

back pocket to tie up the game in the ninth inning.

That particular play was one of those that you could tell it was almost instinct on the part of Hoz because he saw the throw and just went. Frankly, a bad throw to home plate was his savior. I am not sure he would have made it had it not been for the throw that went wild at home plate from the first baseman. But that is the thing that is fun about this team. We can go through—Salvi got the hit. It was a sacrifice hit, but nonetheless this is a guy who got MVP. And it wasn't as if he hit a bunch of home runs in the World Series; he got MVP because he consistently performed in almost a utilitarian way, getting a hit when it was really needed, getting banged up consistently behind the plate. At one point he got hit so hard in the clavicle that I am sure a lot of players would have said: I need an inning. I need to get out. I need to be replaced. But he just kept shaking off every injury. It could get dangerous because he could go on and on.

There were so many contributors on this team. That is what made it so incredibly special. As Senator ROBERTS said, it is not as if there was one hero here, like so many teams that have an A-Rod or a Robert Griffin. We can name the big players who have been standouts, Ripkin and the rest. This is a team in which everybody is a standout because it is all about the team.

Mr. BLUNT. It was a great season. We have had a great time here on the floor talking about the Royals and the Kansas City spirit that drove those teams. For us Missourians, maybe we will see both of our teams in the World Series again next year.

Mr. ROBERTS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BLUNT. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. ROBERTS. Just a note of thanks to the Mets for showing up and playing the Royals—they are a great team—and to give them some encouragement. The season starts with the Mets and Royals at Kauffman Stadium, so they can start all over again. It would be a good thing, perhaps, if the Mets made it again, and certainly with the Royals, and gave it a shot.

I am very glad the Senator mentioned the incident where Hosmer decided to steal home. That was like Jackie Robinson back in the day when he was seeking to steal home. Who did that? And to do that in today's ball game, where people pitch only a certain amount of innings and players look to the manager to steal and do this and do that and everything is sort of in a box—the Royals played out of the box and they had fun.

The reason they are all great players is because they played as a team, as my distinguished colleague from Missouri just pointed out. It was a lot of fun. It is going to be fun next year. Don't worry, Mets, you will have a chance again.

Mr. BLUNT. There are a lot of life lessons watching the Royals. There

might even be some lessons for us Senators watching the Royals and the way they do what they do.

I yield the floor.

#### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

#### WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES RULE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, this week has been devoted legislatively to discussing and considering legislation affecting an EPA regulation called waters of the United States. It is one more example of executive overreach by an increasingly unaccountable Federal agency.

I want to speak about our efforts here on the Senate floor this week and again encourage my colleagues to continue their efforts to make certain this overreach is responded to by Congress. The courts have spoken, but we want to make certain we do our job.

One of the criticisms I hear regularly from people who support this regulation is this: Don't you care about water quality? Don't you care about clean water? I absolutely think it is important to protect our Nation's watersheds. If you are a Kansan, water is life, water is the future of your community. Water matters greatly. We are not against clean water.

Agriculture producers—which dominate in my State—across Kansas are strongly opposed to this regulation, but they are certainly not opposed to the efforts to keep our water supply safe and clean. Most Kansas farmers and ranchers hope to pass their land and their farming operations on to their kids and grandkids. It serves their interests to preserve the land and water to which their family farms are tethered. It is not the Washington lobbyists and the environmental radicals who are telling Americans “If you oppose this regulation, you are opposed to clean water.” That is what they say. Kansans care greatly and particularly farmers and landowners who want their children to enjoy their farm or ranch in the future care greatly about clean water.

It is EPA's abusive regulatory path, characterized by fines, penalties, and potential civil lawsuits against landowners, that gives us major cause for concern. The Federal Government should not dictate to citizens how they manage their private lands.

I believe there are better ways to promote water quality than with threats of severe fines, penalties, or even jail time. One of the ways we see this effort take place is through the Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service. NRCS promotes soil and water health not by

mandates and threats from Washington but through collaborative, voluntary approaches that encourage conservation through incentives and on-the-ground technical assistance for those landowners.

Unlike the EPA, which seems to view agriculture producers as untrustworthy partners who must be forced into caring for the land, NRCS and the USDA Farm Service Agency efforts are successful in large part because they operate under the recognition that farmers and ranchers are devoted stewards to their land.

Policies such as the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program are examples of voluntary approaches that incentivize innovation, provide technical assistance, and more broadly promote clean water through localized, cooperative efforts. Compare those approaches to what we are debating here on the floor today and earlier this week—an overly broad, overly complex, overly ambitious regulation drafted by an agency that has shown a complete unwillingness to listen to or work with landowners.

This regulation is pretty straightforward. If it is water, EPA has the authority to regulate it unless it decides it doesn't want to. Again, what this regulation basically says is that if it is water, EPA has the authority to regulate it unless EPA decides it doesn't want to do it.

First, EPA declares that all “tributaries” are waters of the United States. Tributaries are defined as anything with a bed, banks, or an ordinary high-water mark, regardless of the frequency or duration of the water flow. This kind of definition is so broad and all-encompassing that the EPA can assert jurisdiction over streams and ditches that may flow only for a few hours following a rainstorm.

This regulation also controls waters that are “adjacent” to any water that is under EPA's jurisdiction, including 100-year-old floodplains. And if somehow water could still escape the EPA's long shadow, its broad definition, they came up with yet one more way to regulate it. The regulation states that if waters aren't adjacent or are not tributaries, they can still regulate if there is “significant nexus” between the waters EPA wants to regulate and navigable or interstate water. What that means is that every drop of rain can be regulated because every drop of rain always ends up in a body of water that is navigable. All EPA has to do is establish some connection between the two, and they have granted themselves the authority to regulate the waters.

With its significant civil fines and criminal penalties for those not in compliance, we can see why so many Americans are concerned.

Last year, EPA went on a public relations campaign of sorts to convince stakeholders and to convince people across the country that they only meant to “clarify,” not expand, the

regulation. Instead of lecturing, the EPA should have listened to the overwhelming feedback they received from constituents, including many who attended a meeting in Kansas City. The EPA should have scrapped the rule and started over.

Now we have learned that not only did the EPA ignore the outcry of the American people, but they also disregarded the technical experts at the Army Corps of Engineers who described the rule as “not reflective of the Corps’ experience or expertise.” Again, the Corps is the agency that the EPA is to work with to develop rules. They are the experts, and they say this rule is not reflective of the Corps’ experience or expertise. The Corps says it is not accurate. The Corps says it is not supported by science or law. The Corps says it is inconsistent with the Supreme Court’s decision. And the Corps says it is regulatory overreach.

It is obvious that the regulation exceeds the EPA’s legal authority under the Clean Water Act. It is equally obvious that the EPA intended to run roughshod over anyone who disagreed.

The waters of the United States regulation is, in short, a breathtaking abuse of power, and it is something Congress needs to address.

For too long, Congress has looked the other way when this Executive or any other occupant of the White House exceeds their congressionally mandated legal authorities. Republicans perhaps look the other way when there is a Republican President and Democrats look the other way when there is a Democratic President. The reality is that Congress needs to play its constitutional role in determining what the law is and prevent the abuse that comes from a White House that exceeds that legislative authority day after day.

The EPA’s regulations ignore two Supreme Court opinions. It ignores a time-honored understanding of what the law does and does not permit in the way of regulation, as evidenced by numerous legislative attempts rejected by Congress to amend the Clean Water Act that the Obama administration now does by regulatory action. It ignores the serious repercussions for farmers and ranchers, electric cooperatives that provide electricity to my State, the oil and gas industry that provides jobs across Kansans, the homebuilders that provide homes for Kansans, and many other small business owners in our State and across the country. And it ignores the concerns voiced by so many more, including State and local officials across Kansas and our Nation.

At the end of the day, if the goal is to promote clean water and responsible land management, there is a much more effective method to do so, as evidenced by the voluntary cooperative efforts within USDA that respect private property rights, incentivize conservation rather than criminalize landowners, and don’t threaten to do irreparable harm to our country and to the jobs Kansans so desperately need.

I urge my colleagues to block this regulation and to force the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to work with State and local officials and those affected by the regulation in protecting real waters of the United States. We must protect those waters. We should do it much differently than the Environmental Protection Agency proposes. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### CRUDE OIL EXPORT BAN

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, about a month ago the White House announced that it has reached a deal with 11 other countries along the Pacific Rim—known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership. This is a major trade agreement that followed on the approval of trade promotion authority by the Congress.

As we might expect, President Obama has been quick to tout his credentials as a pro-trade President, and I think so far, so good. In fact, though, you might say he is so pro-trade that he has significantly not only sought to open up the U.S. economy but also the Iranian economy, releasing billions of dollars to a hostile regime by negotiating a deal to ease sanctions against them and potentially releasing as much as 1 million barrels of crude oil by Iran onto the world markets. I think it has been well documented that I oppose that deal.

I do find the President’s position is perplexing at minimum or hypocritical at worst. It is hypocritical that despite his self-proclaimed pro-trade stance, he refuses to do something that should be a no-brainer when it comes to any proponent of free trade: opening up foreign markets to the things we make and produce here, like lifting the antiquated ban on exporting crude oil.

