

researchers like Dr. Leroy Hood and the Institute for Systems Biology. Tools like big data and sophisticated blood analysis can predict effective therapies based on a patient's unique biology, reducing ineffective prescriptions, and lowering health costs over time.

Second, the bill's funding commitment to Vice President BIDEN's Cancer Moonshot will advance groundbreaking research at organizations like the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. By directing the body's own immune system to attack cancer cells, new cancer treatments can save lives for patients who may not respond to traditional interventions.

Third, the bill's support for President Obama's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies, BRAIN, Initiative will continue the leadership of organizations like the Allen Institute for Brain Science in unlocking the mysteries of the brain. Neuroscience is one of the final frontiers of medicine, and future revelations in this field hold immense promise to better treat conditions affecting the brain, such as Alzheimer's and traumatic brain injury.

In addition to my strong support for research into future medical miracles, many of my constituents need treatment for acute and chronic conditions now.

That is why I am encouraged that the 21st Century Cures legislation takes positive steps to combat the dual crises of mental health care and opioid addiction.

The legislation includes a \$1 billion funding commitment to combat the opioid and heroin epidemic. In recent years Washington has experienced a doubling in heroin-related deaths, according to data from the Washington State Department of Health. Earlier this year, PBS's "Frontline" profiled the courageous stories of some of my constituents who are battling addiction, as well as new public responses that municipalities like the city of Seattle are deploying to address this public health crisis.

The reality in too many Washington communities is that needed addiction services are simply out of reach for those in the throes of acute withdrawal, relapse, or in need of ongoing recovery supports. The Cures legislation helps by authorizing much-needed State grants for treatment services, prescription drug monitoring, prevention, and health professional training programs, which will bolster efforts by public health departments like the Spokane Regional Health District to meet urgent community needs. This funding is far from sufficient, given that 90 percent of people who need addiction treatment in the United States do not receive it, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA. However, given that Senate Democrats have been calling for real money for the opioid epidemic throughout this

Congress, the funding in Cures is indeed welcome.

The 21st Century Cures legislation also contains positive new policies that aim to improve access to mental health care, including efforts to better integrate mental health and physical health as well as strengthen rules to ensure health insurance companies cover mental and physical health equally. Unfortunately, many of these policies are not funded and require future appropriations.

Washington communities continue to confront a severe mental health treatment shortage at all levels of the care continuum, including community clinics and psychiatric units. A 2015 report by Mental Health America, a national advocacy group, ranked Washington State 48th in the Nation when it comes to mental health treatment, due to a high prevalence of mental illness and poor access to care. In the face of overwhelming emergency room admissions and a State legal ruling on psychiatric "boarding," community partnerships like the Alliance for South Sound Health in Pierce County have stepped up to build more treatment capacity. And Governor Jay Inslee and the State of Washington have announced ambitious goals to integrate mental health with chemical dependency and physical health.

I will continue to fight for real money for mental health, including policies to ease the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Diseases, IMD, exclusion, an archaic barrier to needed inpatient care for people in crisis, as well as policies to improve mental health delivery.

I am also pleased that the 21st Century Cures legislation includes a provision I sponsored, S. 2261, the Rural ACO Provider Equity Act, to drive coordinated health care in medically underserved areas, as well as legislation I have cosponsored to preserve access to vital outpatient therapeutic services at small rural hospitals. Medical facilities in these remote communities—such as Forks, Brewster, and Newport—need our support to keep essential health services accessible in the face of doctor and clinical staff shortages. I thank the senior Senator from South Dakota for his partnership and support on these important issues.

While I supported the Cures legislation, the package incorporates troubling budget offsets that are concerning.

First, the Cures legislation finances itself in part by selling millions of barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

The use of this budget offset steadily weakens the energy security of the United States and again uses the reserve as a piggy bank to pay for non-energy priorities. In its November 29, 2016, Statement of Administration Policy on the Cures legislation, the White House Office of Management and Budget concurred, noting this offset ". . . continues a bad precedent of selling off

longer term energy security assets to satisfy near term budget scoring needs."

