House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC, March 7, 2017. I hereby appoint the Honorable Michael K. Simpson to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The Speaker pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

The Speaker pro tempore. The Speaker recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, 7 years ago, in March of 2010, the Affordable Care Act was signed into law after a 2-year process of hundreds of committee meetings, exhaustive markups—which I personally participated in—floor debate that went on for days, and, again, back-and-forth between the House and the Senate.

Since that date, despite the, again, bitter criticism by the Republican majority when that law went into effect, there have been 60 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act; and up until this morning, the majority has always begged the question about: What is your replacement? Again, just last week, we heard rumors that there was a replacement, that the Speaker actually had drafted a bill.

Well, with scenes that looked like it was out of “The Blair Witch Project,” we had Members of Congress going around the Capitol opening doors with cameras doing live streams and live coverage, again, to empty rooms and denials that there actually was a bill that anyone could actually take a look at.

Well, as I said, this morning, we now have been told that there actually is a bill that has been filed, which tomorrow will be marked up and voted out of committee with not one single public hearing and, incredibly, with no analysis by the Congressional Budget Office, which any bill that has any impact on budget, whether it is a tax bill or a spending bill, has, as a matter of course, for decades, always been the case. There is no measure which contains more significance in terms of a Congressional Budget analysis than re-forming the healthcare system of America, which constitutes about 15 to 20 percent of the American economy and affects the lives of tens of millions of Americans.

Well, from what we have seen so far, it appears there is a good reason that the folks wanted to keep the bill a secret. Again, the basic fundamentals of the Affordable Care Act is built on two pillars. There was an expansion of Medicaid, and there were subsidies based on income for Americans to be able to buy insurance through the marketplace.

In the State of Connecticut, where I come from, we have cut the uninsured rate down to 3.6 percent from approximately 9 percent when the bill was signed into law 7 years ago.

What this bill does is, again, it just basically decapitates the Medicaid expansion. So about 11 million Americans are going to have their healthcare coverage threatened. And those are not just, you know, people on entitlement programs. We are talking about working Americans.

I know a farmer in my district who almost lost his foot from a chain saw accident, who thanked me the other day that he had Medicaid to cover the cost of his hospitalization, which any bill that has been filed, which tomorrow will be marked up and voted out of committee with not one single public hearing and, incredibly, with no analysis by the Congressional Budget Office, which any bill that has any impact on budget, whether it is a tax bill or a spending bill, has, as a matter of course, for decades, always been the case. There is no measure which contains more significance in terms of a Congressional Budget analysis than re-forming the healthcare system of America, which constitutes about 15 to 20 percent of the American economy and affects the lives of tens of millions of Americans.

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THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

The Speaker pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for years Americans across the country have struggled under a government takeover of health care. Because of ObamaCare, insurance markets are collapsing, healthcare costs are soaring, and patients’ choices are dwindling. Simply put, the flawed healthcare law is failing. It is hurting hardworking men and women across the country, and the American people deserve better.

That is why Republicans promised to deliver healthcare solutions Americans desperately need. This week, we are making good on that promise and moving forward with an effort that will provide a better way on health care.

After a thoughtful and collaborative process, members of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Ways and Means Committee recently unveiled a legislative plan that will repeal and replace ObamaCare. The plan, the American Health Care Act, includes positive, common-sense reforms that will help create more choices, lower costs, and give control back to individuals and families.

These reforms will create a new and innovative fund giving States the flexibility they need to design programs that fit the needs of their communities. They will responsibly unwind ObamaCare’s Medicaid expansion in a way that protects patients and strengthens the program for future generations.

The plan will also dismantle ObamaCare taxes and mandates—including the individual and employer mandate penalties and taxes on prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, health insurance premiums, and medical devices. It will expand health savings accounts to empower individuals and families to spend their healthcare dollars the way they want and need, and provide tax credits to those who don’t receive insurance through work or a government program, helping all Americans access high quality, affordable healthcare.

At the same time, we on the Education and the Workforce Committee are working to advance additional reforms that will help expand coverage, make health care more affordable, and promote a healthy workforce.

One legislative proposal will empower small businesses to band together to negotiate lower healthcare costs on behalf of their employees. Another will protect the ability of employers to self-insure, providing greater access to affordable, flexible healthcare options, for their employees. The third will give employers the legal certainty they need to offer employee wellness plans, helping to promote a healthy workforce and, again, lower healthcare costs.

These three legislative proposals reflect a few shared principles. Families should have the freedom to choose the healthcare plan that meets their needs. Americans need more affordable healthcare options, not fewer. And healthcare decisions should rest with patients and their doctors—not government bureaucrats. Instead of prescriptive mandates, we should ensure employers have the tools they need to help their employees afford health care.

These proposals—along with those in the American Health Care Act—are exactly the kind of free-market, patient-centered reforms Republicans promised, and they reflect the priorities of President Trump and his administration. They are the products of a careful process that took into account the ideas and concerns of men and women from all walks of life, and they will now be considered through an open, transparent process that provides policymakers on both sides of the aisle an opportunity to share their views and offer their ideas.

I encourage everyone—my colleagues in Congress, as well as all Americans—to join in this process. Visit readthebill.gop. See for yourself the hard work we have laid out, and help us move forward with these positive solutions. Together we can help ensure all Americans have access to the high quality, affordable healthcare coverage they deserve.

THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

The Speaker pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFazio) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DeFazio. Mr. Speaker, we just heard a lot about competition and better and improved markets. The basic problem the Republicans have—and they know this very well—is that the health insurance industry is exempt from the antitrust laws of the United States of America, so they can, and they do, get together and collude. They collude to drive up prices. They collude to share markets: hey, if you are pulling out of that State, I will pull out of this State and cut those kind of deals. They can’t be prosecuted.

I think you had a bipartisanship of the floor of this House when we were originally considering the House version of the Affordable Care Act—infinitely superior to the thing passed by the Senate which we got stuck with—and it was over 400 votes to take away their antitrust immunity. Is that in this bill? Heck, no. They are the second largest PAC contributor to the Republican Party, so I am afraid we are not going to take away their antitrust immunity—but we are going to have a really aggressive program to go after those who are colluding to drive up prices. You will be able to go out and get your policies, whatever the insurance companies have decided as they colluded behind closed doors.

Now, the other issue here is, for some reason, the Republicans seem to have taken and painted a big target on the back of low- and middle-income seniors in two ways. They are going to repeal some very small taxes on people who earn over one-quarter of a million dollars a year. You know, those people need another 4 percent because they are just hurting. Those people who earn $1 million, $2 million a year, they are hurting. We have got to repeal that tax. So that is one of the highest priorities in this bill: repeal that tax.

Unfortunately, that means that the Medicare trust fund will be exhausted 4 years earlier. That is right. The money those very high-income people are paying goes to Medicare, to the trust fund, which is in trouble right now. It is going to be exhausted in 2028. Under their plan, it is going to be exhausted in 2024. So they have painted a big target on seniors. But don’t worry, the seniors can go into the competitive—well, not so competitive—insurance market and buy a plan.

But then another little twist and another arrow in the heart of seniors—seniors now, under their plan, instead of a cap of three times the cost of a policy to other, younger subscribers, it is now they are going to jack it up to five times.

Why do you hate seniors so much? What is the deal here? Yeah, the high-income seniors will do fine. But what about the middle- and low-income seniors, those who are struggling to make ends meet on Social Security and others?

Then for some other bizarre reason, they have got it in for Planned Parent-ship. They say it is about abortion. Well, guess what? It is. The Federal law has prohibited Federal money from going to abortions for 40 years. It is not about abortion. It is about something...
different. It is about breast exams, Pap smears, physical exams, STD testing and treatment, information and counseling about sexual reproductive health, cancer screenings, pregnancy tests, prenatal services, and access to affordable care. Why do they want to kill that for 1 million people, many of whom live in rural areas that are already underserved? They don’t have an alternative for those services. But they want to kill that—oh, just for 1 year maybe. Well, actually, they would like to do it permanently. But they are going to say: well, we are just going to do it 1 year and see how it works out, how those million women do.

Then, as my colleagues from Connecticut said, everything around here has to be scored, and it can’t add to the deficit—unless it is something they want to do. Now, in this case, this has not been scored. We have no idea what it is going to cost the American taxpayer, this new Rube Goldberg, and they don’t have any analysis of how many people are going to lose coverage.

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Now, granted, they put off the huge loss of coverage until 2020. They delayed the big changes in Medicaid until 2020. That is when tens of millions of people will lose their health insurance. But there are still going to be a lot of people losing their health insurance a lot sooner, and it would be useful for people to know about that before they vote on it: how much is it going to cost the taxpayer and how many people are going to lose coverage.

Under the ruse of fixing something that is broken that has given 23 million people an opportunity to have health insurance and brought us the lowest rate of uninsured in recent history in this country, they are cutting taxes for wealthy people. By the way, there is a telling number of people who are going to lose coverage.

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my husband was diagnosed. Eventually I left the workforce to care for him... and, of course, lost my employer-provided health insurance at the same time. The ACA has provided me with options ever since then; options that I had not before its passage. In 2014 I had three joint replacements. Life altering surgeries that restored my active lifestyle and removed chronic pain from my life. These were only possible because I was able to access health insurance as an individual, at a reasonable cost.

The Republican plan for increasing costs for older Americans threatens people just like Elisabeth.

These stories matter. These lives matter. We must all keep them in mind as we look to change the Affordable Care Act.

OPPOSE BILL REFORMING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. BERIA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BERIA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to urge all of my colleagues. Democrats and Republicans to oppose this bill that repeals the Affordable Care Act, and here is why.

I stand here not as a Member of Congress, but as a doctor. When I took the oath to enter medicine, like thousands of other doctors, there are really three basic ethics in there: Benevolence: to do good.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not do anything good. It makes it harder for people to get health care.

The second ethic was non-malfeasance: to do no harm.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is going to harm millions of Americans. It is going to pull healthcare coverage away from folks. In fact, I have heard from folks who have come to my townhalls and have talked about how the Affordable Care Act has saved their lives. If you pull health care away from them, people are going to get sicker, and some people may potentially die.

And the third ethic is patient autonomy: the ability of patients to make the choices that impact their lives.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not empower patients to make their own choices. This bill limits those choices. It takes away choices from them.

This is a bad bill that goes against everything that we in the medical profession swear to when we enter the profession. That is why you see doctors standing up and opposing this bill, hospitals opposing this bill, and health plans opposing this bill. That is why, when patients see what is in this bill, you will see American patients pushing back.

If you thought the townhalls have been bad, think about the last few months, just try to pass this bill and take necessary health care away from folks. You are going to see those patients showing up in your townhalls.

Let’s talk about some of the good things that have happened in the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act expanded and made coverage for birth control much more readily available. That is a good thing. Whether you are pro-choice, like I am, it is a good thing. What we have seen by expanding coverage to birth control is the number of unintended pregnancies are near all-time lows. That is what we ought to be doing.

The Affordable Care Act expanded access to preventive health services. We know if we want to bring down the cost of health care, let’s diagnose the cancer early. Let’s treat it and let’s save that life. Let’s better manage disease.

Let’s not go back to the old days where the patient showed up with the heart attack and then we went into action. That costs us a lot more. Let’s prevent that heart attack. Let’s provide better care.

Mr. Speaker, let’s not make the President have to renege on a promise that he made. On the campaign trail and after being inaugurated, the President has said that anyone who is going to get coverage, it was going to be cheaper and it was going to be more accessible to patients. We know this bill that is being introduced does none of that. It cuts coverage. It is going to be more costly for people and fewer people are going to get it.

Mr. Speaker, don’t make the President have to renege and go against the promise that he made. The American public is going to hold him accountable for that.

Mr. Speaker, do the right thing. Let’s put American patients first. That is what we as doctors do every day, and that is why, again, doctors are against it, hospitals are against it, and health plans are against it.

Mr. Speaker, let’s reject this bill. I urge all my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to stand against this bill. It is a bad bill.

DESTABILIZING OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, last night, House Republicans released a blueprint in the middle of the night that threatens to destabilize our Nation’s healthcare system and rob millions of Americans of their health insurance plans.

Since coming to Congress, I have worked tirelessly to find commonsense fixes to our Nation’s healthcare laws. We should be working together to build upon the reforms we have already made to expand coverage and reduce costs. But what my colleagues on the other side have put forward would make working families, seniors, children, and people with disabilities foot the bill for their poorly conceived experiment.

What is worse, they are giving our constituents and their Representatives in Congress less than 48 hours to review it before jamming it through committee.

As a former businesswoman and entrepreneur, I am always channeled to see the long-term impact. Congress has an opportunity for health insurance access, and a chance for affordable care. We can’t go back to a time when getting sick meant going bankrupt, and that is exactly what this legislation would do.
HOW LONG?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, my father, James LeRoy Butler, worked as a janitor. He had a fifth grade education, and now his youngest child is a Member of the 115th Congress. My father worked hard, and his word was his bond.

On January 15, 2017, President Trump promised insurance for everyone. He also promised Americans would have much lower deductibles. On January 22, 2017, he said, “The plan that we promised no one would lose healthcare coverage. But after only a glimpse of his plan, we know these promises are not true, like so many other things that the White House has said.

The people who need coverage the most, the people depending on the President the most, the middle class, working families, and the working poor will be left behind under this plan. In my district alone in Florida, over 66,000 people stand to lose healthcare coverage.

To my Republican colleagues, I ask: How long will we endure empty promises and made-up stories coming out of the White House? How long? I call on the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, delivered in 1965, when he marched from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, and he asked this question: “How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever.

How long? Mexico will pay for the wall. I will release my tax returns. Discriminatory travel bans. Hidden ties with our enemy Russia. How long? Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please hold President Trump accountable and do what you know in your hearts is right. Demand answers and allow the facts to lead you to justice. How long?

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REPLACEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans released a bill last night. That bill deals with every American’s welfare—every American’s welfare—every child’s welfare in this country. None of them were able to testify before the committee, before the committee marks it up on Wednesday. None of them were able to come to that committee and say how it will affect them or their families or their fellow citizens. None were able to testify as to the benefits of the Affordable Care Act for them, their families, their children, and their neighbors. None of them will have been able to read and digest the bill.

Mr. Speaker, last night, after locking it away in a basement for days, and just as reporters were leaving to go home, Republicans released the text of their legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The country has been waiting for 7 years for the Republican replacement, for the Republican alternative, for the Republicans to redeem their promise of a better plan, a better way to ensure the security of having health care that is affordable and available to every American and to their families and their children.

Republicans have been promising, since the enactment of the Affordable Care Act in 2010, that they would repeal it, replace it, and do something better. They don’t repeal it entirely, and they don’t offer something better, something that covers more Americans and lowers costs to consumers. For 7 years, they have said we have a better plan. Last night, they revealed the in-accuracy of that representation; the bait-and-switch, if you will, of that representation; the pretense to their conservatives who have voted some 85 times to repeal the Affordable Care Act that they were not going to offer a bill that did not withstand the fact that they said that is what they are going to do.

The legislation they introduced would repeal, of course, some parts of the Affordable Care Act and replace them with a plan that would take health coverage away, take health care away from millions of Americans and make millions of others pay more for less.

President Trump, just the other day from that rostrum, promised the American people that the Republican plan would “have insurance for everybody.” That was not true. Neither the House Republicans nor the Senate Republicans nor President Trump have offered such a plan, and the plan that was revealed last night does not fulfill that representation.

Mr. Speaker, it should not surprise us, however, that our President says things that prove to be not accurate. He also said from that rostrum that the policies would be far less expensive and far better than they are now. This bill does not do that, and the President has offered no bill that does that.

This plan fails that representation miserably. It increases healthcare costs for middle class families in order to pay for tax breaks for the wealthiest, who don’t need them to afford health care. We should not penalize people for becoming wealthy. We applaud their success. But we should not subsidize health care for those of us who can afford our health care while those who cannot are left to fend for themselves. In other words, the Republicans are once again saying you are on your own.

Their bill also raids the Medicare trust fund, threatening its long-term solvency. In fact, the affordable care added to the life expectancy of Medicare. The bill that the Republicans have put forward imposes severe cuts to Medicaid as well. It forces States and healthcare providers to carry the burden of the uninsured while taking away funding for expanded Medicaid.

Their bill requires States to ration care by throwing those with pre-existing conditions into “sick pools,” with higher premiums, higher deductibles, and waiting periods for coverage. And what services would be available under Medicaid?

Their plan replaces the individual responsibility requirement which, by the way, Mr. Speaker, if you may well know, was the proposal of The Heritage Foundation, The Heritage Action for America. While this is the political arm of the foundation, opposes the Republican bill. Not for the same reason I do, but because they believe it continues much of what ACA tried to do in protecting Americans in a plan that was initially introduced by The Heritage Foundation and adopted by Governor Romney in Massachusetts.

Unbelievably, Mr. Speaker, Republicans won’t even tell the American people how much it will cost and what its impact will be on consumers’ wallets and on our insurance markets. How do you do that? You have hearings, you listen to people, you listen to their experiences, you listen to what they are, and you listen to those who have the greatest experience on their view of what the impact of this legislation will be. There have been no such hearings and none are planned.

Republicans know that millions of Americans will lose coverage under their legislation: those covered under Medicaid, the health insurance exchanges, and even those with employer-based insurance. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please hold President Trump accountable and do what you know in your hearts is right.

Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, it will be difficult for House Republicans to enact their bill into law, not only because of the extreme opposition to those proposals by the American people, as we have seen in townhall meetings after townhall meeting after townhall meeting across this country, but also because the House and Senate Republicans are already rejecting it. It is not certain that House Republicans can even reach a majority in this House on their legislation.

The head of the Republican Study Committee, the largest group of Republicans, has said this bill is not acceptable. The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS), the head of the Freedom Caucus, has said this bill does not repeal the Affordable Care Act, which is his objective and the objective of the Freedom Caucus. Senator Cruz has said that as well. Senator Paul has said that as well. Senator Lee has said that as well.

One thing is clear, however, Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are going to have to find the votes on their own to dismantle the protections incorporated in the Affordable Care Act that the American people now have.

Is the Affordable Care Act perfect? It is not. Should we have spent the last 6
Mr. Speaker, I urge Republican leaders to withdraw this bill. Let us work together to ensure what almost every Member says they want, and that is a healthcare program in America that is affordable by all, available to all, and enjoyed by all. That is what President Trump said at that rostrum just days ago.

This bill that the Republicans are going to mark up on Wednesday does not do what they say or what President Trump said. The American people will oppose it, and we will reflect their opposition in this House. But we are available to our Republican colleagues in good faith to work together to ensure that what the President said — available to all, at a lower price, with everybody having access — we will support that bill, if it exists, and we will work with our Republican colleagues to pass it and give that protection and security to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I note that there have not been many Republicans to speak this morning. I understand that one Republican spoke about this bill. I am amazed if they think this is a better way. I am amazed if they think this will do a better job than the Affordable Care Act. I am amazed if they think they are going to bring costs down and care up, and that we don’t have a lot of Republicans, Mr. Speaker, coming to this floor and claiming victory. They are not here because they can’t claim that victory.

Let’s reject this bill, Mr. Speaker. Let’s work together. We can do better. The American people expect us to do better.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today. Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. Foxx) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Gary Studivnieski, St. Peter’s Catholic Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

O God, You, who have looked upon this grand American experiment with such favor from its beginning and who have preserved it by Your providence, graciously hear our prayers for our Nation, that it may be a bastion of liberty, of justice, of true freedom. Bless this governing assembly with the spirit of Your wisdom, that its Members may decide everything for the well-being and peace of all. May these servants never turn aside from just and noble purposes, as You give them the light to discern these purposes.

Dear Lord, grant each House Member, their families, and their staffs strength, comfort, and always the peace of the kingdom where You reign today and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof. Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SOTO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

HONORING MADILYN GAWRYCH-TURNER

Mr. BOST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a bright young constituent from my district in southern Illinois on winning a scholarship in the VFW Patriot’s Pen essay competition.

Enacted in 1985, the Patriot’s Pen program is designed to foster patriotism by allowing students the opportunity to express their opinion on patriotic themes. This year’s theme was “The America I Believe In.” Madilyn Gawrych-Turner of Jonesboro, Illinois, was sponsored by the VFW post in Anna, Illinois. I would like to congratulate Madilyn, and I know she will have a very bright future.

Also, Madam Speaker, I would like to take just a second, if I may, to wish my wife a happy anniversary for the 37 years that we have been together.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REPEAL

(Mr. SOTO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, last night our Republican colleagues finally revealed their secret healthcare bill, and it is clear that TrumpCare doesn’t care. Here are the top five reasons why:

Number one, TrumpCare cuts Medicaid. It creates block grants to States that will lead to less care, including forcing seniors out of nursing homes and reducing health care for the poor.

Number two, TrumpCare eliminates healthcare subsidies. In its place, it creates standard tax cuts that will require millions of Americans can no longer afford health insurance.

Number three, TrumpCare favors the rich. It provides a tax giveaway for the rich, while leaving the middle class with less access to care.

Number four, TrumpCare hurts our hospitals. It kicks people off of insurance, guaranteeing hospitals, employer plans, and taxpayers will ultimately foot the bill.

Number five, TrumpCare defunds Planned Parenthood. This will leave millions of women without health care. In summary, TrumpCare doesn’t care, and it won’t work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Sunday afternoon, the University of South Carolina’s women’s basketball team clenched their third consecutive Southeastern Conference championship.

The Gamecocks beat Mississippi State 59-49 in the SEC’s women’s basketball tournament title game in Greenville, South Carolina.

Juniors Kaela Davis of Suwanee, Georgia, and Ajara Wilson of Irmo, South Carolina, an extraordinary constituent, led the team with an impressive 38 combined points. This all-star team will likely hold the number one seed in the NCAA tournament that will begin on March 17.

Head coach Dawn Staley joined the University of South Carolina in 2008, building a team based on teamwork and determination. In the eight seasons that Coach Staley has been with the program, the South Carolina Women’s Basketball Team has also seen three SEC regular season championships, three Sweet 16 seasons, and the program’s first number one national ranking, with an average home attendance of over 14,000 Gamecock fans.

As March marks Women’s History Month, it is especially fitting to congratulate Coach Dawn Staley and the historic Gamecock women’s basketball team.

Best wishes for continued success in the NCAA playoffs. Go Gamecocks.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REPEAL AND REPLACE

(Mr. EVANS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, last night House Republicans released their plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act. House Republicans and the Trump administration say that they want a healthcare plan that cuts costs and covers more Americans; yet they introduced a plan that takes away from millions of Americans and puts the poorest Americans, our seniors, our people with preexisting conditions, and working class families at greater risk of getting sick.

According to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, approximately 220,000 Philadelphians would lose their health insurance if the Affordable Care Act is repealed without adequate replacement.

We cannot take this risk. The new plan is an insult to the millions of Americans who have fought hard to try to get ahead. Now is the time to resist.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT’S PEEPING TOMCRATS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the census counts the population every 10 years, but the Census Bureau also sends out a mandatory, intrusive personal and more time-consuming, 28-page document called the American Community Survey.

The survey asks intrusive questions like how many toilets does a person have in their house; what time does a person leave and come home from work; does any person in the house have poor eyesight, difficulty dressing, or mental issues.

If this Orwellian survey is ignored, the government may come after the citizen. First, the telephone calls start: weekly, then daily. Then Uncle Sam sends his peeping tomocrats to lurk around homes, forcing citizens to comply. If a person still refuses to hand over private information to the intrusive eyes of the government, the government may assess fines up to $5,000.

My bill, H.R. 1362, makes the American Community Survey voluntary and also removes the associated criminal penalties. The ACS is a violation of privacy and a costly abuse of government power.

And that is just the way it is.

THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, in recent weeks, I held three townhall meetings and a roundtable discussion about health care in my district. Hundreds of constituents attended, and altogether I spent more than 10 hours listening to our folks.

The best ideas come from the people, Madam Speaker. I know you know that, and I feel it is my duty as a Representative to hear my constituents’ input.

The American Health Care Act reflects what I have heard from patients, families, doctors, and many others over the past 8 years. Our bill will lower costs, increase choices, and give patients greater control of their health care. We are helping middle-income Americans gain access to affordable coverage. It also protects those with preexisting conditions and allows young adults to stay on their parents’ insurance until age 26.

Most importantly, this legislation is moving through the Congress in an open and transparent manner. I invite the people of Florida’s 12th Congressional District and everyone to read and share the American Health Care Act at readthebill.gov.

FORSYTH ACADEMY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, March is National Reading Month, and students across the country often kick off this observance by celebrating the birthday of treasured children’s author Dr. Seuss. Last week I visited Forsyth Academy in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where I read “There’s a Wocket in My Pocket!” to first grade students.

Forsyth Academy is a charter school serving students from kindergarten through eighth grade. The school was founded on the principles of academic excellence, moral focus, parental partnership, and student responsibility. Its leadership believes in setting high standards, making expectations clear, providing meaningful instruction, and watching children surpass expectations as a result.

It is always a pleasure to visit local schools and witness the great things happening in classrooms across the Fifth District. Every student in every school deserves an excellent education, but, unfortunately, we are falling far short of that goal. Thankfully, innovative charter schools like Forsyth Academy are providing thousands of families new hope and opportunity.

School choice is a powerful tool to help children succeed, and I am encouraged by the momentum that is building. I look forward to the work ahead and exploring additional opportunities to provide parents more choices for their children’s education.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:


Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 3(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 7, 2017, at 9:29 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H.J. Res. 37.

Appointment:

Members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o’clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FALEOMAVAEGA ENI FA’AUA’A HUNKIN VA CLINIC

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1362) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa’aua’a Hunkin VA Clinic.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1362
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC, PAGO PAGO, AMERICAN SAMOA.

The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the “Faleomavaega Eni Fa’aua’a Hunkin VA Clinic”. Any reference
Given that I challenged him for his seat from 1994 until 2014, when I won my first term, Eni and I had a long and complicated relationship. Though we were often at odds politically, we always treated one another with the utmost respect and grace, allowing us to form a shared bond that I am very thankful for and will never forget.

Ours was a true friendship that demonstrated that, despite whatever political differences we may have, we can all come together for the good of those we serve. While we may have had disagreements on national issues, we were very much in sync when it came to Federal policy and funding for American Samoa.

As a veteran whose long-term health suffered due to his service in Vietnam, Eni dedicated his life to improving conditions for veterans in American Samoa and took great pride in securing funds to build the local VA clinic which has served our veterans well. Therefore, I can think of no better way to memorialize his dedication to the people of American Samoa and his service to our country in uniform than having the local VA clinic in Pago Pago, which he worked so hard for, named in his honor.

I want to encourage my colleagues in the House and Senate to salute my predecessor and a true public servant, the Honorable Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin.

Born on August 15, 1943, in Vailoatai Village, American Samoa, Mr. Faleomavaega graduated from Brigham Young University in 1966 and subsequently joined the United States Army and served in Vietnam.

However, his career in the Army was just the beginning of his public service. Mr. Faleomavaega served as a staff member to A.U. Fruimaono, American Samoa's first Delegate at-large to Washington, D.C., from 1973 to 1975.

Having earned his law degree from the University of Houston, he next served as staff counsel to the Committee on the Interior and Insular Affairs.

In 1981, Mr. Faleomavaega returned to American Samoa to serve as our deputy attorney general until 1984, then as our lieutenant governor until 1989. During this period, Mr. Faleomavaega reentered military service in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1982 to 1989.

In 1989, Mr. Faleomavaega began his tenure as the congressional Delegate from American Samoa. He went on to win 13 consecutive terms, making him the longest serving Delegate to date from American Samoa.

While in Congress, he diligently served the interests of his constituents as a member of both the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Natural Resources.

Sadly, my friend Eni Faleomavaega passed away on February 22. He is survived by his wife, 5 children, and 10 grandchildren.

I would now like to say a few personal words about the man whom I came to call a true friend.
singing the songs of his people 8,000 miles away.

Though a Delegate in this House, Eni Faleomavaega never presented himself as anything less than a Member of Congress. In doing so, he never diminished the standing of his constituents and their right, like all Americans, to have their voice heard here in the people’s House.

The second lesson I learned from our departed friend was that the responsibilities of a Member of Congress go beyond the parochial concerns of our district. Of course, we are here to be sure that the people and place we represent are treated fairly and that our special circumstances are taken well into account in the formulation of Federal law and policy; but beyond that local responsibility, we all have a larger responsibility to act and speak on behalf of our Nation as a whole.

Eni certainly demonstrated that larger role we must all accept by his advocacy for Native Americans and by taking leadership in the foreign affairs of our Nation, especially in Asia and the island nations of the South Pacific. A good Member of Congress takes care of their own people, just as Eni did. A great Member of Congress understands that their people can only thrive when the Nation as a whole is a place of justice and peace.

These are the lessons I learned from knowing Eni Faleomavaega, and for what he taught me, I will forever be grateful.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us in passing this important piece of legislation. When those veterans in American Samoa see Eni’s name, it will strike them about what he has done and the work that he did here in Congress.

I would also like to give a heartfelt thank you to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) for bringing this bill forward and for honoring her friend the way she has.

I encourage Members to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers at this time. Once again, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1362, a bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa the Faleomavaega Eni Fa’a’aua Hunkin VA Clinic. This is a fitting way to honor the life and service of my good friend and colleague, former Congressman Eni Faleomavaega of American Samoa. During his 26 years of service in the House of Representatives, Congressman Faleomavaega displayed unwavering commitment to addressing a wide range of issues affecting veterans in the Pacific. His focus on access to health care and veteran services in remote areas of the Pacific ensured that veterans had access to the critical resources and services they needed and deserved after serving their country. His efforts directly contributed to increasing the quality of life of veterans throughout the Pacific. Serving as the VA facility in Pago Pago in his honor is a tribute to his service and commitment to the veterans in the Pacific region.

Congressman Faleomavaega’s compassion for veterans can be attributed to his own service as an Army officer during the Vietnam conflict. Servicing capacity gave him firsthand knowledge of the sacrifices servicemen make to protect our way of life.

I deeply miss Eni’s advice, friendship and compassion for veterans. His passing has created a void for all that have known him. On behalf of the people of Guam, I extend my condolences to his family and the people of American Samoa. Our lives are richer for knowing Eni. I also extend my appreciation to Congresswoman RADEWAGEN in putting forward this legislation. It is a very appropriate way to memorialize an important part of Eni’s work on behalf of the people of American Samoa.

Un dangkulo na si Yu’os ma’a (with deepest gratitude), Eni. You are deeply missed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1362.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being the quorum, the question is now before the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FRED D. THOMPSON FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 375) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.
The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, shall be known and designated as the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.
Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 375.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 375 would designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located in Nashville, Tennessee, as the Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for her leadership on this legislation.

Senator Thompson was respected for his work as a lawyer, an actor, and as a United States Senator. This legislation is a fitting tribute that I am honored to bring to the floor today.

Fred Thompson first made a name for himself as an assistant U.S. attorney from 1969 to 1972. That experience brought him to the national stage in his subsequent position as special counsel on a number of Senate committees, most notably as minority counsel with the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, better known as the Watergate Committee.

It was then-Counsel Thompson who helped frame Senator Howard Baker’s now famous question, “What did the President know, and when did he know it?” in regards to the Watergate controversy. Thompson himself asked an even more important question related to the existence of taped conversations in the Oval Office—tapes that led to President Nixon’s eventual resignation.

After returning to the private practice of law in Nashville, Thompson represented the chairperson of the State Parole Board who unearthed a cash-for-plea scheme involving the then-Governor of Tennessee. This case was eventually made into a book and into the film “Marie.” Fred Thompson was cast to play himself, which launched his acting career. Throughout the 1990s, Fred Thompson appeared in supporting roles in some of the decade’s biggest movies, including “Days of Thunder,” “The Hunt for Red October,” and “Die Hard 2.”
In 1994, Fred Thompson ran for political office for the first time and was elected to fill the remaining 2 years of Vice President Al Gore’s Senate term. He was re-elected in 1996 to a full 6-year term and served as chairman of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs until his retirement in 2002.

That didn’t slow Senator Thompson down. He returned to acting and won the role of New York District Attorney Arthur Branch on the hit NBC show “Law & Order” between 2002 and 2007. It was in 2007 that Senator Thompson returned to politics by announcing his candidacy for the United States Presidency. Although his return to the political realm was unsuccessful, Senator Thompson’s popularity did not wane. He returned to acting on screen and on TV, wrote a memoir, and appeared often to comment on politics. Tragically, in 2015, Senator Thompson died from lymphoma.

Senator Thompson was a man of many talents. Through it all, he never lost his roots as a Tennessean. Given Senator Thompson’s dedication to the law and public service, I believe it is more than fitting to name this courthouse and Federal building in Nashville after him.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of this legislation, H.R. 375, which names the Federal building and U.S. courthouse in Nashville, Tennessee, after the late Senator Fred Thompson.

Senator Thompson had a long and extraordinary career in many roles that included actor, lobbyist, private attorney, and radio show host. But he is best known and respected not for his hawking of reverse mortgages but for being an assistant U.S. attorney, a congressional staffer, and, lastly, a U.S. Senator representing the State of Tennessee. Senator Thompson was a graduate of Memphis State University and Vanderbilt Law School. Senator Thompson got his start in public life in 1967, when he served as an assistant U.S. attorney in Nashville, Tennessee.

During his time in that office, he met U.S. Senator Howard Baker from Tennessee who became a lifelong mentor to Senator Thompson. After managing Senator Baker’s successful U.S. Senate campaign, Senator Thompson moved to Washington, D.C., where he was appointed counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee investigating the Watergate break-in and famously helped shape the direction and tone of those hearings. I think that he will be known as one who helped Senator Baker in formulating that age-old, timeless question: “What did President Nixon know, and when did he know it?” It is ironic that today, Speaker, people are asking about our current President, President Trump: What did he know, and when did he know it?

I will tell you, President Trump stood right there at the rostrum of the House last week and said that the Republican health insurance plan would have insurance for everybody, the insurance would be far less expensive and far better than what we have today. But the reality is, as the Republicans have, on a Monday, I guess at some point before the day ended, introduced their repeal bill of the Affordable Care Act.

We asked Senator Thompson today, but I just can’t help asking: When did President Trump know that the Republican plan was going to throw 20 million people off of the Affordable Care Act depriving them of insurance? When did he know that? What did he know about this plan? Because not a whole lot of people around here knew of the plan until it was released because it was shrouded in secrecy, and it was released and a hearing scheduled to mark it up, to mark it up to the legislation, with no hearings taking place on the underlying legislation.

So no CBO score, no Congressional hearings about it, introducing it in a cloud shrouded in secrecy, and, boom, it is dropped on the American people at a time when you are trying to distract attention from other questions about what President Trump knew about Russia, Russian hacking, and those kinds of questions. What did he know to charge the tax-payers own that he is leasing and now he is the lessor and the lessee of that hotel that belongs to the American people? What did he know and when did he know it? Those are questions that the American people have. We intend to get down to the bottom of it on this side. I hope that we will have some help on the other side.

I do want to say that I support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I think the American people would be horrified to learn that of the 30 million people who were able to attain health insurance coverage and access to the healthcare system as a result of passage of the Affordable Care Act, many of those, a substantial number of those, will be thrown off of the rolls and deprived of the ability to have access to the healthcare system because of this new replacement bill that has been filed, which, as I said before, has not been written behind closed doors in total secrecy with no daylight and with no access to the important content of this bill that all of us should have the ability to read the details of it and be able to make a good decision that is consistent with the will of our constituents. This is a

Yes, they are, with this new law that has been half-baked introduced and fast-tracked to become law without people really knowing about it. This is something that people need to know about, people need to get out and reclaim their opposition to because it is going to hurt a lot of people.

The way that this bill changes the Affordable Care Act is it makes it unaffordable for most Americans to be able to afford the insurance that they have gained as a result of passage of the Affordable Care Act. The premium subsidies are recalculated. Instead of based on a sliding scale which is an indication of need, this Republican plan is going to replace that and calculate the amount of the premium subsidy based on age.

Now, what does that do, especially when you consider that some elderly people are more well-heeled than others? They can afford insurance, and they can afford to front the policy cost in order to keep the elderly five times more than they will charge a younger person. That differential had been abolished in the Affordable Care Act, but the Republicans are bringing it back. Who is going to pay? It is going to be those same elderly people. You put it in one hand, and you take it out of the other. All of the elderly people in America, regardless of how much money you earn, should be concerned about that.

Prioritizing health savings accounts over these premium subsidies is going to provide a great big tax cut to the wealthy. You can’t get away from that. It is going to hurt the working people of this country. It is going to be a tax giveaway to the wealthy. I am sad to hear and to see this plan, and all of you should be, also.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT).

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in strong opposition to the Republican proposal to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

This is a rushed bill, Mr. Speaker, that was written behind closed doors in total secrecy with no daylight and with no access to the important content of this bill that all of us should have the ability to read the details of it and be able to make a good decision that is consistent with the will of our constituents. This is a
rushed bill that was written behind closed doors, again, in total secrecy.

Mr. Speaker, procedurally, we have not seen a CBO score of this bill. There have been no hearings on this bill. There has been no expert testimony on the impact of this bill, and the effect it is going to have on healthier families or the quality of coverage all of those families will receive is completely unknown.

Substantively, this bill is an absolute nightmare. It guts Federal requirements for essential health benefits like maternity care. It shatters working Americans’ access to insurance covering abortions. It creates age-based subsidies, repeals all the ACA taxes, and completely destroys the Medicaid expansion program which so much helped many of our States.

In our country, at least 11 million people will lose their healthcare insurance coverage as a result of this reckless dismantlement of Medicaid. In my district alone, over 156,000 individuals are going to lose their coverage with the repeal of the Medicaid expansion. Over 156,000 people. Mr. Speaker, will lose their coverage.

This bill kicks the elderly, the poor, and the sick to the curb and benefits only the young, healthy, and incredibly wealthy. I urge my colleagues to stand with me in opposition. This bill is a serious heart attack to the American people. It is a blatantly partisan action to dismantle President Obama’s successful signature project: ObamaCare. Again, the 1 percent get their way.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, decades to come, we will be able to go back and think of health care within the context of three major programs: Medicaid, Medicare, and ObamaCare.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may have.

Mr. Speaker, with exactly zero hearings on the topic, our Republican friends have now revealed their TrumpCare plan.

Just to remind everyone what President Trump said during the campaign and promised, he said that his Republican plan would “have insurance for everybody,” and that it would be “far less expensive and far better” than what we have today.

Well, now we actually have the plan out. What does it do?

It kicks 20 million Americans off their health insurance. It sharply increases out-of-pocket costs for millions of American families. It rations care for many Americans on Medicaid. It includes massive cuts to Medicaid. It would make maternity care much more expensive.

But don’t worry, there is good news. If you are a CEO of a healthcare company and you make, on average, as they do, somewhere between $13 million and $14 million, the tax increases that were leveled on you 6 years ago will all be repealed. Some congratulations. Those folks benefit, but 20 million Americans lose their health insurance.

Please join me in saying “no” to TrumpCare.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just can’t get out of my mind, Mr. Speaker, those words of President Trump that everybody would have insurance and that it would be far less expensive and far better than what we have today.

The Republicans have campaigned incessantly for the last 7 years on repeal and replace of the Affordable Care Act, which they derisively referred to as ObamaCare. We are going to repeal it and we are going to replace it on day one is what they all said.

And here we are at day 45, something like that, and they have no plan, nothing but one scandal after another; but we have finally now gotten to the House Republicans revealing what they have shrouded in secrecy for so long over the last 7 years. It sputters out without much ado, trying to sneak it in, trying to keep it undercover so that the American people won’t realize what is being done to them.

I can tell you that what is being done under those covers is not worthy of my comment descriptively at this time, but I will say that it is an illicit, illegitimate situation that is taking place because you are taking from a group of people who are in need and you are giving more to individuals who have and who don’t.

In this country we are all in the same boat together. That is what the Affordable Care Act did. It was an aspiration for health care for everyone. It wasn’t perfect. It is not a perfect bill. It needs some repairs done, if you will, some enhancements. We have never had the cooperation from the other side of the aisle to do anything to enhance that foundation that was already laid.

Nobody can argue that 30 million people who did not have health care access and now having it is a bad thing. Nobody can argue that. They could argue that: Well, the way that it was done was bad. They say that we rushed it through without any input from them, but there were literally dozens of public hearings and markups. The bill, all 1,000 pages, was available for everyone to be able to read.

They talk about reading the bill. Well, there are so many by going through right now that they don’t want people to take the time to read them. That is why they introduce them late in the day and then they schedule markups for them without even putting them in front of the committee for a hearing. No airing out of the bill and what it does.

Why are they holding this and hiding it from the American people? Why because they are going to get away with something that is going to be bad for the people. That is why.

They knew that their changes, their repeal and replacement bill, if properly voted, if the American people had an opportunity to learn what is in it, they knew it would not be popular. That is why they hid it from the public. That is why they are not having any hearings on it. They just want to proceed straight to a markup; pass it out of the committee; put it on the floor of the House; pass it out of the House with little debate; send it over to the Senate for a rubber stamp, they hope; and then on to President Trump, who, as I said, filed, didn’t give them the time to tell him that he was going to be presented with perhaps did not provide coverage for everybody and was not far better in coverage than the Affordable Care Act? When was it that he learned that?

The American people want to know a whole lot. There is a whole lot to investigate about President Trump and his campaign. There is a whole lot to investigate about this repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act with an inferior product, one that is slanted to the rich and hurts the working people of this country.

Then it guts the Medicaid program, which millions and millions of people depend on to keep grandma and granddaddy and momma and daddy at the nursing home. Medicaid helps to make nursing home care affordable.

But under this healthcare repeal legislation that the Republicans have filed, they are going to repeal Medicaid. They are going to use the expansion of the Medicaid program which enabled 10 million people to gain coverage that they could not afford, and they are going to cut that. At the same time, they are going to cut part of the Medicaid program which provides for people to be able to have their loved ones properly cared for at the nursing home, instead of down in the basement or upstairs in the spare bedroom.

So, get ready, ladies and gentlemen, for that inevitability if this legislation passes. Get ready for your loved ones to have no place to go, no nursing home facility to take care of them, because they will not be able to afford it and you will not be able to afford it.

Who will suffer most? Momma and daddy and granddaddy and grandma. They are the ones that get the care that is so needed for the elderly.

So in this bill, where they are going to cut 20 million people off the healthcare rolls, they are going to cut momma and daddy from the nursing home by cutting the Medicaid program and turning it into a block grant program and turning it over to the States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1174.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I offer an objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues for their work on bringing this bill to the floor today.

H.R. 1174 is a straightforward bill to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1174) to provide a lactation room in public buildings, as amended.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1174

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Fairness For Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. LACTATION ROOM IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

(a) LACTATION ROOM IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.—Chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3318. Lactation room in public buildings

“(a) Definitions.—In this section:

“(1) Appropriate authority.—The term ‘appropriate authority’ means the head of a Federal agency, the Architect of the Capitol, or other official authority responsible for the operation of a public building.

“(2) Building.—The term ‘covered public building’ means a public building (as defined in section 3301) that is open to the public and contains a public restroom, and includes a building listed in section 6301 or 5101.

“(3) Lactation room.—The term ‘lactation room’ means a hygienic place, other than a bathroom, that—

“(A) is shielded from view;

“(B) is free from intrusion; and

“(C) contains a chair, a working surface, and a sink supplied with electricity, an electrical outlet.

“(b) Lactation Room Required.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the appropriate authority of a covered public building shall ensure that the building contains a lactation room that is made available for use by members of the public to express breast milk.

“(c) Exceptions.—A covered public building may be excluded from the requirement in subsection (b) at the discretion of the appropriate authority if—

“(1) the public building—

“(A) does not contain a lactation room for employees who work in the building; and

“(B) does not have a room that could be repurposed as a lactation room or a space that could be made private using portable materials, at a reasonable cost; or

“(2) new construction would be required to create a lactation room in the public building and the cost of such construction is unfeasible.

“(d) No Unauthorized Entry.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize an individual to enter a public building or portion thereof that the individual is not otherwise authorized to enter.

“(b) Clerical Amendment.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item related to section 3316 the following new item:

“§ 3318. Lactation room in public buildings.”.

(c) Effective Date.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself. I certainly thank my good friend from Georgia for yield.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1174, the Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2017, introduced by my good friend, Ms. NORTON. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this legislation.

My Republican friends have no experience with structural reform. If you look at all the structural reform in our country, beginning with the New Deal, none of it was done by Republicans.

Whether you are talking about the administrative agencies that are so important to all that we do in this country, Medicare, Medicaid, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, whatever you have in mind, these are structural reforms that Republicans...
have, if anything, opposed, as they opposed Social Security, for example.

So here what they are trying to do is to unravel, take away health care, and then put something in its place. They have no experience doing anything like it. Anybody who has looked closely at it has to doubt, as I do, that they can do it.

Look what they will be doing. In my own district, the District of Columbia, we have cut in half the rate of uninsured.

Are Republicans going to give me a guarantee that that cut will remain if they replace the bill with the markup that is going on as we speak?

Ninety-six percent of District of Columbia residents have health coverage today. That is comparable to other advanced countries in the world. As we know, most countries in the world already afford this kind of coverage. That makes the District, according to whoever is doing the counting, number one, because more number one is the Nation in health care provided to our residents. I am very proud of that. I am going to fight like mad to keep it.

Mr. Speaker, many of us had healthcare townhalls over the recess. We were appalled at these townhalls on affordable care that my good friends on the other side also had. They met a revolution from their own constituents. We didn’t have that problem in our townhalls. Some of the stories that were brought forward are truly heartbreaking, so I want to leave you with one.

A woman who came to testify at my healthcare townhall, her name is Markita. Markita’s grandmother was a D.C. Public Schools cafeteria worker for most of her career. She retired early. She retired before she had Social Security or Medicare. She was suffering from diabetes and a stroke, but she was so prudish that she never let anyone know that she had to slice her pills in half just to get by. Now she is under the protection of the Affordable Care Act. Markita’s grandmother is healthier and can afford her medication. She is no longer splitting her pills in half.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the chairman and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise with equal respect for all that the Republicans have put forward, you are going to be worse off today than you were when the Affordable Care Act was passed because 20 million of the 30 million people who are on coverage now will be off coverage if this thing passes.

This Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2017, which was introduced at the colloquy of my colleague from Virginia, has been cosponsored by 20 more of my colleagues, including the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the chairman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with the greatest respect for my colleague from the District of Columbia and her passion on this subject and the bill that she has introduced. I rise with equal respect for my colleague, Chairman BARLETTA, and the way in which he has walked this bill through the process, but I am going to oppose this bill. I am going to do so on the basis of process. I thought it important to explain why, given, I think, the amount of energy that has gone into the bill and the fact that I wasn’t able to voice a vote against it which I wrote the vote at the committee level.

I do so because I think that blank checks rarely work out well for the
A child born in America today is going to inherit a giant liability from the Federal Government in terms of the cost of our Federal Government. By accountants from both the left and the right, they have said what we have in place is not sustainable. Therefore, I think it is very important, from a process standpoint, that we look at a final form number on any of these bills that we throw out and we prescribe, regardless of, again, how well-meaning they are and how much they are, which is certainly the case with this bill. I wanted to stand to give a quick explanation. I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD), my friend, opposes the bill because the CBO scoring process, which came up with a no-cost estimate for this bill, the contention is that that CBO study was insufficient. Well, I am sure that my colleague and friend from South Carolina will agree with me that with no CBO scoring for this congressional Republican healthcare repeal bill that they have put forward, then we are certainly not in a position to proceed further with a fast-track legislative process, as this bill seems to be on. They are going to mark it up with no hearings.

When we were dealing with the Affordable Care Act, we held 79 hearings over 2 years, heard from 181 witnesses from both sides of the aisle, and posted the bill online for 30 days. The CBO scoring actually showed that this bill was going to save money, as opposed to cost.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleague from South Carolina to be in opposition to his own party's healthcare repeal bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the kind gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), my friend.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his work on this.

Mr. Speaker, after weeks of empty promises that he had a secret plan to insure every American at lower costs with higher quality care, President Trump is now standing behind a House GOP plan that was introduced last night that fails every single one of those promises. Based on estimates that we have seen so far, millions of Americans stand to lose coverage, out-of-pocket costs will skyrocket, and the quality of care will plummet.

But today, hours after that bill was introduced, Mr. Speaker, our President referenced a to-be-announced second and third phase of his healthcare rollout. The White House referred to this as "a work in progress," once again injecting our healthcare system with crippling uncertainty that is hurting our patients, hospitals, behavioral health providers, and local economies.

If the House passes this bill, why has it been locked in dark rooms? Why not have an open debate? What are we so afraid of to have a debate on this floor?

That is why I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, to support my resolution of inquiry tomorrow, to try to make sure that the details that have been discussed by this White House and by the Republicans behind closed doors are open for America to understand that before we cram a healthcare overhaul down our throats.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was looking at my congressional calendar, and I noticed that this year we are working in Washington, D.C., more than we have under the past 5 years of the rein of the Republicans. We have been the most do-nothingest Congresses on record for many years, and so I think it is working.

But I am baffled as to whether or not it is because the Republicans don't want to go home and face their constituents in a townhall meeting about the Affordable Care Act repeal bill that they have filed. We will be here in session now for another 4 weeks before the public has a chance to hear from their Representative when they return home for an extended time. But on the flip side, that gives everybody time to prepare for those upcoming townhall meetings which need to be held to explain what they are trying to do to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), my friend.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Last Thursday, I was wandering the Capitol searching for the Republican's secret repeal bill. We went from room to room to read their plan, but now that I have seen it, I understand why they would want to hide it.

Even if we can all agree that we need to make health care more affordable and more accessible, this bill is not the solution. In fact, this bill will only make this problem worse. The Republican repeal bill gives tax breaks to the rich. We are talking about over $800 billion overall, while taking away health coverage from millions of Americans. The Republican repeal bill will dramatically increase the cost of health insurance for millions of Americans, with the biggest increase for seniors and for working families.

It would radically change the Medicaid program, slashing funding, and covering fewer people.

The Republican repeal bill will force Governors and State legislators to ration care. My Republican Governor weighed in now and said that it would be unwise for Illinois if Medicaid is cut back.

Who do they want to cut out? Children, the elderly, people with disabilities. Thousands of hardworking individuals in Illinois who rely on Medicaid to health coverage. As I said, in fact, Republican Governor Bruce Rauner said that our State "won't do very well" if the Republican repeal bill becomes law.

The Republican repeal bill breaks the promise made by President Trump to cover more Americans at lower cost.

I oppose this bill. I am going to fight tooth and nail to protect our care. And, frankly, I think this bill, as my mother would say, is deader than a door nail.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), who opined that this bill was not scored correctly.

We are talking about space already designated for Federal employees. The White House and by the Republicans behind closed doors is open for America to understand that before we cram a healthcare overhaul down our throats. Yes, sometimes these lactation rooms will be dedicated to lactation, but that doesn't mean they are exclusively designated to lactation.

