANNE FARRIS

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate COL Joanne Farris on her recent selection as the first female brigade commander in the

history of the Nevada National Guard. Colonel Farris assumed command of the 991st Multi-Functional Brigade, overseeing more than 700 soldiers, including the Nevada Army Guard's aviation assets. It gives me great pleasure to recognize her achievement in this historic moment.

Colonel Farris joined the Guard over 25 years ago as a private first class and was later commissioned from the University of Nevada, Reno ROTC Program in 1991. She then continued her studies and earned her master's from Clayton College in 2004, the same year she graduated from the Commander and General Staff College. She is currently working towards completion of her second year of War College and is scheduled to graduate this summer.

Colonel Farris formerly commanded the 1–69th Press Camp Headquarters, which deployed to Bosnia in 1999. She also served as command information officer for the State of Nevada, 1–421st Regional Training Institute executive officer, Joint Force Headquarters commander, and as the Nevada Guard State family program director. In 2011, she deployed to Afghanistan with the 401st Army Field Support Brigade.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Colonel Farris for her courageous contributions to the United States of America. Her unwavering dedication to her career is commendable, and she stands as a role model to future generations of heroes. Colonel Farris' service to her country and her bravery earn her a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. Equally as important, it is crucial that female servicemembers and veterans have access to their specific health care needs. There are countless distinguished women who have made sacrifices beyond measure and deserve nothing but the best treatment. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation and will continue to fight until this becomes a reality.

During her tenure, Colonel Farris has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the Nevada Guard. I am both humbled and honored by her service and am proud to call her a fellow Nevadan. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Colonel Joanne Farris for all of her accomplishments and wish her well in all of her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO JODY SHERVANICK

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to recognize Jody Shervanick for her tireless efforts in supporting Nevada's veterans, active military members, and their families. Ms. Shervanick volunteers 7 days a week to give back to the brave men and women who defend our freedom and their families. She has contributed greatly to the Las Vegas military community and to the greater good of the Silver State.

Having grown up as a military child, Ms. Shervanick understands the trials of a military family. She stands as a shining example of someone who has devoted her life to the betterment of others, selflessly serving to bring happiness to our Nation's heroes each day. It is important to thank not only the men and women serving this great Nation, but also their families who make so many sacrifices. Her service to these families is invaluable.

Ms. Shervanick helps with care for veterans and military members with mental illness, such as post-traumatic stress, and aids in times of uncertainty for military families, providing food, financial aid, and childcare. She hosts special events for families stationed at Creech and Nellis Air Force Bases. Ms. Shervanick coordinates the ''World's Largest Baby Shower,'' for wives of active military or female members stationed at Creech and Nellis Air Force Bases, puts on multiple Christmas parties for the children at Nellis Air Force Base, spearheads an annual Easter party for the children at Nellis Air Force Base, and will be putting on a ''Mom''ster and Son Halloween bash in October. I have had the opportunity to attend one of Ms. Shervanick's Operation Showers of Appreciation Military Baby Showers in Las Vegas, and I know firsthand the positive impact her efforts have on military families. She works with volunteers to make pillow slips for deployed military members with pictures of their children. Her commitment to these families is without limit. She is truly a role model to all Nevadans.

Ms. Shervanick's hard work has not gone without notice. She received ''Citizen of the Month'' from Mayor Carolyn Goodman of the city of Las Vegas in December 2014, a plaque recognizing her service from Governor Brian Sandoval, and has been recognized by News 3 KSNV, 8 News Now KLAS, and FOX 5 KVVU for her service to veterans and military families. I extend my deepest gratitude to Ms. Shervanick for her noble contributions to the Las Vegas military community. Her service to Nevada places her among the outstanding men and women of the State and her accolades are well deserved.

Today, I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Ms. Shervanick and her work with active military members, veterans, and their families. Her efforts are both honorable and necessary. I wish her the best of luck in all of her future endeavors.●

RECOGNIZING LOUISIANA'S LEMONADE DAY

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, Saturday, May 2, 2015, marks the fifth annual Louisiana Lemonade Day during which thousands of children across the Pelican State will start their own small business—a lemonade stand. This free, statewide program is dedicated to teaching children how to start, own, and operate their own business, and in the last 5 years, Lemonade Day has provided more than 50,000 children across Louisiana with the opportunity to become entrepreneurs.

On Lemonade Day, thousands of children will open their own lemonade stands and learn the crucial lessons of salesmanship, competition, and marketing. They will be introduced to crucial business skills, like supply and demand, critical thinking and problem solving, and civic responsibility. Lemonade Day encourages young entrepreneurs to save one-third of their profits, share one-third of their profits, and spend one-third of their profits. They are even urged to open a youth savings account. These simple, yet important lessons will shape future generations of business leaders, and hopefully, instill some good money-managing practices that will help them later in life.

The secret to America's success lies within the innovation and creativity of American entrepreneurs. Urging our Nation's youth to develop their big ideas is critical for securing the future of our country's economic stability. On its fifth anniversary, I would like to recognize Louisiana's Lemonade Day and the role it plays in fostering entrepreneurial spirits in the lives of our Nation's youths.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS SUPPORTING THE UNDERLYING OBJECTIVES OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MILITARY COMPENSATION AND RETIREMENT MODERNIZATION COMMISSION (THE ''COMMISSION'')—PM 15

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

To the Congress of the United States:

My Administration fully supports the underlying objectives of the recommendations that the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (the ''Commission'') offered in January. These recommendations represent an important step forward in protecting the long-term viability of the All-Volunteer Force, improving quality-of-life for service members and their families, and ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the military compensation and retirement systems.

As I directed in my letter of March 30, my team has worked with the Commission to further analyze the recommendations and identify areas of agreement. At this time I am prepared to support specific proposals for 10 of the Commission's 15 recommendations, either as proposed or with modifications that have been discussed among the Department of Defense, other agencies, and the Commission. These include the following:

Survivor Benefit Plan

Financial Education

Medical Personnel Readiness

Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs Collaboration

Child Care

Service Member Education

Transition Assistance

Nutritional Financial Assistance

Dependent Space-Available Travel

Report on Military Connected Dependents

In some instances, the Department of Defense is already taking actions to implement these recommendations, and I will direct the Department to develop plans to complete this implementation. In those areas where legislation is required, I expect the Secretary of Defense to transmit to the Congress on my behalf the relevant legislative proposals, which I recommend be enacted without delay.

With respect to the remaining recommendations, given their complexity and our solemn responsibility to ensure that any changes further the objectives above, we will continue working with the Commission to understand how the following proposals would affect the All-Volunteer Force:

Blended Retirement System

Reserve Component Duty Statuses

Exceptional Family Member's Support

Commissary and Exchange Consolidation

I believe there is merit in all of these recommendations and that they deserve careful consideration and study. I will ensure that the Congress is kept apprised of this ongoing work.

Finally, I agree with the Commission that we need to continue to improve the military health care system. The health care reforms proposed in my Fiscal Year 2016 Budget are a good first step and offer service members, retirees, and their families more control and choice over their health care decisions. This remains a critical issue, and my Administration will work with the Commission and interested Members of Congress in the coming months to develop additional reform proposals for consideration as part of my Fiscal Year 2017 Budget.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 30, 2015.*

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:27 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the ''Sister Ann Keefe Post Office''.

At 4:13 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 43. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds, the rotunda of the Capitol, and Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for official Congressional events surrounding the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the United States Capitol.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the ''Sister Ann Keefe Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–1498. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Kenneth E. Floyd, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1499. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Department of Energy Process to Consider LNG Export Applications''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1500. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0519); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1501. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0517); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1502. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–142); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1503. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Phenol, 2-(2H-benzotriazol-2-yl)-6-dodecyl-4-methyl-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9925–78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1504. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Azoxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9926–24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1505. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''General Permits and Permits by Rule for the Federal Minor New Source Review Program in Indian Country for Five Source Categories'' ((RIN2060–AQ95) (FRL No. 9919–85–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1506. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designate Facilities and Pollutants; Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incinerator Units'' (FRL No. 9927–00–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1507. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Stage I Regulations'' (FRL No. 99247–10–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1508. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Arkansas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Fee Regulations'' (FRL No. 9926–91–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)'' (FRL No. 9926–81–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–19. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of North Dakota urging the United States Congress to call for a constitutional convention for the sole purpose of proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States which requires a balanced federal budget; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3015

Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United States mandates that upon the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the states, Congress shall call a convention for proposing amendments; and

Whereas, this application is to be considered as covering the balanced budget amendment language of the presently outstanding balanced budget applications from other states; and

Whereas, this application shall be aggregated for the purpose of attaining the two-thirds necessary to require the calling of a convention for proposing a balanced budget amendment, but shall not be aggregated with any applications on any other subject; and

Whereas, this application is a continuing application until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the states have made applications on the same subject; and

Whereas, the North Dakota Legislative Assembly deems an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring a balanced federal budget to be necessary for the good of the American people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives of North Dakota, the Senate Concurring therein:

That the Sixty-fourth Legislative Assembly urges the Congress of the United States to call a convention of the states limited to proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring that in the absence of a national emergency the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues for that fiscal year, together with any related and appropriate fiscal restraints; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the Senate and the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives of the Congress, to each member of the United States Congressional Delegation, and also to transmit copies to the presiding officers of each of the legislative houses in the United States, requesting their cooperation.

POM–20. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho urging the United States Congress to expedite appropriation of funds to significantly enhance dreissenid monitoring and prevention efforts and to implement the intent of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 101

Whereas, maintaining a healthy suite of economic, environmental and social ecosystem services in aquatic systems is integral to the quality of life in the State of Idaho; and

Whereas, healthy aquatic habitats provide clean drinking water, flood control, transportation, recreation, purification of human and industrial wastes, power generation, habitat for native plants and animals, production of their foods, marketable goods, and cultural benefits; and

Whereas, aquatic invasive species, including mussels such as dreissenids, cause irreparable ecological damage to many waters in the United States; and

Whereas, dreissenids have not yet been detected in the Pacific North-West. The estimated cost to address established populations of dreissenids in the Pacific North-West Economic Region is almost $500 million annually; and

Whereas, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act was signed in June 2014 and authorizes $20 million for Columbia River Basin dreissenid efforts through the Secretary of the Army: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the member of the First Regular Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives concurring therein, that we respectfully request Congress expedite appropriation of these funds to significantly enhance monitoring and prevention efforts and to implement the intent of the Act; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the President of the United States Barack Obama, the United States Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Congress, and to the congressional delegation representing the State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.

POM–21. A resolution approved by the Electors of the City of Watertown, Wisconsin, calling for reclaiming the expansion of the rights of artificial legal entities and the corrupting influence of unregulated political spending; and supporting an amendment to the United States Constitution, stating: only human beings—not corporations, unions, nonprofits, or similar associations—are endowed with constitutional rights, and that money is not speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

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.

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, without amendment:

S. 1177. An original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Peter Levine, of Maryland, to be Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense.

Army nomination of Col. Raymond S. Dingle, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Ron. J. MacLaren, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Herman A. Shelanski, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. James J. Burks, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. James C. Balserak and ending with Brig. Gen. Carol A. Timmons, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Col. Kyle W. Robinson, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Robert D. Carlson and ending with Col. Tracy L. Smith, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2015.

Army nomination of Chaplain (Col.) Thomas L. Solhjem, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Capt. Danelle M. Barrett, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nomination of Capt. Ronald C. Copley, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. David L. Goldfein, to be General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Timothy M. Ray, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Darryl L. Roberson, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Eric C. Bush, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Alan R. Lynn, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Jill K. Faris, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Gary H. Cheek, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Christian A. Rofrano, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. Nora W. Tyson, to be Vice Admiral.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Mark A. Brilakis, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Robert S. Walsh, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDs on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators .

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

Air Force nomination of Troy S. Thomas, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Linell A. Letendre, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Bamidele A. Adetunji and ending with Keri L. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Travis M. Allen and ending with Jeromy James Wells, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard S. Beyea III and ending with Travis C. Yelton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Keith L. Clark and ending with Jennie Leigh L. Stoddart, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Talib Y. Ali and ending with Gabriel

Zimmerer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nomination of John W. Heck, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Anna Hamm, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Jermal M. Scarbrough, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Cynthia A. Rutherford and ending with Angela Scevola-Dattoli, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Susan I. Pangelinan, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Bryan K. Anderson, to be Major.

Army nomination of Mark A. Endsley, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Arpana Jain and ending with Rama Krishna, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 25, 2015.

Army nomination of James J. Raftery, Jr., to be Colonel.

Army nomination of David A. Harper, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Steven R. Ansley, Jr. and ending with Karen S. Hanson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2015.

Army nomination of Rita A. Kostecke, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Schawn B. Branch and ending with Frank A. Smith, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Marine Corps nomination of Joshua B. Roberts, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Dawn R. Alonso and ending with Vincent J. Yasaki, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 26, 2015.

Navy nominations beginning with Nawaz K. A. Hack and ending with Robert P. Rutter, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 25, 2015.

Navy nomination of Brian L. Tichenor, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Cheryl Gotzinger, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of John P. O'Brien, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Carolyn A. Winningham and ending with Sara M. Bustamante, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

By Mr. INHOFE for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Mark Scarano, of New Hampshire, to be Federal Cochairperson of the Northern Border Regional Commission.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1139. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to provide for same day registration; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 1140. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1141. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for small businesses; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 1142. A bill to clarify that noncommercial species found entirely within the borders of a single State are not in interstate commerce or subject to regulation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 or any other provision of law enacted as an exercise of the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 1143. A bill to make the authority of States of Washington, Oregon, and California to manage Dungeness crab fishery permanent and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1144. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a corporate responsibility investment option under the Thrift Savings Plan; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1145. A bill to improve compliance with mine safety and health laws, empower miners to raise safety concerns, prevent future mine tragedies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 1146. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit further reductions in sodium levels and to reinstate the grain-rich requirements applicable to the national school lunch and breakfast programs; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 1147. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 83 Meeting Street in Charleston, South Carolina, as the ''J. Waties Waring Judicial Center''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. REID, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1148. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 1149. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require reporting of certain data by providers and suppliers of air ambulance services for purposes of reforming reimbursements for such services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1150. A bill to provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 1151. A bill to amend title IX of the Public Health Service Act to revise the operations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 1152. A bill to make permanent the extended period of protections for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 1153. A bill to provide legal certainty to property owners along the Red River in Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 1154. A bill to reverse the designation by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture of certain communities in the State of Alaska as nonrural; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 1155. A bill to promote the mapping and development of United States geothermal resources by establishing a direct loan program for high risk geothermal exploration wells, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to improve geothermal energy technology and demonstrate the use of geothermal energy in large scale thermal applications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 1156. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to improve protections for employees and retirees in business bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. 1157. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to consider Brunswick County, North Carolina to be part of the same metropolitan statistical area as Wilmington, North Carolina; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1158. A bill to ensure the privacy and security of sensitive personal information, to prevent and mitigate identity theft, to provide notice of security breaches involving sensitive personal information, and to enhance law enforcement assistance and other

protections against security breaches, fraudulent access, and misuse of personal information; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1159. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand tax-free distributions from individual retirement accounts for charitable purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1160. A bill to amend the Public Land Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service opportunities for young Americans; help restore the nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational and scenic resources; train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts; and promote the value of public service; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. PAUL):

S. 1161. A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to provide increased protection for horses participating in shows, exhibitions, or sales, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. 1162. A bill to ensure Federal law enforcement officers remain able to ensure their own safety, and the safety of their families, during a covered furlough; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. TESTER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1163. A bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide flexibility and reauthorization to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 1164. A bill to protect consumer from discriminatory State taxes on motor vehicle rentals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1165. A bill to provide consumer protections for students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MERKLEY:

S. 1166. A bill to establish a pilot grant program to support career and technical education exploration programs in middle schools and high schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 1167. A bill to modify the boundaries of the Pole Creek Wilderness, the Owyhee River Wilderness, and the North Fork Owyhee Wilderness and to authorize the continued use of motorized vehicles for livestock monitoring, herding, and grazing in certain wilderness areas in the State of Idaho; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1168. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to preserve access to rehabilitation innovation centers under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1169. A bill to reauthorize and improve the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 1170. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1171. A bill to establish a moratorium on oil and gas-related seismic activities off the coastline of the State of Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 1172. A bill to improve the process of presidential transition; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1173. A bill to amend chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the rental of motor vehicles that contain a defect related to motor vehicle safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 1174. A bill to deregulate interstate commerce with respect to parimutuel wagering on horseracing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 1175. A bill to improve the safety of hazardous materials rail transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 1176. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 1177. An original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves; from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 1178. A bill to prohibit implementation of a proposed rule relating to the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'' under the Clean Water Act, or any substantially similar rule, until a Supplemental Scientific Review Panel and Ephemeral and Intermittent Streams Advisory Committee produce certain reports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 156. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to childhood stroke and recognizing May 2015 as ''National Pediatric Stroke Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. Res. 157. A resolution recognizing the economic, cultural, and political contributions of the Southeast-Asian American community on the 40th anniversaries of the beginning of Khmer Rouge control over Cambodia and the beginning of the Cambodian Genocide and the end of the Vietnam War and the ''Secret War'' in the Kingdom of Laos; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. REID, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 158. A resolution recognizing the cultural and historic significance of the Cinco de Mayo holiday; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. Res. 159. A resolution designating April 2015, as ''National 9–1–1 Education Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CARPER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COONS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. PETERS):

S. Res. 160. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the United States during Public Service Recognition Week; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARPER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MORAN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. Res. 161. A resolution designating April 2015 as ''Financial Literacy Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. HELLER):

S. Res. 162. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Alcohol Responsibility Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 163. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the April 25, 2015, earthquake in Nepal; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 164. A resolution designating April 30, 2015, as Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 165. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. Con. Res. 14. A concurrent resolution providing that the President may not provide sanctions relief to Iran until certain United States citizens are released from Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 153

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 153, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to authorize additional visas for well-educated aliens to live and work in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 192

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 192, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 282

At the request of Mr. PAUL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 282, a bill to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 327

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 327, a bill to provide for auditable financial statements for the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 409, a bill to amend the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act to require the Secretary of Defense to inform the Attorney General of persons required to register as sex offenders.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 469

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 492

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 492, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes.