Second, the Cures legislation pays for its investments in part by cutting disease prevention funding. While I appreciate current legislative realities, this policy approach is not sustainable especially in light of dwindling public health resources throughout my State.

Third, the final version of the Cures legislation omits a widely supported and bipartisan child welfare reform bill, the Family First Preventive Services Act, which I have been proud to cosponsor with my colleague Senator RON WYDEN. Washington State is currently using a Federal waiver, which I helped secure, to do a better job of keeping families together and reducing unnecessary foster care placements. This approach is better for kids and families, and it can save States money. The Senate's failure, up to this point, to pass this bill is a lost opportunity for children in Washington and throughout the Nation.

Last, I note that the funding authorized by the Cures legislation must be appropriated by future Congresses. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to fund these important health care priorities.

I view the funding and policies in the Cures legislation as a step forward that continues to support Washington's health care innovation and pave the way for future medical breakthroughs. The mental health and opioid response provisions in the legislation are welcome in addressing these crises, but are far from sufficient. Moving forward, I will work to ensure that appropriators make good on the funding commitments in Cures, and I will fight to open up greater access to health care for Washingtonians.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to four servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Freedom's Sentinel and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the record.

STAFF SERGEANT JOHN W. PERRY

SSG John W. Perry, 30, of Stockton, CA, died November 12, 2016, of injuries sustained from an improvised explosive device in Bagram, Afghanistan. Staff Sergeant Perry was assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER JASON C. FINAN

CPO Jason C. Finan, 34, of Anaheim, CA, died October 20, 2016, in northern Iraq, of wounds sustained in an improvised explosive device blast. Chief Petty Officer Finan was assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Three.

STAFF SERGEANT MATTHEW V. THOMPSON

SSG Matthew V. Thompson, 28, of Irvine, CA, died August 23, 2016, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, of injuries caused by an improvised explosive device that detonated near his patrol while conducting dismounted operations. Staff Sergeant Thompson was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA.

PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS CHARLES H. KEATING IV

PO1 Charles H. Keating IV, 31, of San Diego, CA, died May 3, 2016, in Tall Usqf, Iraq, of combat related causes. Petty Officer First Class Keating was assigned to a West Coast-based Navy SEAL Team.

#### TRIBUTE TO RICHARD GIL KERLIKOWSKE

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my friend from the Department of Homeland Security—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Richard Gil Kerlikowske, who is retiring in January 2017. I have known Gil since his days as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, during which time he worked tirelessly to promote policy reforms, particularly in the area of substance abuse treatment. In 2013, he visited North Dakota at my request and saw firsthand the substance abuse dilemma that we were experiencing in the western part of the State. He worked with me to direct Federal resources to assist our State partners in reducing drug abuse, and for that, I will always be grateful.

Gil was appointed Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, in 2014, and, as a Senator on the committee that oversees CBP, I saw firsthand the dedication he brought to the position. On his retirement, it is fitting that we recognize the successes achieved under his leadership.

Gil worked to counter terrorism and transnational crime by creating a counter-network capability to identify and disrupt illicit networks and adapt to emerging threats along the border and abroad, placing under one roof the National Targeting-Center Passenger and Cargo facilities to enhance the agency's efficiency and effectiveness in identifying potential high-risk individuals and freight.

He made efforts to enhance transparency and accountability by implementing the CBP Integrity Strategy, enhancing the agency's ability to address corruption and misconduct in the workforce; initiating a review and redesign of CBP's complaint and discipline system to promote a timely, transparent, and accountable dispute resolution process; fostering the agency's commitment to respond to use of force incidents by creating an incident team to conduct investigations and by initiating a National Use of Force Review Board to assess policy compliance and best law enforcement practices;

implementing firearms and less-lethal use of force simulator training; implementing National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search, the first nationwide standards that govern interaction with detained individuals.