And the whole notion that some Federal buildings don't have such space means they are in violation of the Affordable Care Act, which requires that these space be provided. If it is not space that is exclusively used for the few women who are lactating or nursing.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have one more point that I needed to make about this abolition, this abolishment of the Affordable Care Act plan that has been submitted. A foun-
it up later. Or if you miss one payment because you missed work, missed a paycheck or something like that, you missed 1 month and have to restate, then you are going to pay a 30 percent penalty on your insurance. That is highly prohibitive.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1174, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION TRANSITION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 442) to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

1. Short title; table of contents.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

TITLE I—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS


TITLE II—SUSTAINING NATIONAL SPACE COMMITMENTS

SEC. 201. Sense of Congress on sustaining national space commitments.

SEC. 202. Findings.

TITLE III—MAXIMIZING UTILIZATION OF THE ISS AND LOW-EARTH ORBIT

SEC. 301. Operation of the ISS.

SEC. 302. Transportation to ISS.

SEC. 303. ISS transition plan.

SEC. 304. Space communications.

SEC. 305. Indemnification; NASA launch services and reentry services.

TITLE IV—ADVANCING HUMAN DEEP SPACE EXPLORATION

Subtitle A—Human Space Flight and Exploration Goals and Objectives

SEC. 411. Human space flight and exploration long-term goals.

SEC. 412. Key objectives.

SEC. 413. Vision for space exploration.

SEC. 414. Stepping stone approach to exploration.

SEC. 415. Update of exploration plan and programs.

SEC. 416. Repeals.

SEC. 417. Assured access to space.

Subtitle B—Assuring Core Capabilities for Future Exploration


Subtitle C—Journey to Mars

SEC. 431. Findings on human space exploration.

SEC. 432. Human exploration roadmap.

SEC. 433. Advanced space suit capability.

SEC. 434. Asteroid redirect mission.

SEC. 435. Mars 2033 report.

Subtitle D—TREAT Astronauts Act

SEC. 441. Short title.

SEC. 442. Findings; sense of Congress.

SEC. 443. Medical experiences and research relating to human space flight.

TITLE V—ADVANCING SPACE SCIENCE

SEC. 501. Maintaining a balanced space science portfolio.

SEC. 502. Planetary science.


SEC. 504. Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope.

SEC. 505. Mission to Venus.

SEC. 506. Europa.

SEC. 507. Congressional declaration of policy and purpose.

SEC. 508. Extrasolar planet exploration strategy.

SEC. 509. Astrobiology strategy.

SEC. 510. Astrobiology public-private partnerships.

SEC. 511. Near-Earth objects.

SEC. 512. Near-Earth objects public-private partnerships.

SEC. 513. Assessment of science mission extensions.

SEC. 514. Stratospheric observatory for infrared astronomy.

SEC. 515. Radiosonde power systems.

SEC. 516. Assessment of Mars architecture.

SEC. 517. Collaboration.

TITLE VI—AERONAUTICS

SEC. 601. Sense of Congress on aeronautics.

SEC. 602. Transformative aeronautics research.

SEC. 603. Hypersonic research.

SEC. 604. Supersonic research.

SEC. 605. Robotic research.

TITLE VII—SPACE TECHNOLOGY

SEC. 701. Space technology infusion.

SEC. 702. Space technology program.

TITLE VIII—MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCY

Subtitle A—Agency Information Technology and Cybersecurity

SEC. 811. Information technology government-wide.

SEC. 812. Information technology strategic plan.

SEC. 813. Cybersecurity.

SEC. 814. Security management of foreign national access.

SEC. 815. Cybersecurity of web applications.

Subtitle B—Collaboration Among Mission Directorates and Other Matters


SEC. 822. NASA launch capabilities collaboration.

SEC. 823. Defense and avoidance of counterfeit parts.

SEC. 824. Education and outreach.

SEC. 825. Leveraging commercial satellite servicing capabilities across mission directorates.

SEC. 826. Flight opportunities.

SEC. 827. Sense of Congress on small class launch missions.

SEC. 828. Baseline and cost controls.

SEC. 829. Commercial technology transfer program.

SEC. 830. Avoiding organizational conflicts of interest in major administration acquisition programs.

SEC. 831. Protection of Apollo landing sites.

SEC. 832. Uranium hexafluoride reprocessing property.

SEC. 833. Termination liability.

SEC. 834. Independent reviews.

SEC. 835. NASA Advisory Council.

SEC. 836. Cost estimation.

SEC. 837. Facilities and infrastructure.

SEC. 838. Human space flight accident investigations.

SEC. 839. Orbital debris.


SEC. 841. Space Act Agreements.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

(4) CIS-LUNAR SPACE.—The term “cis-lunar space” means the region of space from the Earth out to and including the region around the surface of the Moon.

(5) DEEP SPACE.—The term “deep space” means the region of space beyond low-Earth orbit, to include cis-lunar space.

(6) GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUT.—The term “government astronaut” has the meaning given the term in section 50902 of title 51, United States Code.

(7) ISS.—The term “ISS” means the International Space Station.

(8) ISS MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—The term “ISS management entity” means the organization with which the Administrator has a cooperative agreement under section 504(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18354(a)).

(9) NASA.—The term “NASA” means the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(10) ORION.—The term “Orion” means the multipurpose crew vehicle described under section 303 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18323).

(11) SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM.—The term “Space Launch System” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18302).

(12) UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUT.—The term “United States government astronaut” has the meaning given the term “government astronaut” in section 50902 of title 51, United States Code, except it does not include an individual who is an international partner astronaut.

TITLE I—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS


There are authorized to be appropriated to NASA for fiscal year 2017, $19,508,000,000, as follows:

(1) For Exploration, $4,330,000,000.

(2) For Space Operations, $5,023,000,000.

(3) For Science, $5,500,000,000.

(4) For Aeronautics, $640,000,000.

(5) For Space Technology, $686,000,000.

(6) For Education, $115,000,000.

(7) For Safety, Security, and Mission Services, $2,788,600,000.

(8) For Construction and Environmental Compliance and Restoration, $388,000,000.

(9) For Inspector General, $37,400,000.

TITLE II—SUSTAINING NATIONAL SPACE COMMITMENTS

SEC. 201. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SUSTAINING NATIONAL SPACE COMMITMENTS.

It is the sense of Congress that—
(1) honoring current national space commitments and building upon investments in space across successive Administrations demonstrates clear continuity of purpose by the United States government in international, academic, and industry partners, to extend humanity’s reach into deep space, including cis-lunar space, the Moon, the asteroid belt, Mars, and beyond.

(2) NASA leaders can best leverage investments in the United States space program by continuing to develop a balanced portfolio for space exploration and space science, including continued development of the Space Launch System, Orion, Commercial Crew Program, space and planetary science missions, such as the James Webb Space Telescope, Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope, and Europa mission, and ongoing operations of the ISS and Commercial Resupply Services Program.

(3) A national, government-led space program that builds on current science and exploration programs, advances human knowledge and capabilities, and opens the frontier beyond Earth for ourselves, commercial enterprise, and science, and with our international partners, is of critical importance to our national security and to a future guided by United States values and freedoms.

(4) Continuity of purpose and effective execution of core NASA programs are essential for effective use of resources in pursuit of timely and tangible accomplishments.

(5) NASA could improve its efficiency and effectiveness by working with industry to streamline existing programs and requirements, procurement practices, institutional footprint, and bureaucracy while preserving effective program oversight, accountability, and safety.

(6) It is imperative that the United States maintain and enhance its leadership in space exploration and space science, and continue to expand freedom and economic opportunities in space for all Americans that are consistent with the Constitution of the United States; and

(7) NASA should be a multi-mission space agency, and should have a balanced and robust set of core missions in space science, space technology, aeronautics, human space flight, and education.

SEC. 202. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Returns on the Nation’s investments in science and space exploration can accrue over decades-long timeframes, and a disruption of such investments could prevent returns from being fully realized.

(2) To the continuity of such investments, particularly regarding the cancellation of authorized programs with bipartisan and bicameral support, have disrupted completion of major space systems thereby—

(A) impeding planning and pursuit of national objectives in space science and human space exploration;

(B) placing such investments in space science and space exploration at risk; and

(C) degrading the aerospace industrial base.


(4) Sufficient investment and maximum utilization of the ISS and ISS National Laboratory with our international and industry partners is—

(A) consistent with the goals and objectives of the United States space program; and

(B) imperative to continuing United States global space exploration, science, research, technology development, and education opportunities that contribute to development of the next generation of American scientists, engineers, and leaders, and to creating the opportunity for economic development of low-Earth orbit.

(5) NASA has made measurable progress in the development and testing of the Space Launch System and Orion exploration systems with the near-term objectives of the initial integrated test flight and launch in 2018, a human mission in 2021, and continued missions with an annual cadence in cis-lunar space and eventually to the surface of Mars.

(6) The Commercial Crew Program has made measurable progress toward reestablishing the capability to launch United States government astronauts from United States soil into low-Earth orbit by the end of 2018.

(7) The Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, in its 2015 Annual Report, urged continuity of partnerships on the potenti-al for cost overruns and schedule slips that could accompany significant changes to core NASA programs.

TITLE III—MAXIMIZING UTILIZATION OF THE ISS AND LOW-EARTH ORBIT

SEC. 301. OPERATION OF THE ISS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) after 15 years of continuous human presence in low-Earth orbit, the ISS continues to overcome challenges and operate safely;

(2) the ISS is a unique testbed for future space exploration systems development, including long-duration space travel;

(3) the expansion of partnerships, scientific research, and commercial applications of the ISS is essential to ensuring the greatest return on investment for the United States and its international space partners in the development, assembly, and operations of that unique facility;

(4) utilization of the ISS will sustain United States leadership and progress in human space exploration by—

(A) facilitating the commercialization and economic development of low-Earth orbit;

(B) serving as a testbed for technologies and a platform for scientific research and development; and

(C) serving as an orbital facility enabling research upon—

(i) the health, well-being, and performance of humans in space; and

(ii) the development of in-space systems enabling human space exploration beyond low-Earth orbit;

and

(5) the ISS provides a platform for fundamental, microgravity, discovery-based space life and physical sciences research that is critical for enabling space exploration, protecting humans in space, increasing pathways for commercial space development that depend on advances in basic research, and contributes to advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics research.

(b) OBJECTIVES.—The primary objectives of the ISS program shall be—

(1) to achieve the long term goal and objectives of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312); and

(2) to pursue a research program that advances knowledge and provides other benefits to the Nation.

(c) CONTINUATION OF THE ISS.—Section 501 of the Commercial Crew and Commercial Space Competitiveness Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-327) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 501. CONTINUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION.

"(a) POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.—It shall be the policy of the United States to continue to invest in the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18331) to ensure that—

"(1) NASA continue to invest in the United States space program with our international and industry partners to ensure the United States operations continue on an independent path;

"(2) the ISS is a national space station with a stable and successful commercial crew program and space exploration beyond low-Earth orbit;

"(3) NASA’s core missions in science, space technology, aeronautics, human space flight and exploration, that provides the foundation for the policy updates by this Act.

"(4) the ISS and in-space systems continue to operate safely; and

"(5) NASA could improve its efficiency and effectiveness by working with industry to streamline existing programs and requirements, procurement practices, institutional footprint, and bureaucracy while preserving effective program oversight, accountability, and safety.

"(6) It is imperative that the United States maintain and enhance its leadership in space exploration and space science, and continue to expand freedom and economic opportunities in space for all Americans that are consistent with the Constitution of the United States; and

"(7) NASA should be a multi-mission space agency, and should have a balanced and robust set of core missions in space science, space technology, aeronautics, human space flight, and education.

SEC. 302. TRANSPORTATION TO ISS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that reliance on foreign carriers for United States crew transfer is unacceptable, and the Nation’s human space flight program must acquire the capability to launch United States government astronauts on vehicles using United States soil rockets from United States soil as soon as is safe, reliable, and affordable to do so.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON COMMERCIAL CREW PROGRAM AND COMMERCIAL RESUPPLY SERVICES PROGRAM.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) once developed and certified to meet the Administration’s safety and reliability requirements, United States commercially provided crew transportation systems can serve as the primary means of transporting United States government astronauts and international partner astronauts to and from the ISS and serving as ISS crew rescue vehicles;

(2) previous budgetary assumptions used by the Administration in its planning for the Commercial Crew Program assumed significantly higher funding levels than were authorized and appropriated for that Program;

(3) credibility in the Administration’s budgetary estimates for the Commercial Crew Program can be enhanced by an independently developed cost estimate;

(4) such credibility in budgetary estimates is an important factor in understanding program risk;

(5) the development of United States access to low-Earth orbit is paramount to the continued success of the ISS and ISS National Laboratory; and

(6) a stable and successful Commercial Resupply Services Program and Commercial Crew Program are critical to ensuring timely provisioning of the ISS and to reestablishing the capability to launch United States government astronauts from United States soil into orbit, ending reliance upon Russian transport of United States government astronauts to the ISS which has not been possible since the retirement of the Space Shuttle program in 2011.

(7) NASA should build upon the success of the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services Program and Commercial Resupply Services Program that have allowed private sector companies to partner with NASA to
deliver cargo and scientific experiments to the ISS since 2012; (8) the 21st Century Launch Complex Program has enabled significant modernization and improvement at launch sites across the United States to support NASA’s Commercial Resupply Services Program and other civil and commercial space flight missions; (9) the 21st Century Launch Complex Program should be continued in a manner that leverages State and private investments to achieve the program’s objectives; (c) reaffirmation.—Congress reaffirms— (1) its commitment to the use of a commercially provided sector, and the development and delivery system to the ISS for crew missions as expressed in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–155; 119 Stat. 2885), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–422; 122 Stat. 4779), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18301 et seq.); and (2) the requirement under section 50111(a) of title 51, United States Code, that the Administration shall make use of United States commercially provided ISS crew transfer and crew rescue services to the maximum practicable extent; (d) use of non-united states human space flight transportation capabilities.—(1) in general.—The Federal Government may not acquire human space flight transportation services from a foreign entity unless— (A) no United States Government-operated human space flight capability is available; (B) no United States commercial provider is available; and (C) the qualified foreign entity. (2) definitions.—In this subsection: (A) commercial provider.—The term ‘commercial provider’ means any person providing human space flight transportation services from a foreign sector for human exploration and requiring the services of at least one person that is not a citizen of the United States or an organization under the laws of the United States. (B) qualified foreign entity.—The term ‘qualified foreign entity’ means an entity that is in compliance with all applicable safety standards and is prohibited from providing space transportation services under other law. (C) United States commercial provider.—The term ‘United States commercial provider’ means a commercial provider, organized under the laws of the United States or of a State, that is more than 50 percent owned by United States nationals. (3) arrangements with foreign entities.—Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the Administrator from negotiating or entering into human space flight transportation arrangements with foreign entities to ensure safety of flight and continued ISS operations. (4) commercial crew program.— (1) objective.—The objective of the Commercial Crew Program shall be to assist in the development and certification of commercial transportation services. (A) can carry United States government astronauts safely, reliably, and affordably to and from the ISS; (B) can own a crew rescue vehicle; and (C) can accomplish subparagraphs (A) and (B) as soon as practicable. (2) primary consideration.—The objective described in paragraph (1) shall be the primary consideration in the acquisition strategy for the Commercial Crew Program. (3) safety.—(A) in general.—The Administrator shall protect the safety of government astronauts by ensuring that each commercially provided crew transportation services procurement initiative or contract under this subsection meets all applicable human rating requirements in accordance with section 408(b)(1) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18342(b)(1)). (B) lessons learned.—Consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, the Administrator shall ensure that safety and the minimization of the probability of loss of crew are the critical priorities of the Commercial Crew Program. (4) cost minimization.—The Administrator shall strive through the competitive selection process to minimize the life cycle cost to the Administration through the planned period of commercially provided crew transportation services. (C) commercial cargo program.—Section 401 of the NASA Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18341) is amended by striking ‘Commercial Orbital Transportation Services’ and inserting ‘Commercial Resupply Services’. (g) competition.—It is the policy of the United States that, to foster the competitive development, operation, improvement, and commercial availability of space transportation services, and to minimize the life cycle cost to the Administration, the Administrator shall procure services for Federal accessibility to and return from the ISS, wherever practicable, via fair and open competition for well-defined, milestone-based, fixed-price acquisition Regulation-based contracts under section 201(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18311(a)). (h) transparency.—(1) sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that transparency and schedule transparency aid in effective program management and risk assessment. (2) in general.—The Administrator shall, to the greatest extent practicable and in a manner that does not add costs or schedule delays to the program, ensure all Commercial Crew Program and Commercial Resupply Services Program providers provide evidence-based support for their costs and schedules. (i) ISS cargo resupply services lessons learned.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that— (1) identifies the lessons learned from previous and existing Commercial Resupply Services procurements under the ISS; and (2) identifies lessons learned from the Commercial Resupply Services contracts that should be applied to the procurement and management of commercially provided crew transfer services to the ISS from the United States to other future procurements. SEC. 303. ISS transition plan. (a) findings.—Congress finds that— (1) NASA has been both the primary supplier and consumer of human spaceflight capabilities and services of the ISS and in Low Earth orbit; and (2) according to the National Research Council report ‘Pathways to Exploration: Rationales and Approaches for a U.S. Program of Human Space Exploration’ extend beyond 2020 to 2024 or 2028 will have significant negative impacts on the schedule of crewed missions to Mars, without significant increases in funding. (b) sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that— (1) an orderly transition for United States human spaceflight and Low Earth orbit from the current regime, that relies heavily on NASA sponsorship, to a regime where NASA is one of many customers of a low-Earth orbit commercial human space flight enterprise may be necessary; and (2) decisions about the long-term future of the ISS impact the ability to conduct future deep space exploration activities, and that such decisions regarding the ISS should be considered in the context of the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of this Act. (c) reports.—Section 50111 of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: (c) IS S transition plan.— (1) in general.—The Administrator, in coordination with the ISS management entity as defined in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017, shall develop a plan to transition in a step-wise approach from the current regime that relies heavily on NASA sponsorship to a regime where NASA could be one of many customers of a Low-Earth orbit non-governmental human space flight enterprise. (2) not later than December 1, 2017, and biennially thereafter until 2023, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that includes— (A) a description of the progress in achieving the Administration’s deep space human exploration objectives on ISS and prospects for accomplishing future mission requirements, space exploration objectives, and research objectives on future deep space exploration activities, and that NASA is heavily on NASA sponsorship, to a regime where NASA could be one of many customers of a Low-Earth orbit non-governmental human space flight enterprise. (B) the steps NASA is taking and will take, including demonstrations that could be conducted on the ISS, to stimulate and facilitate commercial demand and supply of products and services; (C) an identification of barriers preventing the commercialization of Low-Earth orbit, including issues relating to policy, regulations, commercial intellectual property, data, and confidentiality, that could inhibit the use of the ISS as a commercial incubator; and (D) the criteria for defining the ISS as a research success. (E) the criteria used to determine whether the ISS is meeting the objective under section 301(b)(2) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017; (F) an assessment of whether the criteria used in paragraph (D) and (E) are consistent with the research areas defined in, and recommendations and schedules under, the current National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine surveys on ISS Transportation and on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space; (G) any necessary contributions that ISS exploration and transportation services provide to the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017.
Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017:

"(H) the cost estimates for operating the ISS to achieve the criteria required under subparagraph (C) and the contributions identified under subparagraph (G);

"(I) the cost estimates for extending operations of the ISS to 2024, 2028, and 2030;

"(J) the feasibility of preferred service life of the ISS beyond the period described in section 503 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2015 (42 U.S.C. 15501) through at least 2028, as a unique scientific, commercial, and space exploration-related facility, including—

"(i) a general discussion of international partner capabilities and prospects for extending the partnership;

"(ii) the cost associated with extending the service life;

"(iii) an assessment on the technical limiting factors of the service life of the ISS, including a list of critical components and their expected service life and availability; and

"(iv) such other information as may be necessary to fully describe the justification for and the benefits of extending the service life of the ISS, including the potential scientific or technological benefits to the Federal Government, public, or to academic or commercial entities;

"(K) an identification of the necessary actions and an estimate of the costs to deorbit the ISS once it has reached the end of its service life;

"(L) the impact on deep space exploration capabilities, including a crewed mission to Mars in the 2030s, if the preferred service life of the ISS is extended beyond 2024 and NASA maintains a flat budget profile; and

"(M) an evaluation of the functions, roles, and responsibilities for management and operation of the ISS during the extended service life.

"(2) The Administrator shall submit the plan to the appropriate committees of Congress.

SEC. 305. INDEMNIFICATION; NASA LAUNCH SERVICES AND REENTRY SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 201 of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(b) TERMS OF INDEMNIFICATION.—A contract made under subsection (a) that provides indemnification shall provide for—

"(1) notice to the United States of any claim related to the death, injury, or property damage or loss resulting from a launch service or reentry service carried out under the contract; and

"(2) control of or assistance in the defense by the United States of any claim, suit against the United States, at its election, of that claim or suit and approval of any settlement.

"(c) LIABILITY INSURANCE OF THE PROVIDER.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The provider under subsection (a) shall obtain liability insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility in amounts to compensate for the maximum probable loss from claims by—

"(A) a third party for death, bodily injury, or property damage or loss resulting from a launch service or reentry service carried out under the contract; and

"(B) the United States Government for damage or loss to Government property resulting from a launch service or reentry service carried out under the contract.

"(2) MAXIMUM PROBABLE LOSSES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall determine the maximum probable losses under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) not later than 90 days after the date that the provider requests such a determination and submit all information the Administrator requires.

"(B) REVISIONS.—The Administrator may revise a determination under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph if the Administrator determines the revision is warranted based on new information.

"(3) AMOUNT OF INSURANCE.—For the total claims related to one launch or reentry, a provider shall not be required to obtain insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility of more than—

"(i) $50,000,000 under paragraph (1)(A); or

"(ii) $100,000,000 under paragraph (1)(B); or

"(B) the maximum liability insurance available on the world market at reasonable cost.

"(4) COVERED.—An insurance policy or demonstration of financial responsibility under this subsection shall protect the following, to the extent of their potential liability for involvement in launch services or reentry services:

"(A) The Government.

"(B) Personnel of the Government.

"(C) Related entities of the Government.

"(D) Related entities of the provider.

"(E) Government agencies, to meet the Administration’s projected space communication and navigation needs for low-Earth orbit and deep space operations in the 20-year period following the date of enactment of this Act, including in support of relevant Federal agencies, and cost and schedule estimates to maintain and upgrade the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System to meet the projected needs; and

"(F) the measures the Administration is taking to meet space communications needs after all Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System third-generation communications satellites are operational; and

"(G) the measures the Administration is taking to mitigate threats to electromagnetic infrastructure, including the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System to meet the Administration’s projected space communication and navigation needs; and

"(H) the cost estimates for operating the ISS to achieve the criteria required under subparagraph (G); and

"(I) the cost estimates for extending operations of the ISS to 2024, 2028, and 2030; and

"(J) the feasibility of preferred service life of the ISS beyond the period described in section 503 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2015 (42 U.S.C. 15501) through at least 2028, as a unique scientific, commercial, and space exploration-related facility, including—

"(i) a general discussion of international partner capabilities and prospects for extending the partnership;
resulting from the willful misconduct of the provider or its related entities.

“(g) Certification of Just and Reasonable Amount.—No payment may be made under subsection (a) unless the Administrator determines that the amount is just and reasonable.

“(h) Payments.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the approval by the Administrator of the amount to be paid under subsection (a), the amount shall be paid to the provider, as provided in subsection (b).

“(2) LIMITATION.—The Administrator shall not approve payments under paragraph (1), except to the extent provided in an appropriation Act under section 50915.

“(3) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS.—If the amount of additional appropriations to make payments under this subsection is not approved by the Administrator under subsection (a) unless the Administrator provides for such payments.

“(4) ANTI-DEFICIENCY ACT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law,

“(a) all obligations under this section are subject to the availability of funds; and

“(b) nothing in this section shall be construed to require obligation or payment of funds in violation of sections 1341, 1342, 1349 through 1351, and 1511 through 1519 of title 31, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ‘Anti-Deficiency Act’).

“(j) Relationship to Other Laws.—The Administrator may not provide indemnification under this section for activity that requires a license or permit under chapter 509.

“(k) Definitions.—In this section:

“(1) GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUT.—The term ‘government astronaut’ has the meaning given in section 50915.

“(2) LAUNCH SERVICES.—The term ‘launch services’ has the meaning given in the term in section 50902.

“(3) PROVIDER.—The term ‘provider’ means a person that provides domestic launch services or domestic reentry services to the Government.

“(4) REENTRY SERVICES.—The term ‘reentry services’ has the meaning given in the term in section 50902.

“(5) RELATED ENTITY.—The term ‘related entity’ means a contractor or subcontractor.

“(6) THIRD PARTY.—The term ‘third party’ means a person except—

“(A) the United States Government;

“(B) the provider of the Government involved in launch services or reentry services;

“(C) a provider;

“(D) related entities of the provider involved in launch services or reentry services; or

“(E) a government astronaut.

“(b) Conforming Amendment.—The table of contents for subchapter III of chapter 202 of title 51, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 20147 the following:

“20148. Indemnification; NASA launch services and reentry services.”

TITLE IV—ADVANCING HUMAN DEEP SPACE EXPLORATION

Subtitle A—Human Space Flight and Exploration Goals and Objectives

SEC. 411. HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT AND EXPLORATION—LONG-TERM GOALS.

Section 202(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(a)) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) LONG-TERM GOALS.—The long-term goals of the human space flight and exploration efforts of NASA shall be—

“(1) to expand the human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international, academic, and industry partners;

“(2) to prepare for and conduct a moon mission and return a sample to the Earth; and

“(3) to enable a capability to extend human presence, including potential human habitation on another celestial body and a sustainable human space economy in the 21st Century.”.

SEC. 412. KEY OBJECTIVES.

Section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(b)) is amended—

“(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ‘‘; and’’ and inserting a semicolon;

“(2) in paragraph (4) by striking the period at the end and inserting ‘‘; and’’; and

“(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) to achieve human exploration of Mars and beyond the prioritization of those technologies and capabilities best suited for such a mission in accordance with the stepping stone approach to exploration under section 70504 of title 51, United States Code.”.

SEC. 413. VISION FOR SPACE EXPLORATION.

Section 20302 of title 51, United States Code, is amended—

“(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ‘‘in cis-lunar space or’’ after ‘‘sustained human presence’’;

“(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

“(b) FUTURE EXPLORATION OF MARS.—The Administrator shall manage human space flight programs, including the Space Launch System and Crew Exploration Program to enable missions to the Moon, Mars, and beyond to support the prioritization of those technologies and capabilities best suited for such a mission in accordance with the stepping stone approach to exploration under section 70504 of title 51, United States Code.”.

SEC. 414. STEPPING STONE APPROACH TO EXPLORATION.

Section 70504 of title 51, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 70504. Stepping stone approach to exploration.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administration—

“(1) may conduct missions to intermediate destinations in sustainable steps in accordance with the stepping stone approach to exploration under section 70502 of this title, and on a timetable determined by the availability of funding, in order to achieve the objectives of human exploration of Mars specified in section 202(b)(5) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(b)(5)); and

“(2) may incorporate any subsapplications into the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017.

“(b) COST-EFFECTIVENESS.—In order to maximize the cost-effectiveness of the long-term space exploration and utilization activities of the United States, the Administrator shall take all necessary steps, including engaging international, academic, and industry partners, to ensure that activities and programs subject to the Administration’s human exploration program balance those activities and programs leading to human habitation on the surface of Mars.

“(c) COMPLETION.—Within budgetary considerations, once an exploration-related project enters its development phase, the Administrator shall seek, to the maximum extent practicable, to complete that project without undue delays.

“(d) INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION.—In order to achieve the goal of successfully conducting a crewed mission to the surface of Mars, the President shall invite United States partners in the ISS program and other nations, as appropriate, to participate in an international initiative under the leadership of the United States.”

SEC. 415. UPDATE OF EXPLORATION PLAN AND PROGRAMS.

Section 70502(2) of title 51, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(2) IN GENERAL.—In order to achieve the goal of successfully conducting a crewed mission to the surface of Mars, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall incorporate any subsapplications into the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017.

“(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In order to achieve the goal of successfully conducting a crewed mission to the surface of Mars, the Administrator shall take all necessary steps, including engaging international, academic, and industry partners, to ensure that activities and programs subject to the Administration’s human exploration program balance those activities and programs leading to human habitation on the surface of Mars.

“(c) COMPLETION.—Within budgetary considerations, once an exploration-related project enters its development phase, the Administrator shall seek, to the maximum extent practicable, to complete that project without undue delays.

“(d) INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION.—In order to achieve the goal of successfully conducting a crewed mission to the surface of Mars, the President shall invite United States partners in the ISS program and other nations, as appropriate, to participate in an international initiative under the leadership of the United States.”

SEC. 416. REPEAL.

(a) SPACE SHUTTLE CAPABILITY ASSURANCE.—Section 203 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18313) is amended—

“(1) by striking subsection (b);

“(2) in subsection (d), by striking ‘‘subsection (c)’’ and inserting ‘‘subsection (b)’’; and

“(3) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (b) and (c), respectively.

(b) SPACE SHUTTLE PRIVATIZATION.—Chapter 703 of title 51, United States Code, and the item relating to that chapter in the table of chapters for that title, are repealed.

“(c) SHUTTLE PRIVATIZATION.—Section 50133 of title 51, United States Code, and the item relating to that section in the table of sections for chapter 501 of that title, are repealed.

SEC. 417. ASSURED ACCESS TO SPACE.

Section 70501 of title 51, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) POLICY STATEMENT.—In order to ensure continuous United States participation and leadership in the exploration and utilization of space and as an essential instrument of national security, it is the policy of the United States to maintain an uninterrupted capability for human space flight and operations—

“(1) in low-Earth orbit; and

“(2) beyond low-Earth orbit once the capabilities described in section 421(f) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017 become available.”;

“(b) in subsection (b), by striking ‘‘Committee on Science and Technology of the

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House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate describing the progress being made toward developing the Crew Exploration Vehicle and the Space Launch Vehicle and inserting "Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives describing the progress being made toward developing the Space Launch System and Orion."  

Subtitle B—Assuring Core Capabilities for Exploration  

SEC. 421. SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM, ORION, AND EXPLORATION GROUND SYSTEMS.  

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:  

(1) NASA has made steady progress in developing and testing the Space Launch System and Orion in deep space exploration missions, using the Space Launch System and Orion to achieve short-term and long-term goals and objectives.  

(2) Through the 21st Century Launch Complex program and Exploration Ground Systems programs, NASA has made significant progress toward exploring exploratory systems infrastructure to meet NASA’s mission requirements for the Space Launch System and Orion, and to modernize NASA’s launch service benefit, and defense and commercial space sectors.  

(b) SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM.—  

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that use of the Space Launch System and Orion, with contributions from partners with the private sector, academia, and the international community, is the most practical approach to reaching the Moon and Mars, and beyond.  

(2) REFRAIMMENT.—Congress reaffirms the policy and minimum capability requirements for the Space Launch System under section 302 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2015 (25 U.S.C. 13823(b));  

(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM, ORION, AND EXPLORATION GROUND SYSTEMS.—It is the sense of Congress that—  

(1) the United States works to sustain humans on a series of missions to Mars in the 2030s, the United States national space programs to make progress on its commitment by fully developing the Space Launch System, Orion, and related Exploration Ground Systems;  

(2) the Space Launch System and Orion for a wide range of contemplated missions will facilitate the national defense, science, and exploration objectives of the United States;  

(3) the United States should have continuity of purpose for the Space Launch System and Orion in deep space exploration missions, beginning with the uncrowed mission, EM-1, planned for 2018, followed by the crewed mission, EM-2, in cis-lunar space planned for 2021, and for subsequent missions beginning with EM-3 extending into cis-lunar space and eventually to Mars;  

(4) the President’s annual budget requests for the Space Launch System and Orion development, test, and operational phases should strive to accurately reflect the resource requirements of each of those phases;  

(5) the Space Launch System, including an upper stage needed to go beyond low-Earth orbit, will safely enable human space exploration of the Moon, Mars, and beyond;  

(6) the Administrator should budget for and undertake a robust ground test and uncrowed flight test and demonstration program for the Space Launch System and Orion in order to promote safety and reduce programmatic risk.  

(b) General.—The Administrator shall continue the development of the fully integrated Space Launch System, including an upper stage needed to go beyond low-Earth orbit, in order to safely enable human space exploration of the Moon, Mars, and beyond over the course of the next century as required in section 302(c) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 13823(c)).  

(c) REPORT.—(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report addressing the ability of Orion to meet the needs and the minimum capability requirements described in section 303(b)(3) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 13823(b)(3));  

(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall detail—  

(A) those components and systems of Orion that ensure it is in compliance with section 303(b)(3) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 13823(b)(3));  

(B) the expected date that Orion, integrated with a vehicle other than the Space Launch System, could be available to transport crew and cargo to the ISS;  

(C) any impacts to the deep space exploration missions under subsection (f) of this section due to enabling Orion to meet the minimum capability requirements described in section 303(b)(3) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 13823(b)(3)); and  

(D) the overall cost and schedule impacts associated with enabling Orion to meet the minimum capability requirements described in section 303(b)(3) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 13823(b)(3)); and  

(f) EXPLORATION MISSIONS.—The Administrator shall continue development of—  

(1) an uncrowed exploration mission to demonstrate the capability of both the Space Launch System and Orion as an integrated system by 2018;  

(2) subject to applicable human rating processes and requirements, a crewed exploration mission to demonstrate the Space Launch System, including the Core Stage and Exploration Upper Stages, by 2021;  

(3) subsequent missions beginning with EM-3 at operational flight rate sufficient to maintain safety and operational readiness using the Space Launch System and Orion to extend into cis-lunar space and eventually to Mars; and  

(4) a deep space habitat as a key element in a deep space exploration mission extending along with the Space Launch System and Orion.  

(g) OTHER USES.—The Administrator shall assess the utility of the Space Launch System for national security and other Federal Government launch needs, including consideration of overall cost and schedule savings from reduced transit times and increased science returns enabled by the unique capabilities of the Space Launch System.  

(h) UTILIZATION REPORT.—(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit a report that addresses the extent and budget required to enable and utilize a cargo variant of the 130-ton Space Launch System configuration described in section 302(c) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 13823(c)).  

(2) CONTENTS.—In preparing the report, the Administrator shall—  

(A) consider the technical requirements of the scientific and national security communities of the cargo variant of the Space Launch System; and  

(B) directly assess the utility and estimated cost savings obtained by using a cargo variant of the Space Launch System for national security and space science missions.  

(3) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit the report to the appropriate committees of Congress.  

Subtitle C—Journey to Mars  

SEC. 431. FINDINGS ON HUMAN SPACE EXPLORATION.  

Congress makes the following findings:  

(1) In accordance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (124 Stat. 2831), the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, through its Committee on Human Spaceflight, conducted a review of the goals, core capabilities, and direction of human space flight, and published the findings and recommendations in a 2014 entitled, ‘‘Pathways to Exploration: Rationales and Approaches for a U.S. Program of Human Space Exploration’’.  

(2) The Committee on Human Spaceflight included leaders from the aerospace, scientific, security, and policy communities.  

(3) With input from the public, the Committee on Human Spaceflight identified many practical and aspirational rationales for human space flight together constitute a compelling case for continued national investment and pursuit of human space exploration toward the horizon goal of Mars.  

(4) According to the Committee on Human Spaceflight, the rationales include economic benefits and opportunity; prestige, inspiring students and other citizens, scientific discovery, human survival, and a sense of shared destiny.  

(5) The Committee on Human Spaceflight affirmed that Mars is the appropriate long-term goal for the human space flight program.  

(6) The Committee on Human Spaceflight recommended that NASA define a series of sustainable steps and conduct mission planning and risk management technology development needed to achieve the long-term goal of placing humans on the surface of Mars.  

(7) Expanding human presence beyond low Earth orbit and national security needs to missions to Mars requires early planning and timely decisions to be made in the near-term on the necessary courses of action for commitments to short-term and long-term goals and objectives.  

(8) In addition to the 2014 report described in paragraph (1), there are several independent studies and reports that describe potential Mars architectures or concepts and identify Mars as the long-term goal for human space exploration, including NASA’s "Global Exploration Roadmap" of 2013, "NASA’s Journey to Mars—Pioneering Next Steps in Space Exploration" of 2013, NASA’s "Journey to Mars Roadmap" of 2015, and Explore Mars’ "The Humans to Mars Report 2016".  

SEC. 432. HUMAN EXPLORATION ROADMAP.  

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—  

(1) expanding human presence beyond low Earth orbit and pursuing human missions to Mars in the 2030s requires early strategic planning and timely decisions to be made in the near-term on the necessary courses of action for commitments to short-term and long-term goals and objectives;
(2) for strong and sustained United States leadership, a need exists to advance a human exploration roadmap, addressing exploration objectives in collaboration with international, national, and industry partners;

(3) an approach that incrementally advances toward a long-term goal is one in which nearer-term developments and implementation would influence future development and implementation; and

(4) a human exploration roadmap should begin with low-Earth orbit, then address in greater increments beyond low-Earth orbit to cis-lunar space, and then address future missions aimed at human arrival and activities near and then on the surface of Mars.

(b) HUMAN EXPLORATION ROADMAP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall develop a human exploration roadmap, including a critical decision plan, to expand human presence beyond low-Earth orbit to the surface of Mars and beyond, considering potential intense destinations such as cis-lunar space and the moons of Mars.

(2) SCOPE.—The human exploration roadmap shall include—

(A) an integrated set of exploration, science, and other goals and objectives of a United States human space exploration program; including a long-term goal of human missions near or on the surface of Mars in the 2030s;

(B) opportunities for international, academic, and industry partnerships, where practicable, to develop tools, services, and technology if those opportunities provide cost-savings, accelerate program schedules, or otherwise benefit the goals and objectives developed under subparagraph (A);

(C) sets and sequences of precursor missions in cis-lunar space and other missions or activities that will:

(i) to demonstrate the proficiency of the capabilities and technologies identified under subparagraph (D); and

(ii) to meet the goals and objectives developed under subparagraph (A), including anticipated timelines and missions for the Space Launch System and Orion;

(D) an identification of the specific capabilities and technologies, including the Space Launch System, Orion, a deep space habitat, the Asteroid Redirect Module’s habitat, the planned suit system for use on the ISS, and other capabilities, that facilitate the goals and objectives developed under subparagraph (A);

(E) a description of how cis-lunar elements, objectives, and activities advance the human exploration of Mars;

(F) an assessment of potential health and other risks, including radiation exposure, mitigation plans, whenever possible, to address the risks identified in subparagraph (F);

(G) a description of those technologies already under development across the Federal Government or by other entities that facilitate the goals and objectives developed under subparagraph (A); and

(H) a specific process for the evolution of the capabilities of the fully integrated Orion with the Space Launch System and a description of how these systems facilitate the goals and objectives developed under subparagraph (A) and demonstrate the capabilities and technologies described in subparagraph (D);

(I) a description of the capabilities and technologies that need to be demonstrated or research data that could be gained through the utilization of the ISS and the status of the development of such capabilities and technologies;

(K) a framework for international cooperation on the development of all capabilities and technologies identified under this section, including an assessment of the risks posed by relying on international partners for capabilities and technologies on the critical path of development;

(L) a process for partnering with non-governmental organizations, Space Act Agreements or other acquisition instruments for future human space exploration; and

(M) include information on the phasing of planned missions and activities, goals, timelines, risk areas and potential risk mitigation approaches, technology requirements and phasing of required technology development.

(c) SUBMISSION WITH BUDGET.—Each human exploration roadmap under this paragraph shall include a description of—

(i) the achievements and goals accomplished in the process of developing such capabilities and technologies during the 2-year period prior to the submission of the human exploration roadmap; and

(ii) the expected goals and achievements in the following 2-year period.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the human exploration roadmap, the Administrator shall consider—

(A) using key exploration capabilities, namely the Space Launch System and Orion;

(B) using existing commercially available technologies and capabilities or those technologies and capabilities being developed by industry for commercial purposes;

(C) establishing an organizational approach to ensure collaboration and coordination among NASA’s Mission Directorates under section 821, do not have value commensurate with their probable cost.

(D) any risks identified through research outcomes under the NASA Human Research Program, the National Health Element; and

(E) the recommendations and ideas of several independently developed reports or concepts that describe potential Mars architectures that utilize technologies identified Mars as the long-term goal for human space exploration, including the reports described under section 431.

(F) the planned suit system for use on the ISS.

(G) in April 2015, the NASA Advisory Council’s Key Decision Point-B review of the Asteroid Redirect Mission’s scope and cost cap set by the Administrator.

(H) in April 2015, the NASA Advisory Council—

(1) issued a finding that—

(i) high-performance solar electric propulsion will likely be an important part of an architecture to send humans to Mars; and
to $1,400,000,000 excluding launch and operations.

(ii) while maneuvering a broad set of maneuvers is not necessary to provide a valid in-space test of a new solar electric propulsion stage;

(3) During the Key Decision Point-B review, NASA estimated that costs have grown to $1,250,000,000 excluding launch and operations for a launch in 2021 and the agency must evaluate whether to accept the increase or reduce the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission’s scope and cost cap set by the Administrator.

(I) Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a detailed plan for achieving an advanced space suit capability that aligns with the crew needs for exploration enabled by the Space Launch System and Orion, including an evaluation of the merit of delivering the integrated suit system for use on the ISS.

(J) CRITICAL DECISION PLAN.—In accordance with the goals of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a detailed plan for achieving an advanced space suit capability that aligns with the crew needs for exploration enabled by the Space Launch System and Orion, including an evaluation of the merit of delivering the integrated suit system for use on the ISS.

(K) a framework for international cooperation on the development of all capabilities and technologies identified under this section, including an assessment of the risks posed by relying on international partners for capabilities and technologies on the critical path of development;

(L) a process for partnering with non-governmental organizations, Space Act Agreements or other acquisition instruments for future human space exploration; and

(M) include information on the phasing of planned missions and activities, goals, timelines, risk areas and potential risk mitigation approaches, technology requirements and phasing of required technology development.

(4) CRITICAL DECISION PLAN ON HUMAN SPACE EXPLORATION.—As part of the human exploration roadmap, the Administrator shall include a critical decision plan—

(A) identifying and defining key decisions guiding human space exploration priorities and plans that need to be made before June 30, 2020, including decisions that may guide human space exploration capabilities, development, precursor missions, long-term missions, and activities;

(B) defining decisions needed to maximize the efficiency of exploration including the near, intermediate, and long-term goals and objectives of human space exploration; and

(C) identifying and defining timelines and milestones for a sustainable cadence of missions beginning with EM-3 for the Space Launch System and Orion to extend human presence beyond cis-lunar space to the surface of Mars.

(5) REPORTS.—

(A) INITIAL HUMAN EXPLORATION ROADMAP.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(i) an initial human exploration roadmap, including a critical decision plan, before December 1, 2017; and

(ii) an updated human exploration roadmap periodically as the Administrator considers necessary but not less than biennially.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each human exploration roadmap under this paragraph shall include a description of—

(i) the achievements and goals accomplished in the process of developing such capabilities and technologies during the 2-year period prior to the submission of the human exploration roadmap; and

(ii) the expected goals and achievements in the following 2-year period.

(C) SUBMISSION WITH BUDGET.—Each human exploration roadmap under this section shall be submitted in the budget transmitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 433. ADVANCED SPACE SUIT CAPABILITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) NASA initially estimated that the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission would launch in December 2020 and cost no more than $1,250,000,000, excluding launch and operations.

(2) On July 15, 2016, NASA conducted its Key Decision Point-B review of the Asteroid Redirect Mission and approved for Phase B in mission formulation.

(3) During the Key Decision Point-B review, NASA estimated that costs have grown to $1,250,000,000 excluding launch and operations for a launch in 2021 and the agency must evaluate whether to accept the increase or reduce the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission’s scope and cost cap set by the Administrator.

(4) In April 2015, the NASA Advisory Council—

(1) issued a finding that—

(ii) while maneuvering a broad set of maneuvers is not necessary to provide a valid in-space test of a new solar electric propulsion stage.

(2) determined that a solar electric propulsion mission will contribute more directly to the goal of sending humans to Mars if the mission is focused entirely on development and validation of the solar electric propulsion stage; and

(3) determined that other possible motivations for acquiring and maneuvering a boulder, such as asteroid science and planetary defense, do not have value commensurate with their probable cost.

(5) The Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission is competing for resources with other critical NASA Missions that do not have value commensurate with their probable cost.
(6) In 2014, the NASA Advisory Council recommended that NASA conduct an independent cost and technical assessment of the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission.
(7) The NASA Advisory Council recommended that NASA preserve the following key objectives if the program needed to be descoped:
   (A) Development of high power solar electric propulsion.
   (B) Ability to maneuver in a low gravity environment in deep space.
(8) In January 2015 and July 2015, the NASA Advisory Council expressed its concern to NASA about the potential for growing costs for the program and highlighted that the program should be made a priority for the program’s content.
(b) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that—
   (1) the technological and scientific goals of the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission have not been demonstrated to Congress to be commensurate with the cost; and
   (2) alternative missions may provide a more cost effective and scientifically beneficial means to demonstrate the technologies needed for a human mission to Mars that would be demonstrated by the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission.
(c) Evaluation and report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—
   (1) conduct an evaluation of—
      (A) alternative approaches to the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission for demonstrating the technologies and capabilities needed for a human mission to Mars that would otherwise be demonstrated by the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission;
      (B) the scientific and technical benefits of the alternative approaches under subparagraph (A) to future human space exploration compared to scientific and technical benefits of the Asteroid Robotic Redirect Mission;
      (C) the commercial benefits of the alternative approaches identified in subparagraph (A), including the impact on the development of domestic solar electric propulsion technology to bolster United States competitiveness in the global marketplace; and
      (D) a comparison of the estimated costs of the alternative approaches identified in subparagraph (A); and
   (2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the evaluation under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.
SEC. 435. MARS 2033 REPORT.
(a) In General.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall contract with an independent, non-governmental systems engineering and technical assistance organization to study a Mars human space flight mission to be launched in 2033.
(b) Contents.—The study shall include—
   (1) a technical development, test, fielding, and operations plan using the Space Launch System, Orion, and other systems to successfully launch such a Mars human space flight mission by 2033;
   (2) an annual budget profile, including cost estimates, for the technical development, test, fielding, and operations plan to carry out a Mars human space flight mission by 2033; and
   (3) a comparison of the annual budget profile to the 5-year budget profile contained in the President’s budget request for fiscal year 2017 submitted under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code.
(c) Report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including findings and recommendations regarding the Mars 2033 human space flight mission described in subsection (a).
(d) Assessment.—Not later than 60 days after the date the report is submitted under subsection (c), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an assessment by the NASA Advisory Council of whether the proposal for a Mars human space flight mission to be launched in 2033 is in the strategic interests of the United States in space exploration.
Subtitle D—TREAT Astronauts Act
SEC. 441. SHORT TITLE
This subtitle may be cited as the “To Research, Evaluate, Assess, and Treat Astronauts Act” or the “TREAT Astronauts Act”.
SEC. 442. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.
(a) Findings.—Congress makes the following findings:
   (1) Human space exploration can pose significant challenges and is full of substantial risks, which has ultimately claimed the lives of 24 NASA astronauts serving in the line of duty.
   (2) As United States government astronauts participate in long-duration and exploration space flight missions they may experience increased health risks, such as vision impairment, bone demineralization, and brain function changes, increased cardiovascular risk, and may be exposed to galactic cosmic radiation. Exposure to high levels of radiation and microgravity can result in acute and long-term health effects, which can increase the risk of cancer and tissue degeneration and have potential effects on the musculoskeletal system, central nervous system, cardiovascular system, immune function, and vision.
   (3) To advance the goal of long-duration and exploration space flight missions, United States government astronaut Scott Kelly participated in a 1-year twins study in space while his identical twin brother, former United States government astronaut Mark Kelly, acted as a human control specimen on Earth, providing an understanding of the physical, behavioral, microbiological, and molecular reaction of the human body to an extended period of time in space.
   (4) Since the Administration currently provides medical monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment for United States government astronauts during space flight, given the unknown long-term health consequences of long-duration space exploration, the Administration requested statutory authority from Congress to provide medical monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment to former United States government astronauts for psychological and medical conditions associated with human space flight.
(b) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that—
   (1) the United States should continue to seek the unknown and lead the world in space exploration and scientific discovery as the Administration agrees to the goal of long-duration and exploration space flight in deep space and an eventual mission to Mars;
   (2) data relating to the health of astronauts is critical to improving our understanding of many diseases humans face on Earth;
   (3) the Administration should provide the type of medical monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment described in subsection (a) only for conditions the Administration considers unique to the training or exposure to the space flight environment for former United States government astronauts and should not require any former United States Government astronauts to participate in the Administration’s monitoring;
   (4) such monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment should not replace a former United States government astronaut’s private health insurance;
   (5) expanded data acquired from such monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment should be used to inform the development of new space flight medical hardware, and develop controls in order to prevent disease occurrence in the astronaut community; and
   (6) the 360-day space mission of Scott Kelly aboard the ISS—
      (A) was pivotal for the goal of the United States for humans to explore deep space and Mars as the mission generated new insight into how the human body adapts to weightlessness, isolation, radiation, and the stress of long-duration space flight; and
      (B) will help support the physical and mental well-being of astronauts during longer space exploration missions in the future.
SEC. 443. MEDICAL MONITORING AND RESEARCH RELATING TO HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT.
(a) In General.—Subchapter III of chapter 291 of title 5, United States Code, as amended by section 305 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:
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(b) Requirements.—
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for or provide medical monitoring, diagnosis, or treatment described in subsection (a) that is obligated to be paid for or provided by the United States or any third party under any other provision of law or contractual agreement to pay for or provide such medical monitoring, diagnosis, or treatment if—

(A) payment for (or the provision of) such medical monitoring, diagnosis, or treatment services has not been made (or provided) or cannot reasonably be expected to be made (or provided) promptly by the United States or such third party, respectively; and

(B) such payment (or such provision of services) by the Administrator is conditioned on reimbursement by the United States or such third party, respectively, for medical monitoring, diagnosis, or treatment.

(c) EXCLUSIONS.—The Administrator may not—

(1) provide for medical monitoring or diagnosis of a former United States government astronaut or former payload specialist under subsection (a) for any psychological or medical condition that is not potentially associated with human space flight;

(2) provide for treatment of a former United States government astronaut or former payload specialist under subsection (a) for any psychological or medical condition that is not associated with human space flight; or

(3) require a former United States government astronaut or former payload specialist to participate in the medical monitoring, diagnosis, or treatment authorized under subsection (a) if—

(1) the United States to ensure, to the extent practicable, a steady cadence of planetary exploration; and

(2) the United States leads the world in contribution to a robust and productive scientific discoveries that will transform our understanding of the universe; and

(3) the Administrator shall ensure that integrated testing is appropriately timed and sufficiently comprehensive to enable potential issues to be identified and addressed early enough to be handled within the James Webb Space Telescope’s development schedule and prior to its launch.