By refusing to revise this outdated policy, the President continues to contribute to the flatline of our economy and to deny our potential as an energy powerhouse. And, I might add, at the same time, by not acting to lift this export ban, the President continues to deny our allies the energy they need for their economic security and to improve their national security.

Next month will mark 40 years since the United States put into place a ban on the export of crude oil. For those who might not be familiar with the history, let me offer a little bit of background.

The crude oil export ban was put in place decades ago as a precaution to protect the United States from disruptions to global supply of oil in the 1970s, at a time when we were importing the majority of the oil and gas that we consumed here in the United States. But, fortunately, the world looks a lot different than it did back in the 1970s. For example, in 1970, world production was roughly 48 million barrels of oil a day. In 2015 that number has doubled to 100 million barrels of oil a day, and the United States alone is producing about 9.4 million barrels of oil a day.

As recently as 2008, 76 percent of Americans believed that the world was

somehow running out of oil. Thanks to the remarkable shale revolution, we have come a long way in helping the geopolitical energy landscape turn in our favor here in the United States and have reduced our dependency on imported energy from other parts of the country.

I should mention that it is because of the commonsense policies of States such as Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and North Dakota that we have been able to take advantage of the incredible new technology in this field that goes along with horizontal drilling and fracking to produce a supply of oil and gas that we never would have dreamed of a few short years ago. These developments have been nothing short of revolutionary.

We have recently seen an uptick in oil imports in the United States, primarily because overseas energy producers are discounting their crude to be able to take advantage of the U.S. market. The downward trend for the past several years of imports of oil showed that the United States is importing less than it historically has. Why? Because we are producing more here, so we are less reliant. I think most people would think that would be a good thing.

Our country doesn’t need to bar our domestically produced energy from reaching the global market. We should do away with this antiquated policy and, in so doing, help kick start the U.S. economy in the process. First, let me talk about what this would do to help our economy. Lifting the ban would mean real job creation right here in this country. These are not minimum wage jobs. These are well-paying jobs. It is easy to think that lifting the ban would only provide a limited benefit to those who work in the domestic energy sector, but that is actually not the case.

Domestic energy production involves many different sectors, from construction to shipping to technology companies. By allowing our country to export more crude, the United States has the potential to create many, many jobs here in the United States at a time when we need more jobs—not only in the domestic energy sector but deep in the supply chain as well.

One study estimated that for every new production job, it translates into three additional jobs in the supply chain and another six in the broader economy. It is estimated that in my home State of Texas alone, more than 40,000 jobs could be created in the coming years simply by lifting the ban and making available to producers the global benchmark price known as the Brent price. Several studies have suggested that hundreds of thousands of jobs in multiple sectors throughout the country could be created in the coming years if the crude export ban is lifted.

By the way, I should mention this—because this is probably on everybody’s mind: What is this going to do to the price of gasoline? Study after study has

documented that gasoline prices are going to remain either where they are now or go lower should the ban be lifted. By the way, the Energy Secretary of the Obama administration, Dr. Moniz, agrees with that. It is plain old supply and demand, if you think about it.

Lifting the crude oil ban export would strengthen our economy and could actually save Americans money at the pump. But doing away with this outdated, protectionist policy also gives us the opportunity to promote stronger relationships with our friends and allies around the world. For example, our NATO allies and other nations in Europe rightly question why the United States doesn't lift this ban, which would help them achieve a source of energy that they need, instead of having to depend on countries such as Russia that use it as an instrument of coercion and intimidation.

Today, many of our allies in Europe rely not only on Russia but on Iran for their energy needs. Wouldn't it be so much better if we were able to enter into contracts to sell our energy to our friends and allies to help prop them up and provide them another source of energy, rather than leave them dependent on countries such as Russia that want to use it as an instrument of intimidation. Because of these countries' dependence on our adversaries for their basic needs such as heating, electricity, and fuel, this represents a real vulnerability, not just for them but for us as well because we are part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

As our world becomes more interconnected, we need to take a more long-term strategic view. That means considering the implications of our energy policies for our own national security. By lifting this ban, the United States can offer to help our friends diversify their energy supplies and enhance their energy security and help reduce the revenue that these rogue states take in for nefarious purposes—such as Iran, the No. 1 sponsor of state terrorism.

Lifting the crude oil ban represents a rare opportunity to do two things vital for our country: to strengthen our economy and to promote a safer, more stable world for our allies and partners and ultimately for us.

Last month, in a strong bipartisan vote, the House of Representatives voted to overturn this ban. Now it is time for the Senate to do the same. Unfortunately, the White House has already sent a signal that were we to pass such a bill to lift the ban, the President might decide to veto this pro-trade legislation. I wish to point out to the White House and to anybody else who is listening that time and again the President has relied on Republicans in this Chamber to advance his pro-trade agenda. The reason we have done it is because we agree that a pro-trade agenda is good for our economy and good for our security.

Soon we will have an opportunity to read the full text of the Trans-Pacific

Partnership Agreement that I mentioned earlier. Pro-trade Republicans in this Chamber, myself included, have voted to equip Congress with a powerful mechanism with which to consider trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement or trade promotion authority. Trade promotion authority, or TPA, which passed with strong Republican support and only 13 Democratic votes in the Senate, does not guarantee that the President's agreement will pass this Senate or this Congress—far from it. I am going to use all of the tools that we have provided for in the trade promotion authority legislation to make sure this proposed deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, gets the kind of careful scrutiny it deserves.

We know the President, with not much time left in his administration, is looking for a legacy accomplishment. But this President's inconsistency with respect to free trade gives me great pause. I have to say that he can't take my support for granted or, I believe, the support of others in this Chamber for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, particularly if he acts so inconsistently on other free trade measures such as lifting the crude oil export ban.

Moving forward, I hope the President will learn to work with those of us in Congress who have traditionally supported free trade in every respect. If he were truly the pro-trade President he claims to be, his administration would prioritize lifting the crude oil export ban with the same ferocity with which it supports the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Wyoming.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES RULE

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I applaud my colleague for what he just said, and I want to also applaud the colleagues who today took a stand against the regulatory onslaught and overreach being waged by the Environmental Protection Agency. In promulgating the waters of the United States rule, or WOTUS, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers have teamed up to promulgate one of the most expansive Federal power grabs across the Nation.

Recently, I spoke to this body about the threat that the growth and expansion of Federal regulations pose to this country's economic well-being. The growth of Federal regulation and bureaucracy is a menacing threat to this country's security and success. What America needs now is a smaller, less burdensome regulatory framework that will permit our Nation's economy to thrive. With the \$18 trillion of debt, we can only afford policies that will serve as a catalyst for economic growth.

This waters of the United States rule is a prime example of a Federal agency coming up with regulations that do the precisely opposite. In the early 1970s, Congress passed the Clean Water Act and charged the EPA with protecting our Nation's navigable waters from

pollutants. It has worked. Since then, the EPA and the Corps have been working to ever expand the definition and scope of "navigable water," this time stretching the meaning all the way to the limits of common sense.

With the waters of the United States rule, the administration has once again demonstrated a willingness to advance its own goal at any cost. Under this expansive new rule, the EPA may implement substantial additional permitting and regulatory requirements under the Clean Water Act without any thought to the employees who will lose their jobs, to the businesses or industries this rule will cripple.

As the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said earlier this week in a letter to this body, business owners and their employees in all sectors of the economy would be affected by the regulatory uncertainty of this rule, which is "certain to chill the development and expansion of large and small projects across the country."

Again, this is not the kind of regulation America can afford. The waters of the United States rule is so expansive that it would redefine the jurisdiction of bodies of water under Federal control all the way down to, for example, all water located within 100 feet of other jurisdictional water. This is my favorite: The rule further includes all waters located within 1,500 feet of any other jurisdictional water, if it also is in the 100-year flood plain.

I don't know about you, Mr. President, but I won't stand for giving any Federal agency—much less the EPA—five football fields worth of leeway to enforce any rules or regulations.

As chairman of the Budget Committee, I seldom hear any agency talking about having enough resources. The EPA is not an exception. They can't take care of what they already do, and now they want to bite off every body of water in the United States. There is a lot of water that can be cleaned up. There is a lot of water that has been cleaned up. You always start with what is worse. I always tell people that Jesse James robbed banks because that is where the money was. You start where the most pollution is, not where the least pollution is.

States already know best what makes their waters navigable, and they don't need a Federal rule like waters of the United States to constrain them. This is particularly true for the Western States, where water is a rare and protected source and is respected accordingly. In Idaho, a State which historically relied on streams to support its timber industry, lawmakers consider a stream navigable if it will float timber in excess of 6 inches of diameter or if it is capable of being navigated by oar. Six inches—that is not a very big log. If the State of Idaho protects streams small enough to float logs that size, they don't need a rule like WOTUS to further constrict what is considered navigable.

At some point, the overregulation by the EPA and this administration has to

be stopped. Today we had an opportunity to do just that. By passing the resolution of disapproval, we have sent a message to the President, his administration, and all of its bureaucrats. Earlier this week, the body missed a keen opportunity to pass my friend Senator JOHN BARRASSO's bill to roll back this regulation. His bill would have sent the EPA and the Corps back to the drawing board to develop a new rule. It would have told them how to do it. It would have required them to conduct a thorough economic analysis and consult with States, consult with local governments, and consult with small businesses. Congress made a mistake in 1972 when it passed the Clean Water Act and left too much up to the EPA to define. We had a chance to fix that error with Senator BARRASSO's bill.