S. 507

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 507, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to pay higher wages to their employees.

S. 512

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 512, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to safeguard data stored abroad from improper government access, and for other purposes.

S. 517

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 517, a bill to extend the secure rural schools and community self-determination program, to restore mandatory funding status to the payment in lieu of taxes program, and for other purposes.

S. 607

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) 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. 608

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 608, a bill to prevent homeowners from being forced to pay taxes on forgiven mortgage loan debt.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 622, a bill to strengthen families' engagement in the education of their children.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include biomass heating appliances for tax credits available for energy-efficient building property and energy property.

S. 753

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) 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. 776

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 776, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 860, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 884

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 884, a bill to improve access to emergency medical services, and for other purposes.

S. 898

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 898, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of optometrists in the National Health Service Corps scholarship and loan repayment programs, and for other purposes.

S. 939

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 939, a bill to require the evaluation and consolidation of duplicative green building programs within the Department of Energy.

S. 976

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 976, a bill to promote the development of a United States commercial space resource exploration and utilization industry and to increase the exploration and utilization of resources in outer space.

S. 981

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 981, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a repatriation holiday, to increase funding to

the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1014

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1014, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1032, a bill to expand the use of E-Verify, to hold employers accountable, and for other purposes.

S. 1056

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1056, a bill to eliminate racial profiling by law enforcement, and for other purposes.

S. 1088

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1088, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for voter registration through the Internet, and for other purposes.

S. 1116

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1116, a bill to require that the Federal Government procure from the private sector the goods and services necessary for the operations and management of certain Government agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1117

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1117, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to remove senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct to include removal of certain other employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 1121

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1121, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1127

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1127, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes.

S. 1136

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill relating to the modernization of C–130 aircraft to meet applicable regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1147

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1147 proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 1140. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last week, I spoke on the floor about a new report by the Bipartisan Policy Center. This report talked about the great progress we have made so far in this Congress, as far as getting things done in a bipartisan way. I believe that is good news. Republicans in the Senate are committed to continuing our progress and to holding more votes on areas of bipartisan agreement. So I want to speak about something Senators on both sides of the aisle agree we can do to protect America's navigable waters.

Our rivers, lakes and other waterways are among America's most treasured resources. In my home State of Wyoming, we have some of the most beautiful rivers in the world: the Snake River, the Wind River, dozens of others.

The people of Wyoming are devoted to keeping these waterways safe and pristine for our children and our grandchildren. They understand there is a right way and a wrong way to do that. It is possible to have reasonable regulations to help preserve our waterways, while at the same time allowing it to be used as natural resources.

We have done it for years under the Clean Water Act. That is the right way to do it. The wrong way to do it is for Washington bureaucrats—bureaucrats—unelectable, unaccountable, to write harsh and inflexible rules that could block any use of water or even use of land in much of the country. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers have proposed a new rule, a new rule that would expand the Clean Water Act in what I believe is a dangerous new direction.

The rule is an attempt to change the definition of what the law calls waters of the United States. Under the rule, this term could include ditches, it would include dry areas where water only flows for a short time after it rains. Federal regulations have never before listed ditches and other manmade features as waters of the United States.

What the administration is proposing now simply makes no sense. Under this new rule, the new rule they are proposing, isolated ponds could be regulated as waters of the United States. This is the kind of pond that might form in a low-lying piece of land with no connection to a river or a stream. It could be in someone's back yard.

An isolated pond is not navigable water. That is not what the law was designed to protect. This is bipartisan, and there is bipartisan agreement that Washington bureaucrats have no business, none at all, regulating an isolated pond as a water of the United States. Under this newly proposed rule, agriculture water management systems could be regulated as waters of the United States.

We are talking about irrigation ditches. An irrigation ditch is not navigable water. These are manmade ditches that people dig to move water from one place to another to grow crops. This kind of agriculture water is not what the law was designed to protect. There is bipartisan agreement that Washington bureaucrats have no business regulating an irrigation ditch as waters of the United States.

Under this outrageously broad new rule, Washington bureaucrats would now have a say in how farmers and ranchers and families use their own property. It would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate private property just based on things such as whether it is used by animals or birds or even insects. It could regulate any water that moves over land or infiltrates into the ground.

Well, this is an ominously far-reaching definition. It is the wrong way—the wrong way—to protect America 's precious water resources. This rule is not designed to protect the traditional waters of the United States, it is designed to expand the power of Washington bureaucrats.

Now, there is a better way to protect America's water, and there is bipartisan support for it in this body. Today, I have introduced the Federal Water Quality Protection Act, along with Senators DONNELLY, INHOFE, HEITKAMP, ROBERTS, MANCHIN, SULLIVAN, ROUNDS,

BLUNT, MCCONNELL, CAPITO, and FISCHER. That is bipartisan. It is a bipartisan agreement that says we need a different approach.

This bill says yes to clean water and no to extreme bureaucracy. It will give the Environmental Protection Agency the direction it needs, the direction to write a strong and reasonable rule that truly protects America's waterways, one that keeps Washington's hands off things such as irrigation ditches, isolated ponds, and groundwater, one that does not allow the determination to be based on plants and insects, one that protects streams that could carry dangerous pollutants to navigable waters or wetlands that protect those waters from pollutants.

It would make sure Washington bureaucrats comply, comply with other laws and Executive orders that, well, they have been avoiding. They would have to do an economic analysis and conduct reviews to protect small businesses, to protect ranchers, to protect farmers. They would have to consult with the States. They have to make sure, by consulting with the States, that we have the approach that works best everywhere, not just the approach Washington likes best.

The Environmental Protection Agency says our concerns are overblown. The administration says there is a lot of misunderstanding about what their regulation covers. It says the Agency has no intention of regulating things like I have just described. The key word there is ''intention.'' This bill would help to make sure the rules are crystal clear.

It gives certainty and clarity to farmers, to ranchers, and to small business owners and their families. People would be able to use their property without fear of Washington bureaucrats knocking on their door. We would also be able to enjoy the beautiful rivers and the lakes that should be preserved and protected. This bipartisan bill does nothing to block legitimate protection of the true waters of the United States. It simply restores Washington's attention to the traditional waters that were always the focus before.

That is what this law should protect. This bill is one easy thing we can do to protect Americans from runaway bureaucracy. The Senate has been very productive so far this year. We are going to keep going. We are going to go with more ideas that have bipartisan support. The Federal Water Quality Protection Act is one of them. I want to thank some of the many cosponsors.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1141. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for small businesses; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act of 2015. I am very pleased to be joined by my friend and colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator CASEY, in introducing this bipartisan bill.

I know it will come as no surprise to the Presiding Officer that small businesses are our Nation's job creators. Firms with fewer than 500 employees generate about 50 percent of our Nation's GDP, account for more than 99 percent of employers, and employ nearly half of all workers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, small businesses generated 63 percent of the net new jobs that were created between 1993 and 2013.

Even the smallest firms have a notable effect on our economy. The Small Business Administration's data indicates that businesses with fewer than 20 employees accounted for 18 percent of all private sector jobs in 2013. Our bill allows small businesses to plan for capital investments that are vital to expansion and job creation. It eases complex accounting rules for the smallest businesses and it reduces the tax burden on newly formed ventures.

Recent studies by the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, indicate that taxes are the No. 1 concern of small business owners and that constant change in the Tax Code is among their chief concerns, and that is certainly the case in the State of Maine. When I talk with employers across the State, they constantly tell me the uncertainty in our Tax Code and in the regulations that are coming out of Washington make it very difficult for them to plan, to hire new workers, and to know what is going to be coming their way.

A key feature of our bill is that it provides the certainty that small businesses need to create and implement long-term capital investment plans that are vital to their growth. I will give an example. Section 179 of the Internal Revenue Code allows small businesses to deduct the costs of acquired assets more rapidly. The amount of the maximum allowable deduction has changed three times in the past 8 years. Making matters worse, it is usually not addressed until it is part of a huge package of extenders passed at the end of the year, making this tax benefit unpredictable from year to year and, therefore, difficult for small businesses to take full advantage of in their long-range planning. They essentially have to gamble that the tax incentive is going to be extended and that it is going to be made retroactive to the 1st of the year.

Just recently, I spoke with Patrick Schrader from Arundel Machine, a small business in Maine. He told me that the uncertainty surrounding section 179 has hindered his ability to make sound business decisions. The high-tech equipment that he needs requires months of lead time. For a small business like Patrick's, it is very risky to increase spending to expand and create new jobs when the deductibility of the machinery that helps to make those jobs possible remains unknown until late December. For business planning, this is information that is vital to have at the beginning of the year, not at the end of the year. This uncertainty has a direct impact on hiring decisions and the ability to take advantage of business opportunities.

Our bill permanently sets the maximum allowable deduction under section 179 at $500,000, indexed for inflation, and it is also structured in such a way that it is really targeted to our smaller businesses.

Our bill will also permanently extend the ability of restaurants, retailers, and certain businesses that lease their space to depreciate the costs of property improvements over 15 years rather than over 39 years. Think about that. What restaurant is going to be able to wait 39 years before doing upgrades and improvements? What we are trying to do is to better match the depreciation schedule with the need to update a restaurant or a retail space.

The Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act also allows more companies to use the cash method of accounting by permanently doubling the threshold at which the more complex accrual method is required from $5 million in gross receipts to $10 million. This includes an expansion in the ability of small businesses to use simplified methods of accounting for inventories.

Our legislation also eases the tax burden on a new startup business by permanently doubling the deduction for those initial expenses from $5,000 to $10,000, and for a very small business, that is really important. Similar to section 179, this benefit is limited to small businesses and the deduction phases out for total expenses exceeding $60,000.

Our legislation extends for 1 year a provision that provides benefits to businesses of all sizes, the so-called bonus depreciation.

Let me make clear that I continue to believe Congress should undertake comprehensive tax reform, with three major goals. It should result in a Tax Code that is more progrowth, that is fairer, and that is simpler. I urge the Senate to undertake such a reform, but in the meantime, the provisions of our bill would make a real difference in the ability of our Nation's small businesses to keep and create jobs.

I will give another real-life example of what the small business expensing provisions can mean. I am proud to say Maine is known for its delicious craft beers. Dan Kleban founded Maine Beer Company with his brother in 2009. In 6 short years, the company has added 21 good-paying jobs with generous health and retirement benefits. They plan to hire at least three more workers shortly. Dan noted that his company's business decisions were directly affected by section 179 expensing.

Here is why. This provision allowed them to expand by reinvesting their capital in new equipment to produce more beer and hire more Mainers.

Those are both good outcomes. In the last 3 years, they have taken the maximum deduction allowed under section 179 to acquire the equipment they needed to expand their business. This year, they hope to use the provision to finance the cost of a solar project that will offset nearly 50 percent of their energy consumption.

If their business had been forced to spread these deductions over many years, its owners would not have been able to grow the business as they have done nor create those good jobs. This economic benefit is multiplied when we consider the effect of the investment by Maine Beer Company and Maine's many other craft brewers on the equipment manufacturers, the transportation companies needed to haul the new equipment to their breweries, the increased inventory in their breweries, and the suppliers of the materials needed to brew the additional beer. So it has a ripple effect that benefits many other businesses and allows them to create more jobs as well.

In February, NFIB released new research that backs up this claim with hard numbers. They found that simply extending section 179 permanently at the 2014 level could increase employment by as much as 197,000 jobs during the 10-year window following implementation. U.S. real output could also increase by as much as $18.6 billion over the same period.

In light of the positive effects this bill would have on small businesses, on job creation, and on our economy, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act. I would note that the bill has been endorsed by NFIB, the leading voice for small business.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of endorsement from the NFIB be printed in the RECORD.

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

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2015.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: on behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, I write in support of your Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act, which would provide certainty and permanency with regard to several important tax provisions for small businesses.

The most important source of financing for small business is their earnings, i.e. cash flow. In fact, cash flow is ranked 13th out of 75 potential business problems in NFIB's Small Business and Priorities. This is why NFIB is particularly pleased to see the inclusion of reformed Section 179 expensing and expanded eligibility for cash accounting in your legislation.

Expensing provides small businesses with an immediate source of capital recovery and improved cash flow. Unfortunately, small business expensing levels have only been increased on a temporary basis, and at the beginning of this year the limit reverted back to $25,000, which is highly inadequate for the needs of small businesses. Unless Congress acts, this lower expensing limit will mean that only 30 percent of NFIB members will receive the full benefit of small business expensing in 2015. A 2015 NFIB Research Foundation study shows that a permanent expansion of the expensing deduction allowance limit to $500,000 could increase employment by as much as 197,000 jobs. NFIB supports permanently increasing expensing limits to $500,000 as well as permitting taxpayers to expense the cost of some improvements to real property. We appreciate you accomplishing these goals in your legislation while also permanently indexing this provision to inflation.

Furthermore, small businesses would benefit from the greater ability to use cash accounting for tax purposes. This simplified accounting process would alleviate some of the complexity of the tax code, which currently makes it very difficult for small business owners to plan future investments, hire new workers and grow their businesses. Expanded cash accounting would help business owners manage cash flow while better reflecting their ability to pay taxes.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to provide tax relief for small businesses in the 114th Congress.

Sincerely,

AMANDA AUSTIN,
Vice President, Public Policy.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1150. A bill to provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is among only 22 States in the Nation with a minimum wage higher than that of the Federal minimum wage. The Green Mountain State has long recognized the importance of paying workers a fair and livable wage, and it is past time for Congress to catch up with the daily struggles of working American families.

That is why today I am proud to join as a cosponsor of Senator MURRAY's Raise the Wage Act, to increase the Federal minimum wage to $12 by 2020. The Raise the Wage Act will help more 38 million Americans and thousands of Vermonters who yearn for financial security, for the sound footing to build their lives, and the lives of their children.

The Federal minimum wage has not kept up with inflation. In fact, it has lost more than 30 percent of its value since 1968. Over that same time, productivity has doubled, and low-wage workers today bring more experience and education to the workforce. American workers are being asked to work more for less. It is past time to adjust this disparity.

In Vermont, 64,000 workers would see their wages improve if we raised the minimum wage to $12. That is roughly $141 million in added income for families in Vermont—families who could spend these earnings at the store down the street, multiplying the economic impact to resonate through our local economies and downtown businesses.

Today, nearly two-thirds of Americans who earn the minimum wage or less are women; the Raise the Wage Act will improve the hard-earned wages of more than 21 million American women.

No one who works hard in a full-time job should live in poverty in our land, and raising the minimum wage should not be a question; it is commonsense, it is fair, and it is right. It is the right step to take to help ensure that workers can earn wages that support their families.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 1153. A bill to provide legal certainty to property owners along the Red River in Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. 1153

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 ''Red River Private Property Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. DISCLAIMER AND OUTDATED SURVEYS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary hereby disclaims any right, title, and interest to all land located south of the South Bank boundary line of the Red River in the affected area.

(b) CLARIFICATION OF PRIOR SURVEYS.—Previous surveys conducted by the Bureau of Land Management shall have no force or effect in determining the current South Bank boundary line.

SEC. 3. IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT BOUNDARY.

(a) BOUNDARY IDENTIFICATION.—To identify the current South Bank boundary line along the affected area, the Secretary shall commission a new survey that—

(1) adheres to the gradient boundary survey method;

(2) spans the entire length of the affected area;

(3) is conducted by Licensed State Land Surveyors chosen by the Texas General Land Office; and

(4) is completed not later than 2years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) APPROVAL OF THE SURVEY.—The Secretary shall submit the survey conducted under this Act to the Texas General Land Office for approval. State approval of the completed survey shall satisfy the requirements under this Act.

SEC. 4. APPEAL.

Not later than 1 year after the survey is completed and approved pursuant to section

3, a private property owner who holds right, title, or interest in the affected area may appeal public domain claims by the Secretary to an Administrative Law Judge.

SEC. 5. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

The Secretary shall ensure that no parcels of land in the affected area are treated as Federal land for the purpose of any resource management plan until the survey has been completed and approved and the Secretary ensures that the parcel is not subject to further appeal pursuant to this Act.

SEC. 6. CONSTRUCTION.

This Act does not change or affect in any manner the interest of the States or sovereignty rights of federally recognized Indian tribes over lands located to the north of the South Bank boundary line of the Red River as established by this Act.

SEC. 7. SALE OF REMAINING RED RIVER SURFACE RIGHTS.

(a) COMPETITIVE SALE OF IDENTIFIED FEDERAL LANDS.—After the survey has been completed and approved and the Secretary ensures that a parcel is not subject to further appeal under this Act, the Secretary shall offer any and all such remaining identified Federal lands for disposal by competitive sale for not less than fair market value as determined by an appraisal conducted in accordance with nationally recognized appraisal standards, including the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(b) EXISTING RIGHTS.—The sale of identified Federal lands under this section shall be subject to valid existing tribal, State, and local rights.

(c) PROCEEDS OF SALE OF LANDS.—Net proceeds from the sale of identified Federal lands under this section shall be used to offset any costs associated with this Act.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a list of any identified Federal lands that have not been sold under subsection (a) and the reasons such lands were not sold.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act:

(1) AFFECTED AREA.—The term ''affected area'' means lands along the approximately 116-mile stretch of the Red River from its confluence with the North Fork of the Red River on the west to the 98th meridian on the east between the States of Texas and Oklahoma.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of Bureau of Land Management.

(3) SOUTH BANK.—The term ''South Bank'' means the water-washed and relatively permanent elevation or acclivity, commonly called a cut bank, along the southerly or right side of the Red River which separates its bed from the adjacent upland, whether valley or hill, and usually serves to confine the waters within the bed and to preserve the course of the river; as specified in the fifth paragraph of the decree rendered March 12, 1923, in *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 261 U. S. 340, 43 S. Ct. 376, 67 L. Ed. 687.