SEC. 501. MAINTAINING A BALANCED SPACE SCIENCE PORTFOLIO.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SPACE SCIENCE PORTFOLIO.—Congress reaffirms the sense of Congress—

(1) a balanced and adequately funded set of activities, consisting of research and analysis grant programs, technology development, suborbital research activities, and to the extent practicable, should make progress on the technologies and capabilities needed to position our understanding of the universe; and

(2) the Administrator should set science priorities by following the guidance provided by the scientific community through the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s decadal surveys.

(b) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to ensure, to the extent practicable, a steady cadence of large, medium, and small science missions.

SEC. 502. PLANETARY SCIENCE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Mars 2020 mission, to develop a Mars rover and to enable the return of samples collected by the Mars landing, should remain a priority for NASA; and

(2) the Administrator shall ensure that the concept definition and pre-formation activities of the WFIRST mission continue while the James Webb Space Telescope is being completed.

SEC. 503. JAMES WEBB SPACE TELESCOPE.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the James Webb Space Telescope will—

(A) significantly advance our understanding of star and planet formation, and improve our knowledge of the early universe; and

(B) support United States leadership in astrophysics;

(2) consistent with annual Government Accountability Office reviews of the James Webb Space Telescope program, the Administrator should continue robust surveillance of the performance of the James Webb Space Telescope project and continue to improve the reliability of cost estimates and contractor performance data and other major space flight projects in order to enhance NASA’s ability to successfully deliver the James Webb Space Telescope on-time and within budget;

(3) the on-time and on-budget delivery of the James Webb Space Telescope is a high congressional priority; and

(4) the Administrator should ensure that integrated testing is appropriately timed and sufficiently comprehensive to enable potential issues to be identified and addressed early enough to be handled within the James Webb Space Telescope’s development schedule and prior to its launch.

SEC. 504. WIDESPAN INFRARED SURVEY TELESCOPE.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope (referred to in this section as “WFIRST”) mission has the potential to enable scientific discoveries that will transform our understanding of the universe; and

(2) the Administrator, to the extent practicable, should make progress on the technologies and capabilities needed to position our understanding of the universe; and

(b) CONTINUITY OF DEVELOPMENT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the concept definition and pre-formation activities of the WFIRST mission continue while the James Webb Space Telescope is being completed.

SEC. 505. MARS 2020 ROVER.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Mars 2020 mission, to develop a Mars rover and to enable the return of samples collected by the Mars landing, should remain a priority for NASA; and

(2) the Mars 2020 mission—

(A) should significantly increase our understanding of Mars; and

(B) should help determine whether life previously existed on that planet; and
(C) should provide opportunities to gather knowledge and demonstrate technologies that address the challenges of future human expeditions to Mars.

SEC. 505. INFRARED SURVEY TELESCOPE MISSION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Studies of Europa, Jupiter’s moon, indicate that Europa may provide a habitable environment, as it contains key ingredients known to support life.

(2) In 2012, using the Hubble Space Telescope, NASA scientists observed water vapor around the southern polar region of Europa, which provides potential evidence of water plumes in that region.

(3) For decades, the Europa mission has consistently ranked as a high priority mission for the scientific community.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Europa mission could provide another avenue in which to capitalize on our Nation’s current investment in the Space Launch System that would significantly reduce the transit time for such a deep space mission; and

(2) a scientific, robotic exploration mission to Europa, as prioritized in both Planetary Science Decadal Surveys, should be supported.

SEC. 507. CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATION OF POLICY AND PURPOSE.

Section 2012(d) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(18) The search for life’s origin, evolution, distribution, and future in the universe.",

SEC. 508. EXTRASOLAR PLANET EXPLORATION STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academies to develop a science strategy for the study and exploration of extrasolar planets, including the use of the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, the James Webb Space Telescope, a potential Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope mission, or any other telescope, spacecraft, or instrument, as appropriate.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The strategy shall—

(1) outline key scientific questions;

(2) identify the most promising research in the field;

(3) indicate the extent to which the mission priorities in existing decadal surveys address the key extrasolar planet research and exploration goals;

(4) identify opportunities for coordination with international partners, commercial partners, and not-for-profit partners; and

(5) make recommendations regarding the activities carried out during any assessment under subsection (a) that the Administrator should consider in its annual budget-

(b) USE OF STRATEGY.—The Administrator shall use the strategy—

(1) to inform roadmaps, strategic plans, and other activities of the Administration as they relate to extrasolar planet research and exploration;

(2) to provide a foundation for future activities and initiatives related to extrasolar planet research and exploration;

(3) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Academies shall submit to the Administrator and to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the strategy developed under subsection (a).

SEC. 509. ASTROBIOLOGY STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academies to develop a science strategy for astrobiology that would outline key scientific questions, identify the most promising research in the field, and indicate the extent to which the mission priorities in existing decadal surveys address the search for Earth’s origins, distribution, and future in the Universe.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The strategy shall include recommendations for coordination with international partners, and initiatives in the field of astrobiology.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Academies shall submit to the Administrator and to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the strategy developed under subsection (a).

SEC. 510. ASTROBIOLOGY PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing how the Administration can expand collaborative partnerships to study life’s origin, evolution, distribution, and future in the Universe.

SEC. 511. NEAR-EARTH OBJECTS.

Section 321 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2006 (51 U.S.C. note prec. 71101) is amended to read as follows:

"(a) ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall carry out triennial reviews within each of the Science divisions to assess the cost and benefits of extending the date of the termination of data collection for those missions that exceed their planned missions’ lifetime.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting an assessment under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider the potential benefits of extending any assessment under subsection (a) that was carried out during the previous year.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing how the Administration can expand collaborative partnerships to detect, track, catalogue, and categorize near-Earth objects.

SEC. 512. NEAR-EARTH OBJECTS PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administration should seek to leverage the capabilities of the private sector and philanthropic organizations to the maximum extent practicable in carrying out the Near-Earth Object Survey Program in order to meet the goal of that program under section 321(d)(1) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2006 (51 U.S.C. note prec. 71101(d)(1)).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing how the Administration can expand collaborative partnerships to detect, track, catalogue, and categorize near-Earth objects.

SEC. 513. ASSESSMENT OF SCIENCE MISSION EXTENSIONS.

Section 3064 of title 51, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"3064. Assessment of science mission extensions.

(a) ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall annually transmit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that provides—

(1) a description of the status of efforts to coordinate and cooperate with other countries to discover hazardous asteroids and comets, plan a mitigation strategy, and implement the strategy in the event of the discovery of an object on a likely collision course with Earth; and

(2) a description of the status of efforts to coordinate and cooperate with other countries to discover hazardous asteroids and comets, plan a mitigation strategy, and implement the strategy in the event of the discovery of an object on a likely collision course with Earth.

(2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—After the initial report required under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall annually transmit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(1) a summary of all activities carried out under subsection (d) since the date of enactment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017, including the progress toward achieving 90 percent completion of the survey described in subsection (d); and

(2) a summary of expenditures for all activities carried out under subsection (d) since the date of enactment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—The Administrator, in collaboration with other relevant Federal agencies, shall conduct a technical and scientific assessment of the capabilities and ressources—

SEC. 514. STRATOSPHERIC OBSERVATORY FOR INFRARED ASTRONOMY.

The Administrator may not terminate science operations of the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy before December 31, 2017.

SEC. 515. RADIOISOTOPE POWER SYSTEMS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the exploration of the outer reaches of the solar system is enabled by radioisotope power systems;
establishing continuity in the production of the material needed for radioisotope power systems is essential to maintaining the availability of such systems for future deep space missions and landings; and
(b) Federal agencies supporting the Administration through the production of such material should do so in a cost-effective manner so as to design cost-effective reimbursement requirements on the Administration.

(2) the Administration’s Mars Exploration Program and such program’s ability to optimize the science return, given the current fiscal posture of the program; and
(3) the Mars exploration architecture’s relationship to Mars-related activities to be undertaken by foreign agencies and organizations; and
(b) the Administration shall submit the results of the assessment to the appropriate committees of Congress.

157. COLLABORATION.
The Administration shall continue to develop first-of-a-kind instruments that, once developed, can be commercialized or sustained by other agencies for operations. Whenever responsibilities for the development of sensors or for measurements are transferred to the Administration from another agency, the Administration shall seek, to the extent possible, to reimburse the assumption of such responsibilities.

TITLE VI—AERONAUTICS
SEC. 601. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON AERONAUTICS.
It is the sense of Congress that—
(a) a robust aeronautics research portfolio will help maintain the United States status as a leader in aviation, enhance the competitiveness of the United States in the world economy, and improve the quality of life of all citizens;
(b) the Administration’s mission, continues to be an important core element of the Administration’s mission, and should be supported;
(c) the Administration should coordinate and consult with relevant Federal agencies and the private sector to minimize duplication of efforts and leverage resources; and
(d) the Administration should work with relevant Federal agencies and the private sector to ensure that the next generation of aeronautics research by encouraging investigations into the early-stage advancement of critical technologies that have the potential to transform the commercial supersonic flight operations and provide the basis for establishing appropriate sonic boom standards for such flight operations.

SEC. 602. TRANSFORMATIVE AERONAUTICS RESEARCH.
It is the sense of Congress that the Administration should look strategically into the future and ensure that the Administration’s personnel are at the leading edge of aeronautics research by encouraging investigations into the early-stage advancement of new processes, novel concepts, and innovative technologies that have the potential to meet national aeronautics needs.

SEC. 603. HYPERSONIC RESEARCH.
(a) ROADMAP FOR HYPERSONIC RESEARCH.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administration, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a research and development roadmap for hypersonic aircraft research.
(b) OBJECTIVE.—The objective of the roadmap is to develop and demonstrate improved safety, noise, and environmental impact in a relevant environment.
(c) CONTENTS.—The roadmap shall include specific goals for the research, a timeline for implementation, metrics for success, and guidelines for collaboration and coordination with industry and other Federal agencies.

TITLE VII—SPACE TECHNOLOGY
SEC. 701. SPACE TECHNOLOGY INFUSION.
(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SPACE TECHNOLOGY.—It is the sense of Congress that space technology is critical—
(b) to enabling a new class of Administration missions beyond low-Earth orbit; and
(c) to improving technological capabilities and promote innovation for the Administration and the Nation.

(b) ROADMAP FOR PROPULSION TECHNOLOGY.—It is the sense of Congress...
that advancing propulsion technology would improve the efficiency of trips to Mars and could shorten travel time to Mars, reduce astronaut health risks, and reduce radiation exposure, energy, and mass of materials required for the journey.

(c) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States that the Administrator shall develop technology to support the Administration’s core missions, as described in section 2(3) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) and support sustained investments in early stage innovation, fundamental research, and technologies to expand the boundaries of the national aerospace enterprise.

(d) PROPULSION TECHNOLOGIES.—A goal of propulsion technologies developed under subsection (c) shall be to significantly reduce human travel time to Mars.

SEC. 702. SPACE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

(a) SPACE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Administrator shall conduct a space technology program (referred to in this section as the “Program”) to research and develop advanced space technologies that could deliver innovative solutions across the Administration’s space exploration and science missions.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the Program, the Administrator shall consider:

(1) the recommendations of the National Academies’ review of the Administration’s Space Technology roadmaps and priorities; and

(2) the applicable enabling aspects of the stepping stone approach to exploration under section 70504 of title 51, United States Code.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—In conducting the Program, the Administrator shall—

(1) to the extent practicable, use a competitive process to select research and development projects;

(2) to the extent practicable and appropriate, use small satellites and the Administration’s suborbital and ground-based platforms to demonstrate space technology concepts and developments; and

(3) as appropriate, partner with other Federal agencies, universities, private industry, and foreign countries.

(d) SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS.—The Administrator shall organize and manage the Administration’s Small Business Innovation Research Program and Small Business Technology Transfer Program within the Program.

(e) NONDUPPLICATION CERTIFICATION.—The Administrator shall submit a budget for each fiscal year, as transmitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 51, United States Code, that avoids duplication of projects, programs, or missions conducted by Program with other projects, programs, or missions conducted by another office or directorate of the Administration.

(f) COLLABORATION, COORDINATION, AND ALIGNMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(A) ensure that the Administration’s projects, programs, and activities in support of technology research and development of advanced space technologies are fully coordinated and aligned;

(B) ensure that the results of the projects, programs, and activities are shared and leveraged within the Administration; and

(C) ensure that the organizational responsibilities and development activities in support of human space exploration not initiated as of the date of enactment of this Act is established on the basis of a sound strategy.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that projects, programs, and missions being conducted by the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate in support of research and development of advanced space technologies and systems focusing on human space exploration should continue in that Directorate.

(g) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the appropriate committees of Congress shall—

(1) comparing the Administration’s space technology investments with the high-priority technology areas identified by the National Academies in the National Research Council’s report on the Administration’s Space Technology Roadmaps; and

(2) identify:

(A) identification of how the Administration will address any gaps between the agency’s investments and the recommended technology areas, including a projection of funding requirements; and

(B) identification of the rationale described in subsection (f)(1)(C).

(h) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Administrator shall include in the Administration’s annual budget request for each fiscal year the Administration’s assessment and projections of potential impacts of such authority on the Administration’s near and long-term goals and objectives for leveraging information technology investments that exceed a defined monetary threshold, including any potential impacts of such authority on the Administration’s decision making processes and authorities, including impacts on its ability to implement information security; and

(i) the impact of NASA Chief Information Officer approval authority over information technology investments with the high-priority technology areas identified by the National Academies in the National Research Council’s report on the Administration’s Space Technology Roadmaps; and

SEC. 703. SPACE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall, in a manner that reflects the unique nature of NASA’s mission, ensure that—

(1) the NASA Chief Information Officer, Mission Directorates, and Centers have appropriate roles in the management, governance, and oversight processes related to information technology investments, including funding and operations and information security programs for the protection of NASA systems;

(2) the NASA Chief Information Officer has the appropriate resources and insight to oversee NASA information technology and information security operations and information technology investments that exceed a predefined monetary threshold, including any potential impacts of such authority on the Administration’s near and long-term goals and objectives for leveraging information technology; and

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the strategic plan, the Administrator shall ensure that the strategic plan—

(1) the deadline under section 306(a) of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) the requirements under section 306(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(c) CONTENTS.—The strategic plan shall address, in a manner that reflects the unique nature of NASA’s mission and expertise—

(1) near and long-term goals and objectives for leveraging information technology;

(2) a plan for how NASA will submit to Congress a list of information technology projects, including cost and risk level in accordance with guidance from the Office of Management and Budget;

(3) an implementation overview for an agency-wide approach to information technology investments and operations, including reducing barriers to cross-center collaboration;

(4) coordination by the NASA Chief Information Officer with centers and mission directorates to ensure that information technology policies are effectively and efficiently implemented across the agency; and

(5) a plan to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology investments, including a description of how unnecessary duplication, waste, and unused or outdated information technology acquired by NASA will be identified and eliminated, and a schedule for the identification and elimination of such information technology;

(6) a plan for improving the information security of agency information and agency information systems, including improving security control assessment and self-based security training of employees; and

(7) submission by NASA to Congress of information regarding high risk projects and cybersecurity risks.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report under subsection (a) and any updates there to.
SEC. 813. CYBERSECURITY.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that the security of NASA information and information systems is vital to the success of the mission of the agency.

(b) INFORMATION SECURITY PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall implement the information security plan developed under paragraph (2) and take such further actions as the Administrator considers necessary to improve the information security system in accordance with this section.

(2) INFORMATION SECURITY PLAN.—Subject to paragraphs (3) and (4), the Administrator shall develop an agency-wide information security plan to enhance information security for NASA information and information infrastructure.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the plan under paragraph (2), the Administrator shall ensure that the plan—

(A) reflects the unique nature of NASA’s mission and expertise;

(B) is informed by policies, standards, guidelines, and directives on information security required for Federal agencies;

(C) reflects the unique nature of NASA’s mission and expertise; and

(D) meets applicable National Institute of Standards and Technology information security standards and guidelines.

(4) CONTENTS.—The plan shall address—

(A) an overview of the requirements of the information security system;

(B) an agency-wide risk management framework for information security;

(C) a description of the information security awareness implementation controls, and common controls that are necessary to ensure compliance with information security-related requirements;

(D) an identification and assignment of roles, responsibilities, and management commitment for information security at the agency;

(E) coordination among organizational entities, including between each center, facility, mission directorate, and mission support office, and among agency entities responsible for different aspects of information security;

(F) the need to protect the information security information in information systems and activities and high-impact and moderate-impact information systems; and

(G) a schedule of frequent reviews and updates, as necessary, of the plan.

SEC. 814. SECURITY MANAGEMENT OF FOREIGN NATIONAL ACCESS.

The Administrator shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress when the agency has implemented the information technology security recommendations from the National Academy of Public Administration on foreign national access management, based in reports from January 2014 and March 2016.

SEC. 815. CYBERSECURITY OF WEB APPLICATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall, in a manner that reflects the unique nature of NASA’s mission and expertise—

(1) develop a plan, including such actions and milestones as are necessary, to fully remediate security vulnerabilities of NASA web applications within a timely fashion after discovery;

(2) provide an update on its plan to implement the recommendation from the NASA Inspector General in the audit report dated July 2, 2014, to remove from the Internet or otherwise secure all NASA web applications in development or testing mode.

Subtitle B—Collaboration Among Mission Directorates and Other Matters

SEC. 821. COLLABORATION AMONG MISSION DIRECTORATES.

The Administrator shall encourage an interdisciplinary approach among all NASA mission directorates and divisions, whenever appropriate, for projects or missions—

(1) to ensure mission coordination, and encourage collaboration and early planning on scope;

(2) to determine areas of overlap or alignment;

(3) to find ways to leverage across divisional perspectives to maximize outcomes; and

(4) to be more efficient with resources and funds.

SEC. 822. NASA LAUNCH CAPABILITIES COLLABORATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Launch Services Program is responsible for the acquisition, management, and technical oversight of commercial launch services for NASA’s science and robotic missions.

(2) The Commercial Crew Program is responsible for the acquisition, management, and technical oversight of commercial crew transportation systems.

(3) The Launch Services Program and Commercial Crew Program have worked together to gain exceptional technical insight into the contracted launch service providers that are common to both programs.

(4) The Launch Services Program has a long history of oversight of 12 different launch vehicles and over 80 launches.

(5) Co-location of the Launch Services Program and Commercial Crew Program has enabled the Commercial Crew Program to efficiently obtain the launch vehicle technical expertise of and provide engineering and analytical support to the Commercial Crew Program.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Launch Services Program and Commercial Crew Program each benefit from communication and coordination of launch manifests, technical information, and common launch vehicle insight between the programs;

(2) such communication and coordination is enabled by the co-location of the programs.

(c) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall pursue a strategy for acquisition of crewed transportation services and non-crewed launch services that continues to enhance communication and coordination, and coordination between the Launch Services Program and the Commercial Crew Program.

SEC. 823. DETECTION AND AVOIDANCE OF COUNTERFEIT PARTS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) A 2012 investigation by the Committee on Armed Services identified a state of counterfeit electronic parts in the Department of Defense supply chain from 2009 through 2010 uncovered 1,800 cases and over 1,000,000 counterfeit parts; and exposed the threat such counterfeit parts pose to service members and national security.

(2) Since 2010, the Comptroller General of the United States has identified in 3 separate reports the risks and challenges associated with counterfeit parts and counterfeit prevention at both the Department of Defense and NASA, including inconsistent definitions of counterfeit parts, poorly targeted quality control practices, and potential barriers to improvements to these practices.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the presence of counterfeit electronic parts in the NASA supply chain poses a danger to United States government astronauts, crew, and other personnel and a risk to the agency overall.

(c) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 370 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall revise the NASA Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation to improve the detection and avoidance of counterfeit electronic parts in the supply chain.

(2) CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) require each covered contractor—

(i) to detect and avoid the use or inclusion of any counterfeit parts in electronic parts or products that contain such parts;

(ii) to take such corrective actions as the Administrator considers necessary to remedy the use or inclusion described in clause (i); and

(iii) including a subcontractor, to notify the applicable NASA contracting officer not later than 30 calendar days after the date the covered contractor becomes aware, or has reason to suspect, that any end item, component, part or material contained in supplies purchased by NASA, or purchased by a contractor or subcontractor for delivery to, or on behalf of, NASA, contains a counterfeit electronic part or suspect counterfeit electronic part; and

(B) prohibit the cost of counterfeit electronic parts, suspect counterfeit electronic parts, and any corrective action described under subparagraph (A)(ii) from being included as allowable costs under agency contracts, unless—

(i) the covered contractor has an operational system to detect and avoid counterfeit electronic parts and suspect counterfeit electronic parts that has been reviewed and approved by NASA or the Department of Defense; and

(ii) the covered contractor has provided the notice under subparagraph (A)(iii);

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) require NASA and covered contractors, including subcontractors, to—

(i) to obtain electronic parts that are in production or currently available in stock from; or

(ii) to obtain electronic parts that are not in production or currently available in stock from—

(I) the original manufacturers of the parts or their authorized dealers; or

(II) suppliers who obtain such parts exclusively from the original manufacturers of the parts or their authorized dealers; or

(3) the covered contractor has provided the notice under subparagraph (A)(iii); or

(ii) to obtain electronic parts that are not in production or currently available in stock from suppliers that meet qualification requirements established under subparagraph (C); and

(B) establish documented requirements consistent with published industry standards concerning contract requirements for—

(i) notification of the agency; and

(ii) inspection, testing, and authentication of electronic parts that NASA or a covered contractor or subcontractor for delivery to, or on behalf of, NASA, contains a counterfeit electronic part or suspect counterfeit electronic part from any source other than a source described in subparagraph (A);

(C) establish qualification requirements, consistent with the requirements of section 2319 of title 10, United States Code, pursuant to which NASA may identify suppliers that have appropriate policies and procedures in place to detect and avoid counterfeit electronic parts and suspect counterfeit electronic parts; and
(D) authorize a covered contractor, including a subcontractor, to identify and use additional suppliers beyond those identified under subparagraph (C) if—
(i) the new and audit processes for identifying such suppliers comply with established industry standards; and
(ii) the covered contractor assumes responsibility for the authenticity of parts provided by such suppliers under paragraph (2); and

(f) the selection of such suppliers is subject to review and audit by NASA.

SEC. 823. DEFINITIONS.—In this section:
(a) COVERED CONTRACTOR.—The term ‘‘covered contractor’’ means a contractor that—
(i) is a prime contractor, or a subcontractor, to identify and use additional suppliers beyond those provided by such suppliers under paragraph (2); and
(ii) the selection of such suppliers is subject to review and audit by NASA.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The revised regulations under subsection (a) shall, at a minimum—
(1) require the Administration to request advice on systems engineering and technical assistance functions, professional services, or management support contracts by a prime contractor or the supplier of a major subsystem or component for such programs; and
(2) address organizational conflicts of interest that could potentially arise as a result of the lead system integrator contracts on major acquisition programs and contracts that follow lead system integrator contracts on such programs, particularly contracts for production.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the assessment, the Director shall include—
(a) REQUIREMENTS.—The revised regulations under subsection (a) that are needed to prevent risks to the protection and preservation of those sites and artifacts exist or may exist in the future.

 Sec. 829. COMMERCIAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER LAUNCH MISSIONS.
(a) DEVELOPMENT OF PAYLOADS.—In order to conduct necessary research, the Administrator shall—
(1) identify small class launch opportunities for—
(i) the Development of payloads; and
(ii) the Administration’s successful commitment to growing and diversifying the national science and engineering workforce; and
(b) REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.—Congress reaffirms that the Administration shall provide for payload opportunities expressed in the Experimental Smallsats and Science Missions (EXSSM) program.

(3) the Administration is uniquely positioned to educate and inspire students and the broader public on STEM subjects and careers;
(4) the Administration’s Education and Outreach activities to underserved communities and tribal colleges and universities and encourage new participation in the STEM workforce;
(b) CONTINUATION OF EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall continue engagement with the public and education opportunities for students via all the Administration’s mission directorates to the maximum extent practicable.

(c) LEVERAGING COMMERICAL SATELLITE SERVICING CAPABILITIES ACROSS MISSION DIRECTORATES.
(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:
(1) Refueling and relocating aging satellites in operational lifetimes is a capacity that NASA will substantially benefit from and is important for lowering the costs of ongoing scientific, national security, and commercial satellite operations;
(2) the technologies involved in satellite servicing, such as dexterous robotic arms, propellant transfer systems, and solar electric propulsion, are all critical capabilities to support a human exploration mission to Mars;
(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—
(1) satellite servicing is a vital capability that will bolster the capacity and affordability for long-distance and human exploration operations while simultaneously enhancing the ability of domestic companies to compete in the global marketplace; and
(2) future NASA satellites and spacecraft across mission directorates should be constructed in a manner that allows for servicing in orbit to maximize operational longevity and affordability.

(c) LEVERAGING OF CAPABILITIES.—The Administrator shall—
(1) identify orbital assets in both the Science Mission Directorate and the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate that could benefit from satellite servicing-related technologies; and
(2) work across all NASA mission directorates to evaluate opportunities for the private sector to perform such services or advance technology by leveraging the technologies and techniques developed by NASA programs and other industry programs.

(d) ELEMENTS.—The revised regulations under subsection (a) shall, at a minimum—
(1) address organizational conflicts of interest that could potentially arise as a result of the lead system integrator contracts on major acquisition programs and contracts that follow lead system integrator contracts on such programs, particularly contracts for production;
(2) require the Administration to request advice on systems engineering and technical assistance functions for a major acquisition program contains a provision prohibiting the contractor or any affiliate of the contractor from participating as a prime contractor or as a major subcontractor in the development of a system under the program; and
(d) REQUIREMENTS.—The revised regulations under subsection (a) shall, at a minimum—
(1) require the Administration to—
(i) address organizational conflicts of interest that could potentially arise as a result of the lead system integrator contracts on major acquisition programs and contracts that follow lead system integrator contracts on such programs, particularly contracts for production;
(2) require the Administration to request advice on systems engineering and technical assistance functions for a major acquisition program contains a provision prohibiting the contractor or any affiliate of the contractor from participating as a prime contractor or as a major subcontractor in the development of a system under the program; and
(3) require that a contract for the performance of systems engineering and technical assistance functions for a major acquisition program contains a provision prohibiting the contractor or any affiliate of the contractor from participating as a prime contractor or as a major subcontractor in the development of a system under the program; and
(4) establish such limited exceptions to the requirements in paragraph (a) and (b) as the Administrator considers necessary to ensure that the Administration has continued access to advice on systems architecture and systems engineering matters from highly qualified contractors with domain expertise and experience, while ensuring that such advice comes from sources that are objective and unbiased.

Sec. 821. PROTECTION OF APOLLO LANDING SITES.
(a) ASSESSMENT.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in consultation with relevant Federal agencies and stakeholders, shall assess the issues relating to protecting and preserving historically important Apollo Program lunar landing sites and Apollo program artifacts residing on the lunar surface, including those pertaining to Apollo 11 and Apollo 17.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the assessment, the Director shall include—
(1) a determination of the performance or state of preservation of those sites and artifacts exist or may exist in the future.

Sec. 828. BASELINE AND COST CONTROLS.
Section 3010(f)(1)(A) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by striking ‘‘Procedural Requirements 7120.5c, dated March 22, 2009’’ and inserting ‘‘Procedural Requirements 7120.5E, dated August 14, 2012’’.

Sec. 829. COMMERCIAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CURRICULUM.
Section 5011(a) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by inserting ‘‘, while protecting national security’’ after ‘‘research community’’.
(3) a determination of the extent to which additional domestic legislation or international treaties or agreements will be required; and
(4) specific recommendations for protecting and preserving those lunar landing sites and artifacts.

(c) Report.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the results of the assessment.

SEC. 832. NASA LEASE OF NON-EXCESS PROPERTY.
Section 2014(g) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by striking “10 years after December 29, 2007” and inserting “12 years after December 31, 2018.”

SEC. 833. TERMINATION LIABILITY.
It is the sense of Congress that—
(1) the ISS, the Space Launch System, and the Orion will enable the Nation to continue operations in low-Earth orbit and to send its astronauts to deep space;
(2) the James Webb Space Telescope will revolutionize our understanding of star and planet formation and how galaxies evolved, and will advance the search for the origins of our universe;
(3) as a result of their unique capabilities and their critical contribution to the future of space exploration, these systems have been elevated by Congress and the Administration as priority investments;
(4) contractors are currently holding program funding, estimated to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars, to cover the potential termination liability should the Government choose to terminate a program for convenience; and
(5) as a result, hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are unavailable for meaningful work on these programs;

(6) according to the Government Accountability Office, the Administration procures most of its goods and services through contracts, and it terminates very few of them;
(7) in fiscal year 2010, the Administration terminated 29 of 16,343 active contracts and orders, a termination rate of about 0.17 percent; and
(8) the Administration should vigorously pursue a policy on termination liability that maximizes the utilization of its appropriated funds to make maximum progress in meeting established goals and schedule milestones on these high-priority programs.

SEC. 834. INDEPENDENT REVIEWS.
Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing—
(1) the Administration’s procedures for conducting independent reviews of projects and programs at lifecycle milestones;
(2) how the Administration ensures the independence of the individuals who conduct those reviews prior to their assignment;
(3) the Administration’s internal and external entities independent of project and program management that conduct reviews of projects and programs at life cycle milestones; and
(4) how the Administration ensures the independence of such entities and their members.

SEC. 835. NASA ADVISORY COUNCIL.
(a) Appointment.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Public Administration to assess the effectiveness of the NASA Advisory Council and to make recommendations to Congress for any change to—
(1) the functions of the Council;
(2) the appointment of members to the Council;
(3) the qualifications for members of the Council;
(4) the duration of terms of office for members of the Council;
(5) the frequency of meetings of the Council;
(6) the structure of leadership and Committees of the Council; and
(7) the levels of professional staffing for the Council.
(b) Considerations.—In carrying out the assessment under subsection (a), the National Academy of Public Administration shall—
(1) consider the impacts of broadening the Council’s role to include providing consultation and advice to Congress under section 2113(g) of title 51, United States Code;
(2) consider the impacts of the Council and the activities of other analogous Federal advisory bodies; and
(3) any other issues that the National Academy of Public Administration determines could potentially impact the effectiveness of the Council.

(c) Report.—The National Academy of Public Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the results of the assessment, including any recommendations.

(d) Consultation and advice.—
(1) In general.—The Administrator shall consider the past activities of the Council and the Council’s role to include providing consultation and advice to Congress.

(2) Sunset.—Effective September 30, 2017, section 2113(g) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by striking “and Congress” after “advice to the Administrator.”

SEC. 836. COST ESTIMATION.
(a) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that—
(1) realistic cost estimating is critically important to the ultimate success of major space development projects; and
(2) the Administration has devoted significant efforts to improving its cost estimating capabilities, but it is important that the Administration continue its efforts to develop and implement guidance in establishing realistic cost estimates.

(b) Guidance and criteria.—The Administrator shall provide to its acquisition programs and projects, in a manner consistent with the Administration’s Space Flight Program and Project Management Requirements—
(1) guidance on when to use an Independent Cost Estimate and Independent Cost Assessment; and
(2) criteria to use to make a determination under paragraph (1).

SEC. 837. FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.
(a) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that—
(1) the Administration must address, mitigating, and reversing, where possible, the deterioration of its facilities and infrastructure, as their condition is hampering the effectiveness and efficiency of research performed by both the Administration and industry participants making use of Administration facilities, thus harming the competitiveness of the United States aerospace industry;
(2) the Administration has a role in providing laboratory capabilities to industry participants that are not economically viable as commercial entities and thus are not available elsewhere;
(3) to ensure continued access to reliable and efficient world-class facilities by researchers, the Administration should establish or participate in partnerships with other Federal agencies, State agencies, FAA-licensed spacecraft, institutions of higher education, and industry, as appropriate; and
(4) the Administration should dispose of, maintain, or modernize existing facilities must be made in the context of meeting Administration and other needs, including those required to meet the activities supporting the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of this Act, considering other national laboratory needs as the Administrator deems appropriate.

(b) Policy.—It is the policy of the United States Congress that the Administrator shall develop a plan to maintain reliable and efficient facilities and infrastructure and that decisions on whether to dispose of, maintain, or modernize existing facilities must be made in the context of meeting future Administration needs.

(c) Plan.—The Administrator shall develop a facilities and infrastructure plan.

(d) Goal.—The goal of the plan is to position the Administration to have the facilities and infrastructure, including laboratories, tools, and approaches necessary to meet future Administration and other Federal agencies’ laboratory needs.

(5) CONTENTS.—The plan shall identify—
(A) current Administration and other Federal agency laboratory needs;
(B) future Administration research and development and testing needs;
(C) a strategy for identifying facilities and infrastructure that are candidates for disposal, that is consistent with the national strategic direction set by—
(i) the National Space Policy;
(ii) the National Aeronautics Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation Infrastructure Plan;
(iii) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–155; 119 Stat. 2895), National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–422; 122 Stat. 4779), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2012 (Public Law 113–54; 126 Stat. 130); and
(iv) the human exploration roadmap under section 432 of this Act;
(D) a strategy for the maintenance, repair, upgrading, and modernization of Administration facilities and infrastructure, including laboratories and equipment;
(E) criteria for—
(i) prioritizing deferred maintenance tasks;
(ii) maintaining, repairing, upgrading, or modernizing Administration facilities and infrastructure; and
(iii) implementing processes, plans, and policies for guiding the Administration’s Centers on whether to maintain, repair, upgrade, or modernize a facility or infrastructure and for determining the type of instrument to be used;
(F) an assessment of modifications needed to maximize usage of facilities that offer unique and highly specialized benefits to the aerospace industry and the American public; and
(G) implementation steps, including a timeline, milestones, and an estimate of resources required for carrying out the plan.

(d) Requirement to Establish Policy.—
(2) In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish and make publicly available a policy that guides the Administration’s use of existing authorities to out-grant, lease, excess to the General Services Administration, sell, deconversion, de-mobilize, or otherwise transfer property, facilities, and infrastructure.

(c) Criteria.—The policy shall include criteria for the use of authorities, best practices, standardized procedures, and guidelines for how to appropriately manage property, facilities, and infrastructure.

(e) Submission to Congress.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the plan developed under subsection (c).
SEC. 858. HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS.

Section 70702 of title 51, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by amending subsection (a)(3) to read as follows:

"(3) any other orbital or suborbital space vehicle carrying humans that is (A) a Federal Government; or

"(B) being used pursuant to a contract or Space Act Agreement with the Federal Government for carrying a government astronaut as a researcher funded by the Federal Government; or "; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) after this section:

"(1) GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUT.—The term 'government astronaut' has the meaning given the term in section 50902.

"(2) SPACE ACT AGREEMENT.—The term 'Space Act Agreement' means an agreement entered into by the Administration pursuant to its other transactions authority under section 20113(e).

SEC. 849. ORBITAL DEBRIS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) orbital debris poses serious risks to the operational space capabilities of the United States;

(2) a international commitment and integrated strategic plan are needed to mitigate the growth of orbital debris wherever possible; and

(3) the delay in the Office of Science and Technology Policy's submission of a report on the status of international coordination and development of orbital debris mitigation strategies is inconsistent with such risks.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) COORDINATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of efforts to coordinate with foreign governments within the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee to mitigate the effects and growth of orbital debris under section 1202(b)(1) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18441(b)(1)).

(2) MITIGATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of the orbital debris mitigation strategy required under section 1202(b)(2) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18441(b)(2)).

SEC. 840. REVIEW OF ORBITAL DEBRIS REMOVAL CONCEPTS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) orbital debris in low-Earth orbit poses significant risks to spacecraft;

(2) such orbital debris may increase due to collisions between existing debris objects; and

(3) understanding options to address and remove orbital debris is important for ensuring safe and effective spacecraft operations in low-Earth orbit.

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall solicit and review concepts and options for removing orbital debris from low-Earth orbit; and

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The solicitation and review under paragraph (1) shall address the requirements for and feasibility of developing and implementing each of the options.

SEC. 841. SPACE ACT AGREEMENTS

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, when used appropriately, Space Act Agreements can provide significant value in furtherance of NASA's mission.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) orbital debris poses serious risks to the operational space capabilities of the United States;

(2) Space Act Agreements for the upcoming fiscal year shall publicly disclose on the Administration's website and make available in a searchable format each Space Act Agreement, including an estimate of cost, NASA resources and the expected benefits to agency objectives for each agreement, with appropriate redactions for proprietary, sensitive, or classified information, not later than 60 days after such agreement is signed by the parties.

(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of Space Act Agreements for the upcoming fiscal year.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include for each Space Act Agreement in effect at the time of the report—

(A) an indication of whether the agreement is a reimbursable, non-reimbursable, or funded Space Act Agreement;

(B) a description of the agreement—

(i) the subject and terms;

(ii) the parties;

(iii) the responsible—

(I) Mission Directorate;

(II) Center; or

(III) headquarters element;

(iv) the value;

(v) the extent of the cost sharing among Federal Government and non-Federal sources;

(vi) the time period or schedule; and

(vii) all related agreements;

(C) an indication of whether the agreement was renewed during the previous fiscal year.

(3) ANTICIPATED AGREEMENTS.—The report shall include a list of all anticipated reimbursable, non-reimbursable, and funded Space Act Agreements for the upcoming fiscal year.

(d) CUMULATIVE PROGRAM BENEFITS.—The report shall include, with respect to each Space Act Agreement covered by the report, a summary of—

(A) the technology areas in which research projects were conducted under that agreement;

(B) the extent to which the use of that agreement—

(i) has contributed to a broadening of the technology and industrial base available for meeting Administration needs; and

(ii) has fostered within the technology and industrial base new relationships and practices that support the United States; and

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Babin) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Kinzinger) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017. This bipartisan and bicameral bill grew to maturity through many long and serious discussions about the future of our Nation's space program.

I am encouraged by the bill's persistent emphasis on the continuity of purpose and stability. It is crucial that we continue to support NASA's ongoing human exploration efforts.

As a medical professional myself, I care deeply about this issue. I am honored to have sponsored the original legislation, and am proud to contribute to an important program that will support the brave men and women of our astronaut corps. Outer space poses many medical challenges. The human body simply is not designed to thrive in microgravity, or weightlessness. We know that spending time in space is risky. We want to understand the reasons why the TREAT Astronauts Act will ensure the retention of our astronauts' medical data and help to continue our research in aerospace medicine, while also providing our astronauts with the medical care that they need and deserve after risking so much in service to our country.

This bill continues support for the important work on the Space Launch System, the Orion crew vehicle, and commercial cargo and crew programs.
Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this Senate bill, the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2017, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Space for yielding me time.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017 provides bipartisan and bicameral guidance for NASA as we usher in a new era of space exploration.

I support this bill and the direction it establishes for America's space program. S. 442, which passed the Senate by unanimous consent on July 17, includes almost all of the policy provisions from the House authorization bills that passed the House in the last Congress with broad bipartisan support. In fact, it authorizes the House’s proposed fiscal year 2017 funding level of $19.5 billion.

This bill provides a balanced NASA portfolio across all of the mission directorates. It maintains congressional direction for priority near-term programs, such as the James Webb Space Telescope, the Space Launch System, the Orion crew vehicle, the International Space Station, and the Commercial Crew and Cargo Programs.

NASA’s exploration projects are vulnerable to changes in the political landscape. We must have a flexible space program, but not one that is knocked off course. Successfully combining flexibility with constancy of purpose requires thoughtful planning.

This bill directs NASA to create a roadmap for human exploration. An exploration roadmap will help NASA inform Congress and the President, as well as direct the future path and tempo of exploration for decades to come.

This legislation also looks to the future of scientific exploration. It provides support for NASA’s Mars 2020 rover, the Wide Field Infrared Survey Telescope, and a mission to Europa, Jupiter’s icy moon that possibly harbors the building blocks of life. It establishes that one of NASA’s fundamental objectives is “the search for life’s origin, evolution, distribution, and future in the universe.”

Toward that end, this legislation directs the NASA Administrator to develop both an exoplanet exploration strategy and an astrobiology strategy within 18 months after the bill is signed into law. It also directs the NASA Administrator to report on how the science community can expand collaborative partnerships for these scientific endeavors.

Just 2 weeks ago, NASA announced that it had confirmed the existence of
Mr. Speaker, NASA truly is a symbol of American excellence and ingenuity. For NASA to succeed as they continue the journey in history. We must maintain our competitiveness, stimulate innovation and economic growth, and inspire the next generation to dream big and garner the skills to turn those dreams into action.

Notably, the bill sets the long-term course of sending humans to the surface of Mars and directs NASA to provide a human exploration roadmap outlining the capabilities and milestones needed to achieve the goal. In closing, NASA’s space and aeronautics programs help maintain our competitiveness, stimulate innovation and economic growth, and inspire the next generation to dream big and garner the skills to turn those dreams into action.

NASA and our space program have a long history of bipartisan support. I urge Members of the House to pass S. 442, the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2017.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, and I hope I don’t take 5 minutes.


I have long been a supporter of our Nation’s space program. I have seen what we can accomplish when we put our best and brightest in a room together and give them the resources they need to solve tough scientific, engineering, and mathematical problems to better our society and our understanding of the solar system and beyond.

The bill before us today ensures the hardworking people at NASA and the thousands of private aerospace workers in Colorado and across the country have a constant sea of purpose and the backing of Congress to continue advancing our quest to understand our planet and explore other celestial bodies.

Mr. Speaker, I enjoy serving on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. While we may not agree on every issue, when it comes to our space programs, we come together and find the best solutions to the problems we face, and this bill does exactly that.

As my colleagues on this committee know, I am very passionate about getting our astronauts to the surface of Mars. This bill will require detailed plans from NASA on how to do that and, more importantly, on the timelines so that we can get to Mars through the development of a human exploration system into action.

In addition to this roadmap, section 435 of the bill also requires NASA to report back on the feasibility of a human mission to Mars by the year 2033. Sixteen years from now, Earth and Mars will be aligned for what could be the most significant and inspirational journey in history.

About 18 months ago, our committee heard testimony from former NASA leadership about our deep space exploration missions. I asked them to provide us a date: When can we get to Mars? As it turns out, the planets’ orbit and alignment in 2033 is optimal. So as my colleagues on the committee know, I have prepared a bumper sticker: ‘Cross your fingers for you, showing 2033 as the time we are going to get our astronauts to Mars.

I thank Chairman SMITH, Representative BABIN, Representative EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, as well as Representative BERA for allowing me to work and to help put section 435 into the bill.

I know we can do this. This is a mission that all Americans will be proud of. They are so proud of our space program, the scientists and engineers at NASA. This will give us a real goal and a real project to get our astronauts to Mars by 2033.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time on the bill.

I ask my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work: our chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH); and also the ranking gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON); my counterpart on the subcommittee, Representative BERA; and also Representative PERLMUTTER, the gentleman from Colorado; and all of my fellow members on the subcommittee and our entire committee.

I take a moment to also thank our hardworking staff, and that includes Tom Hammond, Mike Mineiro, Jonathan Charlton, Ryan Faith, Molly Perdue, and Chris Wydler from the majority staff. I also thank Steve Janushkowsky, Jeannie Kranz, Stuart Burns from my congressional staff, and Allen Li and Pamela Whitney from the minority staff.

Mr. Speaker, it is because of their countless hours of hard work, negotiation, and finding common ground that we will now send this bill from the floor of this House of Representatives to the resolute desk of the Oval Office to be signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 442.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.
REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1301, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Ms. CHENEY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–25) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1301) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 725, INNOCENT PARTY PROTECTION ACT

Ms. CHENEY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–27) on the resolution (H. Res. 175) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 725) to amend the Rules of the House of Representatives, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Ms. CHENEY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–27) on the resolution (H. Res. 175) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 725) to amend the Rules of the House of Representatives, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XX, proceedings for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore.

The session was suspended at 4:55 p.m., to resume at 5:00 p.m., pursuant to a motion by Ms. ESHOO, and a previous order of the House.
Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
1. Immediately request the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, and make a public disclosure of the tax returns under Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, and vote to report the information therein to the full House of Representatives.

Whereas, the Chairmen of the Ways and Means Committee, Joint Committee on Taxation, and Senate Finance Committee have the authority to request the President’s tax returns under Section 6103 of the tax code; whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Richard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public; whereas, the Ways and Means Committee used IRC 6103 authority in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers; whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, government contracts, or otherwise; now, therefore, be it:

Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
1. Immediately request the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, and make a public disclosure of the tax returns under Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, and vote to report the information therein to the full House of Representatives.

Whereas, the Chairmen of the Ways and Means Committee, Joint Committee on Taxation, and Senate Finance Committee have the authority to request the President’s tax returns under Section 6103 of the tax code; whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Richard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public; whereas, the Ways and Means Committee used IRC 6103 authority in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers; whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, government contracts, or otherwise; now, therefore, be it:

Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
1. Immediately request the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, and make a public disclosure of the tax returns under Section 6103 of the tax code; whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Richard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public; whereas, the Ways and Means Committee used IRC 6103 authority in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers; whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, government contracts, or otherwise; now, therefore, be it:

Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
1. Immediately request the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, and make a public disclosure of the tax returns under Section 6103 of the tax code; whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Richard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public; whereas, the Ways and Means Committee used IRC 6103 authority in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers; whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, government contracts, or otherwise; now, therefore, be it:

Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
1. Immediately request the tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, and make a public disclosure of the tax returns under Section 6103 of the tax code; whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Richard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public; whereas, the Ways and Means Committee used IRC 6103 authority in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers; whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, government contracts, or otherwise; now, therefore, be it:

Resolved. That the House of Representatives shall—
the information therein to the full House of Representatives.

2. Support transparency in government and the longstanding tradition of Presidents and Presidential candidates disclosing their tax returns.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentlewoman from California wish to present argument on the parliamentary question whether the resolution presented is a question of the privileges of the House?

Ms. ESHOO. I do, Mr. Speaker. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, under clause 1 of rule IX, questions of the privilege of the House are ‘‘those affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings.’’ I believe the dignity and the integrity of the House are put at risk when this body refuses to exercise its statutory authority and constitutional obligation to operate on a check on the executive branch.

Under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, three congressional committees have jurisdiction to request tax returns: House Ways and Means, Senate Finance, and the Joint Committee on Taxation. This authority was placed in the Code by Congress in 1924 to allow for a check on the executive branch. In 1974, section 6103 authority was used by the members of the Joint Committee on Taxation to publish a staff report on President Nixon’s tax returns revealing that he owed nearly a half a million dollars in back taxes. Today, I reveal that he owed nearly a half a million dollars in back taxes. Today, I reveal that he owed nearly a half a million dollars in back taxes.

In 1974, section 6103 authority was used by the members of the Joint Committee on Taxation to publish a staff report on President Nixon’s tax returns revealing that he owed nearly a half a million dollars in back taxes. Today, I reveal that he owed nearly a half a million dollars in back taxes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is reminded that she must confine her remarks to the parliamentary question of whether the resolution qualifies under rule IX.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I am attempting to set forward the question of the privileges of the House on a privileged resolution, and this is a part of it. I believe the only way to determine whether these dealings represent violations of the Emoluments Clause of the Constitution is by fully examining the President’s tax records.

Contrary to the Chair’s ruling last Monday, there is no direct precedent in section 706 of the House Practice manual for the situation because the current situation is unprecedented. The President’s business empire makes him more susceptible to conflicts of interest than any President in our history.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized. The Chair is prepared to rule on the question.

The gentlewoman from California seeks to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX. As the Chair ruled on February 27, 2017, and as demonstrated by section 706 of the House Rules and Manual, a resolution directing a committee to meet and conduct certain business does not qualify as a question of the privileges of the House.

The resolution offered by the gentlewoman from California seeks to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX.

As the Chair ruled on February 27, 2017, and as demonstrated by section 706 of the House Rules and Manual, a resolution directing a committee to meet and conduct certain business does not qualify as a question of the privileges of the House.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is: Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 375, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

AYES—227

ABRAMS
Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Barbeaux (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Bugs
Herrera-Buelna
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bueno
Budd
Burgess
Burke
Calver
cartter
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Crescenz
Conaway
Cock
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Carbajal
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSaulnier
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farha
Farstad
Faso
Ferguson
Feresht:ich
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frazzini (AZ)
Prelingsk:i
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gibbs
Gohmert

Gallo
Goat
Goa
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Gutierrez
Harper
Harrison
Hartlerd
Hensarling
Herbstler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hilliard
Hollingsworth
Honda
Horsford
Huitingen
Hunter
Hurst
Insa
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Keny (MS)
Keny (PA)
Keny (NY)
Kinnenger
Knaug
Kustoff (TN)
Lamborn
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Lobiondo
Long
Ludermil
Love
Lucas
Luetjenmeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marone
Marshall
Masse
Mast
McCarthy
McClain
McClintock
McHenry
McKean
McMorris
McNerney
McRosty
McTigue
McSally
McMaster
Meehan
Meissner
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore (WV)
Moore (WV)
Moran (WY)
Mowack
Murphy (TX)
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Norm
Omn (IA)
Ozes

Oberstar
Palladino
Palazzo
Perdue
Petter
Poe (TX)
Pouliot
Pocan
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Robb
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas
Ros-Lehtinen
Rostenkowski
Ross
Rotthaus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shumate
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (NC)
Smucker
Stafanik
Steck
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Trott
Turner
Upton
Wagner
Walberg
Walcott
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Webber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Wexton
Williams
Williamson
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (NY)
Zeldin

H1573
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 375, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

Mr. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 375, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 375, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on tabling the appeal will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 375, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayeys 227, noes 186, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:
and passing the bill (H. R. 375) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the "Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse."

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill. The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR ANTHONY ‘TONY’ BEILENSON**

(Mr. SHERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I regret to inform the House that my predecessor, Anthony "Tony" C. Bellison, died unexpectedly earlier today.

Anthony Bellison was known for integrity, civility, intelligence, courage, and a willingness to work across the aisle, even when that caused him to differ from the orthodoxy of his own party.

He served in this House for 20 years, from 1977 through 1997, and served for 2 years as chair of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. He passed on Sunday, and I ask that Members rise and that the House observe a moment of silence.

**PUBLIC TIRED OF BIASED MEDIA**

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, from Investor’s Business Daily: ‘The mainstream media’s open hostility to President Trump may be starting to backfire, according to the latest IBD/TIPP poll. The poll found that 55 percent of the public says they have grown ‘weary from the media’s persistently negative coverage of President Trump.’

‘A roughly equal share, 54 percent, also believe that the news media ‘has assumed the role of the opposition party, constantly opposing the president and his policies at every turn.’”

“The results are understandable, given the unusually hostile relationship the press has with Trump. ‘A study by the nonpartisan group Media Tenor found that only 3 percent of network news stories in the first month of the Trump administration could be described as positive.’