This rule allows the EPA to regulate any body of water that has a significant nexus to navigable water. Unfortunately, the rule leaves the definition of "significant nexus" open to the EPA's interpretation.

Here is something that fascinates me. If you contest, guess who gets to make the ruling in the case. The EPA does. Guess how they are going to rule. As anyone from Wyoming would attest, never has a Federal bureaucrat missed an opportunity to make life a little more complicated for the folks out West. I can't possibly think of why I would give the EPA an opportunity to do so here.

The Clean Water Act recognizes States as having primary responsibility for land and water resources within their boundaries. That is a responsibility taken very seriously in places like my home State of Wyoming, where so many farmers, ranchers, and small business owners rely on water for their livelihood. In Wyoming, folks know that you have to take care of the land or the land will never take care of you. You won't find better stewards for land and water anywhere, so if the folks in Wyoming tell you a rule governing the use of water is no good, you can take that to the bank.

As the State's Governor Matt Mead said, this rule was bad from the start. In his words:

The EPA failed to properly consult with states or consider states' concerns. The rule unlawfully seeks to expand federal jurisdiction over water, undercuts state primacy and burdens landowners and water users in the West.

Wyoming has joined 30 other States in suing the EPA and the Corps of Engineers to block this rule. If over 60 percent of the States in this Nation are spending time and money to ask the courts to block this rule, then this resolution should pass with flying colors. In fact, if the 2 Senators from each of the 31 States that are suing were to vote for either the resolution before or this resolution, the previous one would have passed cloture. This one didn't require cloture. So in passing this joint resolution of disapproval, our actions appropriately reflected what our States are telling us to do: Stop this rule.

Two Federal courts have already recognized the fallacy of this rule and issued stays to prevent it from being enforced. Those courts have recognized what we should all recognize: the massive scope of this rule and the potential damage it could cause.

Wyoming was lucky in that it got some relief from a U.S. district court judge before the rule could be enforced in late August. In that ruling by which the court stayed the rule's enforcement, the court said:

The rule asserts jurisdiction over waters that are remote and intermittent. No evidence actually points to how these intermittent and remote wetlands have any nexus to navigable-in-fact water.

I couldn't have said it better.

What the EPA is doing is more out of control than protection. It is an overreach, it is power, and they can't afford it. For the sake of farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, and small businesses and their employees, it is time to stop this outrageous regulation.

I thank the majority leader, Senator BARRASSO, and Senator ERNST for recognizing how important it is to fight this bad EPA rule and bring legislation to the floor to push back.

I urge my colleagues in the House to pass this resolution of disapproval so that we can send a clear message to the President that this Congress will not continue to accept ill-thought-out, ever-expansive, unendingly complicated regulations from this administration, ones that the courts have already ruled on three times.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with Senators CARPER, WARREN, MURPHY, BLUMENTHAL, SCHATZ, and BROWN for up to 1 hour.

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

#### FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I come to the Senate floor to discuss the issue of for-profit colleges. One may wonder how a Member of the U.S. Senate takes up an issue. This came to my attention when a young woman in Chicago, IL, contacted our office and told her story. She was a conscientious young woman who wanted a college education, and, having graduated high school, she shopped around on the Internet and found the degree she wanted. It was a degree in law enforcement offered by Westwood College. Westwood is a for-profit college based in Colorado.

She enrolled in Westwood, and 5 years later—5 years of classes later—she got her diploma in law enforcement from Westwood. She took it to every law enforcement agency in the Chicagoland area, and they said: Young lady, this is not a real college; this is one of those for-profit Westwood colleges. We don't recognize your degree.

When she went to another place, she got the same reaction, and then she re-

alized she had wasted 5 years of her life on a worthless diploma. But that is not the worst part. She incurred a student loan debt of \$80,000 and she couldn't get a job. She moved back into her parents' basement. Her dad came out of retirement to help her pay off this loan, and she is going to take years to do it. She has postponed buying a car, getting her own apartment, or even considering marriage or a family. This was one personal tragedy that opened my mind.

I used to drive out on the Kennedy Expressway and see Westwood College signs on these large, tall buildings and think, wow, this must be some college. Well, it turned out that it was part of a network of for-profit colleges and universities that I have been researching and speaking about ever since.

When I started 5 years ago, it was a different industry than it is today. Too many people like this young lady ended up with empty promises, deep debt, and worthless diplomas from for-profit colleges and universities.

Westwood isn't the only one. The biggest for-profit college is the University of Phoenix. DeVry University, based out of Chicago, IL, is the second largest. Kaplan—which used to own or was owned by the Washington Post, depending on your point of view—ITT Tech, and Le Cordon Bleu are names young people know right off the bat because they are inundated with advertising from for-profit schools. They and their parents think these are real schools. They think: It is worth my time. It is worth the debt to me and my family to pursue a degree.

Five years ago, this industry was in its heyday. Enrollment and profits were sky high. They were a favorite of Wall Street investors. Between 1998 and 2008, enrollment at for-profit colleges exploded by 225 percent. By 2010, total enrollment in these for-profit schools reached 2.4 million.

When the former chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, released a report on the industry in 2012, they had grown to take an incredible share—\$32 billion in Federal taxpayer dollars, 25 percent of all the Federal aid to education. Despite the fact that they had 10 percent of the students, they were taking 25 percent of the Federal aid at that point. Why? They are so expensive. The tuition is so much higher than public colleges and universities or even many private colleges.

Meanwhile, more than half the students who enrolled in for-profit colleges left without a degree within 4 months and found themselves in student loan default. Five years ago, 10 percent of the students accounted for 47 percent of the student loan defaults. How can it be that 47 percent of the students who can't pay back their student loans went to for-profit colleges? It costs so much and the degrees are worthless.

John Murphy is a cofounder of the University of Phoenix. This was the mother ship of them all during the

great for-profit college movement. Here is what he said in the *Deseret News National*:

They are not educators and they're looking to manipulate this model to make money. There is nothing wrong with making money, but I think anyone making money in an educational activity has a higher standard of accountability.

John Murphy, a cofounder of the University of Phoenix, is right. He explained that they started off as a serious venture to educate students, but they soon became a company listed on Wall Street chasing stock prices, tapping into the open spigot of Federal loans, which Mr. Murphy calls the juice of the for-profit college industry. He went on to say:

Phoenix was the one that got it rolling, and then all the other for-profits followed them in.

I will yield at this point to my colleague from Hawaii. I thank Senator SCHATZ for joining me in this colloquy.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the assistant Democratic leader for his leadership on this issue and for his willingness to educate colleagues and educate the public and to push the DOE to take much needed action in this area.

What is happening with some for-profit colleges is truly a national scandal, and it is a scandal for two reasons: First, students are being hurt, and second, we are wasting tens of billions of dollars. The numbers speak for themselves. Almost 2 million students are enrolled in for-profit colleges, and they have collectively taken on \$200 billion in debt to attend, but they often leave with little to show for it. More than half drop out within a few months, and in some programs less than 5 percent of their students ever graduate. For those who leave without a degree, repaying loans is a struggle. Students at for-profit colleges default on student loans at double the rate of students at not-for-profit colleges.

People may be surprised to learn that these substandard programs are financed almost entirely by the Federal Government, and the amount is totally staggering. In total, for-profits receive over \$32 billion a year in Federal financial aid—over 20 percent of the total aid—yet they serve only 12 percent of the students.

There are several for-profit companies that each take in more than \$1 billion a year in Federal aid and graduate less than 10 percent of their students. Think about that. They take in more than \$1 billion in Federal taxpayer money and they graduate less than 10 percent of their students. These companies include the Apollo Group, DeVry, ITT, Kaplan, and Education Management Corporation.

Not only are the educational metrics awful, but many of these for-profit colleges are also under investigation for fraud and deception. Essentially, they have been lying to students and to State and Federal agencies to cover up how bad their record is. Even while

prosecutors go after these schools for fraud, they remain accredited and continue to rake in Federal funds. Here are a few examples:

Education Management Corporation, EMC, faces charges of fraud and deception brought by prosecutors in 13 States and the Department of Justice and faces a lawsuit to recover \$11 billion in Federal and State funds. Yet EMC is still accredited and still receives \$1.25 billion from the U.S. DOE. So the Department of Justice is trying to recover \$11 billion at the same time that the Department of Education gives them \$1.25 billion.

ITT Educational Services is being investigated and sued by 19 States, the SEC, CFPB, and the DOJ. It is also under scrutiny from U.S. DOE for failure to meet financial responsibility standards. Yet they are still accredited, and last year they received just under \$600 million.

Another 152 schools are under investigation by a working group of 37 State attorneys general. They too are still accredited. Collectively, they received \$8 billion in Federal financial aid last year.

What do all of these schools have in common? They are accredited. Accreditation is the key to the castle for accessing this spigot of Federal financial aid. It is supposed to signify that a program provides a quality education for its students. Too often, however, the accreditation means nearly nothing.

The GAO released a study on accreditation last year, and its findings are shocking. Over a 4-year period, the GAO found that accreditors sanctioned only 8 percent of the institutions they oversee and revoked accreditation for just 1 percent. Even more troubling, GAO found there was no correlation between accreditor sanctions and educational quality. In other words, schools with bad student outcomes were no more likely to be sanctioned by their accreditor than schools with good student outcomes.