(4) SOUTH BANK BOUNDARY LINE.—The term ''South Bank boundary line'' means the boundary between Texas and Oklahoma identified through the gradient boundary survey method ; as specified in the sixth and seventh paragraphs of the decree rendered March 12, 1923, in *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 261 U. S. 340, 43 S. Ct. 376, 67 L. Ed. 687.

(5) GRADIENT BOUNDARY SURVEY METHOD.—The term ''gradient boundary survey method'' means the measurement technique used to locate the South Bank boundary line under the methodology established by the United States Supreme Court which recognizes that the boundary line between the States of Texas and Oklahoma along the Red River is subject to such changes as have been or may be wrought by the natural and gradual processes known as erosion and accretion as specified in the second, third, and fourth paragraphs of the decree rendered March 12, 1923, in *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 261 U. S. 340, 43 S. Ct. 376, 67 L. Ed. 687.

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

S. 1156. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to improve protections for employees and retirees in business bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. 1156

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Employees and Retirees in Business Bankruptcies Act of 2015''.

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

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Business bankruptcies have increased sharply in recent years and remain at high levels. These bankruptcies include several of the largest business bankruptcy filings in history. As the use of bankruptcy has expanded, job preservation and retirement security are placed at greater risk.

(2) Laws enacted to improve recoveries for employees and retirees and limit their losses in bankruptcy cases have not kept pace with the increasing and broader use of bankruptcy by businesses in all sectors of the economy. However, while protections for employees and retirees in bankruptcy cases have eroded, management compensation plans devised for those in charge of troubled businesses have become more prevalent and are escaping adequate scrutiny.

(3) Changes in the law regarding these matters are urgently needed as bankruptcy is used to address increasingly more complex and diverse conditions affecting troubled businesses and industries.

TITLE I—IMPROVING RECOVERIES FOR EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES

SEC. 101. INCREASED WAGE PRIORITY.

Section 507(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking ''$10,000'' and inserting ''$20,000'';

(B) by striking ''within 180 days''; and

(C) by striking ''or the date of the cessation of the debtor's business, whichever occurs first,'';

(2) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking—

(A) ''within 180 days''; and

(B) ''or the date of the cessation of the debtor's business, whichever occurs first''; and

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

''(B) for each such plan, to the extent of the number of employees covered by each such plan, multiplied by $20,000.''.

SEC. 102. CLAIM FOR STOCK VALUE LOSSES IN DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLANS.

Section 101(5) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

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

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) right or interest in equity securities of the debtor, or an affiliate of the debtor, held in a defined contribution plan (within the meaning of section 3(34) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(34))) for the benefit of an individual who is not an insider, a senior executive officer, or any of the 20 next most highly compensated employees of the debtor (if 1 or more are not insiders), if such securities were attributable to either employer contributions by the debtor or an affiliate of the debtor, or elective deferrals (within the meaning of section 402(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), and any earnings thereon, if an employer or plan sponsor who has commenced a case under this title has committed fraud with respect to such plan or has otherwise breached a duty to the participant that has proximately caused the loss of value.''.

SEC. 103. PRIORITY FOR SEVERANCE PAY.

Section 503(b) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (8)(B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (9), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(10) severance pay owed to employees of the debtor (other than to an insider, other senior management, or a consultant retained to provide services to the debtor), under a plan, program, or policy generally applicable to employees of the debtor (but not under an individual contract of employment), or owed

pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, for layoff or termination on or after the date of the filing of the petition, which pay shall be deemed earned in full upon such layoff or termination of employment; and''.

SEC. 104. FINANCIAL RETURNS FOR EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES.

Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code is amended—

(1) by adding at the end the following:

''(17) The plan provides for recovery of damages payable for the rejection of a collective bargaining agreement, or for other financial returns as negotiated by the debtor and the authorized representative under section 1113 (to the extent that such returns are paid under, rather than outside of, a plan).''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (13) and inserting the following:

''(13) With respect to retiree benefits, as that term is defined in section 1114(a), the plan—

''(A) provides for the continuation after its effective date of payment of all retiree benefits at the level established pursuant to subsection (e)(1)(B) or (g) of section 1114 at any time before the date of confirmation of the plan, for the duration of the period for which the debtor has obligated itself to provide such benefits, or if no modifications are made before confirmation of the plan, the continuation of all such retiree benefits maintained or established in whole or in part by the debtor before the date of the filing of the petition; and

''(B) provides for recovery of claims arising from the modification of retiree benefits or for other financial returns, as negotiated by the debtor and the authorized representative (to the extent that such returns are paid under, rather than outside of, a plan).''.

SEC. 105. PRIORITY FOR WARN ACT DAMAGES.

Section 503(b)(1)(A)(ii) of title 11, United States Code is amended to read as follows:

''(ii) wages and benefits awarded pursuant to a judicial proceeding or a proceeding of the National Labor Relations Board as back pay or damages attributable to any period of time occurring after the date of commencement of the case under this title, as a result of a violation of Federal or State law by the debtor, without regard to the time of the occurrence of unlawful conduct on which the award is based or to whether any services were rendered on or after the commencement of the case, including an award by a court under section 2901 of title 29, United States Code, of up to 60 days' pay and benefits following a layoff that occurred or commenced at a time when such award period includes a period on or after the commencement of the case, if the court determines that payment of wages and benefits by reason of the operation of this clause will not substantially increase the probability of layoff or termination of current employees or of nonpayment of domestic support obligations during the case under this title;''.

TITLE II—REDUCING EMPLOYEES' AND RETIREES' LOSSES

SEC. 201. REJECTION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS.

Section 1113 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (a) through (f) and inserting the following:

''(a) The debtor in possession, or the trustee if one has been appointed under this chapter, other than a trustee in a case covered by subchapter IV of this chapter and by title I of the Railway Labor Act, may reject a collective bargaining agreement only in accordance with this section. In this section, a reference to the trustee includes the debtor in possession.

''(b) No provision of this title shall be construed to permit the trustee to unilaterally terminate or alter any provision of a collective bargaining agreement before complying with this section. The trustee shall timely pay all monetary obligations arising under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. Any such payment required to be made before a plan confirmed under section 1129 is effective has the status of an allowed administrative expense under section 503.

''(c)(1) If the trustee seeks modification of a collective bargaining agreement, the trustee shall provide notice to the labor organization representing the employees covered by the agreement that modifications are being proposed under this section, and shall promptly provide an initial proposal for modifications to the agreement. Thereafter, the trustee shall confer in good faith with the labor organization, at reasonable times and for a reasonable period in light of the complexity of the case, in attempting to reach mutually acceptable modifications of such agreement.

''(2) The initial proposal and subsequent proposals by the trustee for modification of a collective bargaining agreement shall be based upon a business plan for the reorganization of the debtor, and shall reflect the most complete and reliable information available. The trustee shall provide to the labor organization all information that is relevant for negotiations. The court may enter a protective order to prevent the disclosure of information if disclosure could compromise the debtor's position with respect to its competitors in the industry, subject to the needs of the labor organization to evaluate the trustee's proposals and any application for rejection of the agreement or for interim relief pursuant to this section.

''(3) In consideration of Federal policy encouraging the practice and process of collective bargaining and in recognition of the bargained-for expectations of the employees covered by the agreement, modifications proposed by the trustee—

''(A) shall be proposed only as part of a program of workforce and nonworkforce cost savings devised for the reorganization of the debtor, including savings in management personnel costs;

''(B) shall be limited to modifications designed to achieve a specified aggregate financial contribution for the employees covered by the agreement (taking into consideration any labor cost savings negotiated within the 12-month period before the filing of the petition), and shall be not more than the minimum savings essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by the liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term; and

''(C) shall not be disproportionate or overly burden the employees covered by the agreement, either in the amount of the cost savings sought from such employees or the nature of the modifications.

''(d)(1) If, after a period of negotiations, the trustee and the labor organization have not reached an agreement over mutually satisfactory modifications, and further negotiations are not likely to produce mutually satisfactory modifications, the trustee may file a motion seeking rejection of the collective bargaining agreement after notice and a hearing. Absent agreement of the parties, no such hearing shall be held before the expiration of the 21-day period beginning on the date on which notice of the hearing is provided to the labor organization representing the employees covered by the agreement. Only the debtor and the labor organization may appear and be heard at such hearing. An application for rejection shall seek rejection effective upon the entry of an order granting the relief.

''(2) In consideration of Federal policy encouraging the practice and process of collective bargaining and in recognition of the bargained-for expectations of the employees covered by the agreement, the court may grant a motion seeking rejection of a collective bargaining agreement only if, based on clear and convincing evidence—

''(A) the court finds that the trustee has complied with the requirements of subsection (c);

''(B) the court has considered alternative proposals by the labor organization and has concluded that such proposals do not meet the requirements of paragraph (3)(B) of subsection (c);

''(C) the court finds that further negotiations regarding the trustee's proposal or an alternative proposal by the labor organization are not likely to produce an agreement;

''(D) the court finds that implementation of the trustee's proposal shall not—

''(i) cause a material diminution in the purchasing power of the employees covered by the agreement;

''(ii) adversely affect the ability of the debtor to retain an experienced and qualified workforce; or

''(iii) impair the debtor's labor relations such that the ability to achieve a feasible reorganization would be compromised; and

''(E) the court concludes that rejection of the agreement and immediate implementation of the trustee's proposal is essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term.

''(3) If the trustee has implemented a program of incentive pay, bonuses, or other financial returns for insiders, senior executive officers, or the 20 next most highly compensated employees or consultants providing services to the debtor during the bankruptcy, or such a program was implemented within 180 days before the date of the filing of the petition, the court shall presume that the trustee has failed to satisfy the requirements of subsection (c)(3)(C).

''(4) In no case shall the court enter an order rejecting a collective bargaining agreement that would result in modifications to a level lower than the level proposed by the trustee in the proposal found by the court to have complied with the requirements of this section.

''(5) At any time after the date on which an order rejecting a collective bargaining agreement is entered, or in the case of an agreement entered into between the trustee and the labor organization providing mutually satisfactory modifications, at any time after such agreement has been entered into, the labor organization may apply to the court for an order seeking an increase in the level of wages or benefits, or relief from working conditions, based upon changed circumstances. The court shall grant the request only if the increase or other relief is not inconsistent with the standard set forth in paragraph (2)(E).

''(e) During a period in which a collective bargaining agreement at issue under this section continues in effect, and if essential to the continuation of the debtor's business or in order to avoid irreparable damage to the estate, the court, after notice and a hearing, may authorize the trustee to implement interim changes in the terms, conditions, wages, benefits, or work rules provided by the collective bargaining agreement. Any hearing under this subsection shall be scheduled in accordance with the needs of the trustee. The implementation of such interim changes shall not render the application for rejection moot.

''(f)(1) Rejection of a collective bargaining agreement constitutes a breach of the agreement, and shall be effective no earlier than the entry of an order granting such relief.

''(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), solely for purposes of determining and allowing a claim arising from the rejection of a collective bargaining agreement, rejection shall be treated as rejection of an executory contract under section 365(g) and shall be allowed or disallowed in accordance with section 502(g)(1). No claim for rejection damages shall be limited by section 502(b)(7). Economic self-help by a labor organization shall be permitted upon a court order granting a motion to reject a collective bargaining agreement under subsection (d) or pursuant to subsection (e), and no provision of this title or of any other provision of Federal or State law may be construed to the contrary.

''(g) The trustee shall provide for the reasonable fees and costs incurred by a labor organization under this section, upon request and after notice and a hearing.

''(h) A collective bargaining agreement that is assumed shall be assumed in accordance with section 365.''.

SEC. 202. PAYMENT OF INSURANCE BENEFITS TO RETIRED EMPLOYEES.

Section 1114 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting '', without regard to whether the debtor asserts a right to unilaterally modify such payments under such plan, fund, or program'' before the period at the end;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting after ''section'' the following: '', and a labor organization serving as the authorized representative under subsection (c)(1),'';

(3) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

''(f)(1) If a trustee seeks modification of retiree benefits, the trustee shall provide a notice to the authorized representative that modifications are being proposed pursuant to this section, and shall promptly provide an initial proposal. Thereafter, the trustee shall confer in good faith with the authorized representative at reasonable times and for a reasonable period in light of the complexity of the case in attempting to reach mutually satisfactory modifications.

''(2) The initial proposal and subsequent proposals by the trustee shall be based upon a business plan for the reorganization of the debtor and shall reflect the most complete and reliable information available. The trustee shall provide to the authorized representative all information that is relevant for the negotiations. The court may enter a protective order to prevent the disclosure of information if disclosure could compromise the debtor's position with respect to its competitors in the industry, subject to the needs of the authorized representative to evaluate the trustee's proposals and an application pursuant to subsection (g) or (h).

''(3) Modifications proposed by the trustee—

''(A) shall be proposed only as part of a program of workforce and nonworkforce cost savings devised for the reorganization of the debtor, including savings in management personnel costs;

''(B) shall be limited to modifications that are designed to achieve a specified aggregate financial contribution for the retiree group represented by the authorized representative (taking into consideration any cost savings implemented within the 12-month period before the date of filing of the petition with respect to the retiree group), and shall be no more than the minimum savings essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by the liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term; and

''(C) shall not be disproportionate or overly burden the retiree group, either in the amount of the cost savings sought from such group or the nature of the modifications.'';

(4) in subsection (g)—

(A) by striking ''(g)'' and all that follows through the semicolon at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(g)(1) If, after a period of negotiations, the trustee and the authorized representative have not reached agreement over mutually satisfactory modifications and further negotiations are not likely to produce mutually satisfactory modifications, the trustee may file a motion seeking modifications in the payment of retiree benefits after notice and a hearing. Absent agreement of the parties, no such hearing shall be held before the expiration of the 21-day period beginning on the date on which notice of the hearing is provided to the authorized representative. Only the debtor and the authorized representative may appear and be heard at such hearing.

''(2) The court may grant a motion to modify the payment of retiree benefits only if, based on clear and convincing evidence—

''(A) the court finds that the trustee has complied with the requirements of subsection (f);

''(B) the court has considered alternative proposals by the authorized representative and has determined that such proposals do not meet the requirements of subsection (f)(3)(B);

''(C) the court finds that further negotiations regarding the trustee's proposal or an alternative proposal by the authorized representative are not likely to produce a mutually satisfactory agreement;

''(D) the court finds that implementation of the proposal shall not cause irreparable harm to the affected retirees; and

''(E) the court concludes that an order granting the motion and immediate implementation of the trustee's proposal is essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or a successor to the debtor) in the short term.

''(3) If a trustee has implemented a program of incentive pay, bonuses, or other financial returns for insiders, senior executive officers, or the 20 next most highly compensated employees or consultants providing services to the debtor during the bankruptcy, or such a program was implemented within 180 days before the date of the filing of the petition, the court shall presume that the trustee has failed to satisfy the requirements of subparagraph (f)(3)(C).''; and

(B) by striking ''except that in no case'' and inserting the following:

''(4) In no case''; and

(5) by striking subsection (k) and redesignating subsections (l) and (m) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively.

SEC. 203. PROTECTION OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS IN A SALE OF ASSETS.

Section 363(b) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) In approving a sale under this subsection, the court shall consider the extent to which a bidder has offered to maintain existing jobs, preserve terms and conditions of employment, and assume or match pension and retiree health benefit obligations in determining whether an offer constitutes the highest or best offer for such property.''.

SEC. 204. CLAIM FOR PENSION LOSSES.

Section 502 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) The court shall allow a claim asserted by an active or retired participant, or by a labor organization representing such participants, in a defined benefit plan terminated under section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, for any shortfall in pension benefits accrued as of the effective date of the termination of such pension plan as a result of the termination of the plan and limitations upon the payment of benefits imposed pursuant to section 4022 of such Act, notwithstanding any claim asserted and collected by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation with respect to such termination.

''(m) The court shall allow a claim of a kind described in section 101(5)(C) by an active or retired participant in a defined contribution plan (within the meaning of section 3(34) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(34))), or by a labor organization representing such participants. The amount of such claim shall be measured by the market value of the stock at the time of contribution to, or purchase by, the plan and the value as of the commencement of the case.''.

SEC. 205. PAYMENTS BY SECURED LENDER.

Section 506(c) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: ''If employees have not received wages, accrued vacation, severance, or other benefits owed under the policies and practices of the debtor, or pursuant to the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, for services rendered on and after the date of the commencement of the case, such unpaid obligations shall be deemed necessary costs and expenses of preserving, or disposing of, property securing an allowed secured claim and shall be recovered even if the trustee has otherwise waived the provisions of this subsection under an agreement with the holder of the allowed secured claim or a successor or predecessor in interest.''.

SEC. 206. PRESERVATION OF JOBS AND BENEFITS.

Chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting before section 1101 the following:

''§ 1100. Statement of purpose

''A debtor commencing a case under this chapter shall have as its principal purpose the reorganization of its business to preserve going concern value to the maximum extent possible through the productive use of its assets and the preservation of jobs that will sustain productive economic activity.'';

(2) in section 1129(a), as amended by section 104, by adding at the end the following:

''(18) The debtor has demonstrated that the reorganization preserves going concern value to the maximum extent possible through the productive use of the debtor's assets and preserves jobs that sustain productive economic activity.'';

(3) in section 1129(c)—

(A) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''(c)''; and

(B) by striking the last sentence and inserting the following:

''(2) If the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) are met with respect to more than 1 plan, the court shall, in determining which plan to confirm—

''(A) consider the extent to which each plan would preserve going concern value through the productive use of the debtor's assets and the preservation of jobs that sustain productive economic activity; and

''(B) confirm the plan that better serves such interests.

''(3) A plan that incorporates the terms of a settlement with a labor organization representing employees of the debtor shall presumptively constitute the plan that satisfies this subsection.''; and

(4) in the table of sections, by inserting before the item relating to section 1101 the following:

''1100. Statement of purpose.''.

SEC. 207. TERMINATION OF EXCLUSIVITY.

Section 1121(d) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) For purposes of this subsection, cause for reducing the 120-day period or the 180-day period includes the following:

''(A) The filing of a motion pursuant to section 1113 seeking rejection of a collective bargaining agreement if a plan based upon an alternative proposal by the labor organization is reasonably likely to be confirmed within a reasonable time.