“The poll found that 57 percent back Trump’s plan to have 10,000 more immigration agents; 58 percent support the deportation of illegal immigrants charged with a crime, even if they haven’t been convicted; and 53 percent back Trump’s call to withhold federal aid to ‘sanctuary cities.’”

“Meanwhile, 42 percent say Trump is providing strong leadership for the country, which is higher than the 40 percent Obama got last October.”

**HOUSE REPUBLICANS’ BILL TO REPEAL THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, it took 7 years, but it is finally here. The House Republican plan to make America sick again.

Under this plan, millions of Americans will lose their health insurance, and millions of other families will pay more for worse coverage. At the same time, the Republicans’ bill rolls back Medicaid expansion and allows insurers to charge older enrollees more.

We always knew that the House Republican plan would harm the most vulnerable Americans, but we still do not know how much this bill will cost and how many Americans it will cover. Now, House Republicans prefer it this way. They know that their bill will cover far fewer people than the Affordable Care Act does. They want to hide this fact from the American people and rush this bill through committee.

Mr. Speaker, this is an obvious and embarrassing display of cowardice from the House Republicans. The American people deserve to know the consequences of this bill just as they deserve quality and affordable access to health care. With the Republican plan, it looks like the American people will get neither.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LILLIAN COX**

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I work for the Texans in Meadows Place. They are led by Mayor Charles Jessup. The locals call Meadows Place the best square mile of small-town America. Meadows Place has a secret. Shhhhh. Every man who lives there is in love with the same woman. We all love Lillian Cox.

Lillian turned 110 on February 22. In 352 days, I am taking Lillian out for chicken fried steak. And we may go to the Live Oak Grill, she loves so much. I will have the chicken fried steak.
for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be an adherent of the Constitution, as I know that my colleagues are. We believe in the separation of the three branches of government.

That is why it was so noteworthy and so outrageous that the leader of the free world and Commander in Chief issued a patently irrational email or Twitter on Saturday morning this past Saturday regarding a personal and direct request for the past President of the United States of America regarding that President having wiretapped this individual in an outrageous manner.

Let me cite for you headlines in the Houston Chronicle: FBI chief seeks Trump rebuke of that horrible statement.

I ask the Department of Justice to immediately respond to Director Comey’s request that you rebuke this outrageous statement that would accuse the President of any wiretapping that require either a Title III court, DEA, FBI, or require a FISA court.

Mr. President, explain yourself.

Justice Department, respond to this untruth now.

The Constitution requires it, and the separation of the three branches of government, out of respect, requires it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to direct their remarks to the Chair.

CONGRATULATING SPECIALIST SUSAN TANUI

(Mr. MARSHALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to recognize and congratulate Specialist Susan Tanui, the 2016 Army Soldier-Athlete of the Year.

Specialist Tanui currently serves the soldiers at Fort Riley, Kansas, as a dental assistant.

During her time in service, she has exemplified the Army’s seven core values—loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage—through her dedicated service, which is exemplified by her numerous decorations and awards.

In addition to serving the U.S. Army, Specialist Tanui is currently pursuing a degree at Liberty University, represents the Fort Riley Division running team, the All Army team, and the U.S. Armed Forces as an Army athlete.

She has also represented the U.S. Army in the U.S. Track and Field National Cross Country Championships in 2015 and 2016 and hopes, one day, to compete in the Olympics.

I commend Specialist Tanui’s accomplishments, her outstanding character, and look forward to witnessing what she will accomplish in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, we are so proud of Specialist Tanui, the soldiers of Fort Riley, the home of the Big Red One.

HONORING DR. NEHEMIAH DAVIS

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of a dedicated civil rights leader and pastor, Dr. Nehemiah Davis.

Pastor Davis faithfully served the Mount Pisgah Baptist Church on Evans Avenue in Fort Worth, Texas, on the south side, for over 50 years. Along with serving as a spiritual leader in my hometown, Mr. Davis served as the president of the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America, where he supported churches nationwide.

Pastor Davis’ dedication to the community eventually led to his induction into the Religious Hall of Fame and the perfect foil from the constitu- tional questions that his and his family’s behavior have raised since he took the oath of office.

With hotels and property developments all over America and the world, the Trump empire is dramatically expanding its domestic business, raising vital questions as to the Trumps’ prof- iting from public service, including from foreign entanglements that vio- late the Constitution.

Outlined in Article II of the Constitu- tion, the clause prohibits the President from receiving, other than his salary, any compensation, gift, or other form of profit from the United States, a State government, or their instrumentality.

Congress reserves its ability to consent to foreign emoluments but not to domestic emoluments. Our Founding Fathers were clear—no exceptions.

It has been heavily reported in the papers that the Trump sons have now signed at least 17 letters of intent with potential developers, even listing specific cities. They don’t have to tell their father about all this. The newspa- pers cover it in abundance. And the American people should never have to worry whose interests the President serves.

Today those doubts abound. America, the scales of justice need tending.
House Counsel’s Office, while the company hired a longtime Republican attorney tasked with ensuring the Trump Organization minimizes conflicts of interest.

In 2015, the Trump sons waved off the idea that their plans created any potential ethical problems.

“There are lines that we would never cross, and they have to do with anything government,” Eric Trump said.

Donald Trump Jr. said that since the inauguration, he has spoken with his father twice on the phone and once in person—when he and his brother attended the announcement of their father’s Supreme Court nominee, Neil G. Gorsuch. Donald Trump said he might talk to his father about how things are in the White House but would never discuss government or business affairs.

“Will I ever talk about tax policy? Will I ever ask for anything that could otherwise benefit the business? Absolutely, emphatically not,” Eric Trump said. “He has no need to know what we’re doing, and I certainly don’t need to know what they’re doing, and I don’t want to.”

The Trumps’ point man on the expansion is Eric B. Schiffer, a former executive vice president who was hired in 2015 after previously overseeing expansions at Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Starwood Hotels and the former Wyndham International.

One of the first Scion projects is slated to open in Dallas, where a Turkish-born developer aims to open a sleek glass six-story hotel in downtown development. The Austin, Cincinnati, Denver, Detroit, Nashville, Seattle and St. Louis areas are also possible targets, according to reports in Bloomberg News and business trade publications.

The Trumps declined to say what other cities they were exploring for projects but said they were speaking contracts in many places. Danziger, speaking last month to Skift, an industry publication, called Scion a “four-star lifestyle brand” with wide geographic appeal.

“That kind of brand can be in every city—tertiary, secondary,” he said. “So, how many is that? The opportunity is for hundreds.”

Because of the prohibition on foreign deals, Danziger said the company is “going to have full focus—instead of some focus—on growth domestically.”

The expansion will not be easy, according to analysts. The Trumps will be entering a crowded marketplace of new hotel lines from Marriott, Hyatt and other companies, who have already allocated $28 billion in new projects.

Ivanka Trump created her own brands of shoes, jewelry, handbags and coats. She took the lead on some of the Trump Organization’s recent projects, such as the $221 million D.C. hotel, which had its soft opening in September.

“I’m probably the most obviously like [Trump Sr.—],” Ivanka Trump said in a 2011 company video titled “Trump: The Next Generation.”

In certain ways,” she added, “Eric is very similar to his father in terms of his love of construction and building. And Don has his sense of humor.”

The Trumps’ planned corporate expansion comes as the president has faced intense criticism from Democrats and ethics experts for his continued ownership interest.

A liberal watchdog organization, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), has sued Trump, arguing that his hotel operations violate a constitutional prohibition against the president profiting from the (luxury) property or accepting gifts or payments from a foreign government.

Some Democrats have argued that Trump’s international trademarks, including trademarks he licensed in Kazakhstan in February by China, also violate the Constitution’s emoluments clause.

Trump has called the CREW lawsuit “totally without merit.”

As Elle Wiesel said: “Indifference, after all, is more dangerous than anger or hatred.” Leaders must stand up now against the rising trend of hate-driven terrorism against any ethnic or religious group, including Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others.

Hate and intolerance have no place in the greatest democracy in the world.
Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, Tennessee lost one of its most outstanding citizens, a person who loved Tennessee as deeply, if not more deeply, than anyone. Douglas Selph Henry, Jr., who served in the Tennessee State Senate in the Tennessee State House, served longer than any person ever did in the Tennessee General Assembly—44 years.

Senator Douglas Henry served 24 of those years with me. He was a gentleman, a scholar, a man who said he was a State man, as distinguished from a Federal man, and he was a public man, going to more events in Nashville in his district and for his community than anybody ever has. There was not an event that Douglas Henry wasn’t there and helping to fund.

He was a conservative Senator. We had differences on issues many times. But he was a man you could disagree with, and he was never disagreeable. He was truly a gentleman at all times and a credit to his State and a credit to politics and a credit to his family.

He loved his wife, Lolly, who predeceased him, his five children, and his grandchildren. And though we differed on issues and he was pro-life, he cared about children after they were born, passed the mandatory child seatbelt law, and supported all types of education endeavors and endeavors to support mothers and young children. He was just a gentleman’s gentleman. I was honored to spend time with him. It is a great loss to Tennessee. My thoughts go out to his family.

REMEMBERING DOUGLAS SELPH HENRY, JR.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House for 1 minute ahead of the Republican repeal and replacement of the existing Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act has been law for 6 years now, since the President signed it in 2010.

If you will indulge me, I will try to lay out some facts, not alternative facts, but facts. For example, 20 million Americans have gained coverage as a result of the Affordable Care Act. That percentage of the American population, 6.1 million young adults between the age of 19 and 25, and 4.1 million low-income Americans, even though they have a preexisting condition, and that is 27 percent of us who have some sort of preexisting condition—heart issues, diabetes, broken legs, bad backs, whatever—27 percent of those Americans have gained insurance coverage, even though they have a preexisting condition.

I was insurance commissioner in California for 8 years, and I must tell you that will never take even several days to talk about the battles that I had with the insurance companies who were denying coverage because of preexisting conditions. No longer the case in America. The Affordable Care Act said no. And by the way, the lifetime limits, they are gone, also.

California, which I have had the pleasure of being a citizen of, 3.7 million Californians are now insured under the Medi-Cal program, and 1.4 million Californians are now insured under the exchange, called Covered California. About 1.2 million of those have received subsidies, averaging over $300 a month. Over 5 million Californians will be directly affected by a direct repeal. And in the states of Medicaid, or Medi-Cal as we call it in California, if that is eliminated, that is a $16 billion hit to the State of California, and, obviously, an enormous hit to those 3.7 million Californians who have been covered under the Medi-Cal expansion.

Secondary impacts: employment. Maybe 200,000 jobs would be lost in California.

Individual stories: boy, they abound. Just this evening, I got a call from my wife, and she said: You really ought to talk about that young family in Woodland, California, whose 2-year-old son was diagnosed with a tumor. They were able to get coverage before that under the covered California program. They went back a year later, and the kid had a brain tumor.

Fortunately, it was resolved because they had insurance. They were able to get the early diagnosis. And under the current law, the Affordable Care Act, they will be able to keep their coverage, even though previous to the Affordable Care Act, this young child and, quite probably, the family would be uninsurable.

It is working. The Affordable Care Act is working. Are there ways to improve it? Undoubtedly, there are, and we could sit down and talk about ways to improve it.

But yesterday, our Republican colleagues introduced legislation that is going to have a profound negative impact on men and women across this Nation. We will spend time in the days ahead to talk about the details, but we do know that, in general terms, there will be less coverage at a higher cost for literally everybody, except for a few. And folks like me are just going to put up a chart about that. Let’s start with this one.

You see, in the repeal bill that was introduced, there are very serious tax cuts. We are talking abovethresholds of billions of dollars of tax cuts over the next 2 years. Well, we all want a tax cut. But under the repeal, there are some very special people who are going to get a really big tax cut. Take a look at this.

The top 20 percent of taxpayers will receive 74.2 percent of the multihundred-billion-dollar tax cut, which is estimated to be somewhere in the range of $700 billion to maybe as much as $1 trillion depending upon the final calculations.

By the way, the Congressional Budget Office has not had time to score, that is to tell us what the cost, what the benefits are, of the Republican proposal. But we do know from earlier studies of this, 75 percent of the multihundred-billion-dollar tax cuts go to the wealthy. Wow. And where does the money come from? It comes from the pockets of families, the men and women who are struggling here in America. Maybe they are making a good living—$50,000 to $60,000 a year. They are going to see their benefit package reduced.

One more way to look at this is the famous pie chart. So who gets the tax breaks? Not the top 20 percent. Let’s just focus more clearly here on the top one-tenth of 1 percent. What do they get? They are not a percentage. This is not the top 20 percent. Let’s see who gets the top one-tenth of a percent. What do they get? Well, they get nearly $200,000 a year in tax reductions. That is not bad. So the top 1 percent gets 57 percent of that 6-, 7-, $800-billion-dollar tax cut, and everyone else will get 43 percent.

So what we have here is a massive shift of wealth from the working men and women of America, from American families, to the very top—you know, the wealthy. That is who is getting the benefit in this massive tax cut that has been proposed. I don’t know if that is good policy. It is not in my district. I don’t think it is good policy for America.

We spent a lot of this last year in the Presidential campaign talking about the shift of wealth to the superwealthy and away from the great majority of Americans. But, here we go. In the very first big legislation of this year, we see the Republicans in a massive effort to increase the wealth of the superwealthy at the expense of the rest of Americans.
There are many, many more things to talk about here. But I want to just take a deep breath, which I need, because I guess I am getting rather excited about what is happening—or maybe angry is a better word—and turn to my colleague from the great State of Virginia (Mr. Scott). I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Affordable Care Act. As we discuss this, as he has indicated, it helps a little bit to talk about what the situation was before the Affordable Care Act passed. We know that costs were going through the roof. We knew that those with preexisting conditions, if they could get insurance, would have to pay a lot more for that insurance. We knew that women were paying more for insurance than men. We knew that millions of young people were going to fail. We also noticed another flaw: that it saves money by allowing people to purchase insurance that doesn’t cover everything. We have people buying insurance now that have to buy the basic essentials, and then when you can start picking and choosing, you might save a little money, but things like maternity care, if that becomes an optional coverage, then anybody that wants that will not be able to afford it. It will cost consumers a certain amount. There are no more protections, like insurance companies can’t rescind when you try to cover people with preexisting conditions without a mandate.

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So this plan, when it starts off with that policy, we know it is bound to fail. We also noticed another flaw: that it saves money by allowing people to purchase insurance that doesn’t cover everything. We have people buying insurance now that have to buy the basic essentials, and then when you can start picking and choosing, you might save a little money, but things like maternity care, if that becomes an optional coverage, then anybody that wants that will not be able to afford it. It will cost consumers a certain amount. There are no more protections, like insurance companies can’t rescind when you try to cover people with preexisting conditions without a mandate.

The gentleman raised a very interesting point. It reminds me of another conversation I had earlier this week with my wife. She had gone to her hairstylist, who is about 29 years old, who is her own business for the last 7, 8 years, and she told me wife: It can’t be true. They can’t do it, can they? They can’t kill the Affordable Care Act, the ObamaCare?

She said: For the first time in my life, I was unable to buy health insurance, and now that I have insurance, there is this maternity benefit that is in my package, and now my husband and I, we can afford to have a child.

It was directly to the point the gentleman was making. If there is an option here on maternity coverage or any coverage for women’s health, then we are going to find a situation where people will pick and choose; they will wait to get their insurance, and it becomes uninsured. We have people buying insurance now that have to buy the basic essentials, and then when you can start picking and choosing, you might save a little money, but things like maternity care, if that becomes an optional coverage, then anybody that wants that will not be able to afford it. It will cost consumers a certain amount. There are no more protections, like insurance companies can’t rescind when you try to cover people with preexisting conditions without a mandate.

Mr. Scott of Virginia. Shortly after the Affordable Care Act passed and went into effect, a young lady approached me in a store—and said: Bobby, don’t let them repeal ObamaCare because my son is alive today because of ObamaCare. I said: Well, what do you mean? She said: Late last year, he was diagnosed with a fatal disease for which there is a cure, but we couldn’t afford the cure. Thankfully, he lived to January 1, when ObamaCare kicked in, and we can afford the cure. My son is alive today because of the Affordable Care Act.

If it is repealed, what happens in that case? What happens in all of the other
cases when people don't have insurance? We have heard it represented that, well, anybody can get health care. All they have got to do is show up at the emergency room. Well, yeah, that is fine. You can show up at the emergency room with a stroke, but you can't get blood pressure pills that could have avoided the stroke to begin with. They can stabilize you and send you home, but in terms of a cure or a surgery that may cure something you don't get that. You just get stabilized in the emergency room, and that is not health care. We need people with insurance so they can obtain the preventive care and the corrective care that will get them off on the right track.

The gentleman talked about stripping coverage. When you take that kind of money out of the system, less support for Medicaid, fewer people getting Medicaid, less support for premiums, so that people can actually afford it—if you look at the proposal, a lot of people can't use the tax cut because it is insufficient to pay the premium and they don't have the rest of the money. So we need to make sure that CBO scores this. They will highlight all of these problems. They will show that many fewer people will be insured and that it is not an improvement. We shouldn't do anything unless we are actually improving the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The gentleman is correct on that. I was just looking at some statistics here a moment ago about the shifting of cost. Under the Affordable Care Act, there are many, many benefits for Medicare. Leaving aside the Medicaid population for a moment, the Medicare population, available to every individual 65 and older, there have been significant improvements.

You mentioned the doughnut hole earlier, the drug benefit. If you run up heavy expenditures on your drugs, you would be at the point where you had to pay 100 percent. Medicare didn't cover it. Well, that doughnut hole is collapsing, and in another 2 years, the Medicare program will cover all of the drug costs without limitation. Also, there is the free annual checkup that is available to everybody that is on Medicare. The result of these kinds of things, where drugs are available, blood pressure drugs, diabetes and the like—together with the additional taxes that the superwealthy are paying—has increased the solvency of Medicare by 11 years.

Now, the fiddling that is going on with the proposal that our Republicans have put forward is that it is not clear exactly what the result would be; but we do know that one of the major tax cuts is the elimination of this Medicare tax that the superwealthy have been paying, and that is a tax of about $40 billion. So the support for Medicare and the solvency of Medicare becomes a question mark as a result of the proposals.

We don't have all of the answers to this, but we do know that a 60-year-old presently getting an insurance policy from the Affordable Care Act, from ObamaCare, and making somewhere around $40,000 a year—perhaps working at Walmart—they are going to see a 57 percent reduction in the support that they get from the government. Under the Republican bill, they are looking at $1,000—not $9,000, but $1,000—so 57 percent reduction in the support that they receive, probably leading to them not being able to afford insurance and winding up in your emergency room example.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. To add insult to injury, part of the scheme is to allow insurance companies to charge senior citizens even more. Right now, people are paying what they pay because they charge everybody else. Their bill allows up to five times. That is a two-thirds increase in the cost. So if the tax credit wasn't enough to begin with, it is going to get worse. Mr. GARA. I agree. As a matter of fact, let me make sure I understand. I was 60 a while ago, but let's say I am 60 and I am getting a health insurance policy under ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act. I may have to pay three times what a 25-year-old, for the proposal that has been brought to us by the Republicans, I would pay five times?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. That is right. When everybody pays an average, if you allow some people to pay more, some people are going to pay less, but it is a zero-sum game. Every time they show somebody can pay less, then know that somebody will pay more. They have a scheme, for example—they call it association plans—where you get a group of healthy people, they come out of the insurance pool and get a better rate because the insurance company will look at the association and say: Those are the young, healthy people. I can give them a better rate. They can save money. What happens to everybody else? They have to pay more.

Last time they came up with this idea, the research showed that 80 percent of the people will pay higher premiums because you withdraw from the pool, a healthy group. Now, actually, it will always work, because the group you pull out, if the costs come in higher than average, nobody is going to buy the insurance. They are going to go right back into the regular pool. So if you have one of these things, it will only work if you are pulling out young, healthy people, and that leaves behind, for everybody else, higher rates.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The fundamental nature of insurance is you gather a large population of healthy, not-so-healthy, and perhaps some very sick people into a large population, and the cost is spread across the entire population.

What we may be ceding here in this particular proposal is the unravelling of that fundamental insurance concept with young people, healthy, not both—buying insurance. The cost of insurance has increased of it and the uninsured still get sick.

The gentleman mentioned the emergency room a while ago, and for the most part, in America, a person can get to an emergency room with or without insurance; but if they don't have insurance, there is still a cost associated with the visit to the emergency room and any other thing they may need. They may need to have their leg repaired, or maybe they need an appendectomy or whatever. That is still a cost. The question is: Who picks up that cost? That is called uncompensated care, and it was a huge problem prior to the Affordable Care Act.

I had hospitals throughout my district and throughout California coming to me and saying: We can't afford this because we are not able to cover that uncompensated care for people that don't have insurance that showed up at the emergency room.

Now, we know that from the early analysis done of the proposed legislation by our Republican friends that the number of uninsured is likely to increase, perhaps as much as 11 million people—maybe more, maybe somewhat less. Those people will still get sick. They may have money of their own to cover their costs, but the chances are they don't. That uncompensated cost will be born by the people who do buy insurance. It is a cost shift to those who have insurance.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. In fact, when we passed the Affordable Care Act, the estimated cost on a family policy was about $1,000 a year on the family policy for uncompensated costs shifted on to the insured public. In fact, in Virginia, it is estimated that approximately $15 a month is paid on everybody with insurance, $15 a month to go to the 400,000 people that would have had insurance if we had had Medicaid.

So if you have 100 employees, you can just figure you are paying about $1,500 a month extra because we did not expand Medicaid. 400,000 people will go to the hospital, won't pay, and when people with insurance go, they just have to pay a little extra, about $15 a month per person in the Commonwealth of Virginia because of that.

Mr. GARAMENDI. There are so many problems with this health care system.

One thing that I want to put on the table is from my experience as insurance commissioner in California is that there are two fundamental parts
to the healthcare system in the United States, and really around the world. One of those two parts is how we collect the money and then pay for the services. We call that insurance. It is also Medicare, Medicaid, veterans’ programs, and the like. These are the way in which we collect money and pay for the services.

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The other part of the healthcare system is the delivery of services; these are the doctors, the clinics, the hospitals, and other providers, mental health providers, and the like. We often get confused by putting these two things together.

There has been a lot of talk about what we are doing with the Affordable Care Act. It is essentially a mechanism to pay for services. It is an insurance mechanism. Using the private insurance system, these various exchanges are set up to pool the population of people who do not have insurance from their employer, the individual people, individual coverage. It pools them so that you have that large population so that the cost is spread out across that large insurance pool, and thus it is affordable. That is an insurance mechanism. That is a pooling. It has nothing to do directly with the provision of medical services.

The medical services are then provided out of that pooling arrangement by the individual doctors, maybe clinics, maybe hospitals, maybe group practices. Some of that will be capitated pay, and others will be a fee-for-service.

We haven’t changed directly the way in which services are provided, that is, the delivery of services. And this is found in hospitals. In the Affordable Care Act, there was a penalty for hospitals that had readmissions for infections. What we have seen, as a result of that prevention dealing directly with the way in which services are delivered in hospitals, is a dramatic decline in readmissions for hospital-acquired infections. What that means is some 60,000 people are still alive today because they didn’t get a hospital-acquired infection.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Scott).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, well, that part of the Affordable Care Act has actually improved the quality of service.

There are other things in the Affordable Care Act, such as funding for education of more providers, more doctors and nurses, and other providers because we have a lack of professionals. One area, for example, is psychiatry. If the Veterans Administration hired all the psychiatrists they need, there wouldn’t be any for anybody else. We are so far behind. And the Affordable Care Act provides for that service.

One thing, there is a difference between the ability to pay for the services and the services that are there. People frequently compare the single-payer plan in Canada, which in many areas is a rural area. So you don’t have the critical mass of population to support a high-tech medical system. So if you are going to have a baby, it is probably going to be delivered by a family doctor; not an obstetrician, and you have to go 200 miles to find a neurosurgeon. That doesn’t have anything to do with the fact that they can pay for the services. It is just that the services aren’t there.

So when people talk about the health delivery system, as you pointed out, that is different. The fact that you can actually pay for services doesn’t diminish the opportunity to have those services there; it actually increases the possibility that those services will be there.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly right, and I see that in my district. I have a large rural district in California. And, even today, there are areas where it is difficult to find a physician to get care.

This is one of the things, as you so correctly pointed out, the Affordable Care Act had a part of that. One of the titles dealt with the education of medical personnel. And so what we have seen, at least in California—I suspect across America—with the Affordable Care Act in place, we are seeing that one of the fastest growing areas for new jobs is the healthcare sector because we are adding a lot of people.

We need more educational programs that you talked about, which comes under the jurisdiction, I believe, of your committee. That is an important part.

One of the things that I hope the American public comes to understand is this is not just a sound bite that was used in a political campaign. We are going to repeal the ObamaCare and we are going to replace it with a nice sound bite. But we are talking about the lives of Americans, we are talking about their health, their ability to stay healthy, their ability to get medical services.

When you start tinkering with something that is so personal—that is what people say in my district: This is about my ability to stay healthy, my ability to get medical care. That is what I hear.

They are saying they are frightened. They are concerned that the legislation and all the discussions in the political campaigns has been so heated that they are afraid they are going to lose what they presently have.

A quick look at what has been presented to Congress just in the last 24 hours indicates that a couple of facts are clear. First of all, there is an enormous tax break for the very, very wealthy, probably to the tune of 3- to $100 billion over 10 years. That is an incredible tax break for the superwealthy and for the health insurance industry. That is pretty sure, is in this legislation. We don’t know the exact numbers; but we do know that early indications are that there is a shift, tax breaks for the wealthy, and cost increases for everybody else. That we know.

We also know that there are certain elements of support for individuals that will be removed. As we go about debating this and understanding the full import and get the Congressional Budget Office information, I think we are going to find that Americans are going to say: Well, wait, wait, wait. You are doing what to me? What are you going to replace it with? Are you taking away my health insurance?

I suspect that will lead to a rebellion of some sort. Certainly it has agitated a lot of people in my communities about the justifiable fear of what may be coming to Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Scott).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman indicated, in rural areas one of the things that we have done is funded community health centers, which provides, where there are no professionals, a community health center where you can actually go to get comprehensive primary health care and if you are referred somewhere—where if that is needed. That funding would be obviously in jeopardy.

As you pointed out, when you have tax cuts in terms of resources, that will translate into people actually insured. They will have watered down benefits. And because there is no mandate to ensure that everybody is in the pool and they are trying to cover preexisting conditions, you have a pre-existing condition for disaster. That is not an improvement of the Affordable Care Act.

We need to insist that CBO score the legislation before we start taking votes so that people know exactly what they are getting into.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Virginia is absolutely correct about that. Unfortunately, my understanding is that as early as tomorrow that would happen— that the committees intend to mark up the legislation. Normally, that means the version of the legislation that will pass out of committee is completed.

And, I suspect, usually it is associated with a vote that takes place in committee. We don’t know for sure if it is tomorrow or the next day, but we do know that if it is this week, we will not have the Congressional Budget Office information.

The gentleman mentioned something that I probably should have jumped on immediately because of my rural district, and those are the clinics. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, there are now seven significant clinic organizations that provide services to about 23 specific sites around my district.

They are providing, really for the first time in many of the communities that I represent, immediately available healthcare services to a variety of people. As a result of what we have had an employer-sponsored health plan and others of whom are on Medi-Cal in California.
The apparent reduction in the Medicaid, Medi-Cal for California, support from the Federal Government that will occur over the next 2½ to 3 years will eliminate one of the principal ways in which those clinics have been able to continue to operate, and, that is, the expansion of the Medicaid population in California.

It appears that the legislation that is proposed will shrink the Medicaid program across the Nation and severely curtail California the support available for people who are currently on Medi-Cal. That will be devastating to these clinics in these rural areas.

We have had discussions about this. They say: Watch carefully. If this is what happens, we are going to be out of business. We are going to shut down our doors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the clinics will shut down. Insurance companies will stop writing insurance if people can wait until they get sick before they buy insurance. The insurance market is linked to this system in Washington State by selling nobody any insurance. So we know what is going to happen.

The CBO, when they score this, will point that out, and we will know exactly what items are.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for joining us this evening. This is a fundamental part of American life, that is, our health care. It is about 18 percent of the total GDP, gross domestic product. It is extremely important in terms of the total well-being of our society and our economy.

Changes to the Affordable Care Act that are being proposed will have a dramatic effect. And what we do know about it is that there will be a massive shift of wealth from working men, women, and families to the super-wealthy. We know that from the tax proposals that have been made in the analysis of the tax.

We also know that there is a very, very high probability that perhaps 11 million people will lose their insurance coverage, either in the private insurance market through the exchanges or through the Medicaid programs across the Nation. And the effect on the providers, the hospitals, the clinics will be profound.

So when we have something as important as this, it is just wrong. It is wrong for the majority in this House to put this legislation before the committee members without a full hearing on what the effect will be. But it appears that tomorrow, Wednesday, we will have the first floor vote on this process.

What I want—and I think the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) does, too—is for the American public to hear the debate, to understand the implications where we are today with the Affordable Care Act and what it has brought to us in terms of quality and accessibility to health care and what it would mean with the proposed changes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for organizing the Special Order so that we could actually discuss some of the problems with going forward with our current CBO bill. Knowing what we are doing. Certainly, it is not an improvement in the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for joining us this evening. From California, it is, whoa, wait a minute, let’s be careful.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

TOPICS OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives, and I have a number of topics I would like to bring up this evening.

First, I would comment that I heard the words “Affordable Care Act” multiple times in the previous hour, and it just caught me each time I heard that. Some of that is difficult to say something a difficult time saying such a thing being Honest Abe, and George Washington probably couldn’t have said it at all.

As we know this, it is not affordable care and that is the reason that we have to address it. We knew this was going to happen. Of all the horrible stories we have heard about ObamaCare—this thing they call the Affordable Care Act—many of them were predicted here on the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker. I predicted quite a lot of this stuff right at the start of the debate.

Members who fought against that piece of legislation that was jammed down on us by hook, by crook, by legislative shenanigans.

We could see what was going to happen with this. It was slammed together by trying to circumvent the majorities, by pushing some things through on reconciliation. And we ended up with a piece of legislation that was the biggest bite they could get to create socialized medicine in America.

The worst part of ObamaCare, Mr. Speaker, was this: That it is an unconstitutional taking of God-given, American liberty. We are, and at least used to be, and believe we are to be again—the freest people on the planet—and that our rights come from God; and that government can’t take them away.

Many times here on the floor, I have said, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government hasn’t figured out how to manage our health. That is our business, and we manage that. Our souls are the most sovereign thing that we have and are.

The second most sovereign thing we have and are is our skin and everything inside it. It is our health. It is the management of our health. And if Americans are not capable of managing their own health and making their own health decisions and pressing the market to produce insurance policies that they desire, if Americans can’t make those decisions, then it would just stand to reason, if that is true—and that is what Democrats seem to think—then there aren’t any people competent enough to manage their own health.

What I am pretty sure of is that if we don’t think that regular, red-blooded Americans—especially those who are out there punching the time clock, running their business, starting a business, or working on commission, whatever they might be doing, the salt-of-the-Earth Americans—if they can’t manage it, I am really sure that a bunch of leftists who are elected to office out of the inner cities of America aren’t going to be able to do it.

And we have seen the success of that, the leftist agenda of ObamaCare, imposed upon America, commanding that we buy policies that are approved by the Federal Government. They would have liked to have established the Federal Government as being the single payer and plan and abolished all insurance whatsoever and simply taken care of everybody’s healthcare needs so that one size fits all, and we could drift down into the mediocrity that most the rest of the world has exhibited for a long time.

This all started back in Germany in the latter part of the 19th century, when Otto von Bismarck decided that if he was going to get reelected, he had to make the Germans dependent upon him. And so he devised this plan called socialized medicine. And so he devised this plan called socialized medicine.

To make the Germans dependent upon the Federal Government as being the single payer and plan, and established the Federal Government. They would have liked to have established the Federal Government as being the single payer and plan and abolished all insurance whatsoever and simply taken care of everybody’s healthcare needs so that one size fits all, and we could drift down into the mediocrity that most the rest of the world has exhibited for a long time.

Well, it is not that old a country in Germany, but this idea of Marxism comes right out of there. By the way, there is a bench in Berlin that honors Karl Marx, and a number of other statues and monuments as well. That is where this came from, and we watched as other countries adopted it.

I once picked up—Mr. Speaker, I had a World War II veteran who came over to an event that I was doing in Iowa, and he had given up to his attic and he brought down these Collier’s magazines. They were original Collier’s magazines that started right at the end of the Second World War and went on through those years, for 2 or 3 or 4 years, and they were yellow and, of course, they were dated, and he presented them all to me.

He said: I want you to have these. I want you to read down through these...
magazines and see what it was like in those days shortly at the end of World War II and in the Reconstruction era afterwards.

So I actually accepted all of those magazines, copied them, and gave him back the originals. I didn’t feel right having them in my possession. But I read through them; and there were pictures there of doctors and nurses and healthcare providers in Great Britain that were haggard and tired and worn, and stories about how, because of the socialized medicine they passed in the United Kingdom, they had to see so many patients a day in order to make a living, and they couldn’t pay attention to the patients so much as they had to pay attention to their schedule and turn them through quickly through the turnstiles in the healthcare system in Great Britain because health care was rationed in that way.

I have a friend who is a radio talk show host—and, actually, it is WHO Radio, one of Ronald Reagan’s original radio programs where Ronald Reagan got his start—who comes originally from Great Britain; proud American. But both of his parents are gone, and both of his parents’ deaths can be attributed to the failed national healthcare system, socialized medicine that the United Kingdom has. He had told me several years ago: Once socialized medicine is established, you will not be able to undo it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I bring this up this way because this is our last best chance to turn this country in the right direction. It is our last best chance to throw off this mandate of socialized medicine that was established by hook, crook, and legislative shenanigans by the Democrats, and passed through in the final component in this Congress March 23, 2010. That event that took place, as I recall, I believe it was dated March 23, but it actually rolled midnight, but the Record showed March 23.

I went home that night worn out from days of fighting ObamaCare and doing all that I could do to put an end to it, to kill it off before it did what it has already done to the American people. And I laid down, thinking I would sleep the sleep of the dead, but I woke up in about an hour and a half and I got up and I wrote the repeal of ObamaCare, and it turned out to be the first repeal draft that emerged after ObamaCare had passed.

I certainly wrote it well before Barack Obama had signed the bill, although they hustled it out to him, I think, the next day, and that is when he signed.

The repeal bill that I have introduced here—and it has passed the floor of this House a number of times; I have lost track of how many times, Mr. Speaker—it is only 40 words. And the last words in that bill are: “As if such act had never been enacted.”

That is, Mr. Speaker, what we need to do. We need to send the full, 100 percent, rip-it-out-by-the-roots-as-if-it-had-never-been-enacted repeal out of the House and over to the Senate and set it on Mitch McConnell’s desk and let Mitch McConnell figure out—Majority Leader McConnell, Senator McConnell figure out the politics to get the votes put together in the United States Senate for a full, 100 percent repeal of ObamaCare.

The House will pass such a bill. It won’t be hard to put those votes together. I wouldn’t be surprised if there wasn’t have people worried about their seat that would join us in such an endeavor.

Then, once that bill is over through the Rotunda and over on the desk of Senator McConnell, then we should start down through with the individual repairs to the healthcare system that we need to do, that we all know we need to do and that we have talked about for a long time.

Some of these have been out here debated for 10 years in this Congress, Mr. Speaker, and, instead, we have got a different configuration that has been served up to us. But I submit that it is not too late to do it right. Send the full repeal over. That repeal can have an author, Mr. Speaker, say, a year from now. That is enough time for people to make their adjustments for their own health insurance and get it taken care of, especially under the provisions that I propose.

I would point out that my ObamaCare—and, yes, Members of Congress are obligated to own our own ObamaCare policies and pay a substantial portion of the premium. By the way, mine went up when ObamaCare was imposed upon me by not quite $4,300 a year additional. That was my privilege to own an ObamaCare policy, but we are compelled to own that policy.

For me, I got the letter, dated last September 28, that said, as of December 31, at midnight, my ObamaCare policy was canceled. And it turned out that I would have been without insurance from New Years, from the stroke of midnight, auld lang syne, until whatever time it would take me to get that put together. So we went to work, and there was only one policy that actually qualified under ObamaCare, only one.

Of all the counties in America, roughly a third of the counties there is only one choice available to the American people; compelled by law to buy a policy or be penalized by the Federal Government. And your options are not that you get to keep the policy that you like or that you get to keep the doctor that you like. You don’t even get to choose from a menu of what kind of health insurance policy you want.

Instead, for a third of the counties in America, you only have one choice, and that is the only option that is available to you. So there is no shopping for prices. There is no looking at the kind of options you might want covered by your health insurance policy.

There is no freedom to go out there in the marketplace, and there is no marketplace that actually exists because the consumers are not making the choices that they want. The people who did the kind of policies that they would like. Instead, it is the Federal Government dictating by mandate what the policy shall cover. And when that happens, the premiums go up—which anybody could figure out—and the coverage goes down.

Now, I know that I would just look back to shortly before the election. The Thursday before the election we had an event south of Des Moines on a farm, and there, soon-to-be Vice President-elect Mike Pence arrived, as did Senator Ted Cruz, back to Iowa. I am grateful to both of those gentlemen and friends.

As I gave my speech, I pointed out that I have seen people’s health insurance premiums go from $6,000 a year to $7,000 a year. And people in the crowd started waving their arm, and I say $12,000 a year, $14,000 a year, we had an auction going on, Mr. Speaker, and it came up to $20,000 a year.

Looked to me like these were Ma and Pa family farms of were facing $20,000 in health insurance premiums, where not that long ago they would have been looking at 6 or 7 or $8,000 in health insurance premiums.

That has swept across this country—Somewhere I talked to a gentleman here on the floor tonight whose health insurance premiums were $34,000. That is just not sustainable. You have to finally decide: I am going to take a risk and go without health insurance with those kind of costs.

That is driven by ObamaCare. It is driven by the mandates in ObamaCare. It is driven by the guaranteed issue, no consideration for preexisting conditions, and it is driven by a mandate such as you stay on your parents’ health insurance until you are 26.

It goes on and on and on. OB care, maternity coverage, contraceptive coverage, you can name it, and also, no additional cost for your medical checkups. All of these things cost money, and they are built into the premium, and every time you add another bell or whistle or accessory to your health insurance policy, the premium goes up and up and up.

When the insurers find out that they are losing money, they start to drop out of the marketplace. They drop out of the marketplace, and when they do, there is less competition.

When there is less competition, prices go up, Mr. Speaker. This is what we have seen happen over the years since the implementation of ObamaCare. It is a calamity. It will sink ObamaCare. If we don’t touch it, it will sink and it will be gone. It will implode upon itself. It cannot be sustained. It is the demands for the kind of policies of the aisle from about here on over. They know it intuitively over on this side of the aisle from about there on over. But
the difficulty is that politically they have embraced ObamaCare and they have decided they are going to hold onto it and protect it.

Why? I think part of it is they want to hold on and protect the legacy of President Obama, who, if all had gone well, would have ridden off into the sunset. He doesn't seem to be doing that, Mr. Speaker.

But now we are at this place where we have the votes in the House to do a full, 100 percent repeal of ObamaCare, and that is what we should do.

Tomorrow, I understand that the gentleman from Ohio, and perhaps others, will introduce legislation that will be described as a full repeal of ObamaCare. I wish it were so, but it is designed to fit within the reconciliation standards. It is a legislation that once made it to President Obama’s desk and received a veto. This time, presumably, it could go to President Trump and receive a signature. That is good. I favor that as an improvement in the right direction. But the full right thing we need to do is the 100 percent repeal.

We shouldn’t be sustaining any kind of mandate whatsoever. Let the States determine what the mandates might be, but don’t let them lock people into their States and refuse to let them buy health insurance from outside of those State lines. And it looks to me that the bill, as introduced by leadership, doesn’t really allow for the facilitation of buying insurance across State lines.

So here is what I suggest we do, Mr. Speaker. Send the full, 100 percent repeal over to the Senate. Pick up the bill that was a repeal just about a year ago, send it over to the Senate, too. Then, what we have is MITCH MCCONNELL can choose from the menu on what he can get done, but the pressure for the full repeal will build if the House sends it to the Senate, and the odds of the full repeal get greater and greater.

Then the House, doing its job—and we are not obligated to negotiate a deal out of the House and the Senate and the White House. It is the judgment of the House that needs to be reflected here in this Chamber.

This most deliberative body that we have, the voice for the American people, we should never be trapped into thinking you can’t pass anything out of the House if we don’t first have a handshake with the President and the majority in the Senate. That has handcuffed us for the last 8 or more years.

The strategic thinking has been that we don’t even try to move anything out of the House unless we know they can take it up in the Senate and unless we know that we can get a signature from the President, because anything else is a waste of time.

Well, it is not necessarily a waste of time, Mr. Speaker, not necessary at all. In fact, we need to send out of here our highest aspirations. So I say this: send the full repeal over to the Senate, and then pick up the repairs, the replacements, and the reform, those things that we know we need to do, and they can stand alone with or without the full repeal of ObamaCare.

For example, we need to send PAUL GOSAR’s bill that repeals components of the McCarran-Ferguson Act that allows for insurance to be bought and sold across State lines. PAUL GOSAR has done a lot of work on that bill, and his predecessor, John Shadegg, pushed that bill for about 16 years here in the House of Representatives. In his last week or so here in the House, he said: I have one regret, and that regret is I should have pushed harder for the repeal of McCarran-Ferguson so that we could be selling and buying insurance across State lines.

He should have pushed harder. I re- call John Shadegg pushing very hard on that, and he just couldn’t get it there. We all couldn’t get it there. Now PAUL GOSAR has that bill out of the Judiciary Committee, third of America’s counties; it is hanging on the calendar now, and it should come to this floor. The votes would be here to pass PAUL GOSAR’s repeal of McCarran-Ferguson, and we should send that over to the Senate. Passing that piece of legislation would enable insurance to be sold across State lines, and that would set the competition up between the 50 States.

I recall that, back here on the floor of the House in 2009 and 2010 when the data came out that a typical young man in New Jersey at the time, a healthy 23-year-old, would pay an average premium for the year—$500 a month. $6,000. A similarly situated healthy young man in Kentucky would be paying $1,000 a year. Now, what is the difference between those two States?

So why wouldn’t we let a young man in New Jersey buy a health insurance policy in Kentucky? What are the odds that he is going to be insured if he can get a policy for $1,000 as opposed to $6,000? We know that far more Americans would be insured if they had the options and didn’t have to buy all the bells and whistles. He probably doesn’t need maternity. He probably doesn’t need contraceptive. Maybe he is not thinking about the preexisting condition component of this. If he is 23 years old and he is not worried about a 26-year slacker mandate. So that is the comparison of what could happen if we passed GOSAR’s bill and repealed McCarran-Ferguson and allowed people to purchase insurance across State lines. That should be number one.

Number two would be full deductibility of everyone’s health insurance premiums. Today there is something like 160 million Americans that get their health insurance from their employer. When the employer sets up a group plan as a rule and they negotiate those premiums, whatever that premium might be. It is $10,000 a year per employee, they lay that $10,000 on the barrel head, pay that insurance premium, and that goes into the books as a business expense, and it shows up on the schedule C as a health insurance premium.

But if you are a sole proprietor, or you are a partnership, or you have one part-time employee, that makes you an employer. If you are an employer, you can deduct the premiums to your employees, but you can’t deduct your own premium.

There are 20.9 million Americans similarly situated in that scenario, Mr. Speaker, where that 20.9 million Americans are compelled under ObamaCare to pay for health insurance premiums and meeting those standards, and maybe they have only got one choice—maybe they have only bought the insurance in another State; maybe they have more than two choices like another third of America’s counties; or maybe they have more than two choices like the other third. But at least 1,022 counties in America have only one choice—buy the policy—that is your only choice—or be in violation of the law and be fined and be punished, but do it with after-tax dollars instead of before-tax dollars. That is the burden that they are carrying right now.

Mr. Speaker, 20.9 million Americans are disenfranchised in that way. Yet they would be employers and they would be in the effort of trying to provide health insurance for themselves, trying to start up a business perhaps with maybe one part-time employee, with now this big disadvantage that they don’t get to deduct their health insurance premiums.

The McCarran-Ferguson repeal under PAUL GOSAR, then the full deductibility of everybody’s health insurance premiums, that is the King bill, by the way, Mr. Speaker. I am hopeful that that can be passed through and become law. It is a superior approach to providing refundable tax credits.
We need to learn some things. For example, when we hear tax credits, it really means in this discussion refundable tax credits.

What is a refundable tax credit?

The Federal Government sends you money whether you have a tax liability or not. So that would be that if—and the range in this proposal that emerged yesterday is between $2,000, $4,000, up to $14,000 in refundable tax credits to help people pay for their insurance premiums.

Well, that makes me feel good, the idea of trying to help people that can’t afford it, but in the process of doing that, we are also helping a lot of people that can afford it. It needs to be clear: when you are paying people’s health insurance premium, that becomes an entitlement. If everybody is entitled to having a health insurance policy, and if you don’t have the money to do so—and I think that the standard of $75,000 or less—then the Federal Government will subsidize your policy and conceivably buy your policy. Now we have another new entitlement that grows the Federal Government’s taxes, and spends hundreds of billions of dollars because we don’t want to say no to people. They had a policy handed to them by ObamaCare, which the taxpayers cannot afford.

We can’t afford a $2 trillion debt right now. Mr. Speaker, and we have a debt ceiling crisis coming at us within just a matter of days or, at a maximum, weeks. This Federal Government needs to get a handle on its spending and get ready to get back to balance. We will never get there if we keep growing entitlements here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

So that is two items that need to be brought through. The first is the full repeal. Item number one, the repeal of the McCarran-Ferguson Act, sell insurance across State lines. Item number two, pass the King bill for full deductibility. That means that everybody pays the same insurance premium, and that everybody paying for health insurance on the same standard as employers are.

Then the third thing is the medical malpractice reform, and that is the tort reform legislation that passed out of the Judiciary Committee on the same day with Paul Gosar’s bill. Mr. Speaker. That legislation puts a cap on medical malpractice settlements of $250,000 in noneconomic damages—a lot of us would call that pain and suffering—to $50,000. That is a component of it, but it is not the whole picture. So we adopt language that is actually borrowed from California which passed this medical malpractice reform 40 years ago and capped it at $250,000.

By the way, that is still the law in California today. The individual that signed it into law, his name is—at that time he was the Governor of California, Mr. Speaker. Maybe people don’t remember that Governor of California was 40 years ago: Jerry Brown. The Governor of California today: Jerry Brown.

Is there an effort to repeal the tort reform legislation that has been part of California’s law for 40 years? No.

In fact, Texas has borrowed from those ideas and implemented that into law, and they are finding that they have greatly reduced the number of litigations moving to Texas now because they are not subjected to the outrageous medical malpractice claims that they have been in multiple States across the country.

So this tort reform legislation that just passed out of the Judiciary Committee a week and a half or so ago is another prime piece of legislation that should come to the floor for debate and vote, and I am confident it would pass the House and send it over to the Senate, and then give MITCH MCCONNELL some tools to work with.

That is not the end of it. Mr. Speaker. I know that under the legislation that has been proposed by leadership and just rolled out, they essentially expand health savings accounts. I think they nearly doubled them, as I understand, $6,000-some for an individual, maybe $12,000-some for a couple. That is close, but I know that it is not precise, Mr. Speaker.

I agree that we need to expand health savings accounts. I think we need to expand them more. My legislation expands them to $10,000 for the individual; $20,000 for the couple. But health savings accounts need to be expanded and then given tools to expand so that people can use them and manage them. They can put money in tax free, take money out to pay their premiums, take money out to pay their healthcare costs, and grow the health savings account so that when it grows to a point where it becomes $50,000, $100,000, $400,000, $500,000, double that by the time of retirement or more. With that kind of money sitting in a health savings account, then there will be personal responsibility for health. We don’t have the ability to negotiate health insurance policy, but as a catastrophic policy. They will conclude that they want a policy that has got a high deductible, a fairly high copayment, and that they will take care of their own incidental healthcare costs out of pocket and try to grow their health savings account.

In the process of doing that, if you have got the capital in your HSA, then you can negotiate the premium or your monthly health premium down by negotiating for a catastrophic plan, taking care of the incidental costs yourself out of your health savings account. To some degree, you become your own insured for the lower dollar items while you still have catastrophic insurance for the big things.

We have done the numbers on this. Even when it was down to the cap in 2003 that rolled out of here that was capped, the HSAs were capped at $5,150 for a couple. If they did the math on that, if a couple started out at, say, a $20,000 income, they were able to work for 45 years, round numbers, worked out to be age 65, Medicare eligibility, then they would conceivably be sitting there with $850,000 in their health savings account. I have well over doubled this. In fact, take it up to $10,000, $20,000 for a couple where 5,150 was the opening bid in 2003. So we are not quite four times that amount, yet. And I am not proposing that we end up with $4 million in the account, but maybe some number that is 2.5 or so million.

Arriving at Medicare eligibility with six—well, seven figures times some number in their health savings account leaves these couples in a position where they could go out on the open market and purchase a paid-up Medicare replacement policy for life, pay for that up front, and then the Federal Government wants to tax anything that comes out of the health savings account as ordinary income. But my answer to that is no, don’t do that. If they will take themselves off the entitlement roll by buying a Medicare replacement policy, then let them keep that change tax-free.

Now this becomes a life management account. Not only is it a health savings account. It is a pension plan, and it is incentive to manage your health insurance premiums and your healthcare costs. If you get your tests, to watch your weight, get your exercise, and manage your life because you are going to have a nest egg at the end of your working life that you want to be able to spend doing enjoyable things. If your health is a bad experience, then you have got the money there to cover it to make sure that you are taken care of.

This is where we need to get people in this country. We are just awfully short of people willing to think outside the box and to think about what we should do here in America. We are not just some regular, ordinary, humdrum, run-of-the-mill country, Mr. Speaker. We are the United States of America. We are the most affluent nation in the world. We didn’t become this way because we are dependent upon government. We became this way because we have a robust appetite for freedom. People have gone out and blazed their own trails. In a lot of cases, settling this country, they literally did that, blazed a trail through the timber and went out and settled the West.

When our original Founding Fathers arrived here on our shores, they arrived in a land that had, as far as they knew, unlimited natural resources. They had unlimited freedom because they were a long ways away from King George. They came for their religious freedom as well. They were farmers, they were shopkeepers, they were individual entrepreneurs with a dream, and they forged the American Dream. They did it on religious faith, on free enterprise capitalism, and on God-given liberty. That created this robust country that is the only huge experiment that the world has ever seen: a nation that is formed on ideas and ideals.
Here we are, the descendants, the recipients, the beneficiaries of their risk and of their dream, beneficiaries of their ideals. All we have to do is preserve them. Our Founding Fathers had to hammer them out.

They had to conceive of these ideas about God-given rights, and then they had to articulate it. They had to write these ideas over and over again in many different configurations so that the populace began to understand what it really meant when you have rights that come from God. Then they had to sell this to the colonists. And then they had to defy King George and fight for that freedom.