Our accreditation system is broken. According to the Higher Education Act, accreditation agencies are supposed to be "reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training offered" by institutions of higher education.

That is the reason for making accreditation a core criterion for receiving Federal funds. How are we following the law when accreditation reviews find that 99 percent—basically, everybody—99 percent of institutions are providing an education of value? How can we say with a straight face that accreditors are acting as reliable authorities on educational quality?

The problem here is money. Incentives are lined up against being critical and against setting high standards. The problem can be traced to the funding and governance of the accrediting agencies. First, accrediting agencies are funded by the same institutions they accredit. Colleges pay an initial fee to become accredited and annual

dues after that. They pay for site visits and other services.

Second, accrediting agencies are run and overseen by the institutions they accredit. The member institutions elect their own academics and administrators to serve on the board of the accreditation agency.

It is not hard to see how the incentives are misaligned here. We have created a dysfunctional, if not corrupt, ecosystem in which it is far too easy to become and remain accredited. This system is eerily similar to the one that enabled credit rating agencies to pump out inflated asset ratings, which contributed to the worst financial crisis of our time. Like credit rating agencies, accreditors have a financial interest to churn out accreditations.

The DOE has the authority to improve accreditation. There are a lot of things that Senator DURBIN and others, Senator MURPHY, and I are working on in terms of changing the Higher Education Act and working in the appropriations context, but U.S. DOE has authority that it is beginning to use but needs to use more of in the accreditation space. It can and must do more to ensure that accreditors are actually looking at academic quality and holding schools to high standards. For the sake of students and taxpayers, the DOE must make this a top priority.

I thank the assistant Democratic leader for his leadership on this issue. I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I hope the Senator from Hawaii can stay for just a moment.

If a student is about to graduate from high school, looking for a college, and goes online and types in the word "college" or "university," watch what happens. The page is flooded. The University of Phoenix, DeVry, Kaplan—all of these different schools are flooding the page saying: Come to our school. How does a student know if it is good or not? The only yardstick that can be used is, well, do they receive Federal Pell grants for their students? Do their students receive Federal loans? The answer, when it comes to for-profit schools, is yes.

Senator SCHATZ has put his finger on the problem. They accredit themselves. They decide among themselves who will stay in business. Guess what. They all stay in business.

So the unsuspecting student goes to a worthless, for-profit school, gets a worthless diploma, goes deep in debt, and thinks, I thought this was a good school. How can I get a Federal Pell grant to this school and get a worthless diploma?

The Department of Education is not doing its job. Congress is not doing its job. We have to enforce these standards.

Corinthian was one of the giants. Corinthian went bankrupt. They measured how many students came out of Corinthian and got a job. The numbers were pretty encouraging. The Huffington Post writer started following

the students that got the jobs. Do you know what Corinthian was doing? They were giving \$2,000 to employers to hire their graduates for 1 month so they could report to the Federal Government that their graduates all have jobs. When they were caught with it, they went bankrupt.

Do my colleagues know what we ended up losing, what the Federal taxpayers lost? It could be billions. Who ended up on the hook? The students. The students ended up with the debt, and the taxpayers ended up as losers. Corinthian should never have been accredited.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, there are two problems here. Normally, when something is a waste of taxpayer money, it is not usually also harmful to individuals across the country, but this is a double whammy. This is harming students, causing them to collectively incur tens of billions of dollars' worth of debt, and it is a waste of money, so this really is a double whammy.

I will make this final point: The Obama administration has done the right thing in terms of going after malfeasance in this space, but they are split among their executive agencies. We have the Department of Justice who understands the fraud and deception. We even have parts of the U.S. DOE that understands what is going on, yet they have been slow on the uptake in terms of using the authority under the statute to make the accreditation process a little more reliable when it comes to students. I think that is one of the key things that we are going to be able to accomplish in the next couple of years. The U.S. DOE has to understand that there are separate accrediting agencies, but under the higher education statute, U.S. DOE has the authority to make sure that no institution that is providing a low-quality education and no institution that is engaging in fraud and deception ought to avail themselves of tens of billions of dollars in Federal financing.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Hawaii.

Last week, the senior Senator from Arizona came to the floor and said it was DURBIN's speeches that brought down Corinthian. Correction: What brought down Corinthian was its own malfeasance. They were under investigation by 20 different attorneys general for fraud and deception. They were also under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Department of Education, and the Department of Justice. It was their malfeasance that brought them down, as Senator SCHATZ has indicated. The victims: Students and taxpayers.

For purposes of this colloquy, I wish to yield to my colleague from Delaware, Senator CARPER.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator for inviting us to come to the floor this afternoon and have this conversation. It is great to be with our colleague from Hawaii as well.

Senator DURBIN and I came to the House of Representatives together in 1982. I had been a State treasurer and before that I was a naval flight officer. I was a P-3 aircraft mission commander. I served three tours in Southeast Asia. In 1968, the P-3 four-engine aircrafts were on 12-hour surveillance flights tracking Soviet nuclear submarines all over the world. We flew a lot of missions off the coast of Vietnam and Cambodia, low-level missions tracking infiltration. That is what I did on three tours over there.

I came back from overseas after the last tour, 5 years, and moved from California where my station was home ported, where my squad was home ported during the war, and I ended up moving across the country. I found Delaware on the map, drove my Volkswagen across the country, and enrolled in business school.

I signed up with the GI Bill. I remember the first check I got was \$250. I was thrilled. I used that money to help pay my expenses, and I signed up with a Reserve P-3 aircraft squadron up at the naval air station north of Philly and started flying the same aircraft and a new squadron. I did that for another 18 years and then retired as a Navy captain.

As Senator and as a Governor for 8 years and as commander in chief of the Delaware National Guard—they have a special spot in my heart. A couple of months ago, a delegation with the Governor were sending off the 300 men and women from the Delaware National Guard to eventually end up in Afghanistan. I suspect they are there by this time. I said to the men and women and their families as they were preparing to leave—I told them about my GI Bill and how grateful I was to have it for my generation. I talked to them about their GI Bill. I said: When you come home, if you have 3 years of service during your time in Afghanistan, here is what you are going to get. If you go to Delaware State University, University of Delaware, Delaware Tech Community College, you go for free—tuition, free; books, free; fees, tutoring, free. Plus you get a \$1,500 a month housing allowance. People said: Wow. And I said: If the GI doesn't use it—the Delaware National Guardsman—if you guys don't use it when you come home, your spouse can use it. If your spouse doesn't use it, your dependent children can use it. It is the most incredible GI bill benefit ever. My generation, we got \$250 a month. I am happy for the folks today who serve in Afghanistan and in Iraq for the benefit they receive.

It has not only been a great benefit for the veterans and their families, it puts in the words of—I think it is Polly Petraeus who works at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Polly said that what the GI bill does is it also puts a silver bull's-eye on the veterans because they come back and what happens is a lot of colleges and universities and training schools want to help those GIs and their spouses and

maybe their kids go to school. Some of them are for-profits and some of them are non-profits; some of them are public colleges and universities. Some of them do a great job. Some of the for-profits even do a great job. But some of them—and the Senator from Illinois has mentioned some of them here today—do not. They spend more money on trying to recruit people to come to their schools than they actually spend educating them. They are preparing them for careers, allegedly, for what there are no jobs. Senator DURBIN mentioned what Corinthian has done to place people in work opportunities for a month or so just so it will look like people are being gainfully employed.

There is a lot of money to be made by these for-profit colleges and universities, and for the ones that aren't the white hats but the black hats, what is happening to the GIs and, frankly, to taxpayers is shameful. It is just shameful.

I want to say around maybe 1992, maybe the early 1990s, maybe on this floor, the Senate debated whether or not there should be some way to harness market forces to ensure that—whether it is people using Pell grants or other Federal aid programs, or maybe the GI bill—they could somehow harness market forces to ensure that taxpayer money going to people going to college was being well used. Initially, when the Congress adopted something called the 85-15 rule, the idea was that for at least 15 percent of the students in the school, if they were receiving Federal assistance, 85 percent of those students would have to be coming on non-Federal money. That seemed to make sense, so for a while, that worked pretty well.

Then the rule was changed to the 90-10 rule so that at least 10 percent of the revenues had to come from non-Federal sources. The idea was to use market forces to ensure that the quality of the diploma was actually worthwhile at the school.

Then, we had this new GI bill. We have spent, I think—and the Senator from Illinois probably knows better than me, but I think we have spent today close to \$50 billion on the Iraq-Afghanistan GI bill, close to \$50 billion. It probably dwarfs whatever we spent for folks coming back from the Vietnam war.

Some of the smart for-profit colleges figured out a loophole, though, and what they figured out is the law, when it was first adopted, didn't really focus on the GI bill because it wasn't all that robust, and the 90-10 rule—85-15 and 90-10—focused on things that did not include the GI bill. So when veterans go to college and the GI bill helped to pay for their tuition, or for that of their spouses or their children, that does not count toward the 90 percent.

So as a result, what we have is a loophole that allows a college or university, a private college or university, to realize as much as 100 percent of their revenues from the Federal Government—100 percent. There is nothing



about market forces; 10 percent, 15 percent of your students have to come by non-Federal means. All of them are there on the Federal Government's dole.