''(B) The proposed filing of a plan by a proponent other than the debtor, which incorporates the terms of a settlement with a labor organization if such plan is reasonably likely to be confirmed within a reasonable time.''.

SEC. 208. CLAIM FOR WITHDRAWAL LIABILITY.

Section 503(b) of title 11, United States Code, as amended by section 103 of this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(11) with respect to withdrawal liability owed to a multiemployer pension plan for a complete or partial withdrawal pursuant to section 4201 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1381) where such withdrawal occurs on or after the commencement of the case, an amount equal to the amount of vested benefits payable from such pension plan that accrued as a result of employees' services rendered to the debtor during the period beginning on the date of commencement of the case and ending on the date of the withdrawal from the plan.''.

TITLE III—RESTRICTING EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION PROGRAMS

SEC. 301. EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION UPON EXIT FROM BANKRUPTCY.

Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by adding at the end the following: ''Except for compensation subject to review under paragraph (5), payments or other distributions under the plan to or for the benefit of insiders, senior executive officers, and any of the 20 next most highly compensated employees or consultants providing services to the debtor, shall not be approved except as part of a program of payments or distributions generally applicable to employees of the debtor, and only to the extent that the court determines that such payments are not excessive or disproportionate compared to distributions to the debtor's nonmanagement workforce.''; and

(2) in paragraph (5)—

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

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) the compensation disclosed pursuant to subparagraph (B) has been approved by, or is subject to the approval of, the court as reasonable when compared to individuals holding comparable positions at comparable companies in the same industry and not disproportionate in light of economic concessions by the debtor's nonmanagement workforce during the case.''.

SEC. 302. LIMITATIONS ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ENHANCEMENTS.

Section 503(c) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(A) by inserting '', a senior executive officer, or any of the 20 next most highly compensated employees or consultants'' after ''an insider'';

(B) by inserting ''or for the payment of performance or incentive compensation, or a bonus of any kind, or other financial returns designed to replace or enhance incentive, stock, or other compensation in effect before the date of the commencement of the case,'' after ''remain with the debtor's business,''; and

(C) by inserting ''clear and convincing'' before ''evidence in the record''; and

(2) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) other transfers or obligations, to or for the benefit of insiders, senior executive officers, managers, or consultants providing services to the debtor, in the absence of a finding by the court, based upon clear and convincing evidence, and without deference to the debtor's request for such payments, that such transfers or obligations are essential to the survival of the debtor's business or (in the case of a liquidation of some or all of the debtor's assets) essential to the orderly liquidation and maximization of value of the assets of the debtor, in either case, because of the essential nature of the services provided, and then only to the extent that the court finds such transfers or obligations are reasonable compared to individuals holding comparable positions at comparable companies in the same industry and not disproportionate in light of economic concessions by the debtor's nonmanagement workforce during the case.''.

SEC. 303. ASSUMPTION OF EXECUTIVE BENEFIT PLANS.

Section 365 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''and (d)'' and inserting ''(d), (q), and (r)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(q) No deferred compensation arrangement for the benefit of insiders, senior executive officers, or any of the 20 next most highly compensated employees of the debtor shall be assumed if a defined benefit plan for employees of the debtor has been terminated pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, on or after the date of the commencement of the case or within 180 days before the date of the commencement of the case.

''(r) No plan, fund, program, or contract to provide retiree benefits for insiders, senior executive officers, or any of the 20 next most highly compensated employees of the debtor shall be assumed if the debtor has obtained relief under subsection (g) or (h) of section 1114 to impose reductions in retiree benefits or under subsection (d) or (e) of section 1113 to impose reductions in the health benefits of active employees of the debtor, or reduced or eliminated health benefits for active or retired employees within 180 days before the date of the commencement of the case.''.

SEC. 304. RECOVERY OF EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 5 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 562 the following:

''§ 563. Recovery of executive compensation

''(a) If a debtor has obtained relief under subsection (d) of section 1113, or subsection (g) of section 1114, by which the debtor reduces the cost of its obligations under a collective bargaining agreement or a plan, fund, or program for retiree benefits as defined in section 1114(a), the court, in granting relief, shall determine the percentage diminution in the value of the obligations when compared to the debtor's obligations under the collective bargaining agreement, or with respect to retiree benefits, as of the date of the commencement of the case under this title before granting such relief. In making its determination, the court shall include reductions in benefits, if any, as a result of the termination pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, of a defined benefit plan administered by the debtor, or for which the debtor is a contributing employer, effective at any time on or after 180 days before the date of the commencement of a case under this title. The court shall not take into account pension benefits paid or payable under such Act as a result of any such termination.

''(b) If a defined benefit pension plan administered by the debtor, or for which the debtor is a contributing employer, has been terminated pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, effective at any time on or after 180 days before the date of the commencement of a case under this title, but a debtor has not obtained relief under subsection (d) of section 1113, or subsection (g) of section 1114, the court, upon motion of a party in interest, shall determine the percentage diminution in the value of benefit obligations when compared to the total benefit liabilities before such termination. The court shall not take into account pension benefits paid or payable under title IV of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 as a result of any such termination.

''(c) Upon the determination of the percentage diminution in value under subsection (a) or (b), the estate shall have a claim for the return of the same percentage of the compensation paid, directly or indirectly (including any transfer to a self-settled trust or similar device, or to a nonqualified deferred compensation plan under section 409A(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) to any officer of the debtor serving as member of the board of directors of the debtor within the year before the date of the commencement of the case, and any individual serving as chairman or lead director of the board of directors at the time of the granting of relief under section 1113 or 1114 or, if no such relief has been granted, the termination of the defined benefit plan.

''(d) The trustee or a committee appointed pursuant to section 1102 may commence an action to recover such claims, except that if neither the trustee nor such committee commences an action to recover such claim by the first date set for the hearing on the confirmation of plan under section 1129, any party in interest may apply to the court for authority to recover such claim for the benefit of the estate. The costs of recovery shall be borne by the estate.

''(e) The court shall not award postpetition compensation under section 503(c) or otherwise to any person subject to subsection (c) if there is a reasonable likelihood that such compensation is intended to reimburse or replace compensation recovered by the estate under this section.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 5 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 562 the following:

''563. Recovery of executive compensation.''.

SEC. 305. PREFERENTIAL COMPENSATION TRANSFER.

Section 547 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j)(1) The trustee may avoid a transfer—

''(A) made—

''(i) to or for the benefit of an insider (including an obligation incurred for the benefit of an insider under an employment contract) made in anticipation of bankruptcy; or

''(ii) in anticipation of bankruptcy to a consultant who is formerly an insider and

who is retained to provide services to an entity that becomes a debtor (including an obligation under a contract to provide services to such entity or to a debtor); and

''(B) made or incurred on or within 1 year before the filing of the petition.

''(2) No provision of subsection (c) shall constitute a defense against the recovery of a transfer described in paragraph (1).

''(3) The trustee or a committee appointed pursuant to section 1102 may commence an action to recover such transfer, except that, if neither the trustee nor such committee commences an action to recover such transfer by the time of the commencement of a hearing on the confirmation of a plan under section 1129, any party in interest may apply to the court for authority to recover the claims for the benefit of the estate. The costs of recovery shall be borne by the estate.''.

TITLE IV—OTHER PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. UNION PROOF OF CLAIM.

Section 501(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting '', including a labor organization,'' after ''A creditor''.

SEC. 402. EXCEPTION FROM AUTOMATIC STAY.

Section 362(b) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (27), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (28), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(29) of the commencement or continuation of a grievance, arbitration, or similar dispute resolution proceeding established by a collective bargaining agreement that was or could have been commenced against the debtor before the filing of a case under this title, or the payment or enforcement of an award or settlement under such proceeding.''.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1158. A bill to ensure the privacy and security of sensitive personal information, to prevent and mitigate identity theft, to provide notice of security breaches involving sensitive personal information, and to enhance law enforcement assistance and other protections against security breaches, fraudulent access, and misuse of personal information; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Consumer Privacy Protection Act of 2015. This comprehensive legislation will help ensure that the corporations Americans entrust with their most personal information are taking steps to keep it secure. Data breaches continue to plague American businesses and compromise the privacy of millions of consumers. At the same time, the amount of information we share with corporations who are the target of these breaches is growing. Corporations collect and store our social security numbers, our bank account information, and our email addresses. They collect information about our private health and medical conditions. They know what routes we take to and from work and where we drop our kids off at school. They can replicate our fingerprints. We even trust them with private photographs that we store in the cloud.

Corporations benefit financially from our personal information, and they should be obligated to take steps to keep it safe. Too often, however, private information falls into the hands of those who would do us harm and we are not even told. Last year, in what is commonly referred to as the ''Year of the Data Breach,'' breaches at corporations, including Home Depot, Neiman Marcus, and Sony Pictures, as well as many others, demonstrated how vulnerable our corporations are to hackers and cyber criminals. In some cases these breaches exposed credit card data, social security numbers, or bank account information that left millions at risk of financial fraud or identity theft, and in other cases they exposed personal and private information to the public that led to embarrassment and reputational harm.

The Consumer Privacy Protection Act I am introducing today seeks to protect the vast amount of information that we now share with corporations each and every day, and it builds and expands on data security legislation that I have introduced every Congress since 2005. In today's modern world, data security is no longer just about protecting our identities and our bank accounts; it is about protecting our privacy. Americans want to know when someone has had unauthorized access to their emails, to their bank accounts, and to their private family pictures, but they do not just want to be notified of yet another data breach. Americans want to know that the corporations who are profiting from their information are actually doing something to prevent the next data breach. Consumers should not have to settle for mere notice of data breaches. American consumers deserve protection. This legislation would accomplish that.

The Consumer Privacy Protection Act requires that corporations meet certain privacy and data security standards to keep information they store about their customers safe, and requires that corporations notify the customer in the event of a breach. This legislation protects broad categories of data, including, social security numbers and other government-issued identification numbers; financial account information, including credit card numbers and bank accounts; online usernames and passwords, including email names and passwords; unique biometric data, including fingerprints; information about a person's physical and mental health; information about geolocation; and access to private digital photographs and videos.

I understand that not every breach can be prevented. Cyber criminals are determined and constantly looking for new ways to pierce the most sophisticated security systems. But just as we expect a bank to put a lock on the front door and an alarm on the vault to protect its customers' money, we expect corporations to take reasonable measures to protect the personal information they collect from us. Unfortunately, many of the corporations that profit from the very information that we entrust them to protect, have woefully inadequate measures to secure this information. For others, security is simply not a priority. American consumers deserve better.

This legislation creates civil penalties for corporations that fail to meet the required privacy and data security standards established in the bill or fail to notify customers when a breach occurs. The Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the State Attorneys General each have a role in enforcement. This legislation also requires corporations to inform Federal law enforcement, such as the Secret Service and the FBI, of all large data breaches, as well as breaches that could impact the federal government. Such notification is necessary to help law enforcement bring these cyber criminals to justice and identify patterns that help protect against future attacks.

Many Americans understandably assume Federal law already protects this sensitive information—common sense tells us that it should. Unfortunately, the reality is that it does not. States provide a patchwork of protection, and while some laws are strong, others are not. For example, 47 States and the District of Columbia require some form of data breach notification, but only 12 States have passed data security requirements designed to prevent data breaches. My home state of Vermont has a strong data breach notification law that has been in effect since 2007.

In crafting Federal law, we must be careful not to override the strong State laws that took years to accomplish with weaker Federal protections, but we also need to ensure that all Americans, regardless of where they live, have their privacy protected. To this end, the Consumer Privacy Protection Act preempts State law relating to data security and data breach notification only to the extent that the protections under those laws are weaker than those provided for in this bill. We must ensure that consumers do not lose privacy protections they currently enjoy. Since this bill is modeled after those States with the strongest consumer protections, however, I believe it will improve protections for consumers in nearly every State.

I am joined today by Senators FRANKEN, WARREN, BLUMENTHAL, WYDEN, and MARKEY in introducing this legislation. These Senators have long shared my commitment to protecting consumer privacy. This legislation also has the support of leading consumer privacy advocates, including: Center for Democracy and Technology, Consumers Union, National Consumers League, New America's Open Technology Institute, Consumer Federation of America, and Privacy Rights Clearinghouse.

Millions of Americans who have had their personal information compromised or stolen as a result of a data

breach consider this issue to be of critical importance and a priority for the Senate. Protecting privacy rights should be important to all of us, regardless of party or ideology. I hope that all Senators will support this measure to better protect Americans' privacy.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1169. A bill to reauthorize and improve the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2015. Senator WHITEHOUSE is joining me in this effort.

This measure would improve our Nation's response to juvenile offenders in the criminal justice system.

For the last 40 or so years, the Federal Government, through the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, or JJDPA, has provided guidelines and resources to help States serve troubled adolescents.

This 1974 law provides juvenile justice dollars to States and sets four core requirements for States that choose to accept these Federal funds. The law also created the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Justice Department.

A centerpiece of the current statute is its standards for the treatment of at-risk youth who come into contact with our criminal justice system. But these standards have not been updated since 2002, and the law's authorization has expired.

Since Congress last extended the law more than a dozen years ago, evidence has emerged that some of the JJDPA's provisions need to be improved or strengthened to reflect the latest research on adolescent development.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I have made this law's renewal a priority. The bill I am introducing would extend the statute for 5 years and update its provisions to reflect the latest research on what works with troubled adolescents.

The bill also would continue Congress's commitment to help State and local jurisdictions improve their juvenile justice systems through a program of formula grants. At the same time, the bill would improve the oversight and accountability of this grant program in several key ways.

Such accountability measures are vitally needed to ensure the grant program's integrity.

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony from whistleblowers last week that the Justice Department is failing to hold participating States accountable for meeting the JJDPA's four core requirements.

After I wrote several letters concerning these whistleblower allegations, the Justice Department admitted to having a flawed compliance monitoring policy in place since 1997. This policy allowed States to receive JJDPA formula grants in violation of the law's funding requirements.

Witnesses at last week's Senate Judiciary hearing recounted violations of law, mismanagement, and waste of limited juvenile justice grant funds, in addition to retaliation against whistleblowers.

This is an injustice not only to the taxpayers but also to the youth who face inadequate juvenile justice systems. It is also an injustice to the children who end up in the justice system as a result of poor experience in the foster care system.

Shortcomings in the juvenile justice system will not be solved overnight. But I look forward to taking the lead on legislation in the 114th Congress that will make measurable improvements.

In closing, numerous organizations have worked with us on the development of this bill, and I thank them for their contributions. I also thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his cosponsorship of the legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 1170. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to reauthorize the Breast Cancer Research Stamp for 4 more years.

Without Congressional action, this important and effective way of raising additional funds for critical research will expire at the end of this year. These stamps are sold for a little more than the cost of first class postage, so customers can choose to donate in a simple and easy way.

Since 1998, more than 986 million breast cancer research stamps have been sold, raising over $80.4 million for breast cancer research. The funds have gone to support breast cancer research at both the National Institutes of Health, NIH, and the Department of Defense.

For example, the National Institutes of Health has used proceeds from the Breast Cancer Research Stamp to fund the Maternal Pregnancy Factors and Breast Cancer Risk Study. This study was designed to identify possible connections between various conditions during pregnancy and breast cancer risk. After comparing information from women who delivered babies and were later diagnosed with breast cancer to women who delivered babies and were not diagnosed with breast cancer, researchers found that factors like preeclampsia or carrying twins may increase cancer risk. Knowing these risk factors helps both doctors and patients be vigilant about early screening.

Thanks to breakthroughs in cancer research, more and more breast cancer patients are becoming survivors. Nearly all patients with breast cancer caught in the early stages now survive. That is incredible, and a testament to how important this research has been.

Though despite our great successes, the need for continued research and improved screening and treatments remains high.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in the U.S. and the second leading cause of cancer deaths. One in eight women will be diagnosed, and more than 40,000 die from the disease each year.

Though male breast cancer is less common, an estimated 2,350 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year.

The Breast Cancer Research Stamp provides a simple, convenient way for Americans to contribute toward this vitally important research. It also provides a symbol of hope for those affected by this disease.

I thank Senator ENZI for joining me to support this bipartisan legislation and urge my colleagues to join us and ensure the stamp continues for another 4 years.

This bill is supported by organizations including: the American Association of Cancer Research, AACR, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, ACS CAN, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, ACOG, American College of Surgeons, Are You Defense Advocacy, Breast Cancer Fund, Breast Cancer Research Foundation, Center for Women Policy Studies, Susan G. Komen, and the Tigerlily Foundation.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 156—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE WITH RESPECT TO CHILDHOOD STROKE AND RECOGNIZING MAY 2015 AS ''NATIONAL PEDIATRIC STROKE AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 156

Whereas a stroke, also known as cerebrovascular disease, is an acute neurologic injury that occurs when the blood supply to a part of the brain is interrupted by a clot in the artery or a burst of the artery;

Whereas a stroke is a medical emergency that can cause permanent neurologic damage or even death if not promptly diagnosed and treated;

Whereas a stroke occurs in approximately 1 out of every 3,500 live births, and 4.6 out of 100,000 children ages 19 and under experience a stroke each year;

Whereas a stroke can occur before birth;

Whereas stroke is among the top 12 causes of death for children between the ages of 1 and 14 in the United States;

Whereas 20 to 40 percent of children who have suffered a stroke die as a result;

Whereas a stroke recurs within 5 years in 10 percent of children who have had an ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke;

Whereas the death rate for children who experience a stroke before the age of 1 is the highest out of all child age groups;

Whereas there are no approved therapies for the treatment of acute stroke in infants and children;

Whereas approximately 60 percent of infants and children who have a pediatric stroke will have serious, permanent neurological disabilities, including paralysis, seizures, speech and vision problems, and attention, learning, and behavioral difficulties;

Whereas such disabilities may require ongoing physical therapy and surgeries;

Whereas the permanent health concerns of and treatments for strokes that occur during childhood and young adulthood have considerable impacts on children, families, and society;

Whereas more information is necessary regarding the cause, treatment, and prevention of pediatric strokes;

Whereas medical research is the only means by which the people of the United States can identify and develop effective treatment and prevention strategies for pediatric strokes; and

Whereas early diagnosis and treatment of pediatric strokes greatly improves the chances that an affected child will recover and not experience a recurrence of a stroke: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes May 2015 as ''National Pediatric Stroke Awareness Month'';

(2) urges the people of the United States to support the efforts, programs, services, and organizations that enhance public awareness of pediatric stroke;

(3) supports the work of the National Institutes of Health in pursuit of medical progress on pediatric stroke; and

(4) urges continued coordination and cooperation between the Federal Government, State and local governments, researchers, families, and the public to improve treatments and prognoses for children who suffer from strokes.