All of that took place with the desks that were there and those who gave their lives for our freedom and our liberty. And what is our job, Mr. Speaker? Hang on to it, maintain it. Now, in this case, with Obamacare, we have got to restore it. That is what we are faced with.

In my view, it is not that hard, if we just come together here and do that which we know is right, send the full repeal. So, my colleagues across the rotunda to the Senate, pass PAUL GOSSAR's bill selling insurance across State lines, the repeal of McCarran-Ferguson, make our health insurance premiums fully deductible, and expand our health accounts. Do those things and pass the tort reform legislation which will diminish the malpractice premiums that our doctors and practitioners are paying. If we do that much and eliminate the mandates that tie us down in such a way that we don't have the latitude to work any longer, we don't need a mandate that requires every insurance policy to keep your kids on until age 26. There are a lot of other ways to manage that. If you as a family want to buy such a policy, companies will provide it. You don't need to have the law.

The preexisting condition component of this, yes, we have compassion for people who are uninsurable. In fact, 37 of the States, by my recollection, had policies before ObamaCare, Iowa included—and I helped manage that as former chairman of the Iowa Senate State Government Committee—37 States, by my recollection, had established high-risk pools.

Those were tools used tax dollars to buy the premium down so that those who had preexisting conditions and could not be insured could have their health insurance premiums subsidized by the taxpayers. Now, some States are more generous than others. That is how it will be. But it is a far better solution than the Federal Government being involved in preexisting conditions just because they think that is the right political answer, Mr. Speaker.

We now saw this unfolds as the days and few short weeks come forward here. I am hopeful that we will be able to get together in conference and the Republicans can hammer out a solution that can be signed off on by, hopefully, all of us.

I am hopeful there will be some Democrats that understand you don't want to go back home again and tell your constituents that you fought to defend ObamaCare, this thing that my colleagues, scores of times—in fact, thousands of times here on the floor—called the Affordable Care Act. We know, Mr. Speaker, it is not affordable and that the premiums are way out of control. In many cases, because the deductibles are too high for most people; and that the insurance companies are bailing out one after another. And perhaps a year from now, if we don't do something, there will be great chunks of the American people who will have no options whatsoever.

So I suggest we do this the prudent way: do the full repeal and send single components of the reform rifle shot out of the barrel. Let the Senate take them up. Or, if they think it is prudent, package them up and send them back to us as a package. If the House has once passed it, and it comes back to us in a package, I think we will pass it again.

So these are intense times, and America's destiny is being determined. It is being determined because we have elected Donald Trump as President of the United States. I think much about what it would have been like if I had woken up on the morning of November 9 and we had someone other than Donald Trump elected to be President, and how the optimism that just poured forth since that day has been terrific.

You can recognize, right after the election, that people had a spring in their step, and they are more optimistic and more outgoing. If you would walk into a grocery store, people would walk up to you and have a conversation. If you walked into a restaurant, they would do the same thing.

They were just more outgoing and more friendly and they wanted to engage with each other. They still want to engage with each other. The stock market has soared up over 21,000, and there has been over $3 trillion in wealth created just in the stock market alone, Mr. Speaker.

So this high level of optimism that we have with it a high level of responsibility. It is not only to the ObamaCare change, but the pledge that was made by Donald Trump many times throughout the campaign was a full, 100 percent repeal of ObamaCare. I always say 100 percent repeal will rip it out by the roots as if it had never been enacted. The language is a little different, but the meaning is identical. The meaning is identical, Mr. Speaker: a full repeal of ObamaCare.

President Trump has said many times we need to be able to sell and buy insurance across State lines. That is another Trump promise. Of course, he has got people he is working with. TOM PRICE is head of HHS. He is a good man whom I first met here on the floor of the House of Representatives when he came in as a freshman a number of years ago. I watched as he paid attention to the healthcare issues then. And the constitutional issues, I might add. My first encounter with Tom Price was on constitutional issues, and it was a positive one.

So we are at this place with a new President that has, halfway into his first 100 days, a number of campaign promises that he has yet to live up to, but a great many that he has lived up to. It looks to me like Donald Trump has at least somebody in an office somewhere in the White House that has a list of all the campaign promises, and they are checking those off one by one as he accomplishes the promises that he has made as a candidate.

That is a laudable thing, Mr. Speaker. Yet, he is being bogged down by a series of stories that have, to some degree, we don't want to say handcuffed his administration—but it has made it difficult to operate in a flexible and fluid way.

This has to do with, I think, it is leaks within; people who should be loyal to the United States and hope-fully, loyal to the President of the United States, who have been leaking information out.

When The New York Times is publishing that they have got inside infor-mation that has come from them from the intelligence community, nobody seems to be troubled that The New York Times is going to people in the intelligence community or receiving messages from them and taking infor-mation that is about classified ac-tivities of our Federal Government and printing the stories about that classified information in their paper.


Here is a series of things that have taken place that bring into question the integrity of some people that work within government and some of them that work within our intelligence community. Here are just a string of events. Mr. Speaker, that bring us to a conclusion about what is going on in our Federal Government.

It was in the summer that Heat Street reported that the FBI applied—in June it is reported—applied for a FISA warrant wiretap to survey people in the Trump campaign who had ties to Russia. Roughly late June, this report came out. FISA is the Foreign Intelli-gence Surveillance Act. Special warrants have to be achieved in a FISA court. These warrant requests are classified. The activity around them are classified. So, if it is classified, how is it that Heat Street reported that the FBI applied for FISA warrants to wiretap people in the Trump campaign last June?

Well, that is because classified leak-age went into the ears of the Heat
Street reporters, or I suppose we could say they made it up. And if it were the only story out there, that might be the most likely, but we have a number of other stories.

The Guardian reported that a FISA warrant request was made to monitor four Trump campaign staffers for conflicts or for communications with Russia and Russians. That story in The Guardian matches up with the story in Heat Street roughly last June that there was a FISA warrant request to monitor four of Trump’s campaign staffers for their communications with Russia.

So there is story number one and two. Heat Street writes one. The Guardian writes another. Both of them are writing about what, if we had the real information in front of us, would be classified: the application for FISA and the results of that.

The Guardian turns back and says those applications were denied. They were not based upon a reasonable suspicion that there was, I will say, collusion with Russians.

So in item number three. McClatchy reported that the FBI and five other agencies were investigating Russian influence on the U.S. Presidential election. So we have two stories—one from Heat Street, one from The Guardian—that says that there was an application for a FISA warrant. That FISA warrant was presumably turned down, by reports, but then there is a report that there is the FBI and five other agencies that are investigating Russian influence on the U.S. Presidential election. That is a McClatchy report.

Now, this is starting to add up. I am starting to see here is a sign there is something going on and there is a leak of classified information—a sign something is going on and leak of classified information. Then, the report of the investigation of the FBI and five other agencies.

Now here is the next story. The New York Times reports that the FBI is investigating Russian Government communications with Trump campaign, but there is no evidence of those communications resulting in any kind of collusion, at least. That is a New York Times report.

So these stories have been dropped in: Heat Street, McClatchy, The New York Times.

Here is another New York Times report. The Obama administration allowed the NSA to share globally intercepted personal communications with 16 other Federal agencies without a warrant. That, I believe, refers to a January directive that came from President Obama. He opened up the ability to communicate between the intelligence agencies so that they could share classified information among them, rather than compartmentalize and share that information on a need-to-know basis. That is item number five.

Item number six, the Obama administration officials tried to spread information to media showing Russian involvement to help Trump and his election. That is a story that was pushed out and perpetuated. It was pushed out by, of course, the Hillary campaign and others.

So the weight of this cumulative effect of these stories is adding up. I would add, also, that on October 31 of last year, just a little over a week before the election, Hillary Clinton sent out a tweet—I am trying to remember the words that she used—but it was communication specialists or intelligence officials. It was a reference to experts in communications and computers and that they had identified that there were two—they said—and there were communications between the Russians and the Trump campaign.

It looked to me like that was an effort on the part of the Clinton campaign to spread these rumors that had been planted all the way along through the summer by Heat Street’s report that there was a FISA wiretap warrant that was turned down, and by The Guardian’s report of presumably the FISA warrant turned down because they didn’t show that there was any activity there that was worthy of a warrant; the McClatchy report that said the FBI and other agencies are investigating Russian influence. That you have got the two Times’ reports.

Here is the third New York Times report. They reported that General Flynn talked to Russian officials about how Trump was going to handle Russian sanctions. That report comes back and says there was any activity there that was worthy of a warrant; the McClatchy report that said the FBI and other agencies are investigating Russian influence. That you have got the two Times’ reports.

Now, if that surveillance is taking place of a Russian official, a Russian ambassador in the United States, if those activities are typical surveillance activities that would go on in most any country that had the capability, then that information is still classified. And if the conversation took place between the Russian Ambassador and the Russian Ambassador—and we all, I think, believe that it did—that conversation and the contents of it would be classified.

So how did this leakage come out to The New York Times about the phone call or calls that General Flynn may have had with the Russian Ambassador?

—we2115

The leakage of that information would be a Federal felony because it is classified information, facing 10 years in a Federal penitentiary as a penalty. Yet America is hyperventilating about how this does nothing as two times the report went out that said that Trump and Trump Tower had been hacked or wiretapped by the Obama administration. I know he said President Obama. He put the responsibility on President Obama. It is pretty easy to disprove that. Just mean the Obama administration.

Do we think that this wiretapping is taking place?
their wages. They will get tired of their job over time, but the damage they will do if you let them have a desk will be far greater than what we get out of them for the paycheck we are giving them. I say purge as many as possible, Mr. President. Put those people in places who are loyal to you, who want to carry out your agenda.

Here is another news report. The Washington Post reports that U.S. investigators examined Jeff Sessions’ contacts with Russian officials while he was advising to Trump. This report from The Washington Post says that U.S. investigators examined Jeff Sessions’ contacts with Russia. So he was under surveillance. He was at least under investigation, it sounds like, if this story is true. Here we have a seated United States Senator, a stellar individual.

If I were going to try to compare the character that I know Jeff Sessions is, and I look around this town, I ask: Who matches the character of Jeff Sessions? Not many. I would say Vice President PENCE, and then the list gets pretty short after that. Jeff Sessions has a very high degree of character, and he is imminently a constitutionalist, an adherent of law, a dedicated patriot, and one who makes his decisions within the bounds of the Constitution, of the law, of the rules that exist. He is a great respecter of the order of a civilized society and a terrific example of a General.

There was no better choice that could have been reached by Donald Trump than Jeff Sessions. But here he is, subject to this kind of—at least a report that there is an investigation, Mr. Speaker. I think if I wanted to know about Jeff Sessions’ activities, if I thought that it was my business, I would just ask him. When he answered the question from Senator FRANKEN, the question was in the context of did you have discussions with Russians with regard to any campaign activities that you might have cooperated or colluded with?

If AL FRANKEN had asked that question precisely, then the answer would have been precise as well. I can understand why Jeff Sessions’ answer came back no, that he hadn’t dealt with the Russians. I do a lot of meetings, and if I am asked a question about the context of a subject matter, I will answer within the context of that subject matter. I think that is what Jeff Sessions did. Most of the Senators—I will say all of the Senators sitting there on that committee who heard those questions asked and saw the answers of Jeff Sessions, and then they and their staff and the public, weeks went by, not a peep about anybody being concerned about the answer that Jeff Sessions gave.

Why? Because all of those Senators sitting on that committee listening to his testimony and the other Senators who were watching that testimony either from in the room or around the Hill on C-SPAN, and their staff who were monitoring those hearings all understood that you have people from multiple countries come into your office on an irregular basis, and in a matter of months one might meet with the Greeks, the Russians, the French, the Germans—any country in South America or Asia. There is a constant flow of people coming through my office, and I know there is a constant flow of people from other countries coming through the offices of probably every United States Senator.

So when Jeff Sessions said that he hadn’t met with the Russians within the context of discussing the campaign, which was the heart of the question asked by Senator FRANKEN, no Senator was concerned about his answer that he hadn’t met with the Russians because they understood the context within which he was answering that question. Had that not been the case, some Senator, like CHUCK SCHUMER, would have woken up the first day instead of after they were able to gin it up and turn it into a media story, Mr. Speaker.

We have a country to save. We have an ObamaCare to repeal. We have a healthcare system that needs to be rebuilt logically by preserving our doctor-patient relationship, encouraging competition between insurance companies, letting people be in charge of the policy they want to buy, not being ruled by a lawsuit abuse, being able to sell insurance across State lines and expand health savings accounts. All that needs to happen. I am hopeful that it can happen within the next couple of months, Mr. Speaker.

While that is going on, we need to look over at the White House and encourage this President: Purge those people from your midst who owe their loyalty to Barack Obama. They are undermining your Country. When you have to fight the moles from within, the media from without, the George Soros-organized protesters who are on the streets of America every weekend with a different cause. They will continue this until the public gets tired of it.

Mr. Speaker, the President needs to understand that he has a lot of enemies in this country and a great big job. His ability to take on the mainstream media has been demonstrated. Now it needs to be a little more. You have to fight the moles from within, the media from without, the George Soros-organized protesters who are on the streets of America every weekend with a different cause. They will continue this until the public gets tired of it.

CONCERNS OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BACON). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACSON LEE) for 17 minutes.

Ms. JACSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you for your courtesies.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of topics that I choose to debate this evening, but before I do that, I would like to first raise a very important concern that will soon dramatize itself as my colleagues will join in signing to the President of the United States on the extensive crisis of starvation in Somalia and South Sudan.

Just recently, we met with leadership with my colleagues KAREN Bass and a number of other colleagues—of South Sudan speaking about the extensive starvation in sub-Saharan Africa.

I am looking forward to a response from this White House upon receipt of the letter that they will engage with the world community on providing immediate food aid and other resources to the people of sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Somalia and South Sudan.

It is something that I am well aware of, as my colleague, late MICKY Landel, Congressman from the 18th Congressional District in 1989, and years before that as the co-chair of the Select Committee on Hunger, was very concerned about starvation in that very same area because of the drought and terrible climatic conditions, huge loss of life. Congressman Landel was constantly responding with his own personal sacrifice of taking food over to that area as well as seeking to encourage others in the world family, the United Nations to do so. In 1989, he, in actuality, lost his life in a plane crash in Ethiopia delivering resources to those individuals caught in a terrible condition, a valley, a desert-like atmosphere attempting to save their lives or to bring grain in. I know full well that his spirit reigns as he might have been engaged in this if he were alive in 2017 to see this terrible disaster occurring right in front of us.

We need the United States to be very active in the world community. The U.N. Secretary-General has now pronounced this to be a horrific disaster needing the attention of world leaders and the world community. I want to
put that on the record because I want to offer to the people of Somalia and South Sudan my deepest sympathy. There are other issues in South Sudan that we must address, but we also need to be concerned in the area of food starvation, loss of lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children who are now suffering, and it needs to be addressed.

But I really came to the floor in the backdrop of the introduction of a document that is represented to be an answer to the need of Americans for health care. Certainly the document is one that is being proposed by those who believe that there is a need. I might offer to say that there may be a need to improve some aspects of existing coverage, which has worked so well under the Affordable Care Act. And, yes, to those opponents of the Affordable Care Act, I would be pleased to debate you that, in fact, it has worked well.

It has worked well because 30 million Americans have insurance. It has worked well because 150 million Americans have guaranteed health benefits. It has worked well because low-income Americans have access if they are able to come under the expanded Medicare to health care. It has worked well because of young people being on the insurance of their families to the age of 26. That was first on the Affordable Care Act. It has worked well because we can provide for the preexisting condition of a person who is able to have insurance. We can provide for no caps on your insurance, and also payments to hospitals for uncompensated care. We can provide for that because of the mandate and the tax subsidies that go to the people to allow them to secure the insurance that they would desire.

There are certainly ways that we look to improve, and it would be nice if we had bipartisan cooperation to do that. If we had a document that it is important for the American people to know that the question of how many people will lose coverage has not been answered. How many people will be covered has not been answered by this new document that pretends to respond to the health care needs of Americans. There is no documentation as to what the quality of the coverage will be. And to those listening who are concerned about the financial fiscal responsibility of that, it is from this Congress, no one knows the cost of this insurance.

So I would make the argument that we have a real problem and that there is a document that is supposed to be marked up as a healthcare bill for which the Republicans have not received any response from CBO. Let me indicate that when Democrats were seeking to work with Republicans in 2009, we had a CBO estimate before our markup began. Certainly, a request was made by Democrats about the quality and cost, and, interestingly enough, they asked about coverage, and they asked about quality and cost.

We know that it is almost certain that Americans will lose coverage under this new document. We also know that jobs will be lost. We also know that in my State of Texas, very much is dependent or concerned, if you will, with rural hospitals. That rural hospitals will suffer greatly by the loss if it happens—and we hope not—of the Affordable Care Act, because rural hospitals and the rural communities throughout Texas will be devastated.

We also know that the mandate going away, the tax subsidies will be going not to people where they should be so that you can provide for your insurance as we understand it—this document is still a mystery—but it will be going to insurance companies. And we also know that, if you are 50 and older, it will cost some five times more than if you are younger. A heavy burden on working Americans, with no explanation. We know that the cost is going up and that you may be paying an amount that continues to go up every month.

Let me be very clear. We are trying to get the answers, but it makes for a very difficult process of getting the answers for a bill that has just been released in the last 24 hours, and, in actuality, no one knows really what is in it, and it will then go to committee to be marked up.

In my State of Texas, almost 2 million people have gained coverage since the Affordable Care Act was implemented; would lose their coverage if the Affordable Care Act is entirely or partially repealed.

Mr. Speaker, 1,092,650 individuals stand to lose their coverage if we dismantle the exchanges which allow people to access insurance companies all over the nation.

Mr. Speaker, 913,177 individuals in the State of Texas who received financial assistance to purchase health insurance in 2016 and received an average of $271 per person would risk having to pay more. That money would go to insurance companies.

Let me also say that 1,107,000 individuals in the State could have insurance if the State of Texas additionally would have accepted the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion. I can tell you that States like Kentucky understand the full impact of the Medicaid expansion and they do not want to see it go away.

Mr. Speaker, 508,000 children have regained coverage since the ACA has been implemented, and they will lose their insurance.

Mr. Speaker, 265,000 young adults, as I have indicated, in the State would be able to stay on their parents’ insurance. We don’t know if that is clear because we really don’t know the funding structure of this new document that has now been thrown to the American people.

We know that 646,415 individuals in the State who received cost share reductions to lower out-of-pocket costs, such as deductibles, copays, and coinsurance, are now simply at risk. We are all at risk. We are all, frankly, at risk. So I would have to ask the question: What does this plan really do to help America?

We know that 10,278,005 individuals in the State of Texas who now have private health insurance that covers preventative services without copays, coinsurance, or deductibles may lose these benefits if the Affordable Care Act goes. Women can now purchase insurance for the same price as men, eliminating the disparities that occurred before 2009 and 2010, may be at risk again for having to pay more money for their insurance—the actual disparity in health care being totally eliminated—and insurance companies being able to charge women more than their male counterparts.

Roughly, 4 million individuals in the State with preexisting diseases may, in fact, have their coverage revoked on the basis of the financial structure that can pay to ensure that those with preexisting diseases in this new document called health care, whether there will be any money to cover those individuals for preexisting diseases, we don’t even know that. I think that is something important to note.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, because this is a mysterious bill, we know that it will mostly benefit the rich. Households at the top of the income ladder would see taxes on their wages and investments drop under this bill. No one has anything against our friends who are doing quite well, but it will be on the backs of working Americans.

The Republican plan to replace ObamaCare includes a tax break for insurance company executives making over half a million dollars a year. What a great gift. We are about to approach Easter, a time of sacrifice, and Passover isn’t it ironic what we would be facing is a gift in this tax season of a great tax break of our friends making over $500,000 a year. Meanwhile, working Americans would lose coverage and be forced to pay more for less.

According to CNN, most healthcare experts agree that millions of Americans are likely to lose their coverage under this new document that is to reflect health care. Mothers: likely to make maternity coverage, among other services, immensely expensive, if available at all.

In fact, I recall certainly as a young mother that one of the most frightening things is to not have insurance or the kind of complete coverage that is needed with expectancy of the birth of a child. Not knowing what may happen to the mother during birth, what challenges the new baby may face, and to face the uncertainty of not having full maternity coverage is devastating. Women, pregnant women, and children on Medicaid, under the Medicaid expansion, which has been adopted in 31 States and Washington, D.C., more
than half of the 50 States would shut down at the end of 2019. So you would get a few more years, and then hard-working Americans would be thrown off into the street in 31 States, including Washington, D.C. Women, seniors, children, in particular pregnant women, would see their health care thrown to the wind, extinguished, burned up.

The bill also proposes a major overhaul of Medicaid, a Federal State program covering more than 70 million low-income and disabled Americans. I believe that the proposal is to block grant Medicaid dollars under the pretense of letting States be creative. I want Americans and my colleagues to understand what creativity means. Creativity simply means that they will do everything they can to shorten and cheapen the health benefits that you will get. And it will be made through deals, how little money can we spend, whether we can use the Medicaid block grant dollars for some other things, a wish list that we may want in the State that we come from, the 31 States, plus Washington, D.C.

Instead of the current open-ended Federal entitlement, States would get capped payment block grants based on the number of Medicaid enrollees. Block grants, basically. And when it runs out, you are in a whole world of trouble. Or, as we say, you are up the river without a paddle—you are up the river without a paddle. No one comes to your rescue when you are up the river without a paddle.

Seniors who have worked so hard who are on Medicare will have fiscal problems themselves. It will exacerbate the fiscal problems of Medicare by hastening the exhaustion of the program’s trust fund by 4 years. Our commitment is to ensure that the Medicare trust fund clearly is strong, solid, and solvent. Whenever I meet with my seniors, I tell them my commitment—strong, solid, and solvent. But with this is what we call called health care, we are in jeopardy.

So it is clearly a problem, and it certainly is not gathering support in unanimity on the other side. Mr. Speaker, someone is complaining about it. It happens to be Republicans, so it looks like it is going to be a rough road.

But my concluding remark, Mr. Speaker, is that this document that represents itself as a healthcare answer has so many problems, so many people will suffer, so much loss, that I ask my colleagues to reject this legislation as it is presently constructed, and I look forward to working to better health care for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

TOPICS OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Gohmert) until 10 p.m.

Mr. Gohmert. Mr. Speaker, I was handed a letter by a lady when I was at one of the many events that I attended in my district. It is how I stay in touch with what is going on. This lady says: “U.S. Congressman LOUIE GOHMERT: I am a 52-year-old widow. ObamaCare is a major financial problem for me. Someone needs to fix the healthcare system. One-third of the money I get from my husband’s retirement fund is given to health care. My deductible alone is $7,000.”

She has an exclamation point. “I am angry with the government deciding how I should get on what little money I have. I had to get a part-time job just to put gas in my car. So I clean tables and I mop floors. I am physically unable to work full time. I am frustrated with the fact I had to move back in with my parents just to make ends meet. Would you like that? Fulfilling. Could or would you do something to relieve this burden?”

That is from a 52-year-old widow in my district. We have done with the burden, ObamaCare. We here in Congress decided: You know what? We are going to tell people like this widow how she has to spend what little money she has left. We are going to force this woman to go clean tables and mop floors when she is physically unable to work full time because we here in Washington have decided we know better than she does. So we have every right in Congress to force people like this down with their heads on the land and knees to work for the United States Congress. Pay your taxes and now, that is not enough. We are going to tell you that you are being forced to spend your money on health care that will never get used because you have a $7,000 deductible.

Or how about hearing, 2 weeks ago, from a friend, one of those who was cut because of financial troubles. They had 100 employees. They can’t afford the health insurance that has such high deductibles nobody will ever benefit.

One of the problems is, when you have to take precious healthcare dollars that used to go to providing care in a hospital, in a clinic, for a patient, now it goes to government navigators. Why? Because these pseudo-officials that decided: We have lost too many union members. The unions that are growing are the government unions, the very ones that Franklin Roosevelt said you should never have a union composed of government workers.

Think about it. You are working for the people of the United States of America. Why would you need a union to organize against the people? Sounds un-American. But those are the ones that are growing. And union leaders, without concern for their members, decided: Let’s embrace as many aliens as we can get into the country, legally or otherwise, because they will join the unions and that will grow the ranks; and we as union leaders will be better off, but our members’ wages will continue to go down, our members will continue to lose jobs. But, gee, we may have more people in our union.

We know that there was supposed to be thousands of new IRS agents hired so that they could help enforce ObamaCare. It is a travesty. The bill that has been filed is not going to do it, but, hopefully, our Republican leadership will be willing to work things out and prevent good amendments that will make it palatable so enough of us can vote for it.

I have gotten to know President Trump a bit, and I feel like he wants the best deal he can get for America. If this bill were the best he could get, he would probably have to live with that, but we can do a whole lot better. Some of us are determined we are not going to vote for one that doesn’t.

In the meantime, there is so much to do the President Obama and all of his minions that are still out there trying to undermine the Trump administration. We have a crisis here in Congress.
that people are not talking about. I keep bringing it up. Doesn’t seem to be a lot of folks who want to talk about it.

There was a time when we had mainstream media that actually did research, that questioned things, dug through the bottom of things. But there are IT—information technology, mainly working with computers—employees, shared employees for several Democrats that are under investigation. Imran Awan was the company owner. Abid Awan, Jamal Awan—the wife of Imran Awan—and Natalia Sova, wife of Abid Awan, each made $160,000 a year as IT-shared employees working on computers for various Democrats in the House of Representatives.

The Awan brothers are of Pakistani descent, but their immigration status is unclear. There are a lot of things that are unknown about the Awan brothers. But they worked for our former DNC chair, Debbie Wasserman Schultz—that is Imran Awan. These people are under investigation for stealing material, potentially accessing classified information in the SCIF; but other IT people tell me, once someone is in the congressional system, the calendar, email for one Member of Congress, if they ask for info, it is not that hard to break into lots of other Members of Congress’ email and calendars.

What country that hates America—some that like America—wouldn’t love to know who people are meeting, especially on the Intelligence Committee like one of the people that have employed these?

Some of them, very fine members of things like the Ethics Committee, Judiciary, Foreign Affairs, Intelligence Committee. Let’s see, Andre Carson, Sandy Levin, Jackie Speier—a lot of people, good people—Tim Ryan. A lot of these folks, they employed these folks. They were very trusting, kind people. And these people didn’t have a background check, and now they are under investigation. I heard some have been told that Imran Awan, the lead guy, went back to Pakistan.

Well, if this guy set up and was working on computer systems, is it possible he could do this when this is what a normal mainstream reporter, 30, 40 years ago in the seventies would have asked: Well, did he set up the DNC computer system that got hacked, that was supposedly hacked by Russians or others, did he set up that up so it could be hacked? I mean, there is a lot here going on that we don’t know the answers to, and we deserve to know the answers.

There were mortgage transfers, debts, bankruptcy. Imran Awan, Jamal Awan were known to be the ringleaders of the group, had been providing services since 2005; has convictions for driving offenses which were serious enough to become criminal misdemeanors, used an illegal radar detector, drove an unregistered vehicle; some say, after masterminding the family’s finances, was running the business completely by 2010 and instructed Abid not to even speak to anyone.

The wives of Imran and Abid also began receiving paychecks from the House of Representatives. They purchased two homes in Lorton in 2008, one of which was associated with all three of them. Under Aliw sold that home in 2016 to the younger brother Jamal for $260,000.

Imran owned a home and put it in his father’s name in 2008 in Springfield. Abid later claimed, in bankruptcy, that the house was his.

Jamal Awan was placed on the House payroll at age 20, making $160,000.

Imran is also a real estate agent. Despite making $100,000 in congressional salaries, debts went unpaid by the Awan brothers, including debts to the Congressional Federal Credit Union. $100,000 was taken from a known Hezbollah-connected fugitive, a fugitive from the FBI; and they are associated with this Hezbollah-connected agent, and there is no press out there getting to the bottom of it? What happened to the Washington press, the proud press of Washington of the 1970s? Well, they are in the bag for one party. They are not interested in getting to the bottom of the news. They are all about advocating.

God not just bless America, God help America. We have got to have people wake up before we do much more damage to ourselves. It is time to turn this country around, and one of the things we should start with is getting to the bottom of this investigation; find out how much damage these alleged criminals did from Pakistan to our Congress, and also start undoing the damage ObamaCare has done so people can get jobs again they have lost, so people can have healthcare that has deductibles they can afford. It is time to make America great again.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. Culberson (at the request of Mr. McCarthy) for today on account of illness.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Gohmert. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to, accordingly (at 10 p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.
726. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting twelve notices of vacancies, designation of acting officer, or discontinuation of service, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 115(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

727. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 150916863-6211-02] (RIN: 0648-XE958) received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

728. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2016 Gulf of Alaska Pollock Seasonal Apportionments [Docket No.: 150816863-6210-02] (RIN: 0648-XF109) received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

729. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7415; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-032-AD; Amendment 39-18790; AD 2017-02-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

730. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0571; Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-002-AD; Amendment 39-18766; AD 2016-26-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

731. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6670; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-004-AD; Amendment 39-18765; AD 2016-06-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

732. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — All Federal Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS AIRCRAFT LTD. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7003; Directorate Identifier 2016-CE-015-AD; Amendment 39-18803; AD 2017-02-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

733. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration’s temporary rule — Fishery Management Plan Amendment and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department’s final rule — IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments; Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules [Docket No.: NMC-200-AD; Amendment 39-18728; AD 2017-02-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 866); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

734. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Dock- et No.: FAA-2016-6191; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-044-AD; Amendment 39-18783; AD 2017-02-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 375. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the "Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse" (Rept. 115-23). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1174. A bill to provide a lactation room in public buildings (Rept. 115-24). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 985. A bill to amend the procedures used in Federal court class actions and multidistrict litigation proceedings to assure fairer, more efficient outcomes for claimants and defendants, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-25). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. CHENey: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 174. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1301) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-26). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. BUCK: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 175. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 725) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder (Rept. 115-27). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. KEATON of Georgia, Mr. SIREN of Maryland, Mr. BARTLETT of Georgia, Mr. BUTLER of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DEGETTE, Mr. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POCAO, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. RICHMOND, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. ROACH, Ms. EUDORA BROWN JOHNsoN of Texas, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. LEE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. KYRAN of Ohio, Ms. TAYLOR of Ohio, Ms. DETTRO, Mr. BEYER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SOTO, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. LOFUREN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. TED LEE of Georgia, Mr. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. RASKEIN, Ms. SPEIKER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GHIAVLYA, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. SHERMAN): H.R. 1377. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia): H.R. 1375. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to States (or collaborations of States) to establish, expand, or maintain a comprehensive regional, State, or municipal system to provide tobacco cessation, consultation, and other resources to prescribers relating to patient pain, substance misuse, and substance abuse disorders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CUMMINGS: H.R. 1376. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to provide for the reservation of certain electronic records by Federal agencies, to require a certification and reports relating to Presidential records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HARPER: H.R. 1377. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to better align certain provisions of such Act with Federal disability laws and policies intended to remove societal and institutional barriers to employment opportunities for people with disabilities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HARPER: H.R. 1378. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of doctors of chiropractic in the National Health Service Corps, for granting loan repayment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. MAST, and Mr. BERGMAN): H.R. 1379. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the entitlement to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs for members of the uniformed services and received the Purple Heart; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. McGRORY of Kentucky, Mr. MOSS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. ARRAH, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. SCHRADE, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LARKSEN of Washington, and Mr. HARPER): H.R. 1380. A bill to clarify research and development for wood products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, and in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRiffITH: H.R. 1381. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to permit States to impose an individual responsibility requirement for noninsured nonelderly pregnant individuals made eligible for medical assistance; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. BYRD): H.R. 1382. A bill to establish requirements and restrictions for the commercial, charter, and recreational red snapper fishing seasons in the Gulf of Mexico for the 2017 and 2018 fishing seasons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BACON (for himself, Mr. DUNN, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. TAYLOR): H.R. 1383. A bill to direct certain actions of the United States Government with respect to recognizing the service and sacrifice of veterans of the Korean War, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona): H.R. 1384. A bill to amend titles 5, 10, 38, and 39 of the United States Code to ensure that certain orders to serve on an active duty or service under section 12304a and 12304b of title 10, United States Code, is treated the same as other orders to serve on active duty for determining the eligibility of members of the uniformed services and veterans for certain benefits and for calculating the deadlines for certain benefits; to the Committee on Armed Services, in addition to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FOXX: H.R. 1385. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to limit recruitment and retention bonuses for employees who spend certain time on active duty for the purpose of certain deployments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Mr. LIPINSKI of Illinois, and Mr. WATTS of Kansas): H.R. 1386. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pilot program to assess the operational benefits of remote air traffic control towers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. MIADEWOS, Ms. FOXX, Mr. MESSER, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. KIXON, Mr. HARRIS, and Mr. DEFAZIO): H.R. 1387. A bill to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. O'HALLERAN: H.R. 1388. A bill to enact House Resolution 815, One Hundred Tenth Congress, (establishing the Speaker's Office of Congressional Ethic) into permanent law; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIKES: H.R. 1389. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with
flexibility to provide care coordination under Medicaid for the most vulnerable through managed care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana (for himself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BUD, and Mrs. RAIDENWAGEN):

H.R. 1390. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay costs relating to the transportation of certain deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries owned by a State or tribal government; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana:

H.R. 1391. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide educational and vocational counseling for veterans on campuses of institutions of higher learning, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BERA (for himself, Mr. KILMER, Mr. SOTO, Mr. PLUMMERT, Mr. MCKENNEY, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. HIME, and Ms. SINKA):

H.R. 1392. A bill to establish a National TechCorps program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means; for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BISHOP of Michigan (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WHITFIELD of Georgia, Mr. MESSER, Mr. HURD, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BUCHON, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. NEAL, Mr. CONSTICK, Mrs. WALKSON COLEMAN, Mr. COOPER, Mr. DUTCH, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. MARINO, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. CHISHOLM):

H.R. 1393. A bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. GUTHRIE):

H.R. 1394. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with flexibility with respect to providing coverage for nonemergency transportation under Medicaid, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. MULLIN):

H.R. 1395. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to improve the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACACF); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. CONDIT, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SCHAKOWSKY of Illinois, Mr. CHABOT of Ohio, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SHEN YUAN, and for others of New York, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 1396. A bill to restore statutory rights to the citizens of the United States from forced arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 1397. A bill to authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mrs. GARLOCK of New York):

H.R. 1398. A bill to provide funds to give States incentives to invest in practices and technology designed to expedite voting at the polls and with respect to mail-in and absentee voting, to improve voting system security, and promote automatic voter registration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. COOK (for himself, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. TIPPTON, Mr. HINES, Mr. KENYON, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. MALALPA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi):

H.R. 1399. A bill to reduce temporarily the royalty required to be paid for sodium produced on Federal lands, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRAWFORD (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. HILL):

H.R. 1400. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to authorize agricultural producers to establish and contribute to tax-exempt farm risk management accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida (for himself and Mr. CRIST):

H.R. 1401. A bill to ensure fairness in premium rates for the National Flood Insurance Program for residences and business properties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Ms. HANABUSA):

H.R. 1402. A bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide for a macadamia tree health initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. GÓMEZ-DEL-COÑO of Puerto Rico (for herself, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Mr. SERRANO):

H.R. 1403. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities in Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 1404. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain lands in the United States to the Tuscon Unified School District and to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. GUTÍERREZ, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. CHAKOWSKY, Mr. CARDENAS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. VELA, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. DESAULNIERS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 1405. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a veterans visa program to permit veterans who have entered the United States to return as immigrants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MAST of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. PINGREE):

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H. R. 1413. A bill to provide for a grants program to develop and enhance integrated nutrition and physical activity curricula in medical schools; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SHERMAN (for himself, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. COHEN of New York, Ms. BONAMICI of Oregon, Mr. CARTWRIGHT of California, Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona, Ms. HABABUS of Illinois, Ms. JACKSON of Florida, Ms. JUANITA WILSON of Florida, Ms. LOWE of California, Ms. LOPES of New York, Ms. NOETZIEN of Wisconsin, Mr. PAYNE of Florida, Mr. RASKIN of Maryland, and Ms. SCHANK of New York):

H. R. 1414. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Electronic Fund Transfer Act to provide justice to victims of fraud; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SMITHEE of New Jersey (for himself and Mr. MEINKS):

H. R. 1415. A bill to facilitate effective research on and treatment of neglected tropical diseases, including Ebola, through coordinated domestic and international efforts; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker in each Congress for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri):

H. R. 1416. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude from gross income contributions to the capital of a partnership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. MCCCLINTOCK):

H. R. 1417. A bill to amend the National Law Enforcement Officers’ Museum Act to allow the Museum to acquire, receive, possess, collect, ship, transport, import, and display firearms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H. R. 1418. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to provide that Alexander Creek, Alaska, is and shall be recognized as an eligible Native village under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Iowa (for himself, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. JONES of New York, Mr. MASSIE of Kentucky, Mr. CURBelo of Florida, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H. R. 1419. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the award of a military service medal to members of the Armed Forces who served honorably during the Cold War, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COOK:

H. Res. 173. A resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fifth Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. CHABOT):

H. Res. 176. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H. Res. 177. A resolution expressing support for the designation of Clergy Spouse Appreciation Day; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representa-
tives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. JOHNSTON of Georgia:

H. R. 1374. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 18 allows Congress to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution:

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H. R. 1375. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H. R. 1376. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States grants the Congress the power to enact this law.

By Mr. HARPER:

H. R. 1377. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 18.

By Mr. HARPER:

H. R. 1378. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PETERS:

H. R. 1379. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H. R. 1380. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H. R. 1381. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is necessary and proper pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:

H. R. 1382. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. BACON:

H. R. 1383. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, section 8.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H. R. 1384. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. FOXX:

H. R. 1385. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution, Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. KATKO:

H. R. 1386. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clauses 1 and 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H. R. 1387. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 17 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. O’HALLERAN:

H. R. 1388. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 18.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H. R. 1389. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana:

H. R. 1390. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana:

H. R. 1391. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Mr. BERA:

H. R. 1392. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H. R. 1393. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 1 of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. CONNOY:

H. R. 1394. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H. R. 1395. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

By Mr. COMSTOCK:

H. R. 1396. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

By Mr. CONNOY:

H. R. 1397. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States provides that “The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States . . .”

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H. R. 1398. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 4 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COOK:

H. R. 1399.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. PALLONE:
H.R. 1411.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD:
H.R. 1412.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:
H.R. 1413.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. SHERMAN:
H.R. 1414.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. TIBERI:
H.R. 1415.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:
H.R. 1417.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 & Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2

“The Congress shall have power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.”

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:
H.R. 1418.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. LANCE:
H.R. 1409.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, of the United States Constitution, Congress shall have the power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Ms. McSALLY:
H.R. 1406.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 38: Mr. Poe of Texas, Mr. Bishop of Georgia, Mr. Weber of Texas, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Lucas.
H.R. 82: Mr. Burgess.
H.R. 203: Mr. Loesback.
H.R. 227: Mr. Ted Lieu of California.

H.R. 233: Mrs. Bratton.
H.R. 291: Mr. Costa.
H.R. 299: Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Nolan, Mrs. Roby, Ms. Adams, Mr. Yoho, Ms. Sotoozzi, Mr. Gohmert, Mr. Thompson of California, Mrs. Hartzler, Ms. LoF orein, Mr. Tiberi, Mr. Tipton, Mrs. Murphy of Florida, and Mr. Harper.
H.R. 305: Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Loebback, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, Mr. Nolan, Ms. LoF orein, and Mrs. Bratly.
H.R. 395: Mr. Sarranis, Mr. Nadler, and Mr. Kennedy.
H.R. 351: Mr. Ferguson.
H.R. 367: Mr. Arrington.
H.R. 369: Mr. Tipton.
H.R. 371: Mr. Courtesty.
H.R. 389: Ms. Clark of Massachusetts, Mr. Langevin, Mr. LaMalfa, and Mr. Jones.
H.R. 392: Mr. Emery, Mr. Flores, Mr. Dent, Mr. Lance, Ms. Clark of Massachusetts, Mr. Moultin, Mr. Evans, and Ms. Herrera Brultle.
H.R. 448: Mr. Sherman and Mr. Grjivalja.
H.R. 477: Mr. Ross.
H.R. 502: Ms. Jayapal, Ms. Slatter, Ms. Matsui, Mr. Delaney, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Nolan, Ms. Eshoo, Mr. Smith of Washington, Ms. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico, Mr. Quigley, Mr. Zeleny, Mr. Higgins of New York, Mr. Kind, Ms. Clark of Massachusetts, Mr. Sarbanes, Mr. Ruppersberger, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Ms. Hanabusa, Mr. Scott, Mr. Sanford, Mr. Larson of Connecticut, Mr. Moultin, Mrs. Bratly, Mr. Sotoozzi, Mr. Evans, Mr. Ruiz, Ms. DeLauro, Mr. Rush, Mr. Kildee, Mr. Costa, and Mr. Gabbard.
H.R. 510: Mr. Garamendi.
H.R. 530: Ms. Napolitano, Mr. Gutierrez, Mr. Thompson of California, and Mr. Polis.
H.R. 553: Mrs. Black and Mrs. Walorski.
H.R. 561: Mr. Massie.
H.R. 625: Mr. Thompson of Mississippi, Mr. Keating, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Schwickert, Mr. Moonen of West Virginia, and Mr. Graves of Louisiana.
H.R. 664: Mr. Evans.
H.R. 721: Mr. Lamborn, Mr. Hick, Mr. Ross, Mr. Gosar, Mr. DeSjarlais, Mr. Carter of Georgia, Mr. Poliquin of Maine, Mr. Barr, Mr. Cole, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Lucas.
H.R. 747: Mr. Pallone, Mr. Rosen, Mr. Gohmert, Ms. Cheney, Mr. Michael, F. Doyle of Pennsylvania, Mr. Slaughter, Mr. Smith of New Jersey, Mr. Norcross, and Mr. Polis.
H.R. 749: Mr. Crist.
H.R. 757: Mr. Lowenthal, Ms. Meng, Mr. Blumenauer, Mr. Khanna, and Mr. Nolan.
H.R. 781: Mr. Dunn.
H.R. 785: Mr. McClintock, Mr. Culberson, Mr. Coffman, Mr. Tipton, and Mr. Lucas.
H.R. 810: Ms. Norton, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Raskin, Mr. Merk, Mr. Dutch, and Mr. Johnson of Georgia.
H.R. 816: Mr. Mast, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Ms. Judy Chu of California, and Mr. Polis.
H.R. 821: Mr. Evans.
H.R. 830: Ms. Torres, Mr. Sherman, and Mr. Quigley.
H.R. 846: Mr. Scott of Virginia, Mr. PENCE, Mr. Stivers, Mr. Poe of Texas, and Mr. Neal.
H.R. 849: Mr. Jenkins of West Virginia.
H.R. 878: Mr. Arrington.
H.R. 909: Mr. Larsen.
H.R. 914: Ms. Bonamici and Mr. DeSaulnier.
H.R. 919: Mr. Garamendi and Mr. McGovern.
H.R. 931: Mr. Lynch, Mr. Scott of Virginia, Mr. Costello of Pennsylvania, Mr.
XXI.

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 1301, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MRS. BLACK

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 1301, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.
The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN SASSE, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

PRAYER
The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.
O Lord, in whose hands is the life of every living thing, we depend upon Your strength and might.
Manifest Yourself to our Senators, directing their steps and bringing them to Your chosen destination. Without Your leading, they will be like ships without rudders, but with You directing, they cannot fail to fulfill Your purposes. Take them in the direction that will enable them to positively affect the lives of the heavy laden, the sorrowful, and the suffering.
Purify their hearts with the deep compassion needed to enable Your Kingdom to come and Your will to be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Lord, use them to hasten the coming of Your Kingdom of justice and truth.
We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

The legislation the House introduced last night represents the next step along that path. It is the result of a long conversation with many voices, and it is supported by the one person who can actually sign a bill into law—the President of the United States.

I want to recognize everyone for their contributions and hard work. Given last night’s announcement, I especially want to commend our colleagues in the House. The policy conversation that led to what we saw last night continues. The policy process moves forward today.

We have come a long way. We have a lot further to go, but we are making significant progress. Working arm in arm with the House and the new administration, we are going to keep our promise to the American people because ObamaCare is a direct attack on the middle class. We all know it. We all get letters and phone calls. We hear the heartbreak and the frustration nearly every day.

Consider this letter from one of my constituents in Goshen, who wrote about the ObamaCare plan available to his family:

I am extremely displeased with the limited choices available. While 16 plans are listed for me at the Healthcare.gov website, they are all inferior to my 2016 plan. Neither our primary care physician nor my rheumatologist is in network of any offered 2017 plan.

The cost is another problem. The 2017 plan that I will probably choose will have a 20% higher premium than my 2016 plan with a lower level of benefits.

Pay more; pay more for less. That is ObamaCare for you right there. Look, in so many different ways, we have seen the evidence for years that ObamaCare simply isn’t working. This isn’t a law that can be fixed. This isn’t a law that can be saved. It has to be repealed and replaced. We promised the American people we would do that. We are going to keep our promise.
CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, for the past 8 years, Americans felt left behind by an economy that failed to live up to its potential, a job market that left too many behind, and a future that didn’t seem to be as bright as it once had. For too long, the previous administration pursued an agenda that put Washington’s interests above the people’s interests and regulations that too often followed ideology rather than facts. As recently as last week, in a national paper, one study “estimates that the costs of complying with federal rules and regulations totaled nearly $1.9 trillion in 2015.”

Let me say that again. The costs of complying with regulations in America totaled nearly $1.9 trillion in 2015, equal to about half the Federal budget.

Yet another study “estimates that regulation has shaved 0.8 percent off the U.S. annual growth rate—a growth rate that was already too low to begin with.

You can see the effect that heavy-handed regulations can have on our Nation’s economy. There is no question that some regulations are necessary and even beneficial to our country, but Washington should assess the real impact regulations will have before implementing them.

 Undoing the damage of the past several years is going to take some time, but fortunately there are meaningful steps we have already begun taking to bring relief. Just last night we took another step by blocking a sweeping land regulation that would have threatened American businesses, workers, and taxpayers at large.

Today we will keep working to dial back even more harmful regulations, like the one before us now—the so-called BLM planning 2.0 rule. Don’t let the name fool you. This regulation has been fighting the BLM 2.0 regulation from the start and has introduced legislation under the Congressional Review Act to overturn it.

Later today, we will have the opportunity to vote on a similar resolution, which has already passed the House. It is another important step in our efforts to return power to the States and knock down barriers that keep our economy from growing.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CALLING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning the Judiciary Committee will have a hearing on the nomination of Mr. Rod Rosenstein, the Acting Deputy Attorney General. During the hearing, Mr. Rosenstein should commit to naming a special prosecutor to look into the Trump campaign’s ties to Russia.

There is a strong legal rationale for a special prosecutor. A special prosecutor, by the Department of Justice rules, would be free of day-to-day supervision by anyone at the Department of Justice, would be free to follow the investigation where it leads, and would be subject to an increased level of congressional oversight. Moreover, it is the right thing to do to ensure that this investigation remains impartial, nonpartisan, and truly gets to the bottom of the matter. The bottom line is very simple. The special prosecutor can only be fired for cause, but a line person in the Justice Department could be fired at will. We saw that happen when President Trump didn’t like what Sally Yates said about his Executive order.

He simply fired her. Mr. Rosenstein is a very fine man, an excellent, longtime prosecutor in the Justice Department, but this is when we call for a special prosecutor. It is not an aspersion against him in any way. We are worried the White House will not let an investigation within the Justice Department, without the insulation of a special prosecutor, go forward.

So if Mr. Rosenstein is unwilling to commit to naming a special prosecutor or says he needs to be confirmed, and in his position he can make an assessment, that is insufficient. The need for a special prosecutor is clear enough today to make that call.

Of course, we don’t need to wait for Mr. Rosenstein. Mr. Boente, the Acting Deputy Attorney General, can make the call today, but if neither will commit to a special prosecutor, Congress will have to consider bringing back a narrower independent counsel law to see that this investigation is conducted properly.

TRUMPCARE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on another matter, last night we saw the House Republicans plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. After 70 years of talking about the same thing over and over again, we thought the House Republicans would have been able to come up with a better plan than this. This plan is a mess.

First, it will cost average Americans more money for their healthcare, while providing fewer benefits; second, it will make health insurance more expensive for average Americans pay more for their healthcare; third, it will raise premiums and costs for older Americans; and, fourth, it will remove the guarantee that ensures Americans with pre-existing conditions can get coverage.

TrumpCare will make health insurance more expensive for average Americans, while providing fewer benefits; second, it will make health insurance more expensive for average Americans pay more for their healthcare; third, it will raise premiums and costs for older Americans; and, fourth, it will remove the guarantee that ensures Americans with pre-existing conditions can get coverage.

TrumpCare will make health insurance in America measurably worse in just about every way and leave more Americans uninsured. It does, however, greatly benefit the very wealthy and special interests.

Let’s look at each of the items I just mentioned.

First, TrumpCare will cost more and you will get less. By eliminating minimum coverage for healthcare plans and decreasing the availability of tax credits, the cost for average Americans will increase by at least $1,000 annually. That is a huge increase, like a tax increase for average Americans who need healthcare. It cuts and caps Medicaid, which has expanded health insurance to over 20 million Americans, and affects poor people, as well as many elderly who are in nursing homes, as well as their children who might have to pay for their care with the kinds of cuts we are seeing.

The bill would greatly decrease coverage for maternity care, preventive screenings, mental health, opioid treatment, and more. With respect to women, TrumpCare would send us back to the Dark Ages. Gone are the protections for maternity care, mammograms, and more. Gone is all the funding next year for Planned Parenthood, where 2.5 million women a year get healthcare. The ACA finally made it
the case that you no longer had to pay more for coverage just because you are a woman. TrumpCare rips that away, undoing the progress we made just a few years ago.

Second, TrumpCare would be a boondoggle to the middle class, undermine the ability of Americans pay more. The bill is a winning lottery ticket for wealthy Americans. It removes an investment tax and a surcharge on the wealthiest Americans, folks with incomes of above $250,000 a year, saving them an average of $200,000 a year, and it allows a tax break for insurance executives making over $500,000 a year.

Third, TrumpCare will raise premiums and costs for older Americans. It would repeal the Affordable Care Act’s premium subsidies and replace them with refundable tax credits that could be worth thousands of dollars less than what was provided under the ACA. Under this plan, a senior without Medicare might receive only $1,400 a year, instead of an adequate sum for someone of that age. One illness or a bad break, and the value of their tax credit would evaporate. It also allows insurers to charge older Americans more simply because of their age.

Finally, TrumpCare would remove the guarantee of coverage for Americans with preexisting conditions. TrumpCare is breathtakingly irresponsible. It shifts the costs and the burdens from the government to the people, and raises premiums on older Americans. It seems designed to cover fewer Americans and make that coverage less affordable and less generous. It seems designed to make America sick again.