Among the people who pushed for the 85-15 rule, I think, were Bob Dole and Phil Gramm, and they said a long time ago that we ought to have something like the 90-10 rule. A couple of years before that, the guy that Senator DURBIN will remember named William Bennett—remember him, the Secretary of Education—here is what he called for-profit trade schools. Here is what he called them in 1987. He said:

Diploma mills, designed to trick the poor and to take on Federally-backed debt, milk them for their loan money and then wash them out or graduate them, ill-prepared to enter the job market and pay off their loans.

That is what he called them. As I said earlier, there are some for-profits that do a good job, but there are a bunch that don't. That was the case in 1987 and, unfortunately, it is the case today.

I just want to say we—you have, I have, Tom Harkin in past years—have continuously drawn this to the attention of our colleagues and anybody who wants to listen this issue. This needs to be fixed. It needs to be fixed.

I thank Senator DURBIN for working so hard and letting me help him a little bit on this stuff. I think we are starting to break through. Some of the folks who are the worst actors in this business are starting to fold, and that is a good thing.

Mr. DURBIN. I want to thank Senator CARPER.

Let me show the Senator briefly what has happened to the enrollment of for-profit colleges and universities as people have come to realize they are wasting their time, and many times their GI bill benefits, debt, and ending up with a diploma that doesn't take them anywhere.

Look at the University of Phoenix—this is the mother ship that launched this industry—peak enrollment was nearly 500,000 in 2010. Now it is 227,000, a nearly 50-percent loss.

ITT, which advertises constantly, had enrollment in 2010 of 88,000, and now they are down to 53,000. Career Education Corporation enrolled 41,000 students in 2014 compared to 118,000 in 2010—a 65-percent decrease. Education Management Corporation is down 25 percent. DeVry has declined in enrollment. What is happening here?

I talked to some of the people from some of these for-profit colleges. Parents and families are finally realizing that this is a waste of time and money. It is time for taxpayers to realize the same thing. I overhear my colleagues—conservative colleagues—preaching to me about the miracle of free markets. We are talking about the most heavily subsidized industry in America, accounting for over 40 percent of the student loan defaults with 10 percent of the students enrolled.

I thank the Senator from Delaware for coming, and I yield to the Senator from Massachusetts, Ms. WARREN.

Ms. WARREN. I thank the Presiding Officer and thank Senator DURBIN for calling us together to discuss this important issue.

Our higher education system is broken. Right now a student borrows money to go to college, and the college gets paid in full regardless of whether the college provides a decent education. In fact, Federal loan money is so easy to come by that a new business model of for-profit colleges has sprung up, spending more money on advertising to attract students than actually teaching them anything.

Consider three numbers—10, 20, 40. Just over 10 percent of all college students attend a for-profit college. Yet they take in about 20 percent of all Federal student aid and they account for about 40 percent of all student loan defaults. Many for-profit colleges target young vets and single moms for programs that promise the Moon but end up delivering nothing more than heartache.

I have met with student veterans at terrific public colleges and universities across Massachusetts, such as UMass Lowell and Bunker Hill Community College. These schools are working hard to reach vets and to help them get a first-rate education through their Office of Veterans Service and other resources. It is an exciting story, but time after time the for-profit colleges got there first, so young vets show up already tens of thousands of dollars in debt and without a single credit that will transfer to a decent public college. This makes me sick. These for-profit schools are stealing more than money. They are stealing the hard work and dreams of some of our finest young people.

There are 347 colleges in the United States in which the majority of the students have defaulted or failed to begin paying down their loans. Of these colleges, 85 percent are for-profit. Even with those huge default rates keep raking in the Federal loan dollars and paying out millions of dollars in dividends to their shareholders. These 294 for-profits are sucking down \$2.2 billion in Federal assistance and leaving the majority of their students unable to repay their loans.

The business model of for-profit colleges challenges the conventional wisdom that a college degree is always a smart investment. A recent study found that the average salary increase of for-profit graduates isn't even enough to cover the costs of attending a typical for-profit institution. The research is clear: attendance at a typical for-profit college is simply not worth the cost. It is a bad return on investment.

For-profit colleges know this, but too often the potential students don't. Instead of taking the tough steps necessary to improve the value of the education they offer, most of these for-profit institutions have simply ramped up their marketing operations—and some just flatout break the law—to

keep the gravy train going. These colleges have engaged in fraud in order to swindle more and more students and suck down more and more Federal funds.

Corinthian College is a prime example. At its peak, Corinthian was the Nation's largest for-profit chain, with 120 campuses enrolling over 100,000 students. It was massive. Corinthian built its business model to scoop up Federal financial aid by any means necessary—including fraud. Corinthian was trying to rope students in by using false and misleading information and then saddling them with debt that would be impossible to repay.

Federal policymakers had concerns about Corinthian's conduct for years and had the tools to shut off the Federal loan supply, but instead of acting, the Department of Education allowed Corinthian to keep recruiting more and more students and sucking down more and more Federal funds. When Corinthian's dangerous mix of mismanagement and deception finally blew up, the Department of Education even stepped in to bail out the college and keep it running a little while longer. Now Corinthian is bankrupt and its students are scrambling to start over.

Last week—due to a lawsuit brought by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—a Federal judge ruled Corinthian broke Federal consumer protection laws and ordered the company to pay \$531 million for its illegal behavior, but Corinthian is dead broke, and its executives are off the hook for the financial liability. Plus students and taxpayers are left holding the bag.

Corinthian got people to sign up for student loans by scamming them. If an insurance salesman or a car dealer did that, the buyer wouldn't have to pay. The law is just as clear here, when a school breaks the law, students are entitled to cancel their student loans. That is why this week several of my Democratic colleagues are sending a letter to the Department of Education telling them they have dragged their feet long enough. These students don't owe the student loans that Corinthian tricked them into signing.

Schools like Corinthian make it clear that the Federal Government needs to be more aggressive and more willing to cut off the money faster when schools defraud students. When schools such as Corinthian break the law, their executives shouldn't be allowed to walk away from the mess. They should pay real penalties.

This is about basic fairness. Neither students nor taxpayers should be on the hook to a for-profit college that makes its money by cheating its students. It is time for the Federal Government to step up and do its job to hold for-profit colleges accountable and to ensure that higher education remains a real pathway to success for all hard-working students.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor back to Senator DURBIN.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank Senator WARREN, and before we recognize the Senator from Connecticut, I would like to make a point about executive compensation, which is something we should not overlook.

We take a look at the actual amount of money that is being paid to executives of these for-profit colleges and universities. It is dramatically larger than what is being paid to presidents of public universities. I will put this information in the RECORD at a later point.

The average pay for college presidents is less than \$500,000 a year. There is an executive at the University of Phoenix who was paid over \$8 million in 1 year. When we wrote to the Department of Justice recently, we asked how many of these people are going to be held personally accountable. They left the students holding the bag with student loans and worthless diplomas or dropouts. They left the taxpayers holding the bag because the students can't pay back their loans, and now they are going to go away scot-free after taking billions of Federal dollars? If there is any justice, they need to be held accountable.

I yield to my colleague Senator MURPHY.

Mr. MURPHY. I thank Senator DURBIN very much.

This article is a few years old, but it underscores his point. Here is the opening line of an article from CNBC on this question of salaries for the CEOs of for-profit universities. The article opens by saying: "Forget Wall Street and Silicon Valley. If you're looking to rake it in post-graduation, set your sights on the executive floor at one of the nation's for-profit colleges."

That is an article from CNBC detailing the fact that in their article—again this is a few years old—the salary of the head of Phoenix University was \$11 million, and the CEO of Bridgepoint, another national for-profit university, was making over \$20 million a year.

You can say to yourself: These are private, for-profit companies. Why should Congress be in the business of caring what the CEO of Phoenix University makes or what the CEO of Bridgepoint or ITT or DeVry makes?

Harry Truman made his name as a critic of wartime profiteering. LBJ made his name as a young Member of Congress doing the same. Their idea was that it is all well and good to make yourself rich in the most dynamic capitalist economy in the world, but it is another thing to be getting rich off the taxpayers. It is another thing to be making your fortune almost exclusively coming from sources of money that really is all of our constituents' money in the form of the taxes they pay.

That is what we are talking about today. What we are talking about are executives who are getting rich off of companies that are 90 percent funded by the U.S. taxpayer because this 90-10 rule we talked about is an important

rule for these companies. They run their revenue right up to the limit. So for many of these for-profit universities, their revenue is 70, 80, 90 percent from the taxpayers of the United States, and their CEOs are making \$11 million, \$12 million, sometimes \$20 million a year.

Listen, I am all for people making a million dollars. I have a lot of people in Connecticut who are making \$20 million, but if we are being good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars, we should be wary of those who are making their fortune off of the Federal dole. That is what is happening today.

Senator DURBIN, I just wanted to add in this conversation a note of accountability. That is one of the things that used to unite Republicans and Democrats. Frankly, the Republicans, I admit, cared more about accountability in Federal dollars than sometimes the Democrats did. It was the Republicans in the second Bush administration who started attaching strings to education dollars that were flowing out of Washington to make sure there was actually quality attached to the money that was coming from U.S. Federal taxpayers, but that era seems to be over.