SENATE RESOLUTION 157—RECOGNIZING THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SOUTHEAST-ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARIES OF THE BEGINNING OF KHMER ROUGE CONTROL OVER CAMBODIA AND THE BEGINNING OF THE CAMBODIAN GENOCIDE AND THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR AND THE ''SECRET WAR'' IN THE KINGDOM OF LAOS

Ms. HIRONO submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 157

Whereas April 17, 2015, marks the 40th anniversary of the beginning of Khmer Rouge control over Cambodia and the beginning of the Cambodian Genocide;

Whereas April 30, 2015, marks the 40th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War;

Whereas December 2, 2015, marks the 40th anniversary of the end of the ''Secret War'' in which Communists declared victory over the Kingdom of Laos and established a Communist regime in that country;

Whereas those historic events led to the forced migration to the United States, after 1975, of over 1,000,000 refugees from Cambodia, the Kingdom of Laos, and Vietnam;

Whereas over 600,000 Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the United States, many of whom had worked with the United States Government as translators and civil servants during the Vietnam War and were paroled into the United States after the enactment of the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 (Public Law 94–23), and in the 1990s, over 30,000 survivors of Communist reeducation camps and 150,000 family members of those survivors were resettled in the United States;

Whereas approximately 250,000 refugees from the Kingdom of Laos were resettled in the United States, many of whom assisted the war effort of the United States during the ''Secret War'' in Laos, including 35,000 individuals who served as Special Guerrilla Unit fighters in the surrogate army for the United States and others who served as civil servants;

Whereas at least 115,000 Cambodian refugees were resettled in the United States after 1 of the worst genocides of the 20th century, during which about 20 percent of the Cambodian population perished;

Whereas the exodus of refugees from Southeast Asia prompted the United States to enact the Refugee Act of 1980 (Public Law 96–212) and establish the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which established the first formal refugee resettlement system in the United States;

Whereas the Office of Refugee Resettlement recognized the critical importance of Southeast Asian American Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) with the establishment in 1980 of a special grant program that lay the groundwork for a strong network of Southeast-Asian American community-based organizations in the United States;

Whereas, as of April 2015, over 2,500,000 Southeast-Asian Americans trace their heritage to Cambodia, the Kingdom of Laos, and Vietnam;

Whereas Southeast-Asian Americans include a broad diversity of ethnic groups, including—

(1) Cham, Khmer, and Khmer Loeu from Cambodia;

(2) Hmong, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Taidam, and Lao Theung from the Kingdom of Laos; and

(3) ethnic Khmer, Montagnards, and Vietnamese from Vietnam; and

Whereas Southeast-Asian Americans—

(1) have blazed trails to own small businesses, lead community-based organizations, serve in public office, and nurture emerging leaders;

(2) carry on a rich cultural tradition of music and dance, and pioneer hybrid art forms such as spoken word poetry and hip-hop;

(3) continue to face significant challenges to full economic and social empowerment, such as low rates of high school completion, high rates of poverty, and disproportionate rates of arrest and incarceration; and

(4) remain resilient, rooted both in Southeast-Asian heritage and in the society of the United States, and rising toward a hopeful, equitable future: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the significance of the 40th anniversaries of—

(A) the beginning of the Khmer Rouge rule in Cambodia and the Cambodian Genocide;

(B) the end of the Vietnam War and the ''Secret War'' in Laos;

(C) the humanitarian response of the people and Government of the United States to receive over 1,000,000 refugees from Southeast Asia; and

(D) the beginning of the Southeast-Asian American community in the United States; and

(2) recognizes the ongoing contributions of the Southeast-Asian American community to the economic, cultural, and political vitality of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 158—RECOGNIZING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CINCO DE MAYO HOLIDAY

Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 158

Whereas May 5, or ''Cinco de Mayo'' in Spanish, is celebrated each year as a date of importance by Mexican and Mexican-American communities;

Whereas the Cinco de Mayo holiday commemorates May 5, 1862, the date on which Mexicans defeated the French at the Battle of Puebla, one of the many battles that the Mexican people won in their long and brave fight for independence, freedom, and democracy;

Whereas the victory of Mexico over France at Puebla represented a historic triumph for the Mexican government during the Franco-Mexican war of 1861–1867 and bolstered the resistance movement;

Whereas the success of Mexico at the Battle of Puebla reinvigorated the spirits of the Mexican people and provided a renewed sense of unity and strength;

Whereas the French army, which had not experienced defeat against any of the finest troops of Europe in more than half a century, sustained a disastrous loss at the hands of an outnumbered and ill-equipped, but highly spirited and courageous, Mexican army;

Whereas the courageous spirit that Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza and his men displayed during that historic battle can never be forgotten;

Whereas, in a larger sense, Cinco de Mayo symbolizes the right of a free people to self-determination, just as Benito Juarez, the president of Mexico during the Battle of Puebla, once said, ''El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz'', meaning ''respect for the rights of others is peace'';

Whereas the sacrifice of Mexican fighters was instrumental in keeping Mexico from falling under European domination while, in the United States, the Union Army battled Confederate forces in the Civil War;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo serves as a reminder that the foundation of the United States was built by people from many countries and diverse cultures who were willing to fight and die for freedom;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo also serves as a reminder of the close ties between the people of Mexico and the people of the United States;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo encourages the celebration of a legacy of strong leaders and a sense of vibrancy in communities; and

Whereas Cinco de Mayo serves as a reminder to provide more opportunity for future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic struggle of the people of Mexico for independence and freedom, which Cinco de Mayo commemorates; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe Cinco de Mayo with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 159—DESIGNATING APRIL 2015, AS ''NATIONAL 9-1-1 EDUCATION MONTH''

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 159

Whereas 9-1-1 is recognized throughout the United States as the number to call in an emergency to receive immediate help from police, fire, emergency medical services, or other appropriate emergency response entities;

Whereas, in 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended that a ''single number should be established'' nationwide for reporting emergency situations, and various Federal Government agencies and governmental officials supported and encouraged the recommendation;

Whereas, in 1968, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (commonly known as ''AT&T'') announced that it would establish the digits 9-1-1 as the emergency code throughout the United States;

Whereas Congress designated 9-1-1 as the national emergency call number in the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 (Public Law 106–81; 113 Stat. 1286);

Whereas section 102 of the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004 (47 U.S.C. 942 note) declared an enhanced 9-1-1 system to be ''a high national priority'' and part of ''our Nation's homeland security and public safety'';

Whereas it is important that policy makers at all levels of government understand the importance of 9-1-1, how the 9-1-1 system works, and the steps that are needed to modernize the 9-1-1 system;

Whereas the 9-1-1 system is the connection between the eyes and ears of the public and the emergency response system in the United States and is often the first place emergencies of all magnitudes are reported, making 9-1-1 a significant homeland security asset;

Whereas more than 6,000 9-1-1 public safety answering points serve more than 3,000 counties and parishes throughout the United States;

Whereas telecommunicators at public safety answering points answer more than 200,000,000 9-1-1 calls each year in the United States;

Whereas a growing number of 9-1-1 calls are made using wireless and Internet Protocol-based communications services;

Whereas a growing segment of the population of the United States, including individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, or have speech disabilities, is increasingly communicating with nontraditional text, video, and instant messaging communications services and expects those services to be able to connect directly to 9-1-1;

Whereas the growth and variety of means of communication, including mobile and Internet Protocol-based systems, impose challenges for accessing 9-1-1 and implementing an enhanced 9-1-1 system and require increased education and awareness about the capabilities of different means of communication;

Whereas numerous other ''N-1-1'' and 800 number services exist for nonemergency situations, including 2-1-1, 3-1-1, 5-1-1, 7-1-1, 8-1-1, poison control centers, and mental health hotlines, and the public needs to be educated on when to use those services in addition to or instead of 9-1-1;

Whereas international visitors and immigrants make up an increasing percentage of the population of the United States each year, and visitors and immigrants may have limited knowledge of the emergency calling system in the United States;

Whereas people of all ages use 9-1-1 and it is critical to educate people on the proper use of 9-1-1;

Whereas senior citizens are highly likely to need to access 9-1-1 and many senior citizens are learning to use new technology;

Whereas thousands of 9-1-1 calls are made every year by children properly trained in the use of 9-1-1, which saves lives and underscores the critical importance of training children early in life about 9-1-1;

Whereas the 9-1-1 system is often misused, including by the placement of prank and nonemergency calls;

Whereas misuse of the 9-1-1 system results in costly and inefficient use of 9-1-1 and emergency response resources and needs to be reduced;

Whereas parents, teachers, and all other caregivers need to play an active role in 9-1-1 education for children, but can do so only after first being educated themselves;

Whereas there are many avenues for 9-1-1 public education, including safety fairs, school presentations, libraries, churches, businesses, public safety answering point tours or open houses, civic organizations, and senior citizen centers;

Whereas children, parents, teachers, and the National Parent Teacher Association make vital contributions to the education of children about the importance of 9-1-1 through targeted outreach efforts to public and private school systems;

Whereas the United States should strive to host at least 1 educational event regarding the proper use of 9-1-1 in every school in the country every year;

Whereas programs to promote proper use of 9-1-1 during National 9-1-1 Education Month could include—

(1) public awareness events, including conferences, media outreach, and training activities for parents, teachers, school administrators, other caregivers, and businesses;

(2) educational events in schools and other appropriate venues; and

(3) production and distribution of information about the 9-1-1 system designed to educate people of all ages on the importance and proper use of 9-1-1; and

Whereas the people of the United States deserve the best education regarding the use of 9-1-1: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2015 as ''National 9-1-1 Education Month''; and

(2) urges governmental officials, parents, teachers, school administrators, caregivers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies, training events, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 160—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT PUBLIC SERVANTS SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES DURING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CARPER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COONS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. PETERS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 160

Whereas the week of May 3 through 9, 2015 has been designated as ''Public Service Recognition Week'' to honor employees of the Federal Government and State and local governments and members of the uniformed services;

Whereas Public Service Recognition Week provides an opportunity to recognize and promote the important contributions of public servants and honor the diverse men and women who meet the needs of the United States through work at all levels of government and as members of the uniformed services;

Whereas millions of individuals work in government service, and as members of the uniformed services, in every State, county, and city across the United States and in hundreds of cities abroad;

Whereas public service is a noble calling involving a variety of challenging and rewarding professions;

Whereas the ability of the Federal Government and State and local governments to be responsive, innovative, and effective depends on outstanding performance of dedicated public servants;

Whereas the United States is a great and prosperous country, and public service employees contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas the United States benefits daily from the knowledge and skills of the highly-trained individuals who work in public service;

Whereas public servants—

(1) defend the freedom of the people of the United States and advance the interests of the United States around the world;

(2) provide vital strategic support functions to the Armed Forces and serve in the National Guard and Reserves;

(3) fight crime and fires;

(4) ensure equal access to secure, efficient, and affordable mail service;

(5) deliver benefits under the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), including benefits under the Medicare program under title XVIII of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.);

(6) fight disease and promote better health;

(7) protect the environment and the parks of the United States;

(8) enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and healthy working conditions;

(9) defend and secure critical infrastructure;

(10) help the people of the United States recover from natural disasters and terrorist attacks;

(11) teach and work in schools and libraries;

(12) develop new technologies and explore the Earth, the Moon, and space to help improve knowledge on how the world changes;

(13) improve and secure transportation systems;

(14) promote economic growth; and

(15) assist veterans of the Armed Forces;

Whereas members of the uniformed services and civilian employees at all levels of government make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States, and are on the front lines in the fight to defeat terrorism and maintain homeland security;

Whereas public servants work in a professional manner to build relationships with other countries and cultures in order to better represent the interests and promote the ideals of the United States;

Whereas public servants alert Congress and the public to government waste, fraud, and abuse, and of dangers to public health;

Whereas the individuals serving in the uniformed services, as well as the skilled trade

and craft employees of the Federal Government who provide support to their efforts, are committed to doing their jobs regardless of the circumstances, and contribute greatly to the security of the United States and the world;

Whereas public servants have bravely fought in armed conflicts in the defense of the United States and its ideals, and deserve the care and benefits they have earned through their honorable service;

Whereas public servants have much to offer, as demonstrated by their expertise and innovative ideas, and serve as examples by passing on institutional knowledge to train the next generation of public servants; and

Whereas the week of May 3 through 9, 2015 marks the 31st anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of the week of May 3 through 9, 2015 as ''Public Service Recognition Week'';

(2) commends public servants for their outstanding contributions to this great country during Public Service Recognition Week and throughout the year;

(3) salutes government employees, and members of the uniformed services, for their unyielding dedication to and enthusiasm for public service;

(4) honors government employees and members of the uniformed services who have given their lives in service to their country;

(5) calls upon a new generation to consider a career in public service as an honorable profession; and

(6) encourages efforts to promote public service careers at all levels of government.

SENATE RESOLUTION 161—DESIGNATING APRIL 2015 AS ''FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH''

Mr. REED of Rhode Island (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARPER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MORAN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 161

Whereas according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (referred to in this preamble as the ''FDIC''), at least 27.7 percent of households in the United States, or nearly 34,400,000 households with approximately 67,600,000 adults, are unbanked or underbanked and therefore have not had the opportunity to access savings, lending, and other basic financial services;

Whereas according to the FDIC, approximately 30 percent of banks reported in 2011 that consumers lacked understanding of the financial products and services banks offered;

Whereas according to the 2014 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey Final Report of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling—

(1) approximately 41 percent of adults in the United States gave themselves a grade of C, D, or F on their knowledge of personal finance, and 73 percent of adults acknowledged that they could benefit from additional advice and answers to everyday financial questions from a professional;

(2) 24 percent of adults in the United States, or approximately 56,300,000 individuals, admitted to not paying their bills on time;

(3) only 39 percent of adults in the United States reported keeping close track of their spending, a percentage that has held steady since 2007; and

(4) 16 percent of adults in the United States, or over 37,500,000 individuals, said not having enough ''rainy day'' savings for an emergency is their greatest financial concern, while the same percentage said that their greatest financial concern is not having enough money set aside for retirement;

Whereas the 2014 Retirement Confidence Survey conducted by the Employee Benefit Research Institute found that only 18 percent of workers were ''very confident'' about having enough money for a comfortable retirement, which is a sharp decline in worker confidence from the 27 percent of workers who were ''very confident'' in 2007, while approximately 56 percent of workers say they or their spouses have not calculated the amount of money they need to save for retirement;

Whereas according to a 2015 ''Flow of Funds'' report by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, outstanding household debt in the United States was $13,500,000,000,000 at the end of the fourth quarter of 2014;

Whereas according to the 2014 Survey of the States: Economic and Personal Finance Education in Our Nation's Schools, a biennial report by the Council for Economic Education—

(1) only 24 States require students to take an economics course as a high school graduation requirement; and

(2) only 17 States require students to take a personal finance course either independently or as part of an economics course as a high school graduation requirement;

Whereas according to the Gallup-Operation HOPE Financial Literacy Index, only 58 percent of students in the United States have money in a bank or credit union account;

Whereas expanding access to the safe, mainstream financial system will provide individuals with less expensive and more secure options for managing finances and building wealth;

Whereas quality personal financial education is essential to ensure that individuals are prepared to manage money, credit, and debt, and to become responsible workers, heads of household, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens;

Whereas increased financial literacy empowers individuals to make wise financial decisions and reduces the confusion caused by an increasingly complex economy;

Whereas a greater understanding of, and familiarity with, financial markets and institutions will lead to increased economic activity and growth;

Whereas in 2003, Congress determined that coordinating Federal financial literacy efforts and formulating a national strategy is important; and

Whereas in light of that determination, Congress passed the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9701 et seq.), establishing the Financial Literacy and Education Commission: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2015 as ''Financial Literacy Month'' to raise public awareness about—

(A) the importance of personal financial education in the United States; and

(B) the serious consequences that may result from a lack of understanding about personal finances; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the people of the United States to observe Financial Literacy Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 162—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY MONTH

Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. HELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 162

Whereas, in 2013, an estimated 10,076 people were killed in the United States in drunk driving crashes involving a driver with a blood alcohol content of .08 or greater, impacting countless family members, friends, and communities;

Whereas, in 2013, 1 person died in a drunk driving crash every 52 minutes, on average;

Whereas, in 2013, approximately 8,700,000 people of the United States between the ages of 12 and 20, or nearly 23 percent of the age group for whom alcohol consumption is illegal, reported consuming alcohol during the preceding 30 days;

Whereas research shows that a lifetime of conversations between parents and their children about alcohol, beginning at an early age, can help prevent underage drinking and alcohol abuse;

Whereas the potential danger for young people to be involved in alcohol-related crashes escalates during prom and graduation season;

Whereas many State attorneys general are launching underage drinking prevention messages and programs in their States and communities; and

Whereas April has been dedicated to alcohol awareness for the last 28 years, and more than awareness is needed to further reduce drunk driving and underage drinking: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) declares April to be Alcohol Responsibility Month and supports the goal of encouraging responsible decision-making regarding beverage alcohol;

(2) encourages parents to be responsible role models and to have ongoing conversations with their children throughout their childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood about the dangers of alcohol abuse;

(3) condemns the pervasiveness of alcohol-impaired driving and resulting tragedies; and

(4) promotes the responsible consumption of alcohol by adults in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 163—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE CAUSED BY THE APRIL 25, 2015, EARTHQUAKE IN NEPAL