We don’t even know how large a negative impact this bill will have because Republicans are irresponsibly rushing forward before this bill even receives a score from the Congressional Budget Office.

After years of howling at the Moon, at Democrats for rushing through the Affordable Care Act, the mantra they said over and over again on the floor here and in the House was “read the bill.” Republicans have been having committee votes 2 days after the bill is released.

No wonder they don’t want anyone to know what is in this bill. They are rushing it through because it is very hard to defend what they have done, and the longer it is out there, the harder it is going to be for their colleagues, Republicans, to vote for it. Lawmakers will be voting blind, without a final analysis of how this bill will affect overall coverage and affordability. I know what this affects a lot of my colleagues on the other side.

We have no knowledge of how this affects the deficit. It is removing a lot of the revenues for healthcare without replacing them. In all likelihood—we will see what CBO says—the deficit is going to go way up.

The President is already throwing his arms around this plan, and ultimately he and his party will bear the responsibility for its passage and implementation. At this time, I would like to remind President Trump that he said repeatedly in the campaign that he would expand treatment for Americans suffering from opioid addiction, but this monster of a bill would rip treatment away from hundreds of thousands of Americans dealing with opioid addiction. President Trump said he would ensure Americans with pre-existing conditions would continue to have insurance coverage, but this bill makes that harder in several ways.

President Trump, in his campaign, said:

Everybody’s got to be covered. . . . I am going to take care of everybody. I don’t care if it’s going to cost me votes or not. Everybody’s going to be taken care of of much better than they’re being taken care of now. . . . They can have their doctors. They can have their plans, they can have everything.

“They can have everything.”

Well, if you read the bill the way it reduces funding for Medicaid and replaces the Affordable Care Act subsidies with much smaller tax credits, there is just no way this bill meets the President’s standard.

Was the Affordable Care Act perfect? No. It could use some improvements, but Democrats spent a long time thinking about it and crafting the policy to achieve two very real and specific goals, expand coverage, lower costs.

TrumpCare will do the very opposite. If it has any one coherent positive goal, it is to limit the tax burdens on the very wealthy, and in the process it will badly hurt millions of Americans and throw our healthcare system back into chaos.

If the final product out of the House looks anything like this draft, the Senate should consider it a moral duty to reject it.

I yield the floor.

DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The Acting President pro tempore.

Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 44, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 44) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management’s rule on a strong bipartisan basis. It was a 48-vote margin. They did this just before the February recess, and so it is now in front of the Senate.

As the sponsor of the Senate version, I have come to the floor now to explain to colleagues why this BLM Planning 2.0 Rule is such a bad rule and to urge its nullification.

There are probably a lot of folks that are asking the question: BLM Planning 2.0, what is it? It is not just folks that are listening, it is colleagues here. What exactly is Planning 2.0 and what exactly does Planning 2.0 do? A lot of people are saying: I never heard of this one. Where did it come from? Based on that, I think a lot of context is in order as we begin this debate.

The Bureau of Land Management is a Federal agency that manages 245 million acres of land in 10 states, along with 700 million acres of Federal and non-Federal subsurface estate. Congress has directed the BLM to manage those lands according to the federal Land Policy and Management Act. That is too long to say. So we just refer to it as FLPMA. It serves as the agency’s organic act. It mandates a multiple-use mission for BLM lands. I think it is important to always remember that BLM is required to manage from the concept to the completion of the use. It lays out a planning process for its mission. It establishes a special status relationship between the Federal Government and the States and the local governments that are affected by the agency’s resource management plans.

I think it is important, as we are focusing on the BLM right now, that we remember that BLM lands are not national parks or wildlife refuges. They are not wild and scenic rivers or wildernesses. BLM lands are working lands. They are valuable—not because they might contain a Mount Denali, like up north, or the Grand Canyon—but rather because these lands contain energy and minerals and they can be used. Again, this is the multiple-use concept. They can be used for grazing. They can be used for recreation and many other purposes.

They are valuable in this way and as such are a leading source of good jobs for families and communities across the West. BLM’s management of western lands has never been without controversy. That is part of the reason that the last administration decided to overhaul the regulations that guide the planning process. The stated goals from the administration were to create a better process that would increase transparency, increase public involvement, and reduce the amount of time it takes to develop a resource management plan.

I think the clearly all sound like good ideas, good goals. Unfortunately, the reason we are here today seeking to overturn this planning 2.0 rule is that...
the BLM absolutely failed to achieve any of those three goals. Instead of greater transparency, BLM delivered a new process that ensures less transparency. Instead of expanding public participation, Western States are looking at fewer and weaker opportunities to influence the management of local lands.

Planning 2.0 also turns the relationship between federal, state, and the local governments on its head. It just really turns it upside down. What actually happens then is that it has effectively subverted FLPMA, shattering the special status arrangement that the West is supposed to have under the Federal law.

As a Senator for the State of Alaska when this rule came out, I looked critically at it and I have problems with many aspects of the rule. I know I am joined by nearly all of my western colleagues and many who are not from the West but who have taken the time to understand local land management laws are supposed to work and who have looked critically at this rule.

The more my staff and I have unpacked the Planning 2.0 Rule, the less we like it and the greater is our conviction that we should consider an alternate through the Congressional Review Act. That is why we are here. I could go on for quite some time, but for purposes of this statement, I will list this morning my four main criticisms, all of which compound, each other and show why this rule must be repealed.

First of all, Planning 2.0 seeks to transition to a landscape-level approach for land management planning. It is not a bad concept on its own, really. I don’t have any problem with BLM determining, for instance, where our solar resources are located, but to make that a defining measure and to make that a defining feature of a resource management plan is a bad idea.

It all but assures that new and revised plans will not have the level of detail or specificity that is needed to properly manage our local resources. It allows for planning areas to cross State lines without regard to the competing priorities of neighboring Governors. It does not ensure that existing State and local plans will be consistent. It is very obvious that BLM will deploy it as a mechanism to reduce or perhaps to eliminate many reasonable uses of Federal land that provide jobs and support communities all across the West.

The second criticism I have is that Planning 2.0 allows BLM officials to remove the decisionmaking authority from our field offices and our State directors, and it tends to centralize that power at BLM headquarters. So for those of us in the West, we are looking at a situation where effectively the management decisions of our land are being taken from those who are on the ground, really understand the conditions and are those who are most impacted by it. It shifts it back East to be decided by those who don’t have that same local understanding, who might not really have any understanding as to the areas and why this is so important.

So centralizing power at BLM headquarters, in my view, is never the right way to go. I think that this is going to happen every time with every decision. However it could happen at any time, whenever a future administration decides that a decision needs to be made at the headquarters level, as we have seen at a moment’s notice—perhaps without even any notice at all—decisionmaking authority can be taken away from a Western State with expertise and effectively siphoned here in Washington, DC. That is not the direction to be taken.

The third area of concern I have is that Planning 2.0 reduces the ability of western stakeholders to provide input into the land management process, as well as their stature within it. So, we must now ask ourselves whether you are shifting decisionmaking authority back here to the East. By further limiting stakeholders’ input, that is very problematic.

Now, the agency has talked a good game about public participation. But if you read the rule, what it effectively does is just kind of front-load public input while cutting later opportunities for feedback. If left in place, Planning 2.0 would rob BLM of a mechanism to be able to maximize its decisionmaking power while at the same time effectively sidelinning input from Western States.

We previously were in a situation where western stakeholders had a seat on the stage before this rule, but under it they are really demoted. They are effectively demoted to a middle row in the mezzanine as part of a bigger crowd, but with no special status. I think it is important to keep that in context.

The fourth area of concern is that BLM 2.0 weakens and eliminates the requirements in FLPMA that require BLM to coordinate planning and resource uses with States and local governments. Under this rule, BLM shifts the burden for making sure that resource management plans are consistent with State and local governments plans away from itself and onto the States and onto the local governments. That is not right.

The agency is also limiting the opportunities that those government have to identify and remedy deficiencies within and across plans wherever they may be found.

So here are a couple of examples this morning for the Senate, just to illustrate why so many of us are concerned about this and are opposed to Planning 2.0. You have to ask yourself: Is it fair and is it really what Congress intended, for a western stakeholder to have the same voice and influence over the management of their local lands as any other member of the general public from anywhere else, with no connection, no relationship to these areas?

To be more specific, should a small placer miner in Chicken, Alaska, or a cattle grazer in Nevada be relegated to the same status as a lawyer in, say, Vermont who has never visited either Chicken, Alaska, or rural Nevada? My answer to this is pretty easy. It is a simple no. But that is what awaits us under Planning 2.0.

So here is a real world example of what Planning 2.0 will mean on the ground. Last year, the BLM finalized a resource management plan for 6.5 million acres of eastern Interior Alaska. Much of that plan was developed in accordance with the principles of Planning 2.0. So what does it actually look like for us up there in Alaska, in the eastern Interior area?

The plan closes nearly three-quarters of the 40-mile district, where the only economic activity, really, is placer mining—small placer mining. They closed it to mineral entry. More than 1 million acres are withdrawn into what they call “areas of critical environmental concern”. This is a land management tool that is more and more in recent years to sidestep Congress’s sole authority to designate Federal wilderness.

So the agency sought public comment, but it was limited public comment. They effectively ignored the comments that it did receive. Ultimately, very few Alaskans were able to participate in the development of the plan, and even fewer Alaskans are happy with the final outcome of the plan. We expected, when the Planning 2.0 process was used to shut down a reasonable use of Federal land that the last administration just did not like. This was done even though it enjoys overwhelming support among local residents who really depend on it for their livelihood.

The Planning 2.0 process was also used to close off Federal lands to the public in violation of the “no more” clauses within ANILCA, or the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act, even though there was no imminent threat or reason to do so. So, as colleagues are considering how they will cast their vote on this resolution of disapproval, I am sure, again, that many had not really focused on this Planning 2.0 before. Most of them would never be able to find Chicken, Alaska, on a map, and they are thinking: This is not going to impact me. I am not from the West.

But if you live in the West, if you live in one of the 12 Western States that have BLM land, believe me, you are impacted. I would suggest that what we are seeing, starting in Alaska, is something that simply won’t stay up there. If this rule is allowed to remain in place, we expect that it will move through all of our Western States.

BLM maintains and periodically revises dozens of resource management plans in its 12 Western states. So if Planning 2.0 stays on the books, I think what it will do is it will harm our Nation’s energy producers. I think it will harm our mineral developers. I think it will harm those who rely on...
Federal lands for grazing. It will most certainly cost us jobs. It will cost us economic opportunity, and it will hurt the communities and the people of our Western States.

I would ask that you don’t just take my word for it, which is why six different States have challenged this rule as impairing the informational and coordination rights of local governments. They believe that it violates FLPMA and that BLM has failed to properly evaluate the impact that it will have. They think they have a very strong case. This is a fatally flawed rule. Our best option is to overturn it while we have the ability to do so under the Congressional Review Act and to hold BLM accountable to the underlying statute and its multiple-use mission. If we can agree to do that today, we can then work with our new Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, to make genuine improvements to the BLM land management planning process. I know that Secretary Zinke cares about our public lands. He understands these issues, and I think he is dedicated to ensuring that we get this right.

I would like to close by thanking the roughly 80 stakeholder groups that are supporting our disapproval resolution. I also thank the 17 Senators who are cosponsoring the Senate version of it. I thank the new administration, which has released a statement of policy in support of it. I also acknowledge and thank the Congressional BLM Caucus and Chairman Bishop in the House, who led the resolution through the House with good bipartisanship support a couple of weeks back.

It is now the Senate’s turn to act on this. It is our turn to recognize why this rule deserves to be overturned. For the good of our Western States, let’s send this disapproval resolution to the President’s desk.

With that I again urge the Senate to support House Joint Resolution 44. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. Murkowski). The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak in opposition to this resolution. Many of my colleagues know that we have had discussions in the Senate on several Congressional Review Act resolutions. In principle, the Congressional Review Act resolutions—besides repealing these existing Executive regulations—also have the unfortunate aspect to them that they negate an agency’s ability to make new rules anytime soon in the same area. For example, if you like some of this rule but not all of it, by using the CRA, you are literally preventing the agency from moving forward on any improvements to the rule. I always believe in the legislative process. Working with my colleague from Alaska or working with my colleagues from other areas, I think we have proved that we can resolve key issues. But passing this Congressional Review Act resolution on an issue so important as our public lands and negating the hard work that the executive branch did over a long period of time is something that my colleagues and I just have to say no to.

When it comes to public lands, we want transparency; we want sunshine. We want a bottom-up approach when it comes to land management, and we certainly want collaboration.

As was said earlier, the Bureau of Land Management manages about 245 million acres of public land. That is about 10 percent of the Nation and 30 percent of our Nation’s minerals. So when it comes to this management, it is very important that they continue to follow a very good bottom-up process for land management. I will read now from the actual requirements from the law that oversees them, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. They have to use and observe the principles of multiple use on our public lands and take into account and potential uses of the public lands; weigh long-term benefits to the public against short-term benefits; consider the relative scarcity of the values; give priority to areas of critical environmental concern; make sure they comply with applicable pollution control laws, including State and Federal air, water, noise, or other pollution standards or implementation plans; and coordinate with Federal Departments and Agencies, State and local governments, and Indian Tribes.

So all of these things are part of what is already in existing law. The concept here is to make sure that we continue to have a transparent and open process that is bottom-up. And I certainly believe in a bottom-up process because our public lands must not be territories owned and operated, for example, for the sole benefit of the oil, gas, and mining industries, and we can’t be having these processes in these areas and not have input from the various communities about their concerns on those issues.

For example, in 2001, the Bush administration proposed revisions to six land use plans in eastern Utah, and these plans were finalized in 2008 at the end of the Bush administration, with only limited opportunity for public involvement. All six plans were challenged in Federal court by several motorized recreation and conservation organizations.

It is now 2017, and these plans still remain tied up in litigation. That is why those in the off-road vehicle industry did not feel as though they had input at the very beginning stages of the process. In January the Obama administration negotiated a settlement, which is still pending in court, but this shows how, if there isn’t meaningful public involvement, we are just going to hit a logjam. This is why I think it is so important for us to update this rule.

It has been a long time since the agency updated this rule; I think since 1983. That was the last time—over 30 years ago. I guarantee you, in those 30 years, we can come up with a better process for input from our constituents on important land use issues.

I know the new Interior Secretary like to talk about Teddy Roosevelt, who once said: “The Nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value.”

I know we are preserving and increasing the value of our public lands is exactly what is meant by this planning rule that the Bureau of Land Management put out. This rule wants to make sure that we have input from the local community.

I think it is important to note that this is not a rule that regulates any specific use on public lands. It does not restrict any particular activity. It simply updates or elongates the process saying that it is better to have input from local officials and to use that input from local officials to update the process in an earlier way.

I said to my staff: it is like us huddling and saying that we should write legislation and then me not coming back for 7 years and then letting them know I am on my way to the Senate floor to drop a bill. We would never do that, and the land plans in these communities shouldn’t be done that way either.

Once a local Bureau of Land Management official starts to discuss a plan, there should be transparency. The local community should know exactly what that plan looks like before it is going to be finalized. It needs to encourage collaboration of the stakeholders or else—as the example I just gave in Utah—you are going to end up in litigation or an elongated process before such management plans can take place.

It seems to me that these are pretty reasonable goals: Have a bottom-up process that encourages discussion throughout the process; communities are not caught off guard, and continue to emphasize the roles of State, local, and Tribal governments and cooperating agencies so that they can have input in the process as well.

Finally, I know that there are some who would like to claim that the BLM State director oversees the planning process in their specific State and that somehow that might change, but that is not the case.

Many organizations understand that there will continue to be a bottom-up process under the new rule. That is why so many sportsmen and outdoors groups—like the Outdoor Industry Association, the National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the Nature Conservancy, the Wilderness Society, and the National Parks Conservation Association—all say: Do not overturn the rule that was implemented. These groups feel that 30 years is too long of a period of time to have to wait to encourage public involvement and collaboration, that
these issues are too important to try to turn back the clock and to try to exclude sportsmen and various interests of public access from the planning and use of our public lands.

I hope my colleagues will turn down this very important project that has guaranteed public access, transparency, and sunshine in planning for our public lands.

MEDICAID

Madam President, I would like to come to the floor to discuss the proposed Medicaid changes that are part of what the House is proposing to the Affordable Care Act. This is so important because, as many people know, Medicaid has been a bedrock of how individuals get access to healthcare in our country. And in many parts of our States—at least the State of Washington—Medicaid has been a lifeline in both rural communities and in urban areas and we have heard much from varied states about how Medicaid is actually lowering the commercial insurance premiums because of less uncompensated care. And I heard a safety net hospital in Spokane tell me that the population is already 70 percent Medicaid and Medicare and that there is no way they can absorb this kind of a cut to the Medicaid program and it would just mean healthcare costs would rise in the future. I heard a hospital in Seattle tell me that this kind of attempt is nothing but a budget trigger. It is not a reform of the system. It is simply a way to cut costs.

What we believe is that Medicaid is a key part of our healthcare delivery system. The expansion has worked well and we should continue to move to ways to innovate Medicaid as a way to save costs.

Unfortunately, right now, many people misunderstand how important Medicaid is in the mental health and addiction area. Basically, when you take what we have tried to do to address the opioid epidemic and individuals who are working through the bills that we just recently passed to try to help patients in the emergency room or who are in psychiatric care or who are trying to deal with this grave problem we have in the country, getting rid of Medicaid for those individuals, you might as well roll back all the assistance we just provided as part of the CURES and other legislation. Why? Because these individuals will not be able to access the type of care they need without the support.

I do believe that what we need to do is innovate instead. There are many examples of innovation in our healthcare delivery system. One example, as I have mentioned on the floor several times, is going from nursing home care to community-based care.

Medicaid is going to equal long-term care. So many Americans are not going to be ready to deal with their long-term healthcare issues, and when they are not, they are going to use Medicaid for their long-term care.

We showed in the State of Washington over more than a decade’s period of time that we could save $2.7 billion by shifting our Medicaid population to community-based care instead of nursing home care. If we would do that same kind of innovation at the Federal level, we could achieve substantial savings instead of saving money by cutting.

The issue here is that innovation in our delivery system—innovation, not a budget cap—is what is going to help us with our healthcare needs for the future when it comes to the Medicaid population.

So I urge my colleagues to speak loudly against this proposal to try to cap Medicaid, to try to shift the burden to States and local providers, to county governments, to jails, to all of those individuals who are going to see that population that they don’t have Medicaid coverage and instead work together on expanding the innovation in Medicaid and coming up with savings we need to take care of and to provide health insurance coverage to so many Americans.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.
Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I know the Presiding Officer is a fellow westerner, from a State that is impacted by decisions made by our public lands management agencies, whether that is the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service. Both Colorado and Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming are all of our Western States—greatly affected by decisions that are made in Washington, DC. In a conversation I had with the Presiding Officer from Arizona, we discussed the fact that 85 percent of the State of Arizona is managed by the Federal Government. Whether it is the State or a Tribal entity or the Federal Government, about 47 percent is being federally managed. In the State of Colorado, about half of our State is managed by a public entity. Whether that is the State or a Tribal entity or the Forest Service, BLM land, the Department of the Interior, roughly half of the State is managed by the Federal Government, the others by the States. In other words, it is not in private landownership. So that means that the decisions made by these public land management agencies have a significantly outsized impact on our States that are impacted on States east of the Mississippi.

So today I come to the floor to talk about one of those decisions made by the Bureau of Land Management’s planning 2.0 rule. The discussion we are having today is about whether we should approve a resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act to stop the BLM 2.0 rule from going forward.

The Bureau of Land Management has over 245 million acres of public land. Almost all of those acres are west of the Mississippi River, predominantly in 12 States. The final BLM 2.0 rule is an example of how little Washington bureaucrats understand about the West and how little they think about how the Federal Government and how Federal policymaking doesn’t work when you try to take something they think of in Washington and put it on the people of the West.

It is the promulgation of this rule that actually led to my call for relocating the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management out of Washington, DC, and to put it in a place like Grand Junction, CO, because I believe it is less: public to place public land managers and decisions about our public lands being made by those who are directly affected by that public land being in their backyard. If you live in the State of Colorado or if you live in the Western Slope, some of those counties have over 90 percent of their county managed by the Federal Government. A decision made by that public land agency directly impacts them, not in a couple of weeks or months or next year, but today. To deny somebody from Washington, DC, deciding a one-size-fits-all approach that is going to apply to a Western Slope county commissioner is just absurd. So moving the BLM headquarters to a place like Colorado or Arizona would absolutely result in better policies that work on the ground for our Governors, landowners, county commissioners, farmers, ranchers, cattlemen, energy producers, and recreationalists because they would be nearest to the lands that the decisions being made are affecting.

I hope we can move this country away from this “Washington knows best” mentality. That is why this resolution of disapproval is so important, because that is exactly what it would do, which is to remove “Washington knows best” by stopping the BLM planning 2.0 rule.

As it stands, I don’t believe this rule should move forward. I have committed to Coloradans, to county commissioners, and to the people of my State that I will always have the goal to put more Colorado in Washington and less Washington in Colorado. As a county commissioner in western Colorado, from Dolores, Garfield, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Jackson, Mesa, Moffat, Montezuma, Montrose, or Rio Blanco County should have more say in decisions affecting those BLM lands than somebody who doesn’t live anywhere near their land or their State or their county or those BLM lands.

I believe that Colorado State and local leaders and local users should have a strong voice on local land management decisions. It is their backyard. Yes, it is public land, but the fact is they are the ones trying to make a living, trying to govern, trying to make the best for their constituents, and they should have a voice in those decisions.

I also firmly believe in managing our public lands under the multiple-use philosophy, which promotes recreation, grazing, and energy development with a balanced approach.

If the Congressional Review Act’s resolution of disapproval on the BLM planning 2.0 rule is approved and signed into law, there will still be an opportunity to improve management and update policies at the Bureau of Land Management.

I think that is one of the areas of misinformation that we see about resolutions of disapproval. There are some people who support the BLM planning 2.0 rule, and there are some who have supported other rules that this Chamber has voted to disapprove through the Congressional Review Act. Those people who support it sometimes get their facts wrong when they say things like: "Well, if you reject this resolution of disapproval, then there is no way that you can actually rule in this area again or make a
regulation that impacts this area of law again. That is simply not true. The truth is, when you use a resolution of disapproval, it simply says that we think this is the wrong rule that went forward through the executive branch agencies and we ought to use Congress—those people who understand the needs of their States better than a rulemaker in Washington, DC—to go forward with a new piece of legislation, a new authorization for a different rule. If we do that, then, we are going to have a conversation because we have been able to account for every voice in the process, instead of leaving voices like those county commissioners, whom I talked about, out to dry.

I have told many recreationalists and sportsmen in Colorado that I am working with our Democratic colleagues and Secretary Zinke at the Department of the Interior on how we can move forward with the land management decisions and land use plans that take into account some of their concerns with this resolution of disapproval. There are updates and modifications that can be achieved, but they should all have stakeholder input. I don’t believe that this planning rule 2.0 actually took into account all of the different stakeholders’ views.

Working with some landowners cannot be at the expense of others. Right now, our cattlemen, farmers, ranchers, and county commissioners have severe concerns with the planning 2.0, and they feel as though they did not have a voice in the development of this rule.

I believe we can do better as elected officials and that we can give these local users’ and landowners’ interests a stronger voice in moving forward and that we can move forward together. So let’s approve this resolution of disapproval that would claw back the BLM 2.0 rule. Let’s make sure that local voices are given a place at the table. Let’s make sure that our county commissioners have influence over their area that is greater than somebody in New York City who doesn’t live there. Let’s make sure that we can protect the multiple-use philosophy of our public lands. Whether it is energy, recreation, or renewable energy, we have incredible opportunities on our public lands. But we can do better by working with Congress and taking into account every voice and making sure that we have a rule that is broadly supported.

That is why I intend to support the Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval today, and I hope that my colleagues will do the same, as we truly find a bipartisan solution to give the people of Colorado a greater say over policies that affect their own backyard.

Mr. President, thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from Washington.

TRUMPCARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to take a few minutes to address the deeply harmful bill House Republicans announced yesterday to be put in place, TrumpCare. Since the election, I have had constituent after constituent come up to me with tears in their eyes wondering what the future holds for their healthcare. They are making ends meet under the threat of losing coverage, wondering how they are going to make ends meet if their premiums spike, and they are worried that without protections laid out in the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies will once again have more power to decide what kinds of care are and are not covered. My constituents and people across the country were listening when President Trump said he would provide “insurance for everybody” that would be higher quality and lower cost. They heard Senate Republicans say it is important any new healthcare plan “do no harm.” They even saw House Republicans reassure them that they wouldn’t “pull the rug out” from under anyone having health insurance.

This legislation that has now been rolled out represents a broken promise to patients and families. It will leave them sicker, more vulnerable to the chaos Republicans are creating within our healthcare system, and less financially secure. Millions of people who only just gained Medicaid coverage will lose it. Premiums could increase as much as 30 percent for people who lose coverage because they are too sick to work or become unemployed. People are struggling with mental illness and substance abuse disorders, including opioid addiction, which is ravaging States nationwide, may find their insurance no longer has to cover the treatment they need. Key public health programs that families across the country rely on will be slashed.

TrumpCare would be a disaster for our workers and our families, but let’s be clear about whom it does work for: the wealthiest and the insurance companies. TrumpCare harms the same workers and families Republicans promised to help; it does so in order to reduce the tax burden for the wealthiest and for the insurance companies. In fact, this bill even includes a payroll for insurance company executives. This is the definition of taking our healthcare system backward.

I also want to make it clear what TrumpCare will mean specifically for your health. If you have a gross income of $24,000, you can end up spending up to 30 percent of your gross income just on healthcare costs. That is not affordable healthcare. That is unaffordable healthcare. Clearly, ObamaCare is no gold standard. It is a failed piece of legislation, one that is full of empty promises and one we have to scrap and start over again. Now we have an opportunity to do better for the people we represent, who are counting on us to deliver, to repeal ObamaCare and replace it with options that work.

I believe the plan released last night is a major step in the right direction. Patients need better tools like health savings accounts. They need a way they have more control over their healthcare decisions, and we can keep the bureaucracy out of it. We need to break down the barriers that restrict choice and keep Americans choosing an insurance plan that works for them and their families, and we need to empower employees, particularly small business owners, to provide their employees with the kind of affordable coverage that meets their needs.

To sum it up, we need to move healthcare decisions out of Washington and send them back to the States and back to patients and families and their doctors. That will only happen once we
repeal ObamaCare and replace it with options that work for more affordable healthcare coverage that patients choose, not that the government mandates and punishes you if you don’t buy it but freedom of choice at a better cost and meeting the needs of individual patients.

I am glad our colleagues in the House and our friends in the White House fully understand why this is such a priority and why we need to keep the promise we made. As soon as we can do that and deliver on that major promise to the American people—the sooner we do that, a whole lot of American families across the country will feel relief.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, this morning, the Senate Judiciary Committee considered the nominations of Rod Rosenstein and Rachel Brand as Deputy Attorney General and Associate Attorney General, respectively. Both of them are long-time, well-respected public servants. Mr. Rosenstein has spent his career serving the Justice Department and Presidents of both political parties. In fact, Mr. Rosenstein started in the George H.W. Bush Justice Department back in 1990, and he served every President since.

Mr. President, this morning, the Obama administration needed a prosecutor in the utmost integrity to investigate national security leaks that looked highly political, they turned—you guessed it—to Rod Rosenstein. Put another way, if Rod Rosenstein is the right thing, but Loretta Lynch didn’t. Eric Holder didn’t.

For our colleagues now to suggest that Rosenstein is not the right thing to do, that Attorney General Sessions not resign is beyond outrageous. To my knowledge, he was the first Attorney General ever held in contempt of Congress because he refused to cooperate with our legitimate oversight responsibilities when it came to Operation Fast and Furious. Well, he was the most politicalized Justice Department in American history. Loretta Lynch, who privately met with President Bill Clinton while her Department was investigating his wife’s email scandal, never recused herself from the matter.

Then there was Attorney General Holder. To my knowledge, he was the first Attorney General ever held in contempt of Congress because he refused to cooperate with our legitimate oversight responsibilities when it came to Operation Fast and Furious. Well, he never recused himself and never appointed a special counsel, even though I believe he should have. Compare Attorney General Holder and what he believed was the right thing to do. He recused himself when there was even a suggestion he might not be able to be impartial. He made that commitment from the beginning, well before he was confirmed. He stood by that promise last week. Attorney General Sessions’ integrity is intact, and he did the right thing, but Loretta Lynch didn’t. Eric Holder didn’t.

For our colleagues now to suggest that Rosenstein is not the right thing to do, and that he should resign is beyond outrageous. To suggest that the incoming Deputy Attorney General, Rod Rosenstein, should somehow abdicate the role he has been nominated for, and to which he will be confirmed, is to ask him to prejudge the case before he has even had a chance to look at the evidence.

All I am asking for is our colleagues to have a little perspective. These nominees are the right caliber of people who have the exact expertise we need to make sure our Justice Department runs effectively and impartially follows the laws of the land. These are the types of leaders you want to handle the big issues facing the Department of Justice.

I hope soon our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will turn their attention to doing what the American people sent them to do; that is, to consider bipartisan legislation and not dragging their feet and blocking the Trump administration from getting the team he has chosen to work with in various Cabinet positions and sub-Cabinet positions.

I respectfully, soon they will decide not to obstruct progress and grind this Chamber’s business to a halt but rather will be partners with us, working together to try to build consensus where we can and move the country forward.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from West Virginia.

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

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, the Bureau of Land Management has a mission set by Congress; that is, to manage the Nation’s public lands under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, which means that public lands should be open to everything, from hunting and grazing to energy development and other reasonable uses.

The BLM currently manages more than 246 million acres of land and 700 million acres of Federal and non-Federal subsurface estate. Much of these lands in the West where Federal acres coexist with private and State-owned land. In order to manage its resources effectively, BLM is required to provide resource management plans. This planning has typically been led by BLM’s field offices, in coordination with State, local, and Tribal governments that provide local input on how best to manage the land and its unique resources. However, in the final months of the last administration, the BLM sought to apply a top-down approach, essentially a one-size-fits-all, top-down approach to this resource management process. They termed it the planning 2.0 final rule.

The rule which was finalized in December changed how this planning is done and undermined the well-established process by limiting the ability of local input, public comment, and meaningful State consultation.

The final rule also pulled decision-making away from the regional BLM offices and moved all BLM’s headquarters in Washington, under the concept of “landscape-level planning,” which lets Washington define new
areas covering multiple States. The rule takes important decision-making away from local officials who know the land and understand the needs of their communities.

The BLM rule sought to ignore the multiple-use requirements established by Congress and diminishes the importance of energy development. The rule tilts the balance in favor of conservation and non-development and away from responsible energy development, as well as other uses, like grazing.

In the State of North Dakota, with a distinctive patchwork of underground Federal minerals and private or State surface ownership, this creates more uncertainty for energy producers and more difficulty for our ranchers. By repealing this rule, we are preserving our longstanding tradition of allowing multiple uses on Federal lands, while protecting the livelihoods of our ranchers, energy producers, and many others. That is why this resolution is supported by the North Dakota Stockmen’s Association, along with the National Association of Counties, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the Farm Bureau, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, the Public Lands Council, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, just to name a few.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the CRA on the BLM planning 2.0 rule. I thank Chairman Murkowski, the chairman of our Energy Committee, for his leadership on this important issue.

The House passed this CRA on February 7 in a bipartisan manner. I am hopeful the Senate will do so as well and send this bill to the President’s desk this week.

Today’s CRA ensures that State, local, and Tribal input and expertise should guide the management of our public lands. Let’s stop the BLM’s planning rule and give the people who work and live in these communities a say on what happens in their hometowns. We can do that by voting for this CRA. I urge my colleagues to do so.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, the people spoke loudly last fall. For too long, the Obama administration ignored the comments of those who managed the lands and our natural resources. Now is the time for that power to be put back into the hands of the folks who know it best; that is, the people of Montana, not Washington, DC. And the Bureau of Land Management’s Planning 2.0 rule is no different.

The resolution we are debating today, H.J. Res. 44, would block the implementation of a rule that would fundamentally change the land planning process at the BLM. It would be for the worse.

During the Obama administration’s final days in office, they put through many midnight rules costing a total of $157 billion, including this rule shift which was issued on December 12, 2016, which fundamentally changes the land planning process. The rule shifts the planning and decisionmaking away from those who know the land best, away from BLM regional field offices, and hands it to headquarters in Washington, DC. That is the exact opposite direction that land management should be going, and that is why this rule must go also.

This rule limits the voice of our local and State governments, and it strengthens the voice of folks who are living far away from the lands that are impacted.

Montana farmers, Montana ranchers, Montana miners, the Montana electric co-ops, Montana conservation districts, and Montana county commissioners have all expressed a concern for this rule and have urged congressional action. And there can’t be a more commonsense list of Montanans than that list. In fact, even the western Governors are concerned. As recently as February 10, 2017, our own Governor of Montana, Steve Bullock, and Governor Daugaard from South Dakota urged Congress to direct BLM to reexamine the rule. “Governors are concerned that BLM’s emphasis on landscape-scale planning may lead to a resulting emphasis on national objectives over state and local objectives.” “Collectively, these changes severely limit the deference Governors were previously afforded with respect to RMP development.” That is what our Governors are saying. I am quoting our Governors from the West.

There needs to be more balance in Federal land management. For the last 8 years, we have been out of balance. Oil and natural gas development on Federal lands dropped significantly under President Obama. In fact, for natural gas, we have seen an 18-percent decrease, while oil production on private and State lands doubled, versus the same on Federal land.

Montana has nearly 2 million acres of public land that are inaccessible to the public. Our farmers and ranchers in Montana need a more balanced partnership with the Federal land managers. They deserve more input in the development of land management policies, not less. By the way, our Federal forests in Montana are in dire need of more active management.

So where do we go from here? There is no disagreement that revisions need to be made. Let’s take this rule back to the drawing board and do it right. Let’s work with our new Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, a Montanan, and President Trump to restore more western commonsense to land management.

I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 44.

RECESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. and that the time during the recess be charged equally to both sides on the joint resolution.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FLAKE).

DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PORTMAN). The Senator from Utah, the President pro tempore.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage Senator KLOBUCHAR in a colloquy to commemorate Rare Disease Day in order to discuss issues facing patients and the families of those who have been diagnosed with these types of conditions.

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

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as co-chairs of the Rare Disease Caucus, Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have worked hard to bring more hope to patients and their families who are coping with rare diseases on a daily basis. Today, 1 in 20 individuals worldwide is living with one or more of the more than 7,000 rare diseases, 95 percent of which do not have an effective treatment. While the incentives provided by the Orphan Drug Act, first championed by me in 1983, has led to the approval of nearly 600 orphan drugs, much more needs to be done.

Many patients living with rare diseases rely on the FDA to evaluate and approve treatment options for their conditions. That is why it is so important for the FDA to use its authority to accelerate the evaluation and approval of drugs for treating rare diseases and for Congress to ensure that proper incentives exist for research to develop and make available treatments and cures available for this community.

To address this issue, Congress passed the FDA Safety and Innovation Act of 2012, which refined and strengthened the tools available to FDA to accelerate the evaluation and approval of new drugs targeting unmet medical needs for rare conditions. I have been paying close attention to how this new authority translates into advances for patients suffering from conditions such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy, atypical hemolytic uremic syndrome, Bertrand-N-glycanase deficiency, and other rare diseases.

In light of these changes over the past few years, I ask my friend from Minnesota whether the current approval process is achieving its goals of safety and efficacy without hampering the development of new therapies.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I thank Senator HATCH for beginning this colloquy. I am proud to be a co-chair of the Rare Disease Caucus with him, and I share my colleague’s concerns. I think there must be improvements that are made. I
continue to be inspired by the families across my State, your State, and our country who work so hard to make it easier for kids to have access to drugs to treat their illnesses. Unfortunately, we haven’t yet achieved all we can do for these families, and I have heard time and time again from the pediatric patients and caregivers that many of them have experienced when they interact with the Federal Government on new approaches for these rare disease conditions. Too often they are unaware when a drug is under review, are confused about why experts or patients are not even consulted. The individuals suffering from these conditions and their families need greater clarity about the process for evaluating and approving these drugs, and they ought to be included and informed every step of the way.

It is critical that treatments that do exist for those with rare conditions be accessible and affordable. We must continue to spur the development and accessibility of treatments that the rare disease community desperately needs are not abused.

I ask Senator HATCH, as one with longstanding leadership on the bill that you passed that has helped so many people and saved lives, how can we focus on sharing this message with our colleagues and our constituents?

Mr. HATCH. I appreciate that question.

We must continue to urge the FDA to fully implement its relatively new authority. Every one of us in this body represents constituents who are battling rare diseases, and I urge the FDA to consider this flexibility as applied in reviewing all candidates’ therapies.

I will continue to work closely with my foreign to ensure that the FDA uses the tools, authorities, and resources required to provide patients and physicians with new treatment options. I have also contacted the FDA frequently during the past year to encourage the agency to listen to the voices of patients during the agency’s evaluation process.

When the Senate considers the nominee for FDA Commissioner, I will continue to stress the importance of incorporating a balanced and flexible approach when weighing risks, benefits and outcomes, especially when dealing with small patient populations with such rapidly progressing prognoses.

Patients with limited or no treatment options are depending on FDA to utilize the flexibility outlined in FDASIA. This law, which provides full and fair review of new drug therapies in a timely manner, gives hope to patients suffering from life threatening diseases and, of course, their families as we all do.

I ask Senator KLOBUCHAR, how can we move forward into the next user fee agreement?

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Well, that is going to be very important and really an opportunity to make sure that this works for patients with rare diseases and their families. We know that affordability and accessibility remain paramount. We should also think about the buy-in of the patients and the critical role of the voice of the patient.

As you stated, Senator HATCH, more than 7,000 rare diseases exist, and the vast majority are untreatable. This is an extraordinary burden borne every day by Americans in every single State across the country. As we seek to continue making progress, including monitoring implementation of the advances in the bipartisan 21st Century Cures Act, we must ensure that rare disease treatments receive sufficient attention.

We also must encourage Federal agencies to better incorporate the patient’s voice in their decisionmaking processes. Too often as we rightly focus on evidence-based medicine, we can lose sight of the human experience of these and different therapies. What may seem simple in a lab may be overwhelming or difficult when applied to patients in real life situations—all the more so when children are involved. The FDA and all agencies should ensure that they have appropriate processes to seek and incorporate this vital input. The user fee agreement will be an opportunity for us to make this case.

I would like to thank Senator HATCH again for his time to discuss these issues that are very important to both of us. We look forward to engaging with our colleagues on these issues as we move forward to the implementation of the Cures Act, as well as the work on the Orphan Drugs Act, and as well as the user fee agreement.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my dear friend, the Senator from Michigan, for her time with me today. It is very meaningful to me and, I think, to everybody who is concerned about this rare disease situation in our country.

This is just the start of our conversation for this Congress. There is so much left for us to do, and I am certain we will succeed as long as we stay together and work in a bipartisan way. So I thank my dear colleague for her words and support and the good leadership she provided in the Senate. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to speak about the healthcare bill that has been laid out in the House now—introduced in the House of Representatives. I have great concern about the proposal as it relates to the people of Michigan, whom I represent, as well as to the people across the country. This is what I believe: whatever passes—will be judged based on whether or not people pay more for their coverage, if they can find it, and whether they are going to be able to get the healthcare they need.

Healthcare is very personal. Despite the politics here in Congress and in the White House, healthcare is not political; it is very personal. Can you go to a hospital and see your child in a bed, and if you don’t have health insurance, will you be able to pay for that? Will your child be able to pay for that? Is the treatment they need going to be there or is it going to be out of reach? Is the doctor going to be there or is there going to be a reason that was not there before? Is the treatment you need going to be there or is it going to be harder to get?

I am deeply concerned after the initial look I have had, and we will continue to look at more and more of the details as they come out. This proposal is going to create chaos in the healthcare system. Frankly, I would say this is a mess. It is going to create a big mess as it relates to the families whom I represent and whom we all represent in our home States.

This was written in secret. We have all seen the stories of the Senator from the other side of the aisle who was running around trying to get a copy of what was going on. Everything was done in secret, and now that it is out, we find out that there is no cost at all to it. We do not know that the overall cost will be to taxpayers. We also do not know how many people are going to be able to get healthcare, who is going to be able to be covered.

What I have seen really falls in the category of creating a mess for families—higher costs for middle-class families, higher costs for poor families, but less coverage—such a deal. This is not the kind of deal that the people of Michigan want to have for themselves and their families.

To add insult to injury, it cuts taxes for the wealthiest Americans, while it makes most Americans pay more. It makes seniors pay more, and we have heard people calling it the “tax on aging” or the “senior tax.” The reality is, in a number of different ways, in how we rate, which is based on age and other costs, seniors will pay more. It is my understanding that, in the middle of this, there is actually a sweetheart deal for the CFOs of big insurance companies that will give them pay raises. This whole thing is stunning to me, which is being put forward with a straight face.

On top of everything else, it removes the guarantee for preexisting conditions. It is very unclear what will happen to someone who has had a heart attack or cancer or if your child has juvenile diabetes and, therefore, has a preexisting condition?

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On top of everything else, it removes the guarantee for preexisting conditions. It is very unclear what will happen to someone who has had a heart attack or cancer or if your child has juvenile diabetes and, therefore, has a preexisting condition?

I am deeply concerned after the initial look I have had, and we will continue to look at more and more of the details as they come out. This proposal is going to create chaos in the healthcare system. Frankly, I would say this is a mess. It is going to create a big mess as it relates to the families whom I represent and whom we all represent in our home States.

This was written in secret. We have all seen the stories of the Senator from the other side of the aisle who was running around trying to get a copy of what was going on. Everything was done in secret, and now that it is out, we find out that there is no cost at all to it. We do not know that the overall cost will be to taxpayers. We also do not know how many people are going to be able to get healthcare, who is going to be able to be covered.

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time, and little Leighton is going to have a hard time her whole life.

When we look at the tax credits—or help—for buying healthcare, it goes from helping those from low-, moderate-, and middle-income families being able to afford insurance to changing the whole thing. It is based on your age and your income. So the higher the age and the higher the income, the more taxpayer dollars you get, which makes no sense. A 55-year-old with a higher income will get more tax than a 30-year-old who is working a minimum wage job and has the toughest time in trying to find insurance that he can afford. This is not the set of values or perspectives that make sense for people in Michigan as well as for people across the country.

While that 30-year-old who is working a minimum wage job is going to be paying more and hoping that he does not have a preexisting condition because he may not be able to find insurance at all, we see that there is a $300 billion—with a “b”—tax cut for the wealthiest Americans. Picture this: Somebody in a minimum wage job who could very well see his health insurance funding go away will have a 30-year-old who is working a minimum wage job and has the toughest time in trying to find insurance that he can afford. This is not the set of values or perspectives that make sense for people in Michigan as well as for people across the country.

Just to underscore, this is the first bill out of the gate here in which we are talking about the kind of tax cuts that we are already seeing Republicans cutting taxes for the wealthy while raising taxes on the middle class and raising their healthcare costs if they can find healthcare. These tax cuts are just the start. Wait until we get to tax reform, when we are going to see this whole debate happen again. My guess is that middle-income people are going to end up paying the bill—paying more—and the wealthy people are going to get another round of tax cuts.

To add insult to injury again, there are the sweetheart deals so that the CEOs of the biggest insurance companies can get pay raises—and can get more money—while people will pay more if they work or are poor or middle class. There are tax cuts for prescription drug companies of $30 billion, but the bill does nothing to lower the cost of prescription drugs. This, certainly, is not healthcare for the majority of Americans. Finally, it is not healthcare for those who need to have access to affordable healthcare.

Then it is back to our seniors, who will pay more because of the changes in the way they are covered. We will, essentially, see older people having twice the tax credit but five times more the cost. I am not sure exactly how it is being proposed for preexisting conditions. We are still working through that. I do know that the bill has a penalty. If you have health insurance and, for some reason, there is a crisis in your family and, for some reason, you cannot continue it and you drop that insurance and then you re-enroll again, there is a 30-percent late fee plus you will be paying 30 percent more for your health insurance if you have a preexisting condition.

There are just two other items that are very important. I know that the Republicans tell us that this bill will—I share the concern about this as well, which is the fact that we have been able to create more access to healthcare by expanding Medicaid, which is critically important.

One of the great success stories in Michigan today is that 97 percent of our children in Michigan can now see a doctor—97 percent. We do not want to go backward. Every child should have the ability to see a doctor—every mom, every dad, every grandma, every grandpa. Right now, in Michigan, 97 percent of children can see a doctor because of the work that we did on the Affordable Care Act, including in the expansion of Medicaid. This goes away. It takes a couple or two of years away.

Instead, what is proposed, essentially, is a voucher, but it has been called a lot of names. There used to be folks talking about a block grant to the States. Now they call it “per capita.” Yet it is really simple. Just like there have been proposals by Republicans for years to have a voucher for Medicare, now this is, essentially, a voucher for Medicaid of X number of dollars. If you need more for your nursing home care, then you are on your own. There are X number of dollars for your child, for a family. If you have something happen and you get sick and you need surgery or if you have cancer and it goes above that voucher, you are on your own. It completely changes Medicaid from an insurance system to a system of, essentially, a voucher. Millions and millions and millions of children, of families, of seniors—the majority of seniors in nursing homes get their coverage through Medicaid—and for our moms, dads, grandpas, and grandmas, who right now get quality nursing home care because of Medicaid, will be severely impacted by this voucher that caps how much care they will be able to receive.

Finally, for over half of the population—for those of us who are women—we will see a return, essentially, to a woman being a preexisting condition. Essential services for women—maternity care, which I was at the front of the line in fighting for, and prenatal care—are not available in the majority of private plans. Women may try to buy without her paying more. You can get maternity care, but it is not viewed as basic. It may be basic to you, as a woman, but insurance companies say: Sure, we will cover maternity care, but you have to pay for it. Forever, women have been paying more for their basic healthcare. Under the Affordable Care Act, that changed when we said: Do you know what? As a man, you should not have to pay more for the basic rate of abortions since 1973.

Now all of that goes away under the House proposal. Just to make sure that we see women’s healthcare taken away, Planned Parenthood is defunded. Yet 97 percent of what they do is basic care—mammograms, getting to see your doctor, OB/GYN, prenatal care, and all of the things you need for annual visits and so on. That is completely defunded.

I congratulate everyone who has been involved in the effort to make sure that birth control is affordable for women, and under the Affordable Care Act, we have done that. This is an economic issue; this is not a frill for women or for men or for families or for those who have worked hard to make sure we can lower unintended pregnancies in this country.

The good news is that we are at a 30-year low in unintended pregnancies, a historic low in teen pregnancies, and at the lowest rate of abortions since 1973—1973. Why is that? That is because women have been able to get the healthcare they need. They have been able to get affordable birth control to be able to manage their care, as well as seeing the economy improve. But we are seeing more and more where more information is being made available, costs for basic preventive care is down, and women having access to what they need in healthcare allows them to be in a situation where we are seeing these historic lows on unintended pregnancies, teen pregnancies, and abortions.

I know in Michigan we have a number of counties across Michigan, particularly in rural communities, where the Planned Parenthood clinic is the only provider of basic healthcare. It is the only provider for family planning and for cancer screenings and basic healthcare for so many many men. It may be the only provider in the community. More than half of Planned Parenthood health centers are in rural and underserved communities. About one-third of all of the women living in these communities where Planned Parenthood is available find that this is the only healthcare provider available to them.
So support for women, preventive healthcare, and Planned Parenthood funding are cut completely in this bill. Access to maternity care, prenatal care, and other basic essential services is eliminated. If you want that, you can just pay out of pocket.

On top of that, we are seeing essential services like mental health and substance abuse services and other basic comprehensive services that we said for the last several years should be available—healthcare above the neck as we say below the neck should be viewed as essential services for people across America. All of that goes away with this proposal.

So, in my judgment, this is a mess. It is going to create a mess, with more costs, less service, shifting taxpayer dollars to the wealthy, while asking the middle-class and low-income families to pay more. This is simply not a good deal.

I would welcome the opportunity to work with colleagues on something that makes sense. Let’s put aside this whole effort of repeal. Let’s focus on how we can bring costs down, including prescription drugs, and continue to move forward, but let’s not go back. When the children in my State can see a doctor today, that is worth keeping. That represents the best of our values. We can’t go backward. The proposal we are seeing in the House would take us back to a place that would hurt the majority of Americans, and I strongly oppose it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, irrespective of how the Presidential election came out last November, we would be having a conversation about how to fix ObamaCare. There are many reasons for that, but most importantly is that it has just skyrocketed costs for people in that it has become an issue through the roof, deductibles have increased, copays have increased, and out-of-pocket costs have become so extensive for people that even if they have coverage, they can’t use their plans in many cases. So when our colleagues across the aisle talk about the recently rolled out proposal coming from the House—which they will be discussing and we eventually will be discussing—to try to drive down the costs for people in this country, that is what we are really all about.

You can say what you want, but the fact is that this year, 2017, premium increases are 25 percent in the exchanges—25 percent. In six States, the premium increases were 50 percent in the exchanges. I don’t know how anybody—any family in this country—can keep up with those kinds of skyrocketing premiums. If you are buying your insurance on the individual market, the roof is blown off.

I talk to people across my State of South Dakota all the time who share with me the excessive amount that it now costs for them to cover themselves and their families. I talked to a lady in Sioux Falls recently, and she told me they are now paying $22,000 a year for health insurance. That is not working. That is why what we had was an abysmal failure.

In terms of choices, the whole idea was that people were going to have options out there. In a third of the counties in America today—one-third of the counties in America today—people have one option, one insurer. It is pretty hard to get a competitive rate when you only have one option. There is a virtual monopoly in a third of the counties in America today.

So we have markets collapsing, insurers pulling out, and we saw that last fall Blue Cross Blue Shield pulled out of the individual market in South Dakota and left 8,000 people wondering how they are going to continue to cover themselves with health insurance. The markets are collapsing, choices are dwindling, and costs are skyrocketing.

The Senator from Michigan was just on the floor talking about how terrible things are going to be under the proposal that is being considered and discussed in the House of Representatives, but the fact is, things are terrible today, and that is why we are having this conversation. Eight in ten Americans think ObamaCare either ought to be repealed entirely or dramatically restructured in some way. By any estimation, by any objective measurement or metric, it has been a failure, and that is why we are having this conversation, and that conversation would have occurred irrespective of what happened in the Presidential election last fall.

So let’s be clear about why we are here and why we are having this conversation and why we are coming up with a better solution for the American people that will drive down their costs, give them more choices, create more competition in the marketplace, and give them a higher and better quality of care because it restores the doctor-patient relationship, which is so important, not having the government intervening and being in the middle of all of that.