Unfortunately, we don't have a bipartisan consensus on accountability. We are about to approve a budget that a lot of Republicans and a lot of Democrats will vote for that will send \$140 billion in higher education aid to universities all across this country. It will come with almost no strings attached. It will come with almost no expectations that schools give a degree to kids that will actually get them a job or attempt to keep them in school so they can get some return on investment for the money we are all paying to them.

Senator, you might have talked about it already today, but the numbers of for-profit colleges that just came out today are absolutely stunning. I don't know if you talked about the "Trends in Student Aid" report that just came out today from the College Board.

Here is an amazing statistic. What this survey says is that borrowers who don't graduate from public and private nonprofit 4-year schools default at about the same rate as borrowers who do graduate from for-profit schools. Think about that. You are just as likely to not be able to pay back your student loan if you get a degree from a for-profit school as if you had dropped out of a not-for-profit school.

Here are the numbers: 14 percent of for-profit graduates default; 15 percent of not-for-profit 4-year college non-graduates default. That is a really stunning number. Yet we are just sending money willy-nilly out to these schools that are not putting students in degrees. Why are they not putting students in degrees? Because they are marketing themselves in a way that just does not square with the job market today.

As part of one of these attorney general lawsuits—there is a litany of sto-

ries about the abusive marketing techniques of these for-profit universities.

One of them said: I told the enrollment representative that I did not want to sign the loan unless I was guaranteed a job because I knew that I would not be able to pay it back. She told me that the school placed 99 percent of the students and they could guarantee a job after I finished my externship. She told me that I would be making between \$18 and \$20 an hour after completing the program. No worries about the loan. She told me career services could place me in a job and that she makes sure everybody who enrolls gets placed.

These are the claims that are being made. So it is frankly not surprising, when you have these for-profit universities enrolling thousands of kids in video game design degrees, that you are just as likely to default on a loan if you graduate from some of those worthless programs as if you don't graduate from a not-for-profit university.

So last Congress, Senator SCHATZ and I, joined by Senator MURRAY and Senator SANDERS, introduced a piece of legislation that would start to require some real outcomes from universities. We applied it to for-profit and not-for-profit universities. We said: You have to show that you are giving kids a chance to succeed and get a job, that you are keeping your tuition at reasonable levels. If you do that, then you can continue to get title IV dollars.

But if they don't, we are not going to continue to send money to these schools that simply are not producing graduates who are ready to compete or that are deceptively drawing students in based on claims that just do not wash out in the end.

So, yes, we have to shut down these fraudulent institutions like Corinthian. But we could just make a decision, Republicans and Democrats, to put some additional accountability standards on title IV dollars, apply it to for-profit and not-for-profit schools, and say: If you have a certain number of students who are defaulting, you are not going to continue to get title IV dollars. If you have a rate of tuition increase that is way above that of the national average, you are not going to continue to get title IV dollars.

We know by statistics that this would put a good number of for-profits out of business. It might even touch a handful of the lower performing not-for-profits. But it should be something on which both sides can come together, just some basic accountability for higher education, a basic accountability for the \$140 billion we send, because this does not make sense. It does not make sense to pad the pockets of these CEOs who are making \$20 million a year off of our taxpayers when they are not delivering results that are actually making our economy better.

Thank you, Senator DURBIN, for bringing us together here. I hope that as we debate the Higher Education Reauthorization Act in front of the HELP



Committee—I think Senator ALEXANDER is very interested in some of these debates. So we are going to add some accountability standards. We are talking about these for-profits, but if we really are being good stewards of the taxpayer dollars, we should expect some results.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank Senator MURPHY for his comments.

I will tell you that it is interesting to me that when you take a look at what Wall Street thinks about the for-profit colleges and universities, they are certainly bearish. You would think from what Congress is doing—sending billions of dollars to this industry and propping it up—we are bullish. Take a look at the stock prices of the major for-profit colleges and universities since 2010. The University of Phoenix went from a high of \$57 a share down to \$7.50. This was after the Department of Defense suspended their activities under the GI bill. ITT Tech—a high of \$92 a share in 2011 and they now trade at \$3 a share. Career Education was \$20 a share in 2011 and was \$3.80 yesterday. Education Management Corporation withdrew their stock from NASDAQ so they would not have to make reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission. In 2014, they lost \$684 million. This is an industry which is failing as a business, but sadly it is dragging along students and families and taxpayers with it. That is why we have to come to grips.

I endorse your idea. Apply the standards across higher education, to for-profit and not-for-profit. I can tell you, these for-profits cannot live with that standard. Thank you, Senator MURPHY.

I thank Senator BLUMENTHAL from Connecticut for joining me.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my great colleague from Illinois and my friend and partner from Connecticut for their very powerful analysis, along with Senator WARREN and Senator CARPER, because there really is a need for dispassionate, objective, and targeted consideration of this area of education.

The Senator from Connecticut is absolutely right that we need accountability in both the for-profit and non-profit areas. Senator DURBIN has emphasized that fact repeatedly. I am here as a former member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee who participated with Senator Harkin in announcing a report more than 2 years ago that highlighted many of the abuses in this area. Still, Corinthian has happened since then. There are still abuses in the for-profit area. But there is a need for accountability in the nonprofit area as well.

In all of these areas, there is a need for facts. There are more facts that may be available more recently that ought to be considered, indications that some of the for-profit colleges are doing a better job than others. Kaplan, for example, has recently released facts. None of us can vouch for them independently. The Department of Edu-

cation has an obligation to do better and more to make sure it keeps faith with American students and American taxpayers in the way dollars are allocated to those for-profits.

I am particularly concerned, as the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, with the impact of some of these abusive practices on veterans. One of the really unacceptable facts about this industry is the way it can sometimes exploit and take advantage of our veterans. Senator CARPER put it very well when he discussed how the for-profit schools are prohibited from receiving more than 90 percent of their total revenue from Federal student aid, but VA educational benefits are not counted toward that 90 percent. This 90/10 loophole causes the for-profits to target veterans and to rake in billions of dollars in VA educational benefits. In fiscal year 2014, the for-profit schools received over \$2 billion in VA educational benefits—that is our money, taxpayer funds—including post-9/11 GI benefits.

As ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am working to help protect our Nation's veterans and the GI bill benefits they have earned. In fact, I have introduced legislation—the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act—to ensure that GI bill funding is not squandered on education programs that lack appropriate programmatic accreditation.

Facts are stubborn things, as Ronald Reagan famously said. Facts are what we need. Accreditation and verification and credibility in this area is essential rather than painting with a broad brush every for-profit, rather than tar-ring all of them. Facts are necessary here, and there is a need for accreditation and for facts that show credibility and legitimate course work.

I will be introducing another bill this week to provide relief to veteran students who have been harmed by for-profit schools. I want to repeat that point. These veterans have been harmed directly and tragically by some of these practices. We owe them better. We need to keep faith with them. That is the reason I am going to be introducing the Veterans Education Relief and Reinstatement Act. That will give the VA Secretary authority to reinstate GI bill entitlements that a veteran has used at a school that abruptly closed—think Corinthian—where veterans have lost those benefits and they need a remedy, not just a right but a remedy.

I am hopeful that we can advance these bills through the Veterans' Affairs Committee and stop for-profit colleges like Corinthian from scamming our Nation's veterans. Like my colleagues, I could cite real-life instances of nonveterans as well. But the evidence is overwhelming, and it is acknowledged by some in the industry who say there is a need for corrective measures here, and some of the outliers need to be treated with the strong discipline and discouragement they merit.

I am proud to join my colleagues in this effort. I am hopeful that the report Senator Harkin and the HELP Committee produced years ago will finally reach fruition and that action will be taken by the Department of Education and by this Senate to take measures that protect taxpayer dollars, protect students of America, and protect our veterans.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my colleague from Connecticut, Senator BLUMENTHAL, for joining in this colloquy this afternoon.

What we have tried to do with a number of Senators is to lay out the case that when we go to higher education reauthorization, we owe the taxpayers and we owe families across America the responsibility to look at this industry. What is happening here in inexcusable and unacceptable. It is unfair. Ten percent of the high school graduates, 20 percent of the Federal aid education, 40 percent of all student loan defaults.

Senator MURPHY pointed to the statistics that came out today. You are in just as bad shape with a diploma from a for-profit school as if you drop out of school at a not-for-profit school. That is a damning statistic, just like the 40 percent in student loan defaults.

We cannot continue to look the other way. Wall Street is not looking the other way; they are downgrading these for-profit colleges and universities because they believe this model is flawed. They don't believe it can be sustained. Why do we kid ourselves? Let's apply standards across higher education—standards that are fair to students, fair to families, and fair to the schools—and say to them: This is what we expect as a minimum if you are going to offer higher education to the students across America.

I ask unanimous consent that this transcript from Sharyl Attkisson's television program "Full Measure" which played last Sunday be printed in the RECORD.

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

#### TRANSCRIPT

SHARYL ATTKISSON'S "FULL MEASURE"

(Aired Sunday, November 1, 2015)

WASHINGTON (Sinclair Broadcast Group).—Some for-profit colleges are allegedly preying on military troops; veterans with benefits and a desire to build a new life become targets.