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 163

Whereas, on April 25, 2015, an earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale and the aftershocks of the earthquake devastated Kathmandu, Nepal and the surrounding areas, killing thousands, injuring thousands more people, and leaving many thousands of people homeless;

Whereas the earthquake also resulted in the loss of life and destruction of property in India, Bangladesh, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China;

Whereas United States citizens were also killed in the wide-scale destruction caused by the earthquake;

Whereas Nepal, which is one of the poorest countries in the world, has an estimated 25 percent of the population living on less than $1.25 a day, has an estimated 46 percent unemployment rate with a majority of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture, and has one of the slowest economic growth rates in the region;

Whereas years of civil conflict in Nepal led to a massive influx of people into urban areas despite the absence of appropriate facilities, roads, housing, and infrastructure to support the people;

Whereas, since the end of hostilities, political gridlock among the leadership of Nepal to finalize a constitution has stymied growth and development;

Whereas the loss of infrastructure will further inhibit economic growth in the impoverished country of Nepal;

Whereas the United States Government has worked with the Government of Nepal on disaster risk reduction and earthquake preparedness for years, which certainly saved many lives and accelerated the ability of the Government and people of Nepal to respond to disasters and earthquakes;

Whereas the United States Government and the international community are mounting a large-scale response and recovery effort; and

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development is leading the response of the United States by providing a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), funding, and Urban Search and Rescue experts: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses profound sympathy to, and unwavering support for, the people of Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China, who have always shown resilience and now face catastrophic conditions in the aftermath of the April 25, 2015, earthquake, and sympathy for the families of the citizens of the United States who perished in the disaster;

(2) applauds the rapid and concerted mobilization by President Barack Obama to provide immediate emergency humanitarian assistance to Nepal, and the hard work and dedication of the people at the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense in quickly marshaling United States Government resources to address both the short- and long-term needs in Nepal;

(3) urges that all appropriate efforts be made to secure the safety of orphans in Nepal;

(4) urges that all appropriate efforts be made to sustain recovery assistance to Nepal beyond the immediate humanitarian crisis to support the people of Nepal with appropriate humanitarian, developmental, and infrastructure assistance needed to overcome the effects of the earthquake;

(5) expresses appreciation for the ongoing and renewed commitment of the international community to the recovery and development of Nepal;

(6) urges all countries to commit to assisting the people of Nepal with their long-term needs;

(7) calls on the Government of Nepal to take all necessary actions to enable a faster and more sustainable recovery; and

(8) expresses support for the United States Embassy team in Kathmandu, DART members, other Federal agencies, and the non governmental organization community in the United States, who are valiantly working to assist thousands of people in Nepal under extremely adverse conditions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 164—DESIGNATING APRIL 30, 2015, AS DIA DE LOS NINOS: CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 164

Whereas each year, people in many countries throughout the world, and especially in the Western Hemisphere, celebrate Día de los Niños, or Day of the Children, on April 30th in recognition and celebration of the future of their country—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States, and the well-being of children remains one of the top priorities of the United States;

Whereas the people of the United States must nurture and invest in children to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the spirit of the United States;

Whereas in 2013, the Census Bureau estimated that approximately 17,800,000 of the nearly 54,000,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States are children under 18 years of age, representing ⅓ of the total Hispanic population residing in the United States and roughly ¼ of the total population of children in the United States;

Whereas Hispanic Americans, the youngest and largest racial or ethnic minority group in the United States, celebrate the tradition of honoring their children on Día de los Niños and wish to share this custom with all people of the United States;

Whereas, as the United States becomes more culturally and ethnically diverse, the people of the United States must strive to create opportunities that provide dignity and upward mobility for all children;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and children are responsible for passing on family values, morality, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education is most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas the latest data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicates that Latino students continue to score lower than the national average on reading assessments conducted at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels—an achievement gap that has persisted for decades;

Whereas the most recent data by NAEP demonstrates that 81 percent of Latino fourth graders in public schools are not proficient in reading;

Whereas Latino authors and Latino protagonists remain underrepresented in literature for children, and less than 3 percent of books for children are written by Latino authors, illustrated by Latino book creators, or feature significant Latino cultural content, even though ¼ of all public school children are Latino;

Whereas research has shown that culturally relevant literature can increase student engagement and reading comprehension, yet some Latino students may go their entire educational experience without seeing themselves portrayed positively in the books that they read and the stories that they hear;

Whereas increasing the number and proportion of multicultural authors in literature for children elevates the voices of the growing diverse communities in the United States and can serve as an effective strategy for closing the reading proficiency achievement gap;

Whereas addressing the widening disparities that still exist among children is of paramount importance to the economic prosperity of the United States;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm the significance of family, education, and community among the people of the United States;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their futures, articulate their aspirations, and find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members and encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute (NLCI), serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the United States to declare April 30, 2015, as Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans, a day to bring together Latinos and communities across the United States to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society and invest in future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2015, as Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all people;

(B) are positive and uplifting, and help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about each other's cultures and share ideas;

(D) include all family members, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within families, which will enable children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to build relationships; and

(F) provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence, and to find the inner strength, will, and fire of the human spirit to make their dreams come true.

SENATE RESOLUTION 165—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD MALARIA DAY

Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 165

Whereas April 25th of each year is recognized internationally as World Malaria Day;

Whereas malaria is a leading cause of death and disease in many developing countries, despite being preventable and treatable;

Whereas fighting malaria is in the national interest of the United States, as reducing the risk of malaria protects members of the Armed Forces of the United States and other people of the United States serving overseas in malaria-endemic regions, and reducing malaria deaths helps to lower risks of instability in less developed countries;

Whereas support for efforts to fight malaria is in the diplomatic and moral interest of the United States, as that support generates goodwill toward the United States and highlights the values of the people of the United States through the work of governmental, nongovernmental, and faith-based organizations of the United States;

Whereas efforts to fight malaria are in the long-term economic interest of the United States because those efforts help developing countries—

(1) identify at-risk populations;

(2) provide a framework for critical emergency disease treatment;

(3) provide better health services;

(4) increase local governance needed to address substandard and counterfeit medicines that exacerbate malaria resistance;

(5) produce healthier and more productive workforces;

(6) advance economic development; and

(7) promote stronger trading partners;

Whereas malaria transmission occurred in 97 countries and territories in 2014, and an estimated 3,200,000,000 people are at risk for malaria, the majority of whom are in sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for 90 percent of malaria deaths in the world;

Whereas young children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to and disproportionately affected by malaria;

Whereas malaria greatly affects the health of children, as children under the age of 5 account for an estimated 78 percent of malaria deaths each year;

Whereas malaria poses great risks to maternal and neonatal health, causing complications during delivery, anemia, and low birth weights, and estimates indicate that malaria infection causes approximately 400,000 cases of severe maternal anemia and between 75,000 and 200,000 infant deaths annually in sub-Saharan Africa;

Whereas heightened national, regional, and international efforts to prevent and treat malaria during recent years have made significant progress and helped save hundreds of thousands of lives;

Whereas the World Malaria Report 2014 by the World Health Organization states that in 2013, approximately 49 percent of households in sub-Saharan Africa owned at least one insecticide-treated mosquito net, and household surveys indicated that 90 percent of people used an insecticide-treated mosquito net if one was available in the household;

Whereas, in 2013, approximately 123,000,000 people were protected by indoor residual spraying;

Whereas the World Malaria Report 2014 further states that between 2000 and 2013—

(1) malaria mortality rates decreased by 47 percent around the world;

(2) in the African Region of the World Health Organization, malaria mortality rates decreased by 54 percent; and

(3) an estimated 4,300,000 malaria deaths were averted globally, primarily as a result of increased interventions;

Whereas the World Malaria Report 2014 further states that out of 97 countries with ongoing transmission of malaria in 2014—

(1) 10 countries are classified as being in the pre-elimination phase;

(2) 9 countries are classified as being in the elimination phase; and

(3) 7 countries are classified as being in the prevention of malaria reintroduction phase of malaria control;

Whereas continued national, regional, and international investment in efforts to eliminate malaria, including prevention and treatment efforts, the development of a vaccine to immunize children from the malaria parasite, and advancements in insecticides, are critical in order to continue to reduce malaria deaths, prevent backsliding in areas where progress has been made, and equip the United States and the global community with the tools necessary to fight malaria and other global health threats;

Whereas the United States Government has played a leading role in the recent progress made toward reducing the global burden of malaria, particularly through the President's Malaria Initiative (referred to in this preamble as the ''PMI'') and the contribution of the United States to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria;

Whereas, in May 2011, an independent, external evaluation, prepared by Boston University, examining 6 objectives of the PMI, found the PMI to be a successful, well-led program that has ''earned and deserves the task of sustaining and expanding the United States Government's response to global malaria control efforts'';

Whereas the United States Government is pursuing a comprehensive approach to ending malaria deaths through the PMI, which is led by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, and private sector entities;

Whereas the PMI focuses on helping partner countries achieve major improvements in overall health outcomes through improved access to, and quality of, healthcare services in locations with limited resources; and

Whereas the PMI, recognizing the burden of malaria on many partner countries, has set a target by 2020 of reducing malaria mortality by ⅓ from 2015 levels in PMI-supported countries, achieving a greater than 80 percent reduction from original 2000 baseline levels set by the PMI, reducing malaria morbidity in PMI-supported countries by 40 percent from 2015 levels, and assisting at least 5 PMI-supported countries to meet the criteria of the World Health Organization for national or sub-national pre-elimination: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day;

(2) recognizes the importance of reducing malaria prevalence and deaths to improve overall child and maternal health, especially in sub-Saharan Africa;

(3) commends the recent progress made toward reducing global malaria morbidity, mortality, and prevalence, particularly through the efforts of the President's Malaria Initiative and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria;

(4) welcomes ongoing public-private partnerships to research and develop more effective and affordable tools for malaria diagnosis, treatment, and vaccination;

(5) recognizes the goals, priorities, and authorities to combat malaria set forth in the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–293; 122 Stat. 2918);

(6) supports continued leadership by the United States in bilateral, multilateral, and private sector efforts to combat malaria and to work with developing countries to create long-term strategies to increase ownership over malaria programs; and

(7) encourages other members of the international community to sustain and increase their support for and financial contributions to efforts to combat malaria worldwide.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14—PROVIDING THAT THE PRESIDENT MAY NOT PROVIDE SANCTIONS RELIEF TO IRAN UNTIL CERTAIN UNITED STATES CITIZENS ARE RELEASED FROM IRAN

Mr. RISCH submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 14

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement with Iran relating to Iran's nuclear program until the Government of Iran releases to the United States the following United States citizens:

(1) Saeed Abedini of Idaho, who has been detained in Iran on charges related to his religious beliefs since September 2012.

(2) Amir Hekmati of Michigan, who has been imprisoned in Iran on false espionage charges since August 2011.

(3) Jason Rezaian of California, who, as an Iranian government credentialed reporter for the Washington Post, has been unjustly held in Iran on vague charges since July 2014.

(4) Robert Levinson of Florida, who was abducted on Kish Island in March 2007.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1196. Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1197. Mr. COTTON proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1191, supra.

SA 1198. Mr. COTTON (for Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1197 proposed by Mr. COTTON to the bill H.R. 1191, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1196. Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 11, strike line 16 and all that follows through ''significant breach'' on page 12, line 4, and insert the following:

''(2) POTENTIAL BREACHES AND COMPLIANCE INCIDENTS.—The President shall, within 10

calendar days of receiving credible information relating to a potential breach or potentially significant compliance incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), submit such information to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(3) MATERIAL BREACH REPORT.—Not later than 30 calendar days after submitting information about a potential breach or potentially significant compliance incident pursuant to paragraph (2), the President shall make a determination whether such potential breach

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SA 1197. Mr. COTTON proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; as follows:

Beginning on page 1, strike line 3 and all that follows through ''this section'' on page 4, line7, and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT OF AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN RELATING TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN.

The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 134 the following new section:

''SEC. 135. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT OF AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN.

''(a) TRANSMISSION TO CONGRESS OF NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN AND VERIFICATION ASSESSMENT WITH RESPECT TO SUCH AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) TRANSMISSION OF AGREEMENTS.—Not later than 5 calendar days after reaching an agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership—

''(A) the agreement, as defined in subsection (h)(1), including all related materials and annexes;

''(B) a verification assessment report of the Secretary of State prepared under paragraph (2) with respect to the agreement; and

''(C) a certification that—

''(i) the agreement includes the appropriate terms, conditions, and duration of the agreement's requirements with respect to Iran's nuclear activities and provisions describing any sanctions to be waived, suspended, or otherwise reduced by the United States, and any other nation or entity, including the United Nations; and

''(ii) the President determines the agreement meets United States non-proliferation objectives, does not jeopardize the common defense and security, provides an adequate framework to ensure that Iran's nuclear activities permitted thereunder will not be inimical to or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security, and ensures that Iran's nuclear activities permitted thereunder will not be used to further any nuclear-related military or nuclear explosive purpose, including for any research on or development of any nuclear explosive device or any other nuclear-related military purpose.

''(2) VERIFICATION ASSESSMENT REPORT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall prepare, with respect to an agreement described in paragraph (1), a report assessing—

''(i) the extent to which the Secretary will be able to verify that Iran is complying with its obligations and commitments under the agreement;

''(ii) the adequacy of the safeguards and other control mechanisms and other assurances contained in the agreement with respect to Iran's nuclear program to ensure Iran's activities permitted thereunder will not be used to further any nuclear-related military or nuclear explosive purpose, including for any research on or development of any nuclear explosive device or any other nuclear-related military purpose; and

''(iii) the capacity and capability of the International Atomic Energy Agency to effectively implement the verification regime required by or related to the agreement, including whether the International Atomic Energy Agency will have sufficient access to investigate suspicious sites or allegations of covert nuclear-related activities and whether it has the required funding, manpower, and authority to undertake the verification regime required by or related to the agreement.

''(B) ASSUMPTIONS.—In preparing a report under subparagraph (A) with respect to an agreement described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall assume that Iran could—

''(i) use all measures not expressly prohibited by the agreement to conceal activities that violate its obligations and commitments under the agreement; and

''(ii) alter or deviate from standard practices in order to impede efforts to verify that Iran is complying with those obligations and commitments.

''(C) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—A report under subparagraph (A) shall be transmitted in unclassified form, but shall include a classified annex prepared in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information.

''(3) EXCEPTION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Neither the requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1), nor subsections (b) through (g) of this section, shall apply to an agreement described in subsection (h)(5) or to the EU–Iran Joint Statement made on April 2, 2015.

''(B) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), any agreement as defined in subsection (h)(1) and any related materials, whether concluded before or after the date of the enactment of this section, shall not be subject to the exception in subparagraph (A).

''(b) PERIOD FOR REVIEW BY CONGRESS OF NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—During the 30 calendar day period following transmittal by the President of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a)—

''(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold briefings and hearings and otherwise obtain information in order to fully review such agreement;

''(B) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold briefings and hearings on the compliance and verification mechanisms of such agreement;

''(C) the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold briefings and hearings on the military significance of such agreement; and

''(D) the Committee on Banking and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold briefings and hearings on the relief of sanctions provided under the agreement.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The period for congressional review under paragraph (1) shall be 60 calendar days if an agreement, including all materials required to be transmitted to Congress pursuant to subsection (a)(1), is transmitted pursuant to subsection (a) between July 10, 2015, and September 7, 2015.

''(3) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS DURING INITIAL CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW PERIOD.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (6), prior to and during the period for transmission of an agreement in subsection (a)(1) and during the period for congressional review provided in paragraph (1), including any additional period as applicable under the exception provided in paragraph (2), the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a).

''(4) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS DURING PRESIDENTIAL CONSIDERATION OF A JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (6), if a joint resolution of disapproval described in subsection (c)(2)(B) passes the Congress, the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a) for a period of 12 calendar days following the date of passage of the joint resolution of disapproval.

''(5) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS DURING CONGRESSIONAL RECONSIDERATION OF A JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (6), if a joint resolution of disapproval described in subsection (c)(2)(B) passes the Congress, and the President vetoes such joint resolution, the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a) for a period of 10 calendar days following the date of the President's veto.

''(6) EXCEPTION.—The prohibitions under paragraphs (3) through (5) do not apply to any new deferral, waiver, or other suspension of statutory sanctions pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action if that deferral, waiver, or other suspension is made—

''(A) consistent with the law in effect on the date of the enactment of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; and

''(B) not later than 45 calendar days before the transmission by the President of an agreement, assessment report, and certification under subsection (a).

''(7) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS BASED ON INSPECTIONS AND TRANSPARENCY.—The President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, and any other Executive branch officer or agency may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described under subsection (a) until the President makes the following certifications:

''(A) The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will have access anytime without notice to all of Iran's nuclear facilities, including to Iran's enrichment facility at Natanz and its former enrichment facility at Fordow, and all of Iran's military facilities, and including the use of the most up-to-date, modern monitoring technologies.

''(B) Inspectors will have access to the supply chain that supports Iran's nuclear program. The new transparency and inspections mechanisms will closely monitor materials and components to prevent diversion to a secret program.

''(C) Inspectors will have access to uranium mines and continuous surveillance at uranium mills, where Iran produces yellowcake, for 25 years.

''(D) Inspectors will have continuous surveillance of Iran's centrifuge rotors and bellows production and storage facilities for 20 years, and Iran's centrifuge manufacturing base will be frozen and under continuous surveillance.

''(E) All centrifuges and enrichment infrastructure removed from Fordow and Natanz will be placed under continuous monitoring by the IAEA.

''(F) As an additional transparency measure, a dedicated procurement channel for Iran's nuclear program will be established to monitor and approve, on a case by case basis, the supply, sale, or transfer to Iran of certain nuclear-related and dual use materials and technology.

''(G) Iran has agreed to implement the Additional Protocol of the IAEA, providing the IAEA much greater access and information regarding Iran's nuclear program, including both declared and undeclared facilities.

''(H) Iran will be required to grant access to the IAEA to investigate suspicious sites or allegations of a covert enrichment facility, conversion facility, centrifuge production facility, or yellowcake production facility anywhere in the country.