THE ECONOMY AND REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. President, we have a recovery that technically began almost 8 years ago, but for too many Americans, it still feels as if we are in a recession. Americans basically have not had a pay raise in 8 years. Since the recovery began in 2009, wage growth has averaged a paltry 0.25 percent a year—one quarter of 1 percent increase in pay per year since 2009. Well, imagine if you are a family and you are looking at everything that is going up in your lives, whether it is healthcare, which I just talked about, or the cost of education or the cost of energy or the cost of food, all of these things that continue to significantly increase 0.25 percent—one quarter of 1 percent—pay raise on an annual basis. It is pretty hard not to feel like you are starting to sink and your head is going to be below water before long.

Good jobs and opportunities for workers have been too few and too far between. Millions of Americans are working part time because they can’t find full-time employment. Even as some economic markers have improved, our economy has stayed firmly stuck in the doldrums. Economic growth for 2016 averaged a dismal 1.6 percent, and there are few signs that things are improving anytime soon.

By the way, the historical average going back to World War II is about 3.2 percent average growth in the economy. So last year we were at one-half of what the average had been going back all the way to World War II.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is projecting average growth for the next 10 years at just 2 percent—in other words, long-term economic stagnation.

The good news, though, is that we don’t have to resign ourselves to the status quo. We can get our economy going again. Republicans are committed to doing just that. To get our economy going again, we need to identify the reasons for the long-term stagnation we are experiencing.

A recent report from the Economic Innovation Group identified one important problem: a lack of what the organization calls “economic dynamism.” Economic dynamism, as the Economic Innovation Group defines it, refers to the rate at which new businesses are born and die.

In a dynamic economy, the rate of new business creation is high and significantly outstrips the rate of business deaths. But that hasn’t been the case in the United State lately. New business creation has significantly dropped over the past several years. Between 2009 and 2011, business death outstripped birth.

While the numbers have since improved slightly, the recovery has been pretty far, as before, from historical norms. The Economic Innovation Group notes that in 2012—the economy’s best year for business creation since the recession—it fell far short of its worst year prior to 2008. This is deeply concerning because new businesses have historically been responsible for a substantial part of the job creation in this country, not to mention a key source of innovation. When new businesses aren’t being created at a strong rate, workers face a whole host of problems.

“Less dynamic economies,” the Economic Innovation Group notes, “are one likely to feature fewer jobs, lower labor force participation, slack wage growth, and rising inequality—exactly what we see today.”

Well, American workers clearly need relief, and restoring economic dynamism is a key to providing it. We need to pave the way for new businesses and the jobs they create, and we need to ensure that current businesses, particularly small businesses, are able to thrive.
There are a number of ways we can do this. One big thing we can do is relieve the burden of excessive government regulations. Obviously some government regulations are important and necessary, but too many others are unnecessary and preventing businesses from being competitive. One way to do this is to allow businesses to deduct their startup costs and research and development costs. This would help them innovate, expand, and create jobs.

Unfortunately, over the past 8 years, the Obama administration spent a lot of time imposing burdensome regulations on businesses and trying to control every aspect of the economy. Excessive regulation also prevents many new businesses from ever getting off the ground. Small startups simply don’t have the resources to hire individuals, let alone the consultants and lawyers to do the costly work of complying with the scores of government regulations.

New businesses need to be able to get off the ground. Small startups simply don’t have the resources to do the costly work of complying with all the burdensome regulations. Obviously some officials have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0.

Another important thing we can do is remove unnecessary barriers that restrict access to capital. Both new and existing businesses rely on capital to help them innovate, expand, and create jobs.

In addition to removing burdensome regulations, tax reform needs to be a priority. Measures like allowing new businesses to deduct their startup costs and reducing taxes for small businesses would spur new business creation, help smaller businesses thrive, and provide the tax revenues needed to fund the government.

The American economy has always been known for being dynamic and innovative, and we need to make sure it stays that way. We need to free up the innovators and the job creators so that the next big idea isn’t buried by government regulations before it has a chance to achieve its potential.

Sluggish economic growth doesn’t have to be the new normal. By removing burdensome government regulations and reforming our Tax Code, we can spur economic growth and innovation. We can increase wages and opportunities for American workers, and we can put our economy on the path to long-term health, where that growth rate gets back to that more historic level that allows for better paying jobs and higher wages for American families.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in both Houses of Congress to achieve these goals, and I am anxious for us to start passing bills that create jobs, not kill them. We are favorable to higher economic growth, better jobs, and better wages for the American people and their families.

In addition, since the new Congress began in January, Republicans have been focused on repealing burdensome Obamacare regulations using the Congressional Review Act. The House has already used this law to repeal three Obama regulations, and this week we will use it to repeal at least two more, including the “blacklisting” rule, which imposes duplicative and unnecessary requirements on businesses bidding on Federal Government contracts, and the Bureau of Land Management methane rule, which curbs energy production on Federal lands by restricting drilling.

This methane rule would cost jobs and deprive local governments of tax and royalty payments that they can use to address local priorities.

Another area of regulatory reform we need to address is ObamaCare, as I mentioned. Repealing the burdensome mandates and regulations this law has imposed on businesses will go a long way toward removing barriers to new businesses and spurring growth at existing businesses.

Another important thing we can do is remove unnecessary barriers that restrict access to capital. Both new and existing businesses rely on capital to help them innovate, expand, and create jobs.

The Senate vote may have not any bearing on whether the Outdoor Retailer Show relocates to Colorado. But supporting 2.0 is a show of good faith that our senators get what’s at stake.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I oppose today’s resolution to overturn the Bureau of Land Management planning 2.0 rule.

The Bureau of Land Management is charged with ensuring responsible use of public lands, which requires extensive land use planning to balance priorities like recreation, conservation, and energy development. Planning 2.0 simply updates outdated plans and processes that date back 30 years to provide greater community input and transparency. This is intended to create plans that work better for all users, including local communities. It is also meant to reduce the time it takes to complete the planning process.

Under the new rule, the public is involved in the planning process early to avoid costly and time-consuming disputes later. The rule allows for the use of current technology like geospatial data to allow for more science-based decisionmaking.

Developing planning 2.0 took 2 years and included consideration of more than 6,000 public comments. With today’s resolution, we would abandon modernization that makes it easier for the public and State and local governments to be involved in the Federal planning process and revert to rules that were written in 1983.

A wide range of sportsmen groups, including the Izak Walton League of America, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and Trout Unlimited have asked us to preserve Planning 2.0. They write: “Stakeholders...
from across the multiple-use spectrum agreed that the previous BLM planning process could be improved. Under the outdated process, opportunities for public involvement were too few, and the public didn’t learn about agency plans until they were already proposed."

If we pass this resolution today, BLM will have to go back to that outdated process and would be prohibited from proposing a rule that is substantially similar to planning 2.0. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

TRUMPCARE

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, last night the Republicans in the House revealed their plan to scrap the ACA and replace it with something much worse—TRUMPCare. There are so many things that are wrong with this bill. A lot of us are still going through the 184 pages and all of its implications, so it is impossible to escape when all the difficulties in this legislation in one speech.

I am going to highlight eight problems with this bill to start. First of all, this bill is a complicated and rushed mess. I took the 7 years to work on their own plan, the Republicans cobbled together a bill that makes no sense. In an effort to make everyone in their caucus happy, they have made no one in their caucus happy. That is why we have seen conservative groups—from AEI to AFP, the Heritage Foundation, the Koch brothers—come out and express opposition to the legislation.

Second, this bill cuts Medicaid. They are going to use a phrase called block grants, but I want everyone to understand that is cutting Medicaid. That is a euphemism for cutting the resources for Medicaid. This cuts a program that helps more than 70 million Americans across the country get the healthcare they need. It means less care for pregnant moms, less care for families with loved ones in nursing homes. Nursing home benefits will be totally trashed, and all of these changes will reduce Medicaid to a level not seen before.

By the way, Medicare doesn’t escape the ax. It is also in trouble if we enact the House legislation. TRUMPCare will actually move up the date of insolven-cy of the Medicare trust fund by 3 years, to the year 2025. That is not 20, 30 years from now when they talk about the Social Security trust fund. That is quite soon to have Medicare be insolvent, and they are accelerating the date in which Medicare becomes insolvent.

Third, this bill hits the elderly with an age tax. Here is how the law currently works. It is basically a cap on the amount that an insurance company can charge a senior for healthcare. It says you cannot charge more than three times the amount you charge a young person for a senior citizen.

It is capped at three times what you charge for young people. This would increase the cap to five times the cost. If a young person’s health insurance costs $250, the maximum under the current law is $750. Now you are talking five times $250—$1,250 per month.

This is an age tax. If there is any doubt as to what this is going to be for senior citizens, ask the AARP. They are a bipartisan, well-respected organization that works in every State. Seniors across the country need to understand what this age tax is. You will pay more for health insurance if the law permits it.

Fourth, and this is a very important point. This is basically not a healthcare bill because if it were a healthcare bill, everybody knows it would require 60 votes. It would be enacting new legislation. This is a budget bill. All they can do, really, is cut taxes related to healthcare. This is a bill that cuts taxes for rich people.

How does it finance it? First of all, it finances it probably a lot of it by borrowing. The other portion of it is by cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. TRUMPCare has special tax cuts that only benefit the highest earning households and another one that will go to insurance company executives who make more than half a million dollars a year.

You cannot make this stuff up. They are cutting taxes for insurance company executives who make more than half a million dollars each year; and if you are going to be cutting healthcare for the people we all represent.

Fifth, this bill will blow up the debt and the deficit. The crazy thing is, we don’t actually know how much our debt and deficit will increase because Republicans are in such a hurry to rush this through without a formal CBO analysis. We have no idea how much this is going to cost—probably trillions, but they haven’t even asked for a CBO report. What do you want to know, how much this is going to blow up the debt and the deficit because all of the fiscal hawks will be found to be hypocrites who have been railing about deficits for all of their career. Yet this might be the biggest budget-busting piece of legislation in many, many years, and they don’t want to know how much it costs because they have made a promise. They are going to go ahead and fulfill that promise no matter how ridiculous it is.

Sixth, this bill will trash mental health coverage. The ACA was a huge step forward for the mental health community because it required insurance companies to cover mental health and substance abuse disorders. We are in a moment when every State is struggling with an addiction crisis. What I don’t know is why we would rip away these services when so many people are counting on it to break their addictions.

Seventh, this bill will defund Planned Parenthood because they can’t help themselves in the U.S. House of Representatives. Planned Parenthood is a provider that offers healthcare to millions of women across the country, but this bill will stop low-income women from getting critical health services like breast cancer screenings from local clinics. Oftentimes, this would happen in communities where women have nowhere else to turn. Many community health centers don’t have the services women need or they have twice the wait times that a Planned Parenthood would have. For women out there who have never had cancer, that is simply not an option.

Finally, this bill is too partisan. I think we can all agree that our approach to healthcare could use some improvements, and I am more than ready to work with my Republican colleagues to make healthcare better. That is not just a rhetorical flourish. I have tried to back that up with my legislative actions. I have worked with Senator HATCH on legislation to increase access to high-quality care in hard-to-reach regions. I have worked with Senator CASSIDY and many others on a bill to create a public health emergency fund. I have worked with Senators WICKER, COCHRAN, and THUNE on telehealth bill.

We can work together on healthcare, but it requires three things: No. 1, good faith, and there is no good faith in this piece of legislation. No. 2, bipartisanism. This bill, I am quite sure, will get zero Democratic votes in the House or the Senate. No. 3, we need legislative hearings. We need to have a conversation in the light of day and let the American people weigh in. We need to find out what it is that they are doing to the American healthcare system.

If they are so proud of their plan, why no hearings? If they are so proud of their plan, why not at least a scorecard from the CBO? No. 2, bipartisanism. This bill, I am quite sure, will get zero Democratic votes in the House or the Senate. No. 3, we need legislative hearings. We need to have a conversation in the light of day and let the American people weigh in. We need to find out what it is that they are doing to the American healthcare system.

If they are so proud of their plan, why no hearings? If they are so proud of their plan, why not at least a scorecard from the CBO? If they are so proud of their plan, why do they lack the confidence that any Democrat will support it?

Look, do we have the opportunity to work together to improve healthcare, but this bill is based on a budget Office? If they are so proud of their plan, why do they lack the confidence that any Democrat will support it?

I hope my colleagues will join me in opposing this very bad piece of legislation and give us some space and time to do this right and to do this in a bipartisan fashion.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. Murphy. 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. MURPHY. Mr. President, TrumpCare is here, and you are going to hate it. This replacement for the Affordable Care Act has been 7 years in the making. On a cursory overview, it appears that when you ask the question to who is going to hurt under the replacement plan, the answer is everyone, with the exception of insurance companies, drug companies, and the very wealthy.

I hope we are able to step back and take a moment to analyze what this replacement plan is going to do to Americans who badly need healthcare, who believed Republicans when they said they were going to repeal the bill and replace it with something better, and who believed President Trump when he said that he was going to repeal the Affordable Care Act and replace it with something that was wonderful, that insured everybody who was insured under the Affordable Care Act and did it at lower costs.

I know my colleagues who are well meaning in this Chamber cannot read this replacement plan and understand it to do anything but strip coverage away from millions of Americans and to drive up costs for millions of Americans. No credible, nonpartisan analysis will look at this replacement plan without seeing the devastation that will be wrought.

I want to spend just a few minutes, now that we have had this plan to look at for 24 hours, and analyze just how dangerous it is and pleading with my Republican colleagues to take their time and, hopefully, decide instead to work with Democrats to try to strengthen the Affordable Care Act, fix what is not working as well, but preserve the parts that are working.

Here is what I mean when I say that everyone, with the exception of insurance companies, drug companies, and the superrich, is hurt by the GOP replacement plan. If we look at it, this is quite a vicious cycle. We are going to end the Medicaid expansion—what is that replacement plan does. It says that in 2 years, effective 2020, the Medicaid expansion will go away. That means in my State, 290,000 people will lose healthcare. Millions across the country will lose healthcare. They are, by and large, the poor and the lower middle class—largely women and children who can’t get insurance other than through the Medicaid programs, who will no longer be able to get it. Medicaid has been expanded in Democratic States, Republican States, blue States, red States. Letting Medicaid expansion hang around for 2 years is no solace to people who will jam into those years as much healthcare as they can get, but then be without it afterwards.

Even more insidious is the part of the GOP healthcare replacement plan that would turn Medicaid into a block grant after 2020. This has been talked about in conservative circles for a long time, but has been resisted, again, by Democrats and Republicans who understand what that means. It means Medicaid will eventually wither on the vine and will become a State responsibility. No longer will the Federal Government help States pick up the costs for insuring the most vulnerable citizens.

Remember who Medicaid covers. Medicaid covers every person under 65 who is under Medicaid with disabilities in this country. Of the tens of millions of kids living with disabilities, 6 out of 10 of them get their insurance from Medicaid. If Medicaid is turned into a block grant, let me just tell you, let me warn you, that healthcare will end for millions of those kids. If it does not end, it will be dramatically scaled back because States cannot afford to pick up 60, 70, 80 percent eventually of the cost. Thirty percent of non-elderly adults with disabilities are covered by Medicaid. Sixty-four percent of nursing home residents are covered by Medicaid. Two out of every three of our senior citizens who are living in nursing homes are covered by Medicaid. If the Medicaid block grant, a sudden windfall will not be able to pick up those costs and will not be able to deliver healthcare to people in nursing homes. That is just the truth.

The Republican bill effectively ends coverage for 24 million people all across this country who are covered by the Medicaid expansion after 2 years, and then it jeopardizes care for tens of millions more by dramatically cutting the Medicaid Program and the Medicaid expansion—this is not a game; this is 11 million people.

Remember, it is not a guess because in 2020 you will be reverting back to the rules before the Affordable Care Act. Before the Affordable Care Act, 11 million fewer people were covered under Medicaid. Even if States maybe hang around and decide to front the billions of dollars necessary to cover a few million of those, you are still talking about 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 million people who tell me what people making over $80,000 a year, they will not be able to buy insurance. That is why 20 million people have insurance today. The Republican plan just do their penalty differently. What this replacement plan says is that if you lose insurance and you try to get it later on, you will pay 30 percent more. I admit that there is a penalty in the underlying Affordable Care Act and there is a penalty in the Republican bill, but the problem is that under the existing Affordable Care Act, the help you get to buy insurance allows you to buy insurance. That is why 20 million people have insurance today. But because the tax credits are cut in half under this proposal, it will render healthcare unaffordable; thus, more people will have gaps in coverage; thus, more people will pay the penalty.

So in the end, this bill really does not provide protection for people with preexisting conditions because they are not going to be able to buy insurance in the first place. They are going to fall into that gap, and then they are going to have to pay more. Even if they do get insurance, it may not even cover what they need.

All of this is made harder to understand because it seems to be one big excuse to deliver a giant tax cut to the wealthy. The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates that this bill would cut taxes by $600 billion for the wealthiest Americans. The Affordable Care Act was financed in part by a tax on unearned income for people making over $250,000 a year. I live in a pretty wealthy State—Connecticut, but people making $250,000 and a whole lot of unearned income are not amongst the most needy in our society. The average tax cut under this bill
would be $200,000. Why? Because we are taxing so few people who are making such big amounts of money, the average tax cut would be $200,000.

It is so hard to understand because when you do the sum total of parts that are going to be cut, it is like looking at something on the back of a napkin in order to rush something out into the public so that Republicans can claim they are fulfilling the promise they made, without thinking through the consequences.

Over the weekend, I heard my Republican friends and President Trump say they are going to repeal the Affordable Care Act and replace it with something better. I heard the new Secretary of Health and Human Services say that no one was going to lose insurance, that costs were not going to go up, and that the insurance protections were going to be preserved. None of that will be true under the current plan under consideration. Everybody knows it, which is why it is being hidden from public view.

Politicians love praise. We love good press. So if Republicans thought this was a praiseworthy plan, they would not be hiding it. They would not be trying to rush it through. They would be open and transparently they should have been growing about for years—replacing the Affordable Care Act with something that is better.

This is worse for everyone except for insurance companies, drug companies, and the superrich. The superrich get a big tax cut, and all of the fees that were levied on the insurance companies and drug companies that were used to pay for additional expansion go away.

Tucked inside here, there is even a very specific tax cut for insurance company CEOs. I mean, think about that. Tucked into this bill is a specific tax cut for a select group of individuals—insurance company CEOs. I represent a lot of those CEOs, but it does not matter.

I hope we will find a way to work together to try to strengthen the Affordable Care Act and fix what is wrong. The plan that was unveiled yesterday—I understand not by the Senate but by the House—hurts everybody except for a select few. I think most of my colleagues know we can do better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 3:45 p.m. today, there be 15 minutes of debate remaining on H.J. Res. 44, equally divided in the usual form.

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

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—S. 616

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be discharged from further consideration of S. 616 and the bill be referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.
the most about them, and who depend on them to provide for their families.

It is the same story in many other Western States, from Arizona and New Mexico to Washington and Oregon, to Montana and South Dakota. This rule affects all 12 BLM States, and those States are not happy about it.

We have heard from about 80 groups so far that oppose that rule, and I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the list of supporters be printed in the RECORD. This being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

**STRONG SUPPORT FROM WESTERN STAKEHOLDERS**

**NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS**


**STATE STAKEHOLDERS**


Ms. MURKOWSKI. This list includes our Nation’s energy and mineral producers, the people who keep our lights on, who provide fuel for our vehicles, and who construct everything from semiconductors to soldier’s gas masks. The American Petroleum Institute, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Western Energy Alliance, the National Mining Association, and the American Exploration & Mining Association are all opposed to this rule, and so are many State groups, like the Arizona Mining Association, the Montana Electric Cooperatives’ Association, and the Petroleum Association of Washington, DC.

Joining them are many of our Nation’s farmers and ranchers, the individuals who provide so much of our Nation’s food supply, whether that is steak or whether that is milk or something else. The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the American Sheep Industry Association have registered their opposition. The American Farm Bureau Federation opposes the rule and so do many of its State partners, including the Colorado Farm Bureau, the New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau, the Oregon Farm Bureau, and the Washington Farm Bureau.

Perhaps most critically, planning 2.0 has drawn strong opposition from local and State governments, the entities that are elected to represent all of the people, not just one specific interest. The National Association of Counties, the voice of County governments all across the country, issued a letter outlining their support for the disapproval resolution. Another group, the National Association of Conservation Districts, wrote that planning 2.0 should be repealed because it “skirts the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and reduces the ability of local government involvement” while seeming “forced and blind to the many issues and their interactions.”

Again, this disapproval resolution has drawn strong support from a wide range of stakeholder groups—energy, mining, and grazing, America’s farmers and ranchers, State officials, local counties, and conservation districts. It is a rare day when you can or can’t use the vast swaths of public lands outside your back door for things like hunting, camping, four-wheeling, hiking, fishing, and rock climbing.

We have heard such strong support because this is a misguided rule that will negatively impact our Western States. It subverts the special status relationship between the Federal Government and the States and local governments. It limits local involvement and local input. It opens the door for decisionmaking authority to be centralized at BLM’s headquarters here in Washington, DC. It upends BLM’s multiple-use mission by allowing the agency to pick and choose among preferred uses, while sidelining industries that provide good-paying jobs in our western communities.

I think there is broad agreement that planning 2.0 should be overturned. That is what we are here to do, and we will have that opportunity in just a few moments.

So I ask all Members of the Senate, including those who do not have BLM lands in their States, to consider the strong support this resolution of disapproval has drawn and to join us in passing it at 4 o’clock.

With that, 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.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, we had a chance earlier today to talk about this Congressional Review Act resolution before us that I urge my colleagues to turn down. This resolution basically would negate a very important aspect of a rule that was put in place to help the public have more input on public lands.

The rule was pretty straightforward—common sense—to make sure that there was a lot of increased public input to bolster the decisionmaking process and to ensure that there are 21st century management policies in place.

There is nothing in this rule that was implemented in the last administration that erodes or takes away from the States’ and local governments’ planning processes and the decisionmaking they do.

So it is very important to me that we continue to have the transparency and openness and sunshine in our public planning. I think one editorial from the Post-Register from Idaho said it best. So I will read from it.

Resource management planning. Sound boring? Maybe. But if you are a Westerner, it definitely shouldn’t be.

Resource management planning (RMP) affects all of us. If you can’t use the vast swaths of public lands outside your back door for things like hunting, camping, four-wheeling, hiking, fishing, and rock climbing, it affects all of the things you probably love about being a Westerner.

With a new Republican presidential administration in power and the GOP-controlled Congress rubber-stamping everything in the dark, ready to implement part one of its grand scheme for public lands—cashing in on
those resources—RMPs should get a whole lot more interesting to Westerners.  

Since 2014, BLM officials have been toiling away, rebuilding the current rules for land use planning in a significant way for the first time since 1983. . . .  

One important change is that Planning 2.0 would let the BLM take into account local impacts from the beginning.  

Going on to read from the editorial:  

The Republican-controlled House has already passed a resolution to strike Planning 2.0 from the books once and for all. The Senate will vote within days on whether or not they’ll use the same sledgehammer—the Congressional Review Act (CRA). It’s an especially diabolical weapon.  

Once the CRA is used on Planning 2.0, it will be gone forever. It prevents future BLM rules for planning land use from being introduced if they are “substantially the same.”  

The utterly confounding part is why this rule is being picked on in the first place. . . .  

Planning 2.0 actually mandates more local control, gives it more often and is a smarter, more elegant solution to sharing use of our public lands.  

I couldn’t say it better than that editorial. Local communities are watching. They want more sunshine. They want more input. They want a smoother process. They don’t want lawsuits that take forever. They want us to work in a collaborative fashion, guaranteeing the public input of local governments, States, and our citizens in how we manage our Federal lands.  

I urge my colleagues to turn down this resolution.  

I suggest the absence of a quorum.  

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.  

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I yield this time.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.  

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time. The question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?  

The motion was agreed to.  

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 58) was passed.  

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 18, Seema Verma, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.  

The motion was agreed to.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.  

The bill clerk read the nomination of Seema Verma, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.  

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read it.  

The bill clerk read as follows:  

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Seema Verma, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services.  


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

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.  

The bill clerk read as follows:  

Motion to proceed to H.J. Res. 58, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.  

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.  

The bill clerk read as follows:  

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 58) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues. This resolution is simple. It overturns the last administration’s overreach into scores of States and territories, into thousands of college and university teacher preparation programs, and into millions of American classrooms.  

Last night, I drafted a fairly detailed statement on some of the problems deep inside this regulation, but I have decided to skip past most of that. Why? Because the problem with this regulation is actually much more basic than all of the substantive problems in the regulation. This regulation actually makes the assumption that bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., are competent to micromanage teacher training programs in America. That is what this regulation ultimately does, and that is absurd.
So I would like to ask three questions of folks who plan to vote to defend this regulation. First, do you really think that bureaucrats in this city know better how to run teacher training programs than people who have spent most of their lives in actual classrooms with actual future teachers and with students? How many of you have ever run a teacher training program? Has anyone in this body ever run a teacher training program? Because I have—almost. I have spent a lot of my life around these programs. As a kid, with my dad, who was a lifelong public schoolteacher and coach, and I have been in many of these classrooms with him when he was getting master’s and continuing education programs; then with my wife who is also a public high school teacher; and then I was a college president at a university that had multiple teacher training programs. I know Keith Rohwer, and I know the other deans of education that have been at University of Nebraska, and many other colleges and universities across Nebraska. Yet, even though I have been around a lot of these programs in some detail, I wouldn’t possibly think I am ready to decree all the details of these programs from thousands and thousands of miles away.

Question No. 2, has anyone actually read this regulation that folks are going to want to defend on this side? I have been reading it in it. I will not claim I have read it, but I have read it in. This is the 695 pages of the regulation itself. There is actually a lot of guidance material as well, but I didn’t bring that because I didn’t want to have both of my hands occupied. This is the 695 pages of the regulation we are talking about today, and it is actually really silly. If you read inside it, it is filled with enough specificity that if you tried to explain it to the generality of the informed Americans, I submit to you that you would blush. There is a level of detail and a level of specificity in this that we are not possibly competent to defend at the micro level.

Question No. 3, can the folks who think this is what Washington, DC, ought to be doing right now—please show me somewhere in this document, the Senate version of the Constitution—show me somewhere in this document given the broad authority to micromanage local programs like this from here. Because, honestly—I mean this sincerely to my colleagues who plan to vote to defend this rule—I don’t see how you can defend this document and think that this is conceivably our job from here. We are not competent to do this.

Now, a couple of qualifications are in order. Am I suggesting that all teacher training programs in America work well? Heavens, no. There are some that are fairly strong, and there are actually a lot that are really, really poor and weak, but having a good intention to make them better is not the same as actually having accomplished something that will make them better.

Good intentions are not enough. For us in this body to act because we have compulsory governmental powers, we would need not merely good intentions, we would also need competence and authority. We are not those about teacher training programs.

Everyone in this body agrees that education is darn near the center of the future of our country. We all want and need good teachers and we can all remember specific teachers who stood out because of her or his creative presentation, because of their unexpected humor, because of their charm and their compassion, because of their tireless drive, because of their inspired mentorship. None of us in this Chamber who has the privilege of serving our fellow countrymen and women regret or are unaware of the fact that the skills and the guidance and the abilities that we have are the function of the mentorship and the pedagogy of life-changing teachers early in our lives. We have benefitted from and we need good, prepared teachers.

If we all agree teachers are critically important to our future, and since we all agree that our programs are important and we also agree that some of them aren’t very good, the question would be, What would we do about that? What kind of debate should we have about why much education in the United States is nevertheless important is anyone in this body sincerely believe that the big, pressing problem in American education is that there aren’t enough rules like this coming out of bureaucracies in Washington, DC?

Because if you believe that, I would humbly suggest that you should go and meet with some of the ed school faculties back in your State and ask them if you can read them these 695 pages so you can tell them that we have the answer. We simply want the pleasure to come back and tell us in this body that they agree with you, that what we really need is some rule that says, and some 700 page regulations from Washington, DC, micromanaging things as specific and local as teacher preparation programs.

Oh, and one more thing, which is actually kind of big. This regulation explicitly violates the plain language and the congressional intent of the Federal education law that was passed in this chamber last year. I think it got 83 votes. The act prohibits the Secretary of Education from prescribing “any aspect or parameter of a teacher, a principal, or other school leader evaluation system within a State or local education agency” or “indicators or specific measures of teacher, principal, or other school leader effectiveness or quality.” There is nothing ambiguous about this language.

In addition, the Higher Education Act is clear that the levels of performance used by a State to assess teacher training programs “shall be determined solely by the State.”

This rule overrides State authority over literally tens of thousands of discipline-specific teacher preparation programs across the burgeoning States with a federally defined and expensive mandate. Under this regulation, States would be required to create elaborate new data systems that would link K–12 teacher data to data on the programs of teacher education and administrators in particular schools and then to the data back into the teacher preparation programs. This regulation’s goal would be to measure the success of teacher preparation based largely on teachers’ students’ subsequent test scores, and it would all need to be backlinked in the data. This is data that is not currently gathered.

Rube Goldberg is smiling somewhere because this sounds like a bureaucrat’s dream, a paperwork trail monitoring all the strengths and weaknesses of some vast machine spitting out layers and layers of new data over which Washington’s experts could then postulate and tinker. Again, I have no doubt the bureaucrats who wrote these 700 page documents—pages—about rules, about data to be gathered that States are not currently gathering—I have no doubt the people who wrote this mean well. I also have no doubt the people who are going to defend this rule as being somehow commonsensical, as some vast complex machine that just somehow commonsensical—then why is it 700 pages—also mean well, but those good intentions don’t change the fact that what they have actually done in this rule—what they have actually done—is build a much larger requirement set of paper trails, demanding further burdens on our teachers, on our principals, and on the professors who are teaching teachers, and then require all of them to report back through new or expanded bureaucracies at the State level, though the States have not chosen to gather this data, or pass this data on to a bureaucracy a couple of blocks from here.

These Rubik’s Cubes of rules and data collection are not being done today, and supposedly we are going to make teacher preparation programs better by all of the specificity that comes from this rule.

The fact that these regulations will likely cost States millions of dollars to do what they are not designed to result in injury. Let’s be honest. Education is not some vast complex machine that just needs a little bit more tinkering from Washington-level intervention before it will be at utopia. It isn’t true, and this rule is not an effective way to actually help the teachers who care so much that they are investing their lives in our kids.

Nebraska’s parents and educators and locally elected school boards are better equipped and better positioned to tackle these most important educational challenges. They are better equipped and they are better intentioned, even than the smartest, the
nicest, and the most well-meaning experts in Washington, DC. If you disagree, again, I humbly challenge you to go and try and read this rule to elementary and secondary school teachers in your State and to those who are running the programs that train them. Read it and then realize that this report back to us that they actually share your view that the really big problem in American education is not enough 700-page rules from educational bureaucrats from DC.

Good intentions are not enough. Federal intervention and reforms should never make problems worse, and that is what this rule would do.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and to re dedicate ourselves to the duties that really and fundamentally are ours, to the duties the Federal Government is exclusively and monopolistically empowered to carry out because it isn’t this. We are not competent to displace the expertise of the distributors of knowledge, and that is why we should not be trying to regulate teacher training programs from Washington, DC. We are not competent to do this.

Thank you for your consideration. I yield the floor.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor actually on behalf of students across the country, and for those who are so passionate about their education that they want to dedicate themselves to teaching, and to urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution that it ensures, students will have the chance to succeed.

While this rule may not be the rule that any of us would have written on our own, it is important.

Let me say at the outset that there are many great teacher prep programs that exist around our country, and they are doing a great job preparing our teachers to succeed in the classroom, but there are also teacher preparation programs that are struggling and need support to help make sure they produce great teachers for our schools.

Now, as a former preschool teacher and as a mom, I know how important it is to have great teachers in our classrooms, and I understand how a good education, with an amazing teacher, can change a child’s life. I am sure all of our colleagues think back on that one special teacher they had who shaped and changed their life. They teach us not only how to read and write and do arithmetic, but good teachers teach us how to think critically, how to be creative, how to form an argument. I know I am not alone in saying that I owe much of what I have to the quality of the public education I received growing up, and I have spent my career fighting to make sure every child in America has the same opportunity I did.

Unfortunately, too many teaching students today are forced to take out huge amounts of student loans to afford continuing their education so they can realize their dream. They are willing to make this sacrifice. They don’t complain. The very least we can do for those who want to become teachers is to make sure they are actually getting their money’s worth when they make an investment in themselves.

That is what this rule does. It helps make sure students can make informed decisions about the quality and preparedness of their education.

Here are a few of the ways this rule does that—and I am hoping my colleagues will see that this shouldn’t be controversial. This rule strengthens and streamlines reporting requirements of teacher prep programs to focus on employment placement and retention of graduates. It provides information from employers to future teacher candidates so they can make an informed decision about their education by choosing a school that improves the likelihood they will find employment after graduation. It makes sure that prospective teachers can access this information before they take out massive amounts of student debt.

When teacher programs are struggling, this rule helps States identify at-risk and low-performing programs to ensure they succeed. It helps those that need to adapt or adjust their programs and help their teaching students succeed.

There is one more reason I would urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution. It would put more power into the hands of Secretary DeVos, and many of us don’t yet have the trust that she would use that power to promote the best interests of students in higher education. Secretary DeVos does not come from a higher education background. We don’t know whether she supports providing information on teacher placement rates and retention rates before prospective teachers take out student loans. We have no idea what she would do if this rule went away, and I believe it would be too risky to find out.

By investing in our teachers, we are investing in our future generations. Our future teachers have the right to know whether they are receiving a quality education, and they deserve to know that before they take out massive amounts of student debt.

It helps to improve teacher prep program accountability and gives prospective teachers the information they need to make an informed decision on which program is most likely to make them successful in the classroom.

It ensures that Secretary DeVos does not have more power to implement unknown policies that could hurt students and reduce the number of qualified great teachers in our public schools.

Without this rule and the information it is, parents and students will have a hard time finding a quality teacher prep program that will help them get a job after they graduate. I think that is simply wrong. We should be working to make sure teaching students have full access to information and options. This rule would give them less.

For all the future teachers out there, I urge my fellow Senators to vote against this CRA because every young person deserves to know that the program they enroll in is actually preparing them to be a successful teacher in the classroom, and every student deserves to have an amazing teacher in every classroom.

The Every Student Succeeds Act is a critical part of our bipartisan education law. It is an important part of the civil rights protections it offers, as well as the assurances it made that every student would have an opportunity to succeed, no matter where they live or how they learn or how much money parents make. Jamming through that resolution would weaken it, and it would be a major step toward turning our bipartisan law into another partisan fight.

Rolling back the Every Student Succeeds Act rule less than a month before States have to submit their plans to the Department of Education will cause chaos and confusion in the States, and it will hurt our students, our teachers, and our schools. It will also give Secretary DeVos greater control over that bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act and give her the tools to implement her anti-public education agenda.

Secretary DeVos’s lack of experience and expertise, as well as her damaging track record on school privatization, leaves her unqualified to implement this bipartisan law that governs public education and public schools without the important guardrails that rule ensures. Given her record and her comments, she would almost certainly push for measures that disregard key civil rights protections in the Every Student Succeeds Act and could allow unequal, unfair, and unreliable accountability for schools across the country.

The Every Student Succeeds Act rule is supported by Democrats and Republicans, by teachers and businesses, and by parents and communities. We should not go backward. I urge my colleagues to reconsider moving forward with that resolution, which I understand they want to bring up later this week, and work with us to continue building on that bipartisan progress that we all worked toward for our students.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, consent is ordered.

REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE BILL

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to offer a few comments about the House Republican bill that was just unveiled yesterday. Those who have been following or those who have been working on this issue for a couple of weeks are claiming it is a new healthcare plan or a new comprehensive healthcare proposal—in essence, by their argument, a replacement if the Affordable Care Act were repealed. I disagree. I don’t believe in any way it is a plan. It might be a bill, but I think a better description of it in terms of its impact would be that it is a scheme, not a plan. It is a scheme that will roll back coverage gains from the Affordable Care Act—but is better known by a longer name: the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Kaiser—one of the great institutions that track healthcare data and healthcare policy—told us that there are 70 million Americans with employer-sponsored coverage. Those Americans didn’t have much protection before the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act with regard to pre-existing conditions or annual lifetime limits. A whole series of protections for people that we’re not there before that.

This scheme, as I am calling it, will not only roll back coverage gains in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, in the process it will also devastate the Medicaid Program, leaving many of the most vulnerable Americans behind.

Another impact of this scheme will be to increase costs for middle-class families, of which there are millions of Americans with employer-sponsored coverage. That is one analysis that should be on the record. There are some that are publishing a report off the record right now, and one of those reports will be marked up by the committee, I think, tomorrow. I hope it doesn’t require much reading to get to a markup tomorrow.

Usually when you introduce a bill, the bill is reviewed by Members of Congress. There is some public debate on it. There is some back-and-forth. And then a period of time later, maybe weeks, there is a markup. The committee engages in a thorough review of the bill, and the markup means they make changes. They add amendments or take them out, or maybe take one and another. That is a serious approach when you do this work of legislating on a serious issue.

Healthcare is about as serious and difficult an issue as there is. I think it should be accorded the serious review that the complexity and the consequence of this issue demand. This is not a serious proposal. It is a scheme, but it is a scheme that the House seems to be focused on right now. This process means the House will mark up this bill within I guess about 48 hours of it being unveiled, maybe less than 48 hours. That means there will not be a single hearing on the bill, or getting the bill scored, which is a fancy Washington word for having someone tell us what it costs. There will be no thorough review, no serious review on such a monumental issue called healthcare and what happens to hundreds of millions of Americans.

At the same time, the markup will proceed with lightning speed, and there will not be any information on the record about an analysis of the bill that is thorough and serious, and of course we will not know how to pay for it and we will not have the score that will tell us how it will be paid for and what the cost will be.

It is hard to come up with the words, but the implication of this bill would be a disaster. If you are a millionaire and you are doing quite well under this bill. You are going to get a bonanza from this bill. You are going to have a great payday. If you are a child or you happen to be born if you are a woman or if you are an individual with a disability or a chronic disease, you are out of luck. You are in big trouble.

I would hope that those Americans would have the benefit of a serious review of a serious issue. If the bill is not serious, I guess they are going to ram it through. We will see what happens in the next couple of days.

There is one analysis that should be on the record. There are some that are publishing a report off the record right now, and I am looking at it. It is about 2½ pages. They know the vote will take place soon in the committee—two committees, maybe in the House. This report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities is moving quickly to keep up with the fast pace at which the bill is proceeding. I won’t read the whole report, and I won’t enter the whole report into the RECORD; I am sure people can go online and look at it. Here is the title of the report: The Affordable Care Act Provisions Would Shift $370 billion in costs to states over a decade.” It is written by Edwin Park, who has been writing about Medicaid for a long time.

Few Americans know more about Medicaid than Edwin Park and people like him who study it. I will read the first sentence, which gives you the basics of it: “The new House Republican health plan would shift an estimated $370 billion in Medicaid costs to states over the next ten years, effectively ending the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and the Medicaid expansion for 11 million people while also harming tens of millions of additional seniors, people with disabilities, and children and parents who rely on Medicaid today.”

That is the opening line of this proposal, which I believe is a scheme. What does that mean for Medicaid? We have heard a lot around here about flexibility, that States want more flexibility when it comes to Medicaid. I will tell you what they don’t want. They don’t want a flexibility argument to be a scheme that results in cuts to those States. As the Federal Government says: Here is a block grant that may increase or may not, but good luck, States, as you balance your budgets.

Of course, Governors and State legislators balance their budgets, and they have very difficult choices to make—sometimes choices the Federal Government never makes. That is why some Republican Governors took advantage of the Medicaid expansion and expanded healthcare available in their States. That is one of the reasons that is why some Republican Governors took advantage of the Medicaid expansion and expanded healthcare available in their States. That is one of the reasons they are worried about—and some will oppose this idea of so-called per capita caps or block-granting of Medicaid or the like.

If we have a proposal to cut $370 billion from the House, what does that mean for some of those groups that I just mentioned earlier? Well, we know that more than 45 percent of all the baby births in the United States of America are paid for by Medicaid, so that is a consequence for pregnant women and their children. One in five seniors receive Medicaid assistance by way of the benefit to someone trying to get into a nursing home. Medicaid also pays for home-based care for seniors and, of course, long-term care as well.

What if you have a disability? Over one-third of the Nation’s adults with disabilities who require extensive services and support are covered by Medicaid.

We know that in a State like mine—because we had a Republican Governor
embrace the Medicaid expansion, and then we had a Democratic Governor embrace it and really develop it and bring it to where it is today—we have expansion of Medicaid that resulted in some 700,000—that is not an exact number, but it is approaching 700,000 Pennsylvanians covered through the Medicaid expansion. And 62 percent of Americans who gained coverage through the Medicaid expansion are working. So we are talking about a lot of families and a lot of individuals who are working and getting their healthcare through Medicaid. That opportunity presented itself because, in the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid was expanded.

There are lots of numbers we could talk about. I will give maybe two more. Medicaid is the primary payer for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Medicaid expansion enabled 180,000 Pennsylvanians to receive these lifesaving services. If you are a Member of Congress and you have been going home and talking about the opioid crisis—and to say it is a crisis is a terrible understatement. It has devastated small towns and rural areas. It has destroyed families. The term 'Pam' is used. Some of the numbers indicate it is getting worse, not leveling off. If you say you care about that and you supported the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act as a Member of Congress and you support the funding that was in the 21st Century Cures Act at the end of the year, and you say you are working toward help for communities devastated by the opioid crisis, it is OK to say that, but you can’t then say: But I want to support the House Republican proposal on Medicaid, when Medicaid is the primary payer for these substance abuse treatment programs.

I mentioned before adults and children with disabilities. Medicaid covers 60 percent of children with disabilities. We know the range of that—ranging from autism to Down syndrome, to traumatic brain injury, and many other disabilities or circumstances that I have not mentioned. For a lot of people, this is real life. It is not some theory that gets kicked around Washington, often by people who have good healthcare coverage as they are talking about cutting healthcare for others. We have a lot of testimony from what we might want to call the real world.

One of the most compelling pieces of correspondence I received in my time in the Senate was from a mom about her son. Her name is Pam. She is from Coatesville, PA. That is in South-eastern Pennsylvania, within the range of suburban Philadelphia. She wrote to tell me how important Medicaid is to her family and to tell me about her 5-year-old son Rowan. She sent me a picture of Rowan with a firefighter’s hat on. Oh, if you are not familiar with that, they are, by the heroic work of firefighters. Her story—I will not go through her whole letter, but she got news a couple of years ago that many parents get in the course of the lives of their children. She got news in March of 2015 that her son Rowan was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. The diagnosis was made by a psychologist who worked for the Intermediate Unit—meaning the institution that works for the school districts and helps to provide special education. Rowan continued in the preschool program and daycare program before and after school, but then Pam goes on to say:

I was never able to find a daycare suitable for all of Rowan’s needs. In late January of 2016, I applied for [Medical Assistance].

I will stop there for a moment to explain. Medical Assistance is the State share of the State end of the Medicare Program. We call it Medical Assistance. Other States have a different name for it.

Pam said she applied for Medical Assistance:

After Rowan was awarded this assistance we were able to obtain wrap-around services, which included a Behavioral Specialist Consultant . . . and a Therapeutic Staff Support worker.

Pam goes on to say, and I am quoting her again:

Without Medical Assistance, I am confident that I could not work full time to support our family. . . . [We] would be bankrupt and my son would go without the therapies he needs.

These are the therapies I just mentioned. Then Pam goes on to say, urging two of her colleagues to focus on her son, focus on her family when we are casting votes and having debates about policies that relate to healthcare and Medicaid. Here is what Pam asked me to do as her Senator:

Please think of Rowan: My 9-month-old Luna, who smiles and laughs at her brother, she will have to care for Rowan late in her life after we are gone. We are desperately in need of Medical Assistance and would be devastated if we lost these benefits.

So said Pam about her son and about the importance of the Medical Assistance Program, which is known on the national level as Medicaid. I would hope that those in the House, as they are quickly marking up legislation that would have a huge impact on families like Pam’s and many more—I would hope they would think of Rowan, think of his little sister Luna and what her future looks like from now on when she would likely have to care for Rowan and answer some of Pam’s questions.

There are a lot of questions that we have about policy and numbers and budget cuts, and they are all appropriate. But some of the most important questions we have to answer for those who are asking them are questions that our constituents are asking. And one of those is Pam. We have to be responsive to her concerns about her son and his children. I hope, in the midst of debate, in the midst of very rapid consideration of a complicated subject on a bill that has been slapped together—in my judgment, too quickly—that Pam’s concerns would be an uppermost priority in the minds of those who are working on this legislation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this is my “Time to Wake Up” speech No. 159. In giving these speeches, I have come to realize that some of my colleagues seem to have a hard time wrapping their heads around the basic understanding of climate change. Some of President Trump’s Pragmatic Promises seem to have the same problem.

They say the scientific community is split on the issue. It is not.

They say the climate has always been changing. Not like this, it hasn’t.

They say we have the notori-ous “I’m not a scientist” dodge. Well, if a colleague doesn’t understand this, then perhaps he ought to trust the scientists at NOAA and at NASA, at our National Labs, and at universities in Rhode Island and across the country—the scientists whose job it is to understand this.

Mr. President, I say, in addition to trusting the scientists, I also trust Rhode Island fishermen who see the changes in their traps and nets and our shoreline home-owners watching the sea steadily rising toward their homes. You don’t need fancy computer models to see the ocean changes already taking place; you just need a thermometer to measure rising temperatures, basically a yardstick to measure sea level rise or a simple pH kit to measure the acidifica- tion of our oceans.

Let’s look at ocean acidification. The oceans have absorbed about one-third of all the excess carbon dioxide produced by humans since the industrial revolution, around 600 gigatons’ worth. When that carbon dioxide dissolves into the ocean, chemistry happens, and it makes the oceans more acidic.

Carbon dioxide reacts with water to form carbonic acid. Carbonic acid isn’t stable in ocean water, so it breaks down into bicarbonate ions, a base, and hydrogen ions, an acid. The increase in acidic hydrogen ions is the crux of the chemistry of ocean acidification. More hydrogen ions lower the water’s pH,
and the lower the pH, the higher the acidity.

Regular viewers of my “Time to Wake Up” speeches or people who spent the night up with us while we objected to Administrator Pruitt’s nomination may remember this simple experiment. Let me describe it briefly in this simple experiment on the Senate floor just a few weeks ago. I took the glass of water on my desk, and I used the carbon dioxide in my own breath. Blowing through an aquarium stone, I was able to show, with the help of a little pH dye, how easy it is actually to measure the effect of CO$_2$ on the acidity of water. With just a few breaths into the water, I was able to visibly make this glass of drinking water more acidic.

That little experiment is a microcosm of what is happening in our oceans right now, except, instead of bubbles blown through a straw, it is a transfer of excess CO$_2$ from the atmosphere into the surface waters of the ocean around the globe.

Scientific observations confirm that what the laws of chemistry tell us should happen is actually happening. Massive carbon pollution resulting from burning fossil fuels is changing ocean chemistry faster than ever in the past 50 million years.

Now, you start talking in big numbers, and it all goes into a blur—50 million years, compared to how long the human species has been on the planet, which is about 200,000 years. So 50 million years is what, 250 times the length of time that our species has inhabited the Earth.

This chart shows measurements of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere taken at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii. That is the redline of climbing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. And it shows carbon dioxide in the ocean, which is the green measure, which is also climbing in tandem with the rise in the dioxide in the atmosphere. Finally, it shows the pH of ocean water in the sea. Of course, as the chemistry would tell us, as the carbon dioxide goes up, the pH comes down, and the acidity rises; the water becomes more acidic.

We measure that surface seawater on the Earth’s oceans has, since the industrial revolution, become roughly 30 percent more acidic. NOAA predicts that oceans will be 150 percent more acidic by the end of the century. Coral reefs, like Rhode Island and Florida, will feel the hit.

Ocean acidification disrupts life in the sea when those loose hydrogen ions we talked about latch onto free carbonate ions. Usually that carbonate is plentiful ocean water. Shell-forming marine creatures, like oysters and clams, use this loose carbonate to help form their shells. But if the carbonate they need is bound up by hydrogen ions, they can’t get enough carbonate to build their shells.

We have even seen acidification scenarios in which shells start to dissolve in the water. Shellfish hatcheries on the west coast have already seen devastating losses of larval oysters due to acidic waters. When ocean pH fell too low, baby oysters couldn’t form their shells, and they quickly died off. Dr. Julia Ekstrom, the lead researcher for Natural Resources Defense Council’s 2015 study on ocean acidification, told PBS that it has cost the Pacific Northwest oyster industry more than $100 million and jeopardized thousands of jobs. Her research flagged 15 States where the shellfish industry would be hardest hit, from Alaska to Rhode Island, to my home State of Rhode Island.

Toward the bottom of the oceanic food web is the humble pteropod. Pteropods are sometimes called sea butterflies because their tiny snail foot has evolved into an oceanic wing. In 2014 NOAA found that more than half of pteropods sampled off the west coast were suffering from severely dissolved shells due to ocean acidification, and it is worsening.

This is a pteropod shell degrading over time in acidified water.

Of course, we are here in “Mammam Hall,” where it feels laughable to care about anything that can’t be monetized. We talk a good game here in the Senate about how God’s creation and God’s creatures, but what we really care about is the money. So let’s monetize this.

Who cares about this humble species? Salmon do. As the west coast loses its pteropods, that collapse reverberates up the food chain, and the salmon care because many of them feed on the pteropods. The west coast salmon fishery is a big deal, so salmon fishermen care about this.

Another foundational marine species, krill, is also affected by ocean acidification. In the Southern Ocean, nearly all marine animals can thank krill for their survival. From penguin diets to whale diets, krill is king.

A 2008 study by the Nature Climate Change found ocean acidification inhibiting the hatching of krill eggs and the normal development of larvae. The researchers note that unless we cut emissions, collapse of the krill population in the Southern Ocean portends “dire consequences for the entire ecosystem.”

Closer to home, the University of Alaska’s Ocean Acidification Research Center—yes, ocean acidification is serious and not just some Environental Protection Agency, about ocean acidification. He gave the following two answers: “The oceans are alkaline and are projected to remain so,” and two, “The degree of alkalinity in the ocean is highly variable and therefore it is difficult to attribute that variability to any single cause.”

Let’s look at those answers.

The first answer is plain and simple nonsense because the harm to ocean creatures from acidification comes from the dramatic shift in ocean acidity, not from variability in pH. Furth more, the acid-based spectrum the shift takes place. The observation he made is irrelevant to the question.

His second answer is no better. It exhibits purposeful ignorance of the role humans’ carbon pollution plays in damaging the ocean, because the chemical principles at issue here are indisputable. You can replicate them in a middle school laboratory in any Florida school. As I put it to you today, you can replicate them even here on the Senate floor. Like its carbon cousin, climate change, ocean acidification doesn’t care whether you believe in chemistry. It doesn’t matter to chemistry if you swallow the propaganda pumped out by the fossil fuel lobby. The principles of science operate notwithstanding. The chemical interactions take place by law of nature whether you believe them or not. If you believe in God, then you have to acknowledge that these laws of nature are God’s laws, the basic operating principles He established in His creation. But, of course, here at Mammon Hall, it is always about the money.