They've even been given a name by some college recruiters: cash cows.

About 300 thousand vets get up to \$21K a year in G.I. Bill money. In all, 1800 colleges—many of them for profits—have received more than \$20 billion G.I. Bill tax dollars.

With so many billions in the mix, it's easy to see why some colleges use high pressure and allegedly dishonest tactics. Now, taxpayers are about to be on the hook for alleged misconduct by the schools.

As a U.S. Marine, Bryan Babcock fought on the front lines in Iraq including the Second Battle of Fallujah in 2004. His post-military plan: police work. He used his GI Bill money to pursue a criminal justice degree at the for-profit college ITT Tech.

Attkisson: How did you hear about it?

Babcock: I saw a commercial on TV. That kind of got me interested in them.

Babcock says ITT promised that police agencies everywhere would accept the degree. The cost—\$70,000—would far exceed his GI Bill grant at the time, but ITT made it easy for Babcock to borrow. He says they even helped him fill out paperwork for student loans. Then, after his third year, he made a startling discovery.

Babcock: We applied to 22 or 23 police departments.

Attkisson: And what did they say?

Babcock: All of them said that they did not recognize ITT's degrees or their credits.

Attkisson: And what thoughts went through your head when you heard this?

Babcock: I was angry that I'd spent all this money in student loans and it turns out that the degree, if I would have finished there, would have been pretty much worthless.

It's a story told by thousands of vets who attended for-profit colleges where students are more likely to drop out, default on their loans, or graduate in dire debt without a useful degree.

Of eight for-profits that get the most GI bill funds, seven have been targets of inquiries for possible violations including deceptive or misleading recruiting.

Together, they received nearly a billion (\$939,086,610 million) tax dollars over two school years.

One of those companies is DeVry University where Chris Neiweem was hired as the school recruited vets under the new GI Bill.

A veteran himself, Neiweem was assigned to "Team Camo" where he says managers urged the sales team to use high-pressure tactics on troops who sometimes weren't suited for college.

"Working in the industry at that time truly reminded me of the film 'Glengarry Glen Ross,'" he said.

"There is this scene where a corporate sales manager is brought in to improve the performance of the sales floor—played by Alec Baldwin."

In the scene, Baldwin says to a salesman "they're sitting out there waiting to give you their money, are you gonna take it?"

"And that was similar at the company," said Neiweem.

If "Team Camo" dared to let veterans suspend class while in combat like those in the National Guard Neiweem says management called them on the carpet.

Neiweem: The company didn't care. They just wanted to make sure that they stayed in their classes and so the university could continue to be paid and they would continue to be on the enrollments books.

Attkisson: Even if they were in a combat zone that didn't make sense for them to try to go to college on the computer?

Neiweem: Yes. Management's guiding wisdom was, to be frank, "get their ass in class."

Neiweem showed Full Measure today's sales tactics at work.

In a chat on DeVry's website, he asks about costs and benefits—but can't get direct answers.

"I can have a representative from our military admissions team reach out to you," he said, reading the response of a recruiter.

"It's fairly frustrating that I asked these questions and I can't get answers. Rather, they're trying to sort of tie me in and get me closer so they can work towards selling the school."

DeVry officials declined an on camera interview but said "DeVry has a long history of serving veterans and military personnel" dating back to the 1940's. And "[W]e offer quality academics and student services with flexibility to meet their busy schedules."

Former Congressman Steve Gunderson leads the main national for-profit college

trade group called the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU).

"If anybody has a bad outcome, and certainly if a veteran has a bad outcome, that's a problem and we want to solve that," he said.

He believes for-profits are under assault from opponents and competitors.

Gunderson: I have never before seen a situation where a sector is the target of attacks for ideological reasons. I mean, there simply are good people who do not believe the private sector oughta be involved in the design and delivery of education.

Attkisson: Fair enough, but is there any doubt in your mind that some schools have used unfair, unethical, or even dishonest tactics?

Gunderson: There is no doubt in my mind that there are bad schools in every sector of higher education who have engaged in inappropriate conduct for various reasons whether it be athletics or whether it be admissions or it be something else.

Gunderson said the industry is improving. A Government Accountability Office report found for-profits catering to military students actually beat public schools in one area: higher graduation rates.

With billions flowing to for-profits under investigation, President Obama dispatched a warning at Ft. Stewart army base about any for profits that may be preying on the troops.

"It's not right. They're trying to swindle and hoodwink you. They don't care about you; they care about the cash," he said. But as federal scrutiny surged, the industry has countered with Washington lobbyists and campaign cash.

Since 2010, for-profit colleges have poured nearly \$10 million (\$9,906,512) into campaign contributions and spent \$41 (\$41,924,452) million on lobbying, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Illinois): That's how you really win friends and influence people on Capitol Hill. The for-profit colleges and universities have friends in high places.

Attkisson: That implies some members in Congress, you think, are bought and paid for on this issue.

Sen. Durbin: I would say this—they are influenced by it.

Senator Durbin has pushed one bill after another to fight for-profit college fraud, only to see the bills get watered down and voted down.

"If these schools that are enticing kids into loans for educations that are worthless had some 'skin in the game,' some responsibility for default, they'd think twice about it. But they don't. They could care less," he said.

It turns out taxpayers have the most skin in the game.

In June, the federal government said it will forgive loans for students at Corinthian College, putting taxpayers on the hook for up to \$3.5 billion. Corinthian shut down in May amid fraud accusations, which the company denied. And the feds may wipe out loans at other problematic colleges.

In May, the federal government charged Babcock's alma mater, ITT Tech, with fraud, alleging it concealed financial information from investors.

ITT is fighting the charges, but declined our interview request.

Gunderson says he doubts Babcock's ITT degree would have really been useless.

"I am willing to say, that if he graduated, from an accredited criminal justice program, there are many police agencies that would hire him. Maybe not the one he wanted to go to, but there are many that will, and evidence all across the country shows that," said Gunderson.

Babcock gave up on the ITT degree and his dream of police work. Instead, he's focused on warning other vets, and working to pay down his \$40 thousand student loan debt.

"I think it's a shame that they prey on men and women that volunteered to protect this country. And that earned a benefit with their service, and then ITT and the other for-profit schools are just trying to take that," he said.

The Defense Department recently banned the University of Phoenix from recruiting on military bases, alleging a pattern of violating policies designed to protect military students. Senator Durbin says ITT is now facing investigations by the Justice Department and 18 Attorneys General.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor, and 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.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES RULE AND THE  
EPA

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today I wish to speak about our vote on the waters of the United States and the Environmental Protection Agency.

I noted that the White House has lately been advocating for criminal justice reform. They say an underlying problem with the justice system today is that Congress criminalized too much conduct too severely. But it is the same White House that is behind the new waters of the United States regulation—an Executive power grab that would effectively put every landowner in Arkansas and in America at risk of Federal criminal charges for making adjustments to land on their own private property.

The waters of the United States regulation gives the government jurisdiction—and, in turn, the danger of Federal criminal charges—over tributaries, adjacent waters, and "other waters." This includes streams that only exist after heavy rains or, as some of us call them, mud puddles.

If a landowner in Arkansas has so much as a ditch on his or her property, he or she could be liable for Federal criminal charges for disturbing that ditch in any way. If a homeowner wants to add an addition to his garage and this addition even touches "land that fills with water after rain," also known as just "land," this homeowner could be liable for Federal criminal charges.

President Obama and my Democratic colleagues argue that we are exaggerating: Come on, they say; the Environmental Protection Agency would never bring charges against a homeowner for expanding his garage or trying to regulate a mud puddle.

They insist on the benevolence of the EPA and ask us to trust them to exercise good judgment and reasonable discretion. Before we trust the EPA's benevolence, though, it is prudent to examine the EPA's own track record.

Let's consider that in August of this year, the EPA directed contractors to excavate the Gold King Mine in Colorado without first testing the water pressure or calculating water volume. In the worst environmental disaster in recent years, the EPA caused more than 3 million tons of toxic wastewater to pollute the Animas River.

Since the spill, much of the toxicity remains, endangering farmers, landowners, Native Americans, and anyone who relies on this river. After the spill, the EPA has refused to turn over documents, disciplined no one, failed to show up to congressional hearings, refused to take responsibility, and still won't answer the simple question of whether the Agency will pay for the damages it caused.

The Navajo Nation in New Mexico relies on the river polluted by the EPA for drinking water and for farming. In the days following the spill, the Navajo lost their water supply. The EPA offered to deliver clean water that the Navajo could use for drinking and crop irrigation but, instead, they used dirty oil tankers to deliver contaminated water.

The EPA is not only a threat to citizens, to landowners, and to businesses, but it is also a threat to the environment they purport to protect. Since the disaster, the EPA has continued to spill toxic wastewater into creeks and rivers. There has been zero accountability for this Agency.

Based on that track record, I don't think we should be giving the EPA any more power. That is why I joined my colleagues earlier today to vote to roll back the waters of the United States regulation before the EPA criminalizes nearly every landowner in the United States.

But we should also consider the bigger picture. This regulation is a symptom, not the problem. The problem is the EPA itself—its overreach and lack of accountability.