''(I) Iran has agreed to implement Modified Code 3.1 requiring early notification of construction of new facilities.

''(8) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS BASED ON THE POSSIBLE MILITARY DIMENSIONS OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM.—The President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, and any other Executive branch officer or agency may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described under subsection (a) until the President has certified to Congress that the Government of Iran has fully and verifiably disclosed all of Iran's Possible Military Dimensions associated with the Iranian nuclear program.

''(9) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS BASED ON THE STATUS OF HARDENED UNDERGROUND ENRICHMENT FACILITIES.—The President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, and any other Executive branch officer or agency may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described under subsection (a) until the President has certified to Congress that the Government of Iran has permanently closed or rendered inoperable all of its hardened underground facilities associated with the Iranian nuclear program.

''(c) EFFECT OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WITH RESPECT TO NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN.—

''(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

''(A) the sanctions regime imposed on Iran by Congress is primarily responsible for bringing Iran to the table to negotiate on its nuclear program;

''(B) these negotiations are a critically important matter of national security and foreign policy for the United States and its closest allies;

''(C) this section does not require a vote by Congress for the agreement to commence;

''(D) this section provides for congressional review, including, as appropriate, for approval, disapproval, or no action on statutory sanctions relief under an agreement; and

''(E) even though the agreement may commence, because the sanctions regime was imposed by Congress and only Congress can permanently modify or eliminate that regime, it is critically important that Congress have the opportunity, in an orderly and deliberative manner, to consider and, as appropriate, take action affecting the statutory sanctions regime imposed by Congress.

''(2) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, action involving any measure of statutory sanctions relief by the United States pursuant to an agreement subject to subsection (a) or the Joint Plan of Action—

''(A) may be taken, consistent with existing statutory requirements for such action, if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b), the Congress adopts, and there is enacted, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress does favor the agreement;

''(B) may not be taken if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b), the Congress adopts, and there is enacted, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress does not favor the agreement; or

''(C) may be taken, consistent with existing statutory requirements for such action, if, following the period for review provided in subsection (b), there is not enacted any such joint resolution.

''(3) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase 'action involving any measure of statutory sanctions relief by the United States' shall include waiver, suspension, reduction, or other effort to provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to, Iran under any provision of law or any other effort to refrain from applying any such sanctions.

''(d) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT OF IRANIAN COMPLIANCE WITH NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall keep the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of all aspects of Iranian compliance with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a).

''(2) POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT BREACHES AND COMPLIANCE INCIDENTS.—The President shall, within 10 calendar days of receiving credible and accurate information relating to a potentially significant breach or compliance incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), submit such information to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(3) MATERIAL BREACH REPORT.—Not later than 30 calendar days after submitting information about a potentially significant breach or compliance incident pursuant to paragraph (2), the President shall make a determination whether such potentially significant breach or compliance issue constitutes a material breach and, if there is such a material breach, whether Iran has cured such material breach, and shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership such determination, accompanied by, as appropriate, a report on the action or failure to act by Iran that led to the material breach, actions necessary for Iran to cure the breach, and the status of Iran's efforts to cure the breach.

''(4) SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 calendar days after entering into an agreement described in subsection (a), and not less frequently than once every 180 calendar days thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership a report on Iran's nuclear program and the compliance of Iran with the agreement during the period covered by the report, including the following elements:

''(A) Any action or failure to act by Iran that breached the agreement or is in noncompliance with the terms of the agreement.

''(B) Any delay by Iran of more than one week in providing inspectors access to facilities, people, and documents in Iran as required by the agreement.

''(C) Any progress made by Iran to resolve concerns by the International Atomic Energy Agency about possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

''(D) Any procurement by Iran of materials in violation of the agreement or which could otherwise significantly advance Iran's ability to obtain a nuclear weapon.

''(E) Any centrifuge research and development conducted by Iran that—

''(i) is not in compliance with the agreement; or

''(ii) may substantially enhance the breakout time of acquisition of a nuclear weapon by Iran, if deployed.

''(F) Any diversion by Iran of uranium, carbon-fiber, or other materials for use in Iran's nuclear program in violation of the agreement.

''(G) Any covert nuclear activities undertaken by Iran, including any covert nuclear weapons-related or covert fissile material activities or research and development.

''(H) An assessment of whether any Iranian financial institutions are engaged in money laundering or terrorist finance activities, including names of specific financial institutions if applicable.

''(I) Iran's advances in its ballistic missile program, including developments related to its long-range and inter-continental ballistic missile programs.

''(J) An assessment of—

''(i) whether Iran directly supported, financed, planned, or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world;

''(ii) whether, and the extent to which, Iran supported acts of terrorism, including acts of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world;

''(iii) all actions, including in international fora, being taken by the United States to stop, counter, and condemn acts by Iran to directly or indirectly carry out acts of terrorism against the United States and United States persons;

''(iv) the impact on the national security of the United States and the safety of United States citizens as a result of any Iranian actions reported under this paragraph; and

''(v) all of the sanctions relief provided to Iran, pursuant to the agreement, and a description of the relationship between each sanction waived, suspended, or deferred and Iran's nuclear weapon's program.

''(K) An assessment of whether violations of internationally recognized human rights in Iran have changed, increased, or decreased, as compared to the prior 180-day period.

''(5) ADDITIONAL REPORTS AND INFORMATION.—

''(A) AGENCY REPORTS.—Following submission of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a) to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership, the Department of State, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense shall, upon the request of any of those committees or leadership, promptly furnish to those committees or leadership their views as to whether the safeguards and other controls contained in the agreement with respect to Iran's nuclear program provide an adequate framework to ensure that Iran's activities permitted thereunder will not be inimical to or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security.

''(B) PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON NUCLEAR INITIATIVES WITH IRAN.—The President shall keep the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of any initiative or negotiations with Iran relating to Iran's nuclear program, including any new or amended agreement.

''(6) COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION.—After the review period provided in subsection (b), the President shall, not less than every 90 calendar days—

''(A) determine whether the President is able to certify that—

''(i) Iran is transparently, verifiably, and fully implementing the agreement, including all related technical or additional agreements;

''(ii) Iran has not committed a material breach with respect to the agreement or, if Iran has committed a material breach, Iran has cured the material breach;

''(iii) Iran has not taken any action, including covert action, that could significantly advance its nuclear weapons program; and

''(iv) suspension of sanctions related to Iran pursuant to the agreement is—

''(I) appropriate and proportionate to the specific and verifiable measures taken by Iran with respect to terminating its illicit nuclear program; and

''(II) vital to the national security interests of the United States; and

''(B) if the President determines he is able to make the certification described in subparagraph (A), make such certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(7) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

''(A) United States sanctions on Iran for terrorism, human rights abuses, and ballistic missiles will remain in place under an agreement, as defined in subsection (h)(1);

''(B) issues not addressed by an agreement on the nuclear program of Iran, including fair and appropriate compensation for Americans who were terrorized and subjected to torture while held in captivity for 444 days after the seizure of the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran, in 1979 and their families, the freedom of Americans held in Iran, the human rights abuses of the Government of Iran against its own people, and the continued support of terrorism worldwide by the Government of Iran, are matters critical to ensure justice and the national security of the United States, and should be expeditiously addressed;

''(C) the President should determine the agreement in no way compromises the commitment of the United States to Israel's security, nor its support for Israel's right to exist; and

''(D) in order to responsibly implement any long-term agreement reached between the P5+1 countries and Iran, it is critically important that Congress have the opportunity to review any agreement and, as necessary, take action to modify the statutory sanctions regime imposed by Congress.

''(e) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the event the President does not submit a certification pursuant to subsection (d)(6) or has determined pursuant to subsection (d)(3) that Iran has materially breached an agreement subject to subsection (a) and the material breach has not been cured, Congress may initiate within 60 calendar days expedited consideration of qualifying legislation pursuant to this subsection.

''(2) QUALIFYING LEGISLATION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'qualifying legislation' means only a bill of either House of Congress—

''(A) the title of which is as follows: 'A bill reinstating statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran.'; and

''(B) the matter after the enacting clause of which is: 'Any statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran pursuant to _____ that were waived, suspended, reduced, or otherwise relieved pursuant to an agreement submitted pursuant to section 135(a) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 are hereby reinstated and any action by the United States Government to facilitate the release of funds or assets to Iran pursuant to such agreement, or provide any further waiver, suspension, reduction, or other relief pursuant to such agreement is hereby prohibited.', with the blank space being filled in with the law or laws under which sanctions are to be reinstated.

''(3) INTRODUCTION.—During the 60-calendar day period provided for in paragraph (1), qualifying legislation may be introduced—

''(A) in the House of Representatives, by the majority leader or the minority leader; and

''(B) in the Senate, by the majority leader (or the majority leader's designee) or the minority leader (or the minority leader's designee).

''(4) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If a committee of the House to which qualifying legislation has been referred has not reported such qualifying legislation within 10 legislative days after the date of referral, that committee shall be discharged from further consideration thereof.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Beginning on the third legislative day after each committee to which qualifying legislation has been referred reports it to the House or has been discharged from further consideration thereof, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the qualifying legislation in the House. All points of order against the motion are waived. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to proceed on the qualifying legislation with regard to the same agreement. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(C) CONSIDERATION.—The qualifying legislation shall be considered as read. All points of order against the qualifying legislation and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the qualifying legislation to final passage without intervening motion except two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the sponsor of the qualifying legislation (or a designee) and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the qualifying legislation shall not be in order.

''(5) CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.—

''(A) COMMITTEE REFERRAL.—Qualifying legislation introduced in the Senate shall be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

''(B) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the Committee on Foreign Relations has not reported such qualifying legislation within 10 session days after the date of referral of such legislation, that committee shall be discharged from further consideration of such legislation and the qualifying legislation shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

''(C) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time after the committee authorized to consider qualifying legislation reports it to the Senate or has been discharged from its consideration (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of qualifying legislation, and all points of order against qualifying legislation (and against consideration of the qualifying legislation) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the qualifying legislation is agreed to, the qualifying legislation shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

''(D) DEBATE.—Debate on qualifying legislation, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion to further limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the qualifying legislation is not in order.

''(E) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on passage shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the debate on the qualifying legislation and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate, if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

''(F) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to qualifying legislation shall be decided without debate.

''(G) CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGES.—Debate in the Senate of any veto message with respect to qualifying legislation, including all debatable motions and appeals in connection with such qualifying legislation, shall be limited to 10 hours, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees.

''(6) RULES RELATING TO SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—If, before the passage by one House of qualifying legislation of that House, that House receives qualifying legislation from the other House, then the following procedures shall apply:

''(i) The qualifying legislation of the other House shall not be referred to a committee.

''(ii) With respect to qualifying legislation of the House receiving the legislation—

''(I) the procedure in that House shall be the same as if no qualifying legislation had been received from the other House; but

''(II) the vote on passage shall be on the qualifying legislation of the other House.

''(B) TREATMENT OF A BILL OF OTHER HOUSE.—If one House fails to introduce qualifying legislation under this section, the qualifying legislation of the other House shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

''(C) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES.—If, following passage of the qualifying legislation in the Senate, the Senate then receives a companion measure from the House of Representatives, the companion measure shall not be debatable.

''(D) APPLICATION TO REVENUE MEASURES.—The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply in the House of Representatives to qualifying legislation which is a revenue measure.

''(f) RULES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.—Subsection (e) is enacted by Congress—

''(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such are deemed a

part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of legislation described in those sections, and supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such rules; and

''(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

''(g) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the section shall be construed as—

''(1) modifying, or having any other impact on, the President's authority to negotiate, enter into, or implement appropriate executive agreements, other than the restrictions on implementation of the agreements specifically covered by this section;

''(2) allowing any new waiver, suspension, reduction, or other relief from statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law, or allowing the President to refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a) during the period for review provided in subsection (b);

''(3) revoking or terminating any statutory sanctions imposed on Iran; or

''(4) authorizing the use of military force against Iran.

''(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) AGREEMENT.—The term 'agreement' means an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran that includes the United States, commits the United States to take action, or pursuant to which the United States commits or otherwise agrees to take action, regardless of the form it takes, whether a political commitment or otherwise, and regardless of whether it is legally binding or not, including any joint comprehensive plan of action entered into or made between Iran and any other parties, and any additional materials related thereto, including annexes, appendices, codicils, side agreements, implementing materials, documents, and guidance, technical or other understandings, and any related agreements, whether entered into or implemented prior to the agreement or to be entered into or implemented in the future.

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

''(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND LEADERSHIP.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees and leadership' means the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate and the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Speaker, Majority Leader, and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

''(4) IRANIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term 'Iranian financial institution' has the meaning given the term in section 104A(d) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8513b(d)).

''(5) JOINT PLAN OF ACTION.—The term 'Joint Plan of Action' means the Joint Plan of Action, signed at Geneva November 24, 2013, by Iran and by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and all implementing materials and agreements related to the Joint Plan of Action, including the technical understandings reached on January 12, 2014, the extension thereto agreed to on July 18, 2014, the extension agreed to on November 24, 2014, and any materially identical extension that is agreed to on or after the date of the enactment of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015.

''(6) EU-IRAN JOINT STATEMENT.—The term 'EU-Iran Joint Statement' means only the Joint Statement by EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif made on April 2, 2015, at Lausanne, Switzerland.

''(7) MATERIAL BREACH.—The term 'material breach' means, with respect to an agreement described in subsection (a), any breach of the agreement, or in the case of non-binding commitments, any failure to perform those commitments, that substantially—

''(A) benefits Iran's nuclear program;

''(B) decreases the amount of time required by Iran to achieve a nuclear weapon; or

''(C) deviates from or undermines the purposes of such agreement.

''(8) NONCOMPLIANCE DEFINED.—The term 'noncompliance' means any departure from the terms of an agreement described in subsection (a) that is not a material breach.

''(9) P5+1 COUNTRIES.—The term 'P5+1 countries' means the United States, France, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

''(10) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term 'United States person' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8511).''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by section 2

SA 1198. Mr. COTTON (for Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1197 proposed by Mr. COTTON to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; as follows:

On page 3, line 20, of the amendment, strike ''purpose.'' and insert the following: ''purpose; and

''(iii) the President determines Iran's leaders have publically accepted Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 30, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining Insurance Capital Rules and FSOC Process.''

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

RAFAEL RAMOS AND WENJIAN LIU NATIONAL BLUE ALERT ACT OF 2015

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 33, S. 665.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 665) 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.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage.

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

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 665) was passed, as follows:

S. 665

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 ''Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COORDINATOR.—The term ''Coordinator'' means the Blue Alert Coordinator of the Department of Justice designated under section 4(a).

(2) BLUE ALERT.—The term ''Blue Alert'' means information sent through the network relating to—

(A) the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer in the line of duty;

(B) an officer who is missing in connection with the officer's official duties; or

(C) an imminent and credible threat that an individual intends to cause the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer.

(3) BLUE ALERT PLAN.—The term ''Blue Alert plan'' means the plan of a State, unit of local government, or Federal agency participating in the network for the dissemination of information received as a Blue Alert.

(4) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term ''law enforcement officer'' shall have the same meaning as in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b).

(5) NETWORK.—The term ''network'' means the Blue Alert communications network established by the Attorney General under section 3.

(6) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 3. BLUE ALERT COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

The Attorney General shall establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice to issue Blue Alerts through the initiation, facilitation, and promotion of Blue Alert plans, in coordination with States, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other appropriate entities.

SEC. 4. BLUE ALERT COORDINATOR; GUIDELINES.

(a) COORDINATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Attorney General shall assign an existing officer of the Department of Justice to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network.

(b) DUTIES OF THE COORDINATOR.—The Coordinator shall—

(1) provide assistance to States and units of local government that are using Blue Alert plans;

(2) establish voluntary guidelines for States and units of local government to use in developing Blue Alert plans that will promote compatible and integrated Blue Alert plans throughout the United States, including—

(A) a list of the resources necessary to establish a Blue Alert plan;

(B) criteria for evaluating whether a situation warrants issuing a Blue Alert;

(C) guidelines to protect the privacy, dignity, independence, and autonomy of any law enforcement officer who may be the subject of a Blue Alert and the family of the law enforcement officer;

(D) guidelines that a Blue Alert should only be issued with respect to a law enforcement officer if—

(i) the law enforcement agency involved—

(I) confirms—

(aa) the death or serious injury of the law enforcement officer; or

(bb) the attack on the law enforcement officer and that there is an indication of the death or serious injury of the officer; or

(II) concludes that the law enforcement officer is missing in connection with the officer's official duties;

(ii) there is an indication of serious injury to or death of the law enforcement officer;

(iii) the suspect involved has not been apprehended; and

(iv) there is sufficient descriptive information of the suspect involved and any relevant vehicle and tag numbers;

(E) guidelines that a Blue Alert should only be issued with respect to a threat to cause death or serious injury to a law enforcement officer if—

(i) a law enforcement agency involved confirms that the threat is imminent and credible;

(ii) at the time of receipt of the threat, the suspect is wanted by a law enforcement agency;

(iii) the suspect involved has not been apprehended; and

(iv) there is sufficient descriptive information of the suspect involved and any relevant vehicle and tag numbers;

(F) guidelines—

(i) that information should be provided to the National Crime Information Center database operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation under section 534 of title 28, United States Code, and any relevant crime information repository of the State involved, relating to—

(I) a law enforcement officer who is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty; or

(II) an imminent and credible threat to cause the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer;

(ii) that a Blue Alert should, to the maximum extent practicable (as determined by the Coordinator in consultation with law enforcement agencies of States and units of local governments), be limited to the geographic areas most likely to facilitate the apprehension of the suspect involved or which the suspect could reasonably reach, which should not be limited to State lines;

(iii) for law enforcement agencies of States or units of local government to develop plans to communicate information to neighboring States to provide for seamless communication of a Blue Alert; and

(iv) providing that a Blue Alert should be suspended when the suspect involved is apprehended or when the law enforcement agency involved determines that the Blue Alert is no longer effective; and

(G) guidelines for—

(i) the issuance of Blue Alerts through the network; and

(ii) the extent of the dissemination of alerts issued through the network;

(3) develop protocols for efforts to apprehend suspects that address activities during the period beginning at the time of the initial notification of a law enforcement agency that a suspect has not been apprehended and ending at the time of apprehension of a suspect or when the law enforcement agency involved determines that the Blue Alert is no longer effective, including protocols regulating—

(A) the use of public safety communications;

(B) command center operations; and

(C) incident review, evaluation, debriefing, and public information procedures;

(4) work with States to ensure appropriate regional coordination of various elements of the network;

(5) establish an advisory group to assist States, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other entities involved in the network with initiating, facilitating, and promoting Blue Alert plans, which shall include—

(A) to the maximum extent practicable, representation from the various geographic regions of the United States; and

(B) members who are—

(i) representatives of a law enforcement organization representing rank-and-file officers;

(ii) representatives of other law enforcement agencies and public safety communications;

(iii) broadcasters, first responders, dispatchers, and radio station personnel; and

(iv) representatives of any other individuals or organizations that the Coordinator determines are necessary to the success of the network;

(6) act as the nationwide point of contact for—

(A) the development of the network; and

(B) regional coordination of Blue Alerts through the network; and

(7) determine—

(A) what procedures and practices are in use for notifying law enforcement and the public when—

(i) a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty;

(ii) a law enforcement officer is missing in connection with the officer's official duties; and

(iii) an imminent and credible threat to kill or seriously injure a law enforcement officer is received; and

(B) which of the procedures and practices are effective and that do not require the expenditure of additional resources to implement.