He engaged stakeholders and partners globally to enhance U.S. border security. Such actions include signing new preclearance agreements with Sweden and the Dominican Republic; creating increased security, economic growth opportunities, and an improved passenger experience with CBP performing the same immigration, Customs, and agriculture inspections of air passengers on foreign soil prior to boarding a direct flight to the United States; assisting the Government of Tanzania in establishing a sophisticated canine program to combat the smuggling of contraband; and sponsoring ten Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements with various countries.

He worked to advance border security and management by addressing the surge of unaccompanied alien children and family units by enhancing the agency's capabilities and coordination with Federal partners while sustaining all border security responsibilities; deploying advanced technological solutions to provide additional layers of surveillance; initiating a Naloxone pilot program, becoming the first Federal law enforcement agency to train and equip officers with the potentially lifesaving drug for the treatment of overdoses; installing facial comparison technology in two airports and continuing work towards a comprehensive biometric exit system; establishing the Missing Migrant Initiative in the south Texas corridor—a proactive program to establish preventative procedures in order to preserve human life.

He worked to enhance economic competitiveness through lawful trade and travel with a continued commitment to the strong partnership between the U.S. and Canada by leading CBP to deliver on key Beyond the Border Action Plan commitments related to joint commerce and travel facilitation and security initiatives; transitioning to the Automated Commercial Environment, which serves as the "single window" for the electronic transmission of import and export information for 47 agencies; streamlining the import-export process and eliminating more than 200 forms; developing ten centers for excellence and expertise to facilitate trade for compliant importers; achieving positive results in CBP's Traveler Satisfaction Survey administered at the top 25 airports between September 2015 and February 2016.

He promoted organizational integration, innovation, and agility by raising levels of engagement and commitment higher than at any other time since 2011, according to the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. He led creation of advanced hiring hubs and other recruitment initiatives that re-

duced overall costs and hiring delays for CBP officers and Border Patrol agents. The agency was recognized by Monster.com and Military.com's "Best Companies for Veterans 2016" as the second best organization for veterans among government and private sector employers.

I would like Congress to recognize the significance of these accomplishments and to express my appreciation and the appreciation of the American people for Gil Kerlikowske's selfless dedication to service. I wish him the best of luck as he pursues the next chapter of his life.

#### HONORING OFFICER JOSE GILBERT VEGA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Police Officer Jose Gilbert Vega, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and uncle who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 8, 2016.

Jose "Gil" Vega was born in Texas to a family of migrant farm workers. When Gil was 6 years old his family relocated to Coachella, CA, where he graduated from Indio High School. In 1979, Gil began his career in law enforcement by serving as a reserve police officer for the Indio Police Department. He was hired as a community service officer by the Palm Springs Police Department in 1982, and the following year, he accepted additional responsibilities as a jail and reserve field training officer. Gil's hard work and dedication was recognized in 1985 when the city of Palm Springs hired him as a police officer trainee. Upon completion of his program at the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Academy, Gil was promoted to police officer.

Officer Vega worked on various assignments throughout his career, including serving as a detective for the Riverside Auto Theft Interdiction Detail, RAID, and the Palm Springs Crimes Against Property Unit. Over the course of three decades, Officer Vega mentored over 30 police officers and was consistently recognized for his commitment to his job and the community. He was awarded a lifesaving medal for performing CPR on an infant in 2010 and received the Medal of Merit in 2013. He is also the only officer in the history of the Palm Springs Police Department to have been selected twice by his peers as "Officer of the Year," in 1992 and 2011.

Officer Vega truly embodied the very best of law enforcement and his courageous service will be forever remembered. On behalf of the people of California whom Officer Vega served so bravely, I extend my heartfelt condolences to his wife, Susana; his eight children; and his entire extended family.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN LEWIS LARKIN O'HERN III

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize U.S. Army CPT Lewis Larkin O'Hern III for his extraordinary dedication to duty and