That is why we must pass the EPA Accountability Act. This legislation would require the EPA to pay—out of its own budget—for the damages it recklessly caused when spilling 3 million gallons of toxic waste into the Animas River. Unless the EPA faces consequences for its actions against the American people, nothing will change. It is our constitutional responsibility to provide oversight of an agency that has caused massive damage to both the American people and to the environment.

We must protect Arkansans and Americans from EPA overreach and lack of accountability.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. 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. NELSON. Mr. President, what is our parliamentary posture?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2685.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be given 5 minutes to speak as in morning business.

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

#### "EL FARO" TRAGEDY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, on the morning of October 1, the *El Faro* cargo ship—a container ship almost 900-feet long—was carrying 33 men and women, and on that fateful day it sent its final communication, reporting that the engines were disabled. This left the ship drifting with no power, with an oncoming category 3 hurricane. Despite search-and-rescue attempts by the Coast Guard, the *El Faro* and her crew were not heard from again.

One month later, the National Transportation Safety Board, working with the U.S. Navy, has found the sunken *El Faro* at the bottom of the ocean in waters that are 15,000 feet deep. At nearly the same time, the ship's owner, TOTE Maritime, began its attempt to limit the company's liability for this tragedy.

News reports have indicated that the company filed a complaint last week stating that the company did everything in its power to make the ship safe and that the company ought to be exonerated from any and all claims for all damages.

Well, this is clearly hasty decision-making. It clearly is a matter of concern to me because most of these mariners were from my State of Florida. Their families are grieving and hoping for any answers as to what happened to their loved ones.

Well, right now, we don't have all of those answers. The NTSB only just found the ship with the help of the U.S. Navy, and yet somehow the company is able to definitely declare that they weren't at fault and that they bear no responsibility for the loss. It seems that this is an attempt to limit any liability of the company.

So this is a time when we need reflection for figuring out what happened to the *El Faro*, for finding the ship's recorder, which the U.S. Navy is now in the process of trying to find, and then once you have that black box, for piecing together the ship's last minutes before the ship sank.

So instead of being split apart, it is a time to come together as a community and to support those who have been so tragically impacted.

I have some leadership responsibility on the commerce committee, which has jurisdiction over maritime matters. It is my intention to see that there is a thorough and honest investigation to try to find answers for the families and to find answers so that we can prevent a tragedy such as this from happening again. That is where we should be focused.

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

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is hard to think of a time in recent memory when the number of threats facing our country were more diverse or more threatening than they are now—from ISIL to Russia, from China to the Taliban, from Iran to Al Qaeda. These threats are real, these threats are worrying, and these threats make the political games that Democrats continue to play with our men and women in uniform all the more hard to understand.

Democrats have spent months upon months blocking funding for our troops. They have tried to hide behind a whirling kaleidoscope of excuses, moving from one to another as each is debunked, but with the setting of a top-line budget number last week, the final excuse is gone. What is the excuse now?

It is time for the appropriations process to finally be allowed to move forward. That means it is time for the men and women who put everything on the line for us to finally receive the support they need to be safe. It is time for our troops to finally get the certainty they need to plan for training and operations.

The Defense appropriations bill is half of all discretionary spending. The Defense appropriations bill contains no controversial policy riders—none. The Defense appropriations bill was supported in committee 27 to 3. Nearly every Democrat voted for it. Democrats even sent out press releases praising the bill. It is obvious why we should pass it now.

President Obama's own Secretary of Defense just wrote an op-ed titled "U.S. Military Needs Budget Certainty in Uncertain Times" in which he implored Congress to authorize long-term funding for the military.

He said:

In this uncertain security environment, the U.S. military needs to be agile and dynamic. What it has now is a straitjacket. At the Defense Department, we are forced to make hasty reductions when choices should be considered carefully and strategically.

He concluded with this:

I appeal to Congress to act on a long-term budget deal that will let American troops and their families know we have the commitment and resources to see them succeed, and send a global message that the United States will continue to plan and build for the finest fighting force the world has ever known.

So look, our colleagues across the aisle are just completely out of excuses. It is time to move the bill forward. Once we do, we have every intention of then moving on to other appropriations bills as well.

Remember, our Members worked very hard on these bills. Nearly all of the appropriations measures passed committee with support from both parties. We obviously want to process all of them.

If Democrats hadn't wasted literally months blocking every last one as part of some political game, we could have passed all 12 appropriations bills a long time ago, but since they did, it has forced Congress up against a December 11 deadline of the Democrats' own creation. We are going to work within that deadline to get as much done as we possibly can. With bipartisan cooperation, we can get a lot more accomplished. With more political games, we can get a lot less done.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

#### EPA CLEAN WATER RULE

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I was pleased to vote today in support of S.J. Res. 22, which would nullify the Environmental Protection Agency's recently finalized clean water rule. Just yesterday, I voted in support of a bipartisan bill, S. 1140, authored by my colleague, Senator JOHN BARRASSO, which would have forced EPA to pull the rule. Unfortunately, that bill did not receive the 60 votes necessary under Senate rules that are needed to pass.

The resolution passed by the Senate today is supported by hundreds of national and local organizations, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Homebuilders Association, to name a few. While I understand that the White House has threatened to veto this resolution if it reaches the President's desk, it is still important that a majority of Congress voice their opposition to the EPA rule as Federal courts continue to weigh its legality.

Americans around the Nation are lining up against the EPA clean water rule because of its economic cost, the regulatory impact, and the uncertainty it engenders among State and local governments, businesses, and consumer alike. The rule itself bypassed Congress by redefining the types of water bodies under the Clean Water Act that EPA has the authority to regulate. EPA pushed forward without regard for State and local environmental protection laws, which is partly why about a dozen State attorneys general, including from my home State of Arizona, have won injunctions in Federal court against the EPA rule.

The EPA claims that the rule only allows the Agency to halt activities

that disturb small, environmentally sensitive streams and wetlands. But when you dive into the rule's lengthy publication, you will find that EPA is proposing to expand its jurisdiction over roughly 60 percent of all waters of the United States and can also capture certain irrigation ditches, stock ponds, and even dry desert washes. Farmers, housing, construction jobs, and other activities will all suddenly find themselves under the thumb of EPA bureaucrats. The EPA will claim it has written waivers into the rule for these industries, but there is growing consensus that the waivers are so unclear and conflicting that nobody believes they hold any water. The EPA's rule-making process itself was so closed off from outside input and peer-reviewed science that it is clear to any reasonable observer that EPA had misjudged the economic damage their rule will inflict on small business, farms, and local governments around the country.

The EPA rule is especially bad news for Arizona agriculture and homebuilding sectors which, combined, account for most of all economic activity in my State. If a farmer wants to build or repair a canal, the EPA rule could block it. A community that wants to build a school or a church near a dry wash will have to beg EPA for a permit. Under the rule, the EPA can even fine a private property owners tens of thousands of dollars if the Agency thinks water historically flowed across their land even when there is no visible evidence.

Regardless whether or not the President vetoes this resolution, I will continue to oppose the EPA clean water rule. I am a proud cosponsor of Senator JEFF FLAKE's similar bill, S. 1179, the Defending Rivers from Overreaching Policies Act, DROP Act, which would direct the EPA to pull its rule over its poor, nonscientific definition of "navigable" water bodies. We will continue to push forward with this and other legislative initiatives and will watch closely to see how the courts handle the EPA rule.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PARK

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and congratulate Mr. Robert Park, director of the Portage County Veterans Service Commission, on his retirement after more than two decades of service to Ohio veterans.

Mr. Park served 26 years in the naval service, retiring in 1997 as a chief aviation electronics technician, Aircrew. He flew more than 2,000 hours in a P-3 Orion aircraft, predominantly as a radio operator with Combat Aircrew 6 in Patrol Squadron 93, where he was selected as "Gold Wing Sailor of the Year."

During his time with the Portage County Veterans Service Commission, VSC, Mr. Park worked directly with

staff to help maintain a high-quality standard of service to veterans. Mr. Park advocated to significantly increase VA benefits for Portage County veterans. According to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, for every dollar Portage County spends related to the VSC, veterans in Portage County receive \$93.20 in benefits thanks to the work of Mr. Park.

Mr. Park's dedication to veterans and military families in Portage County extends beyond his position at the Portage County VSC. Mr. Park also served as a board member for the Family and Community Services Freedom House, which is an organization that serves homeless veterans. Mr. Park is also a member of many veterans organizations, including the local Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and Disabled American Veterans chapters.

Mr. Park also served statewide as second vice, first vice, and finally as president of the Ohio State Association of County Veterans Service Officers. He also worked for many years as an instructor for the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

Nationally, Mr. Park advocated for veterans as an executive board member, judge advocate, and instructor on the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

Beyond his dedication to veterans, Mr. Park continues to support his community through involvement in organizations that help develop young people as future leaders. Mr. Park currently serves on the board of Access to Independence and the Rootstown Local School District. He also volunteers as an assistant coach for both baseball and soccer, as well as Cub Master and Scout Master for local Cub and Scout Troops.

Mr. Park and his wife, Rebecca, have three children: David, Jonathan, and Rachel.

Bob will be truly missed not only by his VSC family, but by the veteran community in Portage County and throughout the State of Ohio. Bob always gave his best to the veterans and families he served. I would like to thank Mr. Park for all his years of service, as a sailor and later as an advocate for veterans. I wish him all the best in his retirement.●

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2232. A bill to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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