(c) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The guidelines established under subsection (b)(2), protocols developed under subsection (b)(3), and other programs established under subsection (b), shall not be mandatory.

(2) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The guidelines established under subsection (b)(2) shall, to the maximum extent practicable (as determined by the Coordinator in consultation with law enforcement agencies of States and units of local government), provide that appropriate information relating to a Blue Alert is disseminated to the appropriate officials of law enforcement agencies, public health agencies, and other agencies.

(3) PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES PROTECTIONS.—The guidelines established under subsection (b) shall—

(A) provide mechanisms that ensure that Blue Alerts comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws and regulations; and

(B) include standards that specifically provide for the protection of the civil liberties, including the privacy, of law enforcement officers who are seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, is missing in connection with the officer's official duties, or who are threatened with death or serious injury, and the families of the officers.

(d) COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES.—The Coordinator shall cooperate with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Transportation, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and appropriate offices of the Department of

Justice in carrying out activities under this Act.

(e) RESTRICTIONS ON COORDINATOR.—The Coordinator may not—

(1) perform any official travel for the sole purpose of carrying out the duties of the Coordinator;

(2) lobby any officer of a State regarding the funding or implementation of a Blue Alert plan; or

(3) host a conference focused solely on the Blue Alert program that requires the expenditure of Federal funds.

(f) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Coordinator shall submit to Congress a report on the activities of the Coordinator and the effectiveness and status of the Blue Alert plans that are in effect or being developed.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

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

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 136.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 136) expressing support for the designation of May 1, 2015, as ''Silver Star Service Banner Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 136) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 16, 2015, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 158, Cinco de Mayo; S. Res. 159, National 9–1–1 Education Month; S. Res. 160, Public Service Recognition Week; S. Res. 161, Financial Literacy Month; S. Res. 162, Alcohol Responsibility Month; S. Res. 163, earthquake in Nepal; S. Res. 164, Dia de los Ninos; and S. Res. 165, World Malaria Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. 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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 84 through 94, and 96 through 106, and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army Medical Service Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be brigadier general

Col. Raymond S. Dingle

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Ron. J. MacLaren

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Herman A. Shelanski

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. James J. Burks

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. James C. Balserak
Brig. Gen. Steven J. Berryhill
Brig. Gen. Kevin W. Bradley
Brig. Gen. Peter J. Byrne
Brig. Gen. Gretchen S. Dunkelberger
Brig. Gen. Richard J. Evans, III
Brig. Gen. Robert M. Ginnetti
Brig. Gen. Jeffrey W. Hauser
Brig. Gen. William O. Hill
Brig. Gen. Joseph K. Kim
Brig. Gen. Jerome P. Limoge, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Paul C. Maas, Jr.
Brig. Gen. John P. McGoff
Brig. Gen. Brian C. Newby
Brig. Gen. Marc H. Sasseville
Brig. Gen. Michael E. Stencel
Brig. Gen. Carol A. Timmons

The following named office for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Kyle W. Robinson

IN THE ARMY

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grades indicatd under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Robert D. Carlson
Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Dire
Brig. Gen. Mary E. Link
Brig. Gen. Hugh C. Van Roosen

To be brigadier general

Col. Vincent B. Barker
Col. Lisa L. Doumont
Col. Robert D. Harter
Col. John F. Hussey
Col. Scott R. Morcomb
Col. Gerard L. Schwartz
Col. Richard K. Sele
Col. Tracy L. Smith

The following named officer for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Army as a Chaplain under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be brigadier general

Chaplain (Col.) Thomas L. Solhjem

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Danelle M. Barrett

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Ronald C. Copley

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Timothy M. Ray

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Darryl L. Roberson

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr.

IN THE ARMY

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Eric C. Bush

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Alan R. Lynn

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Jill K. Faris

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Gary H. Cheek

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Christian A. Rofrano

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Vice Adm. Nora W. Tyson

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Mark A. Brilakis

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10 U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert S. Walsh

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN355 AIR FORCE nomination of Troy S. Thomas, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN356 AIR FORCE nomination of Linell A. Letendre, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN386 AIR FORCE nominations (115) beginning BAMIDELE A. ADETUNJI, and ending KERI L. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN387 AIR FORCE nominations (20) beginning TRAVIS M. ALLEN, and ending JEROMY JAMES WELLS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN388 AIR FORCE nominations (16) beginning RICHARD S. BEYEA, III, and ending TRAVIS C. YELTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN389 AIR FORCE nominations (9) beginning KEITH L. CLARK, and ending JENNIE LEIGH L. STODDART, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN390 AIR FORCE nominations (54) beginning TALIB Y. ALI, and ending GABRIEL ZIMMERER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN391 AIR FORCE nomination of John W. Heck, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN392 AIR FORCE nomination of Anna Hamm, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN393 AIR FORCE nomination of Jermal M. Scarbrough, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN394 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning CYNTHIA A. RUTHERFORD, and ending ANGELA SCEVOLA-DATTOLI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN395 AIR FORCE nomination of Susan I. Pangelinan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

IN THE ARMY

PN25 ARMY nomination of Bryan K. Anderson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2015.

PN252 ARMY nomination of Mark A. Endsley, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 4, 2015.

PN319 ARMY nominations (3) beginning ARPANA JAIN, and ending RAMA KRISHNA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 25, 2015.

PN357 ARMY nomination of James J. Raftery, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN358 ARMY nomination of David A. Harper, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN359 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEVEN R. ANSLEY, JR., and ending KAREN S. HANSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN396 ARMY nomination of Rita A. Kostecke, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN397 ARMY nominations (2) beginning SCHAWN B. BRANCH, and ending FRANK A. SMITH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN77 MARINE CORPS nomination of Joshua B. Roberts, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 13, 2015.

PN125 MARINE CORPS nominations (69) beginning DAWN R. ALONSO, and ending VINCENT J. YASAKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

IN THE NAVY

PN320 NAVY nominations (2) beginning NAWAZ K. A. HACK, and ending ROBERT P. RUTTER, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 25, 2015.

PN360 NAVY nomination of Brian L. Tichenor, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN361 NAVY nomination of Cheryl Gotzinger, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 13, 2015.

PN398 NAVY nomination of John P. O'Brien, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

PN404 NAVY nominations (2) beginning CAROLYN A. WINNINGHAM, and ending SARA M. BUSTAMANTE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 20, 2015.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 4, 2015

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, May 4; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 8.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, Senators should expect a vote in relation to the veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 8 at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MAY 4, 2015, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:07 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 4, 2015, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

PATRICIA NELSON LIMERICK, OF COLORADO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018, VICE ROBERT S. MARTIN, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GAYLE SMITH, OF OHIO, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE RAJIV J. SHAH, RESIGNED.

THE JUDICIARY

JULIE HELENE BECKER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE HERBERT BLALOCK DIXON, JR., RETIRED.

STEVEN M. WELLNER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE KAYE K. CHRISTIAN, RETIRED.

WILLIAM WARD NOOTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE A. FRANKLIN BURGESS, RETIRED.

ROBERT A. SALERNO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE ROBERT ISAAC RICHTER, RETIRED.

TODD SUNHWAE KIM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE KATHRYN A. OBERLY, RETIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JOSHUA D. BURGESS
JAMES R. CANTU

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MICHAEL I. ETAN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

ERIK D. MASICK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

MUHAMMAD R. KHAWAJA
MUHAMMAD S. MUNIR
NIKALESH REDDY

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

RICHARD A. BRAUNBECK III
KENNETH J. BROWN, JR.
GRANT GORTON
ANTHONY K. JARAMILLO
WESLEY J. JOSHWAY
MICHAEL H. MCCURDY
JEFFREY J. PRONESTI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

THURRAYA S. KENT
JASON P. SALATA
WENDY L. SNYDER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

MICHAEL E. BIERY
DANIEL C. HEDRICK
JAMES A. MCMULLIN III
TONY S. W. PARK
MATTHEW D. TURNER
RICKY M. URSERY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

NEIL T. SMITH
CHRISTOPHER J. STERBIS
WENDY A. TOWLE
DOMINICK A. VINCENT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

JASON B. BABCOCK
JAMES L. CAROLAND
PATRICK A. COUNT
JOEL D. DAVIS
JOSEPH E. DUPRE
CLARENCE FRANKLIN, JR.
KURTIS A. MOLE
DANNY L. NOLES
DONOVAN I. OUBRE
CESAR G. RIOS, JR.
CHRISTOPHER P. SLATTERY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

NICHOLAS E. ANDREWS
RODNEY J. BURLEY
JOAQUIN S. CORREIA
GEORGE D. DAVIS III
ANDREW D. GAINER
JAMES B. GATEAU
JODY H. GRADY
BOBBY L. HAND, JR.
DAMEN O. HOFHEINZ
EDWARD A. KRUK
SHAWN A. ROBERTS
VINCENT S. TIONQUIAO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

SOWON S. AHN
ANDREW N. COREY
ROBERT F. HIGHT, JR.
JEFFREY J. JAKUBOSKI
SEAN R. KENTCH
MADELENE E. MEANS
JAMES F. SCARCELLI
BENJAMIN A. SNELL
HENRY A. STEPHENSON
SCOTT R. WHALEY
CRAIG M. WHITTINGHILL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

STEVEN W. CONNELL
JON C. GRANT
JACKIE D. KNICK
ROSARIO D. MCWHORTER
JAMES D. RHOADS
DANIEL M. ROSSLER
JAMES P. TURNER
MICHAEL A. WHITT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5721:

To be lieutenant commander

ANTHONY S. ARDITO
RYAN L. BIRKELBACH
ROBERT E. BREISCH III
JOSHUA L. BROADBENT
DANIEL P. BURBA
ADAM R. CAMPBELL
RICHARD E. CAMPBELL, JR.
TIMOTHY B. CLARK
KEENAN L. COLEMAN
JEFFREY A. CORNIELLE
GRAIG T. DIEFENDERFER
CHASE H. DILLARD
LEWIS R. EMERY
MATTHEW R. FURTADO
DANIEL E. GARDNER
SEAN A. GENIS
SEAN F. GLASS
JASON A. GOELLER
BRANDON C. HARDIN
ERIC E. HAYES
EVAN E. HENTSCHEL
RYAN P. HILGER
MICHAEL C. HUGHES
ROBERT B. INMAN
MASON P. JONES
JAMES M. KAUFMAN
ROBERT E. KELLER
JOSEPH J. KIMOCK, JR.
JEFFREY R. KINGSLAND
SAMUEL G. LEHNER
CHRISTOPHER A. LINDAHL
BENJAMIN S. MACNEIL
TYLER V. MARSHBURN
JASON L. MCKEOWN
DAVID P. MOSES
WILLIAM P. MURPHY
JUSTIN M. NEFF
DAVID D. NOVOTNEY
FELIX PEREZ
TRAVIS L. RAINEY
CHRISTOPHER J. ROGERS
MATTHEW G. SHIPMAN
DAVID A. SMITH
PHILIP S. SMITH
TIMOTHY S. SMITH
JAMES A. STANKE
DAMON Y. TURNER
JEREMY W. WHEELIS
MARVIN L. WILSON
RODERICK D. WILSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

CHRISTINE J. CASTON
MELANIE R. N. HAO
JOHN D. HUDSON
ELENA P. INGRAM
PATRICK S. MARTIN
STEVEN M. MILINKOVICH
KATHERINE J. SCHULLIAN
KAREN L. SRAY
JAMES V. WALSH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

MICHAEL A. HURNI
PAUL J. LING III
JAMES C. RENTFROW
DAVID M. RUTH
ELIZABETH R. SANABIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

ROBERT C. BANDY
ROBERT E. BEBERMEYER
VINCENT S. CHERNESKY
KENNETH A. EBERT
JONATHAN C. GARCIA
DAVID T. HART
PETER A. LASHOMB
ELIZABETH S. OKANO
CAREY M. PANTLING
FRANCIS D. ROCHFORD
RONALD J. RUTAN
STEPHEN F. SARAR
DJUENO S. SEARLES
NEIL G. SEXTON
KENNETH S. SHEPARD
PETER D. SMALL
GODFREY D. WEEKES
DOUGLAS L. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

DOMINIC S. CARONELLO
JEFFREY J. CARTY
JOSEPH A. CASCIO
DANIEL P. COVELLI
MATTHEW W. EDWARDS
THOMAS H. HOOVER
DANIEL L. MACKIN
RICHARD M. MASICA
PAUL J. MITCHELL
VERNON J. RED
KERRY D. SMITH
MICHAEL J. SUPKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

GARRETT T. PANKOW

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

WILLIAM M. WALKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 716:

To be lieutenant commander

CHRISTOPHER C. MEYER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

JEFFREY G. BENTSON
PAUL N. PORENSKY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

KEVIN D. CLARIDA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

BRIANNA E. JACKSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

JARED M. SPILKA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

FRANCINE SEGOVIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

TODD W. MALLORY

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 30, 2015:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. RAYMOND S. DINGLE

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) RON. J. MACLAREN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. HERMAN A. SHELANSKI

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. JOSEPH ANDERSON

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES J. BURKS

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JAMES C. BALSERAK
BRIG. GEN. STEVEN J. BERRYHILL
BRIG. GEN. KEVIN W. BRADLEY
BRIG. GEN. PETER J. BYRNE
BRIG. GEN. GRETCHEN S. DUNKELBERGER
BRIG. GEN. RICHARD J. EVANS III
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT M. GINNETTI
BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY W. HAUSER
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM O. HILL
BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH K. KIM
BRIG. GEN. JEROME P. LIMOGE, JR.
BRIG. GEN. PAUL C. MAAS, JR.
BRIG. GEN. JOHN P. MCGOFF
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN C. NEWBY
BRIG. GEN. MARC H. SASSEVILLE
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL E. STENCEL
BRIG. GEN. CAROL A. TIMMONS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. KYLE W. ROBINSON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT D. CARLSON
BRIG. GEN. DANIEL J. DIRE
BRIG. GEN. MARY E. LINK
BRIG. GEN. HUGH C. VAN ROOSEN

To be brigadier general

COL. VINCENT B. BARKER
COL. LISA L. DOUMONT
COL. ROBERT D. HARTER
COL. JOHN F. HUSSEY
COL. SCOTT R. MORCOMB
COL. GERARD L. SCHWARTZ
COL. RICHARD K. SELE
COL. TRACY L. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS A CHAPLAIN UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

CHAPLAIN (COL.) THOMAS L. SOLHJEM

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DANELLE M. BARRETT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. RONALD C. COPLEY

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. TIMOTHY M. RAY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. DARRYL L. ROBERSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ERIC C. BUSH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ALAN R. LYNN

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. JILL K. FARIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. GARY H. CHEEK

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. CHRISTIAN A. ROFRANO

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. NORA W. TYSON

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MARK A. BRILAKIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT S. WALSH

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF TROY S. THOMAS, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF LINELL A. LETENDRE, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BAMIDELE A. ADETUNJI AND ENDING WITH KERI L. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TRAVIS M. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH JEROMY JAMES WELLS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RICHARD S. BEYEA III AND ENDING WITH TRAVIS C. YELTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KEITH L. CLARK AND ENDING WITH JENNIE LEIGH L. STODDART, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TALIB Y. ALI AND ENDING WITH GABRIEL ZIMMERER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JOHN W. HECK, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF ANNA HAMM, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JERMAL M. SCARBROUGH, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CYNTHIA A. RUTHERFORD AND ENDING WITH ANGELA SCEVOLA–DATTOLI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF SUSAN I. PANGELINAN, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRYAN K. ANDERSON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MARK A. ENDSLEY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ARPANA JAIN AND ENDING WITH RAMA KRISHNA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 25, 2015.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JAMES J. RAFTERY, JR., TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID A. HARPER, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEVEN R. ANSLEY, JR. AND ENDING WITH KAREN S. HANSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 13, 2015.

ARMY NOMINATION OF RITA A. KOSTECKE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SCHAWN B. BRANCH AND ENDING WITH FRANK A. SMITH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JOSHUA B. ROBERTS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAWN R. ALONSO AND ENDING WITH VINCENT J. YASAKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 26, 2015.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH NAWAZ K. A. HACK AND ENDING WITH ROBERT P. RUTTER, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 25, 2015.

NAVY NOMINATION OF BRIAN L. TICHENOR, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF CHERYL GOTZINGER, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF JOHN P. O'BRIEN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CAROLYN A. WINNINGHAM AND ENDING WITH SARA M. BUSTAMANTE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 20, 2015.