The EPA Administrator is obliged to trust in real science and to take action to protect human health and the environment. I am deeply unconvinced that Administrator Pruitt will live up in any respect to those obligations, but I would not be proven wrong. Likewise, I similarly challenge my colleagues here in the Senate.
This Chamber and our Nation will be judged harshly by our descendants, both for our pigheaded disregard for the basic truths, the basic operating systems of the world we live in, and for the shameful reason why we disregard them. This is not the time.

Mr. President, it is time for the Senate to wake up before it is too late.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the House’s plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act is dangerous and irresponsible. Just listen to Governor John Kasich, Republican Governor of my State, who says we should not be throwing 500, 600, 700,000 Medicaid beneficiaries—mostly people who have jobs and work in low-income jobs—we shouldn’t throw them off their insurance. In fact, in Ohio there are 900,000 people—700,000 on Medicaid, 100,000 on their parents’ healthcare plans and another 100,000 on the exchanges—who would lose their insurance if the House succeeds and the Senate goes along in changing dramatically or repealing the Affordable Care Act.

My office is flooded with letters and calls from Ohioans begging us not to take away their care. Let me share some of those letters.

A woman from Beachwood, OH, in Northeast Ohio wrote to me on January 11 terrified of possible changes to the Medicaid system that helps fund nursing homes like the one where she lives. She writes:

I strongly believe changes would drastically diminish my quality of life and many other residents in the nursing home setting. My care needs are currently well managed by qualified and caring staff members. I am a 2-person assist with dressing, bathing, and getting to and from the bathroom. I also require two people with getting dressed every morning.

Medicaid cuts would decrease the number of staff. Without adequate staff, I am afraid of extensive wait periods and frequent bathing accidents. . . . It would be very difficult to endure, cause embarrassment, while destroying my dignity in the process.

I am not as strong as I used to be. I have children who love and care for me and placed me in a safe environment. Living in the nursing home has allowed me to live a little more independent. I want to continue to live as independently as possible.

And of the 88 counties in Ohio, 70 or so are classified as small town or rural, like the county I grew up in, Richland County—many of whom otherwise would not be able to attend treatment due to transportation barriers—attending treatment through public transportation. Working with these clients, you learn their stories. So many have been through unimaginable trauma, losses, and emotional/physical pain. Many have never had the support to help them begin to work through these issues underlying the substance use.

She is worried. The lady in Mount Vernon, OH, is worried, with very good reason, that these repeal plans would “leave millions of Americans without access to needed mental health and addictions treatment in our state and communities.”

Most recently, a woman in Butler County—the congressional district of former Speaker John Boehner and some members of my staff, past and present—writes:

I am extremely concerned about the cuts President Trump and the Republican-led Congress propose to make in the Medicaid program and services for the developmentally disabled.

Her son is 15 years old. He was diagnosed with a specific type of autism. He is nonverbal, with severe cognitive and physical challenges. She wrote to my office how Medicaid has been “a godsend” for her and her family. Before her son received a waiver under the Medicaid Program, her family was spending $100 a month in copays for psychiatric medications alone. That is in addition to all the extra medical education and care for their chal- langed child. They couldn’t afford the physical therapy he needs, despite hav- ing insurance coverage through her husband’s employer. She wrote that Medicaid “more than anything else, improved the quality of my son’s life, and extension, the life of our whole fam- ily.”

Understand that health challenges—especially mental health challenges but health challenges overall—in one member of a family affect the whole family. That is something we should remember as this Congress seems to rush pell-mell into trying to repeal Medicare, trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

These three letters are three of hundreds of thousands of letters that we received—hundreds of thousands of letters and calls that Members of the Senate are receiving. I don’t know, when 20 million people will lose their insurance, so many Members of Con- gress, who themselves have govern- ment-financed health insurance—we have health insurance in this body paid for by taxpayers, yet we think it is appropriate to pass legisla- tion in part giving tax cuts to the rich- est Americans and at the same time stripping away Medicare benefits, tak- ing 22 million people who now have in- surance off of that insurance and pro- posing minor insurance for some of them but not nearly all of them. If we are people of God, if we are people who care about our constituents, how can we do that is just beyond me.

I go back to the quote from one of the people I read about today from Beachwood. She wrote, “Please consider the people who will be affected the most.”

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Mr. President, President Trump de-clared this week Consumer Protection Week, but his proclamation has gaping holes. It ignores the many ways large corporations cheat consumers and the biggest tool Americans have to fight back.

Not once did the proclamation men- tion the Consumer Financial Protec-tion Bureau, which has returned $12 billion to 29 million consumers. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was created under Dodd-Frank 8 or 9 years ago. Not once does it talk about the unscrupulous lenders who targeted Americans with predatory mortgages before blowing up the economy in 2007 and 2008. Not once does the President’s Consumer Protection Week procla-mation mention the millions of fake ac-counts opened by Wells Fargo. Not once does it mention the shady outfits that set up shop outside the gates of our military bases and the payday
Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I am truly saddened that I must address what I fear is a growing threat to our Republic—the silencing of political debate by totalitarian mob violence on college campuses.

I was not in Burlington, VT, last Thursday to witness what happened at Middlebury College, but I would like to read from accounts that have been provided by two people who were, in fact, there when all the things unfolded. They were the target of the mob violence. Their names are Allison Stanger, professor of political science at Middlebury College, and Charles Murray, the author of several groundbreaking books including the work "The Bell Curve" and a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. America deserves and needs to hear their stories.

On Saturday, 2 days after the incident, Professor Stanger wrote on her Facebook page as follows:

I agreed to participate in the event with Cyrus, and I was ready for dinner. The students asked me to do so. They are smart and good people—all of them—and this was their big event of the year.

As the campus uproar about his visit built, I was genuinely surprised and troubled to learn that some of my faculty colleagues had rendered judgment on Dr. Murray's work and character while openly admitting that they had not read anything he had written. With this best of intentions, they offered their leadership to enraged students, and we all know what the results were.

I want you to know what it feels like to look out at a sea of students yelling obscenities at other members of my beloved community.... I saw some of my faculty colleagues, who had publicly acknowledged that they had not read anything Dr. Murray had written, make eye contact with him, and know what the results were.

When the event ended and it was time to leave the building, I breathed a sigh of relief. What impressed me was the extraordinary respect and conversation with faculty and students in a tranquil setting. What transpired instead was a scene from the TV show "Home Improvement" rather than an evening at an institution of higher learning. We confronted an angry mob as we tried to exit the building. We had made it. I was ready for dinner and put it out of business. Special interests have relentlessly attacked the CFPB since the day we created it.

President Trump ran on the promise of protecting the little guy, but he hasn't followed through on the promise of protecting ordinary Americans from some of the most privileged special interests in this town.

If you are one of the 29 million Americans who received help from CFPB, you might know how important saving it is, but you might not know how important it is. If you are a member of the military, you know that one group of people, and that is protecting our veterans and our service members. The CFPB has an entire office that is dedicated to helping men and women who have served in uniform—the Office of Servicemember Affairs.

A couple of weeks ago, my Rhode Island Senator friend, Jack Reed, was in the Armed Services Committee with the senior enlisted advisers of military services—the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines. Their job is to make sure our servicemembers and their families are getting the support they need. Every one of them said, one thing to say about the CFPB. It's the Office of Servicemember Affairs—of the value it provides and the support it provides to the men and women who sacrifice so much for our country.

Senator Boxer brought up an alarming figure. A recent report estimated that thousands of servicemembers are forced out of service every year because of financial hardships—problems with their mortgages, with payday loans, with credit card debt. One will remember earlier in the presentation that I talked about how many of these financial groups set up right outside military bases. That causes a tragedy for these men and women who want to serve their country, and it causes tragedy for their families. For every tax payer $57,000 every time someone is forced out of service. Many other servicemembers lose their security clearances because of financial trouble, which directly affects the mission readiness that is brought on by shady business practices.

The CFPB is stepping in to protect these heroes who are often taken advantage of. The CFPB's Office of Servicemember Affairs is led by men and women who have served in the military and know what kind of help service members need. They visit 145 military facilities across the country in order to help servicemembers get their finances straightened out and to hear about their concerns. They have handled 70,000 complaints from servicemembers and veterans about abusive practices by financial institutions. They have returned $130 million back to service members and their families simply by enforcing the law and protecting those consumers.

The CFPB protects the men and women who protect our country. It protects all of us. The best way to celebrate Consumer Protection Week is not through words and proclamations, it is through actions.

We need to combat cyber crimes and identity theft, as the President mentioned, but we also need to combat all kinds of tricks and traps—loans with outrageous interest rates, for-profit college collectors who deliver, lenders who discriminate based on race. The list goes on and on.

I urge my colleagues to join me in working to ensure that the CFPB remains a strong, active ally in the cause of consumer protection this week, next week, every week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

SILENCING OF POLITICAL DEBATE

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I am truly saddened that I must address what I fear is a growing threat to our Republic—the silencing of political debate by lenders and other unscrupulous lenders who set up shop outside the gates of the military bases because they aren't allowed on the military bases as they try to exploit our service men and women and their families.

Now this President ignore some of the most pressing consumer protection issues, his administration is attacking the most important consumer advocate indeed—the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Lauderdale, Trump's Department of Justice filed papers in Federal court signaling that it will argue that the CFPB shouldn't be independent. The President and White House want the CFPB under their control so they can weaken it, so they can help Wall Street, so they can take away some of its power. They think the President should have the power to fire the head of the agency for any reason.

The CFPB has been independent was to protect it from a President who chose Wall Street over Main Street. It was Presidential Candidate Trump who sounded pretty good standing up to Wall Street and helping Main Street. It is what look at the nominee, his appointments, and his actions so far, it has been exactly the opposite. He has been the president of Wall Street and at the same time exploiting Main Street. It means that what the President has proposed is that the President can fire his director for doing his job: stepping on the toes of special interests.

The CFPB works in part because it has a Director. The current Director of the CFPB, Richard Cordray from Ohio, has protected consumers, has returned billions to Americans who were cheated and who were taken advantage of by big companies.

The CFPB works in part because it has an independent budget. Banks can't kill it by lobbying it and cutting off its budget. That is the point. People whom he has in many cases recovered money from because he represents consumers—those banks, those Street banks, and other financial institutions, because of the way it is set up, can't lobby Congress to take money away from it and put it out of business. Special interests have relentlessly attacked the CFPB since the day we created it.

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A couple of weeks ago, my Rhode Island Senator friend, Jack Reed, was in
The next day, on Sunday, the American Enterprise Institute’s website published this account from Dr. Charles Murray.

Dr. Murray wrote:

If it hadn’t been for Allison and Bill Burger (Middlebury President for Communications) keeping hold of me and the security guards pulling people off me, I would have been pushed to the ground. That much is sure. What could have happened after that I don’t know, but I do recall thinking that being on the ground was a really bad idea, and I should try really hard to avoid that. Unlike Allison, I wasn’t actually hurt at all.

In the 23 years since “The Bell Curve” was published, I have had considerable experience with protests. Until last Thursday, all of the ones involving me have been as carefully scripted as kabuki: The college administration meets with the organizers of the protest, and ground rules are agreed upon. The protesters have so many minutes to do such and such. It is agreed that, after the allotted time, they will leave or desist. These negotiated agreements have always worked. At least a couple of dozen times, I have been able to give my lecture to an attentive, at least, quiet audience despite an organized protest.

Middlebury tried to negotiate such an agreement with the protesters, but for the first time in my experience, the protesters would not accept any time limits. If this becomes the new normal, the number of colleges willing to let themselves in for an experience like Middlebury’s will plunge to near zero. Academia is already largely sequestered in an ideological bubble, but at least it’s translucent. That bubble will become opaque.

Worse yet, the intellectual thugs will take over many campuses. In the mid-1990s, I could count on students who had wanted to listen to start yelling at the protesters after a certain point, “Sit down and shut up. We want to hear what he has to say.” That kind of pushback had an effect. It reminded the protesters that they were a minority.

I am assured [he continues] by people at Middlebury that their protesters are a minority. Just a minority. In my experience, the protesters have intimidated the majority. The people in the audience who wanted to hear me speak were completely cowed. That cannot be allowed to happen. If a minority of students are fearful to speak openly because they know a minority will jump on them there is no longer an intellectually free campus in the sense.

I suspect that most of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle may not necessarily be fans of Dr. Charles Murray. There is nothing wrong with that, but I am confident they at least would be honest enough and self-respecting enough to remain silent when any scholar’s work without ever having read it, like many of Middlebury’s faculty members apparently did. More importantly, I am confident my Democratic colleagues would join me in denouncing the violence of the Middlebury campus protesters who sought to silence Dr. Murray. On countless occasions, I have heard my Democratic colleagues come to the Senate floor to condemn violence in all of its forms. Why would this time be any different?

We are all in the same boat, but I am confident that if Dr. Murray were invited to testify here on Capitol Hill—perhaps at a committee of the United States Senate—my Democratic colleagues would eagerly join in an open and respectful debate that would ensue as a result of that visit. I am confident they would reject any effort to silence or to do harm to those with whom they might disagree. I am confident that if any outburst like that happened, whoever was chairing that committee and the ranking personnel associated with that committee would immediately bring the disruption to a close so an open, honest, respectful discussion could occur within that meeting.

I know tensions are high in America today, and I know what it is like to be on the losing side of a bitterly fought Presidential election as we, as Republicans, found ourselves in just a few years ago in the wake of the 2012 election cycle and in the wake of the previous Presidential election cycle before that in 2008, but that does not and cannot not be the end of free speech. Totalitarians who fail to recognize this core fact of decency and tolerance are goose-stepping into some of the darkest corners of the human heart.

If there is anything that should unite us in these polarized times, it is that the kind of violence we saw on Monday is not acceptable. That is why I commend the 44 Middlebury College professors who have signed a “Statement of Principles” on “Free Inquiry on Campus.” I hope more Middlebury professors will join them. In any event, I hope all Americans will join them in standing up for free, open, honest, respectful debate.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES THOMAS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to acknowledge Charles Thomas, a veteran broadcast journalist and political reporter. Last week, after a career spanning four decades, Charles Thomas appeared in his final newscast at ABC 7 Chicago.

Born in Webster Groves, MO, Charles grew up in the St. Louis area and graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism. Shortly after graduation, Charles began his career as a radio reporter at KCMO in Kansas City. He has also worked in negotiations in San Francisco and Philadelphia before joining ABC News bureau Midwest correspondent in St. Louis. In 1991, Charles was hired as a general assignment reporter at ABC 7 Chicago and later named to the coveted position of political reporter in 2009.

Since joining ABC 7’s “Eyewitness News” in 1991, its newscast was and remains the most watched TV news in Chicago. On Charles’s 25th anniversary at the station, he said: “I am very blessed to have worked here and like to think that my efforts have had something to do with that success.” As an avid viewer, I am here to say it has. His unique perspective and keen ability to tell stories made him valuable to any newsroom. Let me tell you, Charles asks the tough questions and holds us all accountable.

As the politician often in the crosshairs, I can tell you I knew Charles was always prepared and ready to challenge any weak response. I speak for all of Chicago when I say Charles Thomas will be missed.

For more than a quarter century, Charles has covered the biggest stories in the country—the OJ Simpson Trial, Oklahoma City bombing, Rodney King trials, Great Chicago Flood, and the election of the first African-American President, to name just a few. He truly had a front row seat to history. He even joined then-Senator Barack Obama on a trip to Africa in 2006. His remarkable career has taken him to every State in America and five continents, and he leaves with no regrets. Reflecting on his years covering national, State, and local politics, he said: “Without a moment’s hesitation, I can look back and say I had the best TV reporting job in America.”

Charles Thomas has had an amazing career. His work earned him two Emmy awards for reporting in 1983 and 1992. Although he is retiring, Charles is not done telling stories. He plans to explore digital storytelling focusing on the African-American community, celebrating positive stories often missed in local and national broadcasts—what a noble and necessary endeavor. I am so saddened that Charles will remain an inspirational voice in the community.

I want to congratulate Charles Thomas on his distinguished career and thank him for his outstanding service to the people of Chicago. I especially want to thank Charles’s wife, Maria, and their three children for sharing so much of their husband and father with our community. I wish him and his family all the best in their next chapter.
PROTECTING YOUNG VICTIMS FROM SEXUAL ABUSE ACT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, yesterday I introduced the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act, a bill to protect young athletes who participate in the U.S. amateur ranks from sexual abuse.

Before last summer’s Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, the Indianapolis Star published an investigative piece that revealed that amateur gymnasts were sexually abused in gyms all across the country. No one knew how widespread the problem was.

But throughout the investigation, the Indianapolis Star tallied—after reviewing police files and court cases across the country—368 gymnasts who alleged they were sexually abused over a 20-year period.

Kids as young as 6 were secretly photographed in the nude by coaches. Young athletes were molested by coaches during “therapy” sessions. Sexual predators spent countless hours with children one-on-one and abused them for years before anything was done. These accounts were devastating. And they were just the tip of the iceberg.

After reviewing this report, I, along with my colleagues Senator LEAHY, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and Senator DONELLY, wrote to USA Gymnastics to urge the organization to do more to protect their young athletes.

Specifically, we urged the organization to update its policies and require that all members—including coaches, athletes, and others—immediately report to law enforcement when there is an incident of sexual abuse committed against a minor athlete.

After we sent the letter, several sexual abuse victims from California reached out to my staff. They revealed that they were abused by individuals affiliated with USA Gymnastics. I told my staff that I had to meet them. Six brave women, who were each abused as young gymnasts at various points in their careers, then travelled across the country to share their testimonies with me. Two athletes from another sport who were sexually abused also joined us. We never forget their faces that day. When I walked into the room, I could sense the overwhelming devastation wrought on their lives.

One by one, they shared their hopes and dreams. Gymnastics is a beautiful sport. The gymnasts talked about how, while pursuing future Olympic glory, they put their complete faith in the USA Gymnastics infrastructure. They fully trusted the coaches and doctors who had the USA Gymnastics seal of approval. And it was this environment that they were sexually exploited by those whom they trusted.

Several of the women had been abused repeatedly—over the course of months and years—by a USA Gymnastics team doctor named Larry Nassar. Nassar is currently being prosecuted for a number of horrific crimes against children. One of those brave women was Jamie Dantzscher, a retired gymnast who won the bronze medal competing in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Jamie told me how she trained as a young girl in California. When she was 13 years old, she was thrilled to be able to train with the national USA Gymnastics team. It was with the national team that Nassar gained her trust. Nassar became her “buddy,” in the midst of an intense training environment. With USA Gymnastics backing him as a famous doctor and trainer, it was a lot easier to believe that there was absolutely no reason to believe Nassar was not trustworthy.

So when Jamie went to see Nassar for back pain, she was confused when Nassar began to touch her inappropriately. She was 13 and 14 years old. As she described the abuse to me in graphic detail, the other women around the room began to sob quietly. The tactics that Nassar used were too familiar to them.

And for the first time, each of the victims believed that their horrific experiences were one-off events, that they were isolated in their own subjective memories. But the sharing of their stories—together in that room with me and the other athletes—affirmed to them that what they had experienced was wrong.

One of the other gymnasts who bravely shared her story with me was Jeanette Antolin, who competed on the national team in the late nineties. Jeanette shared with me how she was frightened of ever saying anything about the abuse committed against her because she believed she was being treated by a world-class doctor with USA Gymnastics’ approval. As an aspiring Olympian, she feared that if she complained about anything, it would affect her career.

The same fears had overcame Jessica Howard, a rhythmic gymnast who was 15 years old when Nassar began abusing her. She was sent to Nassar for hip problems, and he told her that she should not wear any underwear for her treatment. At the time, she was confused and afraid to say anything to anyone. She believed she would be prevented from pursuing her dreams if she said anything.

I also met Doe Yamashiro from southern California. Doe was sexually abused by a 1984 Olympic Coach named Don Peters. Coach Peters began fondling Doe and then had sex with her. Doe told me and the group of the pain and anguish she still suffers from many years later. The same pain and devastation was felt by all of the young victims who were in the room.

One of the common themes I heard from their stories was not just the predatory behavior of the perpetrators, but also how the USA Gymnastics institution failed to protect them. One of the women told me how she heard USA Gymnastics officials say at one point that it was their top priority to obtain “medals and money” and that a “reputation of a coach” should not be tarnished by an allegation raised by a victim.

This shocked me, and as I dug deeper into the USA Gymnastics institution, which is considered a “national governing body” under federal law, and oversaw over 3,000 gymnasia nationwide, I saw that their policies made it harder for victims, rather than easier, to report incidents of abuse. Their by-laws stated, for example, that the only way a member athlete could file a “confidential” and anonymous complaint about a coach was through a signed, written complaint.

Furthermore, USA Gymnastics’ policy indicated that the organization “may” report sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities if a child’s safety was at risk, but it was not mandatory. It further stated that it complied with State mandatory reporting laws, but if a State law didn’t require anything more, there was no other obligation to do anything.

It is my strong belief that these arcane policies left children vulnerable to the advances of sexual predators and failed to protect them even when incidents came to light. For example, in reviewing USA Gymnastics’ history in public accounts, there were multiple instances where gymnastics coaches were convicted of heinous child sex crimes, years after USA Gymnastics had received complaints about those coaches. In other words, USA Gymnastics appears to have sat on reports of sexual abuse for years, while predators continued to prey on children.

At the end of my meeting with the survivors, I looked at each of them and told them that I would work on legislation to protect other kids and amateur athletes like them from sexual predators.

The legislation we have introduced does three main things to help child sex abuse survivors. It is a strong bipartisan bill, and I want to extend my deepest thanks to those Members who have worked with me on it, including Senators COLLINS, GRASSLEY, DONELLY, NELSON, BLUMENTHAL, FLAKE, McCASKILL, ERNST, KLOBUCHAR, SINEHEEN, WARREN, HARRIS, CORTEZ-Masto, RUHIO, and YOUNG.

The first thing the bill does is to mandate that any person affiliated with USA Gymnastics or other national governing bodies immediately report child abuse, including sexual abuse, to local or Federal law enforcement. This requirement would apply not only to USA Gymnastics, but to each of the other 47 national governing bodies that oversee various Olympic sports, including USA Taekwondo, USA Speed Skating, USA Swimming, and USA Cycling. It is absolutely imperative that a bright line be drawn for all those working with national governing bodies that once there are facts of suspected sex abuse, a report must be made as soon as possible to proper authorities. This bill mandates that.
Second, this bill strengthens Masha’s law, which was named after a 5-year-old Russian orphan who was adopted by an American man only to be raped and sexually abused by him for 6 years until he was finally caught by the FBI in 2003. Masha was not only abused, but he had also produced over 200 sexually explicit images of that abuse. Masha’s law allows civil suits by minors against sex abuse perpetrators who violate a variety of criminal laws, including child trafficking, sexual exploitation, and child pornography crimes.  

This law is significant for victims to obtain justice because there are times when criminal cases against perpetrators are declined due to difficulties in proving a criminal case. Therefore, for many traumatized victims, the only avenue for them to ever seek justice against their perpetrators is through Masha’s law or other civil remedies. 

The bill updates Masha’s law to help victims. It clarifies, for example, that victims of child sex crimes are entitled to statutory damages of $150,000 and possible punitive damages, due to the particularly severe nature of the crime.  

The bill also extends the statute of limitations for Masha’s law. The statute of limitations extension is part of legislation that Senator CORNYN and I have worked on over the past couple of years, called the Extending Justice for Sex Crime Victims Act.  

Finally, the bill makes reforms to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, which establishes “national governing bodies” like USA Gymnastics. The Stevens Act specifically lists the authorities and duties of national governing bodies.  

When I first wrote to USA Gymnastics about its poor handling of sexual abuse allegations, they replied that the Stevens Act limits their abilities to fully protect athletes from sexual abuse, so this bill fixes that. It requires national governing bodies like USA Gymnastics to establish policies and procedures for the mandatory reporting of sex abuse to law enforcement, policies and procedures to keep track of coaches who leave one gym due to complaints and then go to another gym and repeat cycles of abuse, policies to ensure that minors and amateur athletes are not in one-on-one situations with adults, policies to facilitate reporting of sex abuse allegations to national governing bodies and other authorities, and stronger oversight and enforcement policies so that the national governing bodies take a greater role in making sure that the policies are actually being implemented and enforced throughout the country.  

These provisions give national governing bodies like USA Gymnastics absolutely no excuse to make sure that all members are subjected to the strongest training and procedures to prevent sexual abuse. It further forces organizations like USA Gymnastics to impact the culture of their sports, through various oversight mechanisms, to make sure that all members of such organizations adhere to the strictest standards when it comes to sexual abuse prevention.  

Finally, I would like to close with this. All over the country, victims of sexual abuse are coming forward to disclose how they were abused and exploited at the height of their innocence when they were children. Multiple victims from California and throughout the country have, for example, contacted Dr. Larry Nassar and his team with great courage their pain and anguish. Rather than list statistics, I want you to know that each of these individual stories represents an untold amount of pain and suffering that reverberates throughout generations, leaving devastation in its path. I urge my colleagues in this body to work with me and the sponsors of this bill to pass this important legislation to protect victims.

I would also like to acknowledge the support for this legislation from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, National Children’s Alliance, RightsGirls, University of Utah Law Professor Paul Cassell, Child Sex Crime Victims’ Lawyer James Marsh, Crime Victims’ Rights Network, National Crime Victims Center, Child USA, National Association of VOCA Administrators, National Organization for Victim Assistance, ToPrevail, ChampionWomen, National Children’s Advocacy Center, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, the National Association to Protect Children, and the Rape Abuse & Incest National Network.  

They are on the front lines of this work, and I greatly appreciate their support.  

Thank you very much.

Ms. COLLINS, Mr. President, today I wish to support the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Assault Act of 2017. I commend Senator FEINSTEIN for her leadership on this bill and for shining a spotlight on the atrocious crimes perpetrated against young American athletes.  

Sexual abuse is a heinous crime that must be eradicated in every corner of our society. I have long worked to prevent sexual assault and ensure that survivors have access to the resources and support they need. Last year, the Indianapolis Star reported on allegations of sexual abuse and misconduct made against coaches, gym owners, and other adults affiliated with USA Gymnastics over several decades. These very serious allegations included sexual abuse against young athletes. Predatory coaches were allowed to move from gym to gym undetected by a lax system of oversight. The investigation also revealed that officials at USA Gymnastics, one of America’s most prominent Olympic organizations, failed to alert police to many incidents of sexual abuse that occurred on their watch.  

These crimes have hurt hundreds of victims across various sports. This Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Assault Act would require amateur athletic governing bodies, such as USA Gymnastics and other U.S. Olympic organizations, to promptly report every allegation of sexual abuse to the proper authorities. This legislation would help survivors receive justice and protect more people from becoming victims.  

In addition, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Assault Act would require these national governing bodies to develop robust policies and procedures for mandatory reporting to law enforcement and to develop training and oversight practices to prevent abuse. This bill would also bolster Masha’s Law, the law that lets minors bring civil suits against sexual predators and extends the statute of limitations for such cases.  

The young athletes who train to represent our country at the top levels of competition and those at all levels who aspire to compete should not have to fear victimization by trusted coaches and sports officials. I want to again thank Senator FEINSTEIN for her leadership on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 51312(b), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy: Mr. Stutzri of New York.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 46. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Port Ontario in the State of New York; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 428. An act to survey the gradient boundary along the Red River in the States of Oklahoma and Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.
H.R. 560. An act to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following bill was discharged from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and referred as indicated:

S. 416. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Incentive Act of 1980 to require an annual review by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the annual government-business forum on capital formation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–927. A communication from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, twelve (12) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Agriculture, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–928. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Annual Materials Plan (AMP) for fiscal year 2018 and the succeeding fiscal years 2019–2022; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–929. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled “Exhibit Hyperlinks and HTML Format” (RIN2330–A195) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 15, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–930. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled “Temporary General License: Extension of Validity” (No. 2015–1355) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–931. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–932. A communication from the Director of the Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled “Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors” (NUREG–1021, Rev. 11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–933. A communication from the Acting United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2017 Trade Policy Agenda and Executive Order 13313 of the President of the United States on the Trade Agreements Program; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–934. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report certifying for fiscal years 2014–2016 that the United Nations agency or United Nations affiliated agency grants any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which promotes and condones or seeks the legalization of pedophilia, or which includes as a subsidiary or member any such organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–935. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the Legal Adviser’s conclusion that a United Nations affiliated agency grants any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which seeks the legalization of pedophilia, or which includes as a subsidiary or member any such organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–936. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List. 2017–0013 – 2017–0031); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–937. A communication from the Secretary, Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, pursuant to the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, on the progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2015, through November 30, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–938. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on the progress of the United States in its negotiations with regard to the 2005 EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–939. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report concerning the progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2015, through November 30, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–940. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report concerning the progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2015, through November 30, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–941. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled “Use of Oxygen Depleting Substances” (RIN0999–AH36) (Docket No. FDA–2015–N–1355) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–942. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the continuation of the order of Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014, to Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.


EC–945. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–047, “Professional Engineers and Manufacturer Civil Monetary Penalties; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.


EC–953. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–057, “Professional Engineers and Manufacturer Civil Monetary Penalties Act of 2016”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.


EC–962. A communication from the Committee on Foreign Relations, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–066, “Taxicab License Amendment Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–963. A communication from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, “Planning,
Buying, and Implementing New Information Technology: A Case Study of the D.C. Business Center; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–961. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ([RIN2120–AA64] (Docket No. FAA–2016–6261)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–962. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ([RIN2120–AA64] (Docket No. FAA–2016–6561)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-976. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives: BAE Systems (Operations Limited)” (RIN2120-AA64 (Docket No. FAA–2016–18166)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.


EC-980. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives: PILATUS AIRCRAFT LTD. Airplanes” (RIN2120-AA66 (Docket No. FAA–2016–7415)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-981. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives: Airbus Helicopters Deutschland” (RIN2120-AA63 (Docket No. FAA–2016–4045)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-982. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures: Miscellaneous Amendments (ST7; AMD1; NA) (RIN2120–AA65)” received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-983. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules: Miscellaneous Amendments (SA7)” (RIN2120–AA63) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-985. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class E Airspace, Salem, OR” (RIN2120–AA61) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-986. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Reel Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; 2016 Recreational Accountability Measures and Closure for South Atlantic Greater Amberjack” (RIN0648–XE757) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 1, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-987. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Greater Amberjack” (RIN0648–XE2910) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-988. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Greater Amberjack” (RIN0648–XE2906) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-990. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Exchange of Flatfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648–XE754) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-991. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648–XE854) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 1, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-992. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Lesserágina, Banded, and Banded Rudderfish Complex” (RIN0648–XE754) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 1, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-993. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2016 Accountability Measure, Compliance and Recreational Species in the U.S. Caribbean Off Puerto Rico” (RIN0648–XE941) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 1, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-994. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Revisions to Safety Standards for Toddler Beds” (Docket No. CPSC–2017–0012) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2017, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Herbert R. McMaster, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ROESCHLACHER, Ms. COLBERT, and Mr. WARNER:

S. 536. A bill to promote transparency in the oversight of cybersecurity risks at publicly traded companies; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. BALSINGH, Mr. LEDWENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CAIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERRICK, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. SCHWARTZ, Ms. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDLALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 537. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BURCH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MERRICK, Mr. DAINES, Mr. KING, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. SMARTTIN):

S. 538. A bill to clarify research and development for woof products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ):
S. 539. A bill to designate the area between the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street, Northwest and John Street, Northwest of the City of Washington, D.C., as "Oswaldo Paya Way"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PEDOUE, Mr. REED, Mr. HAY, Mr. SCHAFER, Mr. KASICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. EINSTEIN, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HASSAN, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 540. A bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CAPITO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CUZZ, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICHER, and Mr. MORAII):

S. 541. A bill to amend title 9, United States Code, with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 542. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. MURRAY, Mr. CARPER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAKENEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLI- BRAND, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHAFER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARK- ESY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. VAN HOL- LEN):

S. 549. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide for a macadamia tree health initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. LEARY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MAR- KEY, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 543. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to include in each contract into which the Secretary enters for necessary services authorities and mechanism for appropriate oversight, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. McCASKILL, and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 546. A bill to reduce temporarily the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. KOELNER, Ms. HIRANO, Mr. MORGAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mr. MENEN- DEZ, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHAFER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 555. A bill to amend section 302 of the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize designation of a foreign trade zone; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mr. MENEN- DEZ, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHAFER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 552. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Electronic Fund Transfer Act to provide justice to victims of fraud; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WAR- REN, Mr. REED, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 553. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements of higher education institutions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ROBINSON, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Ms. INHOFE, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MORAII, Mr. PERN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUND, Ms. RUHIO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TULLIS, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. GRA- HAM):

S. 554. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLI-BRAND for herself and Ms. COLLINS:

S. 547. A bill to designate the area between the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street, Northwest and John Street, Northwest of the City of Washington, D.C., as "Oswaldo Paya Way"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PEDOUE, Mr. REED, Mr. HAY, Mr. SCHAFER, Mr. KASICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. EINSTEIN, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HASSAN, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 548. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCHAFER, Mr. LARY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. MUR- KOWSKI, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 549. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide for a macadamia tree health initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARPER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAKENEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLI- BRAND, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHAFER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARK- ESY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. VAN HOL- LEN):

S. 550. A bill to restore statutory rights to the people of the United States from forced arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 551. A bill to establish responsibility for the International Outer Space Law; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BROWN (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 82. A resolution congratulating the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Laboratory; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 14

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the sponsors of S. 14, a bill to provide that Members of Congress may not receive pay after October 1 of any fiscal year in which Congress has not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget and passed the regular appropriations bills.

S. 58

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the sponsors of S. 58, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.
At the request of Mr. McCain, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. Hassan) was added as a cosponsor of S. 92, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow for the personal importation of safe and affordable drugs from approved pharmacies in Canada.

S. 96

At the request of Ms. Klobuchar, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. Rounds) was added as a cosponsor of S. 96, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

S. 104

At the request of Mrs. Gillibrand, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. Franken) was added as a cosponsor of S. 104, a bill to provide for the vacating of certain convictions and expungement of certain arrests of victims of human trafficking.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. Rubio, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. Grassley) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency may not regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 241

At the request of Mrs. Ernst, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. Rounds) was added as a cosponsor of S. 241, a bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

S. 202

At the request of Mr. Nelson, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. Shaheen) was added as a cosponsor of S. 252, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require drug manufacturers to provide drug rebates for drugs dispensed to low-income individuals under the Medicare prescription drug benefit program.

S. 253

At the request of Mr. Cardin, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. Gardner) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. Merkley) were added as cosponsors of S. 253, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 260

At the request of Mr. Cornyn, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Boozman) was added as a cosponsor of S. 260, a bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

S. 272

At the request of Mr. Schatz, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. Menendez) was added as a cosponsor of S. 272, a bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and the stability of the transportation security workforce by applying a unified personnel and accountability system under title 49 United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who are responsible for screening passengers and property, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mr. Lankford, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. Kennedy) was added as a cosponsor of S. 301, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion.

S. 303

At the request of Mr. Booker, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Markey) was added as a cosponsor of S. 303, a bill to discontinue a Federal program that authorizes State and local law enforcement officers to investigate, apprehend, and detain aliens in accordance with a written agreement with the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and to clarify that immigration enforcement is solely a function of the Federal Government.

S. 315

At the request of Mr. Sullivan, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. Johnson) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a monument honoring the helicopter pilots and crewmembers who were killed while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 324

At the request of Mr. Hatch, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. Tillis) was added as a cosponsor of S. 324, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans.

S. 333

At the request of Mr. Lankford, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. Kennedy) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. Nelson, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. Klobuchar) was added as a cosponsor of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 370

At the request of Mr. Cruz, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. Rubio) was added as a cosponsor of S. 370, a bill to eliminate the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection by repealing title X of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, commonly known as the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010.

S. 394

At the request of Mr. Rounds, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. Enzi) was added as a cosponsor of S. 394, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to provide that a member of the Armed Forces and the spouse of that member shall have the same rights regarding the receipt of firearms at the location of any duty station of the member.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. Crapo, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. Hoeven), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. Risch), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. Carper), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. Sullivan), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. Leahy) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. Franken) were added as cosponsors of S. 407, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 431

At the request of Mr. Thune, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Boozman) was added as a cosponsor of S. 431, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the use of telehealth for individuals with stroke.

S. 438

At the request of Mr. Blunt, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. Tester) was added as a cosponsor of S. 438, a bill to encourage effective, voluntary investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes.

S. 482

At the request of Mr. Thune, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. Rounds) was added as a cosponsor of S. 482, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 487

At the request of Mr. Crapo, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Boozman) was added as a cosponsor of S. 487, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs.
At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to participant votes on the suspension of benefits under multiemployer plans in critical and declining status.

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel fuel in the case of liquefied natural gas for purposes of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund financing rate.

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 512, a bill to modernize the regulation of nuclear energy.

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 518, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide for technical assistance for small treatment works.

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 23, a resolution establishing the Select Committee on Cybersecurity.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 536. A bill to promote transparency in the oversight of cybersecurity risks at publicly traded companies; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

S. RES. 23. At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to accidental release prevention requirements of risk management programs under the Clean Air Act.

S. RES. 27. At the request of Mr. DAINES, the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel fuel in the case of liquefied natural gas for purposes of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund financing rate.

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mrs. CAPITTO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 27, a joint resolution disapproving of congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to accidental release prevention requirements of risk management programs under the Clean Air Act.

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITTO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to accidental release prevention requirements of risk management programs under the Clean Air Act.

At the request of Mr. NUNN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mrs. CAPITTO) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 1, a joint resolution approving the nomination of Dr. T. Michael McAllister to be Officer of the Environmental Protection Agency.

At the request of Mr. FLAKE and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 27, a joint resolution establishing the Select Committee on Cybersecurity.

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mrs. CAPITTO) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to accidental release prevention requirements of risk management programs under the Clean Air Act.
goal by encouraging publicly traded companies to be more transparent to their investors and customers on whether and how their boards of directors are prioritizing cyber security.

I thank Harvard Law School professor John Coffee, and the Consumer Federation of America for their support, and I urge my colleagues to join Senator Collins, Senator Warner, and me in supporting this legislation.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 550. A bill to restore statutory rights to the people of the United States from forced arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I have reintroduced legislation to protect Americans from being stripped of their legal rights by little known clauses now hidden in an alarming number of contracts. When we enter into agreements to obtain cell phone service, rent an apartment, or accept a new job, most are not made aware of the forced arbitration clauses that are often hidden in the legal fine print. But these oppressive provisions force us to abandon our constitutional right to protect ourselves in court and instead send hard-working Americans to face wealthy corporations behind closed doors in private arbitration. This must change.

When Congress passed the Federal Arbitration Act in 1925, it was intended to help businesses resolve legal disputes with each other. But over the past two decades, private arbitration has been abused by large companies to push Americans out of court. In doing so, these companies have effectively opted out of critical labor, consumer, and civil rights laws that give Americans the ability to assert their claims before our independent judiciary.

Forced arbitration clauses now appear in nearly every contract we sign. Unfortunately, examples of the injustice caused by these clauses are equally ubiquitous and can be found all across the country—afflicting consumers, workers, seniors, veterans, and families in Vermont and every other State, and the cases are heart-wrenching.

Just last week, the Washington Post reported that hundreds of current and former employees of Sterling Jewelers—a company that earns $6 billion in annual revenue—have for years alleged that the company is engaged in pervasive gender discrimination and has fostered a culture that condones sexual harassment. The stories now being reported date back to the early 1990s. Yet, despite the fact that women at the company have been alleging misconduct for decades, no one knew about it. That is because their claims were hidden behind closed doors because of private arbitration. To this day, we still do not know the full details.

The press has helped to bring attention to other instances of forced arbitration in recent years. In 2015, the Los Angeles Times revealed that Wells Fargo used arbitration clauses to deny customers whose names were used to open fraudulent accounts an opportunity to seek recovery in court. In February 2016, Wells Fargo asked a Federal court in Utah to move a number of sham account allegations to arbitration. The New York Times dedicated a three-part investigative series to highlighting the impact on consumers and workers of forced arbitration clauses. And by telling the story herself, television journalist Gretchen Carlson was barred from speaking publicly about her allegations of sexual harassment against former FOX News chairman Roger Ailes. I have long raised concerns about the practice of forced arbitration, and as chairman led hearings of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2007, 2008, 2011, and 2013. This should not be a partisan issue. Both Republican and Democratic attorneys general have repeatedly spoken out against the Federal Arbitration Act's intrusion on State sovereignty and a State's compelling interest in protecting the health and welfare of its citizens. In Vermont, lawmakers enacted commonsense legislation to limit the abuse of forced arbitration clauses and raise consumer awareness, but this law was invalidated because it conflicted with Federal law. Companies have effectively created a "get out of jail free" card that guts our laws and shields bad actors from any type of public accountability. This is an unconscionable situation, and Congress must act.

The Reinstating American Rights Act that I am reintroducing today will protect Americans' right to seek justice in our courts. It will ensure that our Federal laws will actually be effective by ensuring that Americans cannot be stripped of their ability to enforce their rights before our independent court system. This bill also ensures that when States act to address forced arbitration, as my home State of Vermont has, they are not preempted by an overbroad reading of our Federal arbitration laws.

This effort is supported by the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, the National Employment Lawyers' Association, and consumer groups such as National Association of Consumer Advocates, Consumers Union, Public Citizen, the National Consumer Law Center, and Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety. For years, these groups and many others have worked tirelessly to highlight the injustice of forced arbitration and close the full scope of the number of people it affects.

All Senators should care about ensuring that corporations cannot unilaterally circumvent the statutes that this body writes, debates, and enacts into law. Senators should also care about the ability of the States to protect consumers from unconscionable contracts. I urge Members to support this bill.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. REED, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 553. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements made between students and certain institutions of higher education, and to prohibit limitations on the ability of students to pursue claims against certain institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

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

S. 553

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Court Legal Access and Student Support (CLASS) Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 1 OF TITLE 9, UNITED STATES CODE, TO ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS MADE BETWEEN STUDENTS AND CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code (relating to the enforce- ment of arbitration agreements) shall not apply to an enrollment agreement made between a student and an institution of higher education.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 102).

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON LIMITATIONS ON ABIL- ITY OF STUDENTS TO PURSUE CLAIMS AGAINST CERTAIN INSTITU- TIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Section 487(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(30) The institution will not require any student to agree to, and will not enforce, any limitation or restriction (including a limitation or restriction on any available choice of applicable law, a jury trial, or venue) on the ability of a student to pursue a claim, indi- vidually or with others, against an institu- tion in court.''.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 555. A bill for the relief of Shirley Constantino Tan; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today, I am reintroducing a bill for the private relief of Shirley Constantino Tan. Ms. Tan is a Filipina national living in Pacifica, CA. She is the proud

I believe Ms. Tan merits Congress's special consideration for this extraordinary case, because her removal from the United States would cause undue hardship for her and her family. She faces deportation to the Philippines, which would separate her from her family and jeopardize her safety.

Ms. Tan experienced horrific violence in the Philippines before she left to come to the United States. When she was only 14 years old, her cousin murdered her mother and her sister and shot Shirley in the head. While the cousin who committed the murders was eventually prosecuted, he received a short jail sentence. Fearing for her safety, Ms. Tan fled the Philippines just before her cousin was due to be released. She entered the United States legally on a visitor's visa in 1989.

Ms. Tan's current deportation order is the result of negligent counsel. She applied for asylum in 1995. When her case appeal was pending at the Board of Immigration Appeals, her attorney failed to submit a brief to support her case. As a result, the case was dismissed, and the Board of Immigration Appeals granted Shirley voluntary departure from the United States.

Ms. Tan never received notice that the Board of Immigration Appeals granted her voluntary departure. Her attorney, who did not receive the order, and ultimately never informed her of the order. As a result, Ms. Tan did not depart the United States and the grant of voluntary departure automatically led to a removal order. She learned about the deportation order for the first time on January 28, 2009, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents took her into immigration custody.

Because of her attorney's negligent actions, Ms. Tan was denied the opportunity to present her case in immigration proceedings. She later filed a complaint with the State Bar of California against her former attorney. She is not the first person to file such a complaint against this attorney.

On February 4, 2015, Ms. Tan's spouse, Jay, a U.S. citizen, filed an approved spousal petition on her behalf. On August 20, 2015, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services denied her application due to the fact that she still had a final order of removal. Ms. Tan must go back to the immigration court and ask for the court to terminate her case and then reapply for her green card. Ms. Tan is facing the threat of deportation while she seeks to close her case before an immigration court.

In addition to the hardship that Ms. Tan would endure if she is deported, her deportation would cause serious hardship to her two U.S. citizen children, Joriene and Jasheley.

Joriene is a junior at Stanford University and is premed, majoring in human biology. In addition to his studies, Joriene is involved in Stanford's Filippino-American Student Union. Jasheley is a junior at Chapman University, majoring in business administration. Ms. Tan no longer runs her in-home daycare and is a homemaker.

If Ms. Tan were to leave the United States, her family has expressed that they would go with her to the Philippines or try to find a third country where the entire family could relocate. This would mean that Joriene and Jasheley would have to leave behind their education and the only home they know in the United States.

I do not believe it is in our Nation's best interest to force this family, with two U.S. citizen children, to make the choice between being separated and relocating to a country where they may face safety concerns or other serious hardships.

Ms. Tan and her family are involved in their community in Pacifica and own a family business that attends Good Shepherd Catholic Church, volunteering at the church and the Mother Teresa of Calcutta's Daughters of Charity. Ms. Tan has the support of dozens of members of her community who have shared with me the family's spirit of commitment to their community.

Enactment of the legislation I am introducing on behalf of Ms. Tan today will enable this entire family to continue their lives in California and make positive contributions to their community.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 556. A bill for the relief of Joseph Gabra and Sharon Kamel; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing private relief legislation on behalf of Joseph Gabra and Sharon Kamel, a couple living with their four U.S. citizen children in Camarillo, CA.

Joseph and Sharon are nationals of Egypt who fled their home country over 19 years ago after being targeted for their religious membership in the Christian Coptic Church in Egypt. They became involved with this church during the 1990s, Joseph as an accountant and project coordinator helping to build community facilities and Sharon as the church's training director in human resources.

Unfortunately, Joseph and Sharon were also subjected to threats and abuse. Joseph was jailed repeatedly because of his involvement with the church. Sharon's family members were violently targeted, including her cousin who was murdered and her brother whose business was firebombed. When Sharon became pregnant with her first child, she was threatened by a member of the church and, as a result of a successful organization for raising her child in a non-Muslim faith.

Joseph and Sharon came to the United States legally on visitor visas in November 1998. Due to their fears of persecution in Egypt based on their religious beliefs, they filed for asylum in the United States in May 1999.

However, Joseph, who has a speech impediment, had difficulty communicating with the lawyer he was afraid to return to Egypt, and 1 year later their asylum application was denied. Considering that Sharon's brother, who also applied for asylum for similar reasons, was granted asylum in the United States, Joseph and Sharon appealed the denial of their asylum applications, to no avail.

While Sharon's brother, who is now a U.S. citizen, has filed a family-based immigrant petition on Sharon's behalf, it will be at least 4 years until she will even be eligible for a visa number due to visa backlogs. If Sharon and Joseph are deported before then, they will not only be separated from their family but will be forced to return to a country where the persecution of Coptic Christians continues.

Due to their fear of returning to Egypt, Joseph and Sharon have therefore tried to build a life for themselves here in the United States, working hard while building a beautiful family. With the protection of past private bills I filed on their behalf, Joseph was able to get his certified public accountant license and opened his own accounting firm, where Sharon works by his side. Joseph and Sharon make sure that their four U.S. citizen children—Jessica, age 18, Rebecca, age 17, Rafael, age 16, and Veronica, age 11—all attend school in California and maintain good grades.

Joseph and Sharon carry strong support from friends, members of their local church, and other Californians who attest to their good character and community contributions.

I am concerned that the entire family could face serious and ungranted hardships if Joseph and Sharon were forced to return to Egypt. For Jessica, Rebecca, Rafael, and Veronica, the only home they know is in the United States. Separation of this family would be devastating and the alternative—relocating the family to Egypt—could be dire, as it is quite possible that these four American children would face discrimination or worse on account of their religion, as was the experience of many of their family members.

Joseph and Sharon have made a compelling plea to remain in the United States. These parents emphasize their commitment to supporting their children and creating a healthy and productive place for them to grow up in California. I believe this family deserves that opportunity.

I respectfully ask my colleagues to support this private relief bill on behalf of Joseph Gabra and Sharon Kamel.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 557. A bill for the relief of Jose Alberto Martinez Moreno, Micaela...
Lopez Martinez, and Adilene Martinez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing private immigration relief legislation to provide lawful permanent resident status to Jose Alberto Martinez Moreno, Micaela Lopez Martinez, and their daughter, Adilene Martinez. This family is originally from Mexico but has been living in California for over 20 years. I believe they merit Congress’s special consideration for this extraordinary form of relief.

When Jose came to the United States from Mexico, he began working as a busboy in restaurants in San Francisco, CA. In 1986, he started working as a cook at Palio D’Asti, an award-winning Italian restaurant in San Francisco.

Jose worked his way through the ranks, eventually becoming Palio’s sous chef. His colleagues describe him as a reliable and cool-headed coworker and as “an exemplary employee” who not only is “good at his job but is also a great boss to his subordinates.

He and his wife Micaela call San Francisco home. Micaela is a homemaker and part-time housekeeper. They have three daughters, two of whom are U.S. citizens. Their oldest daughter, Adilene, age 28, is undocumented and currently works full-time at a cinema and hopes to continue pursuing her studies in the future.

The Martinez’s second daughter, Jazmin, age 21, is a U.S. citizen. She graduated from Leadership High School and is now studying at California State University, San Francisco. Jazmin has been diagnosed with asthma, which requires constant treatment. According to her doctor, if Jazmin were to return to Mexico with her father, the high altitude and air pollution in Mexico City could be fatal to her. The Martinez’s other U.S. citizen daughter, Karla, is 19 years old and attends San Francisco City College.

The Martinez family attempted to legalize their status through several channels.

In 2001, Jose’s sister, who has legal status, petitioned for Jose to get a green card. However, the current green card backlog for siblings from Mexico is very long, and it will be many years before Jose will be eligible to legalize his status through his sister.

In 2002, the Martinez family applied for a hardship waiver. Their application was denied. An immigration judge denied their subsequent application for cancellation of removal.

Finally, Daniel Scherotter, the executive chef and owner of Palio D’Asti, petitioned for a hardship employment green card for Jose based upon his unique skills as a chef. Jose’s petition was approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. However, before he will be eligible for a green card, he must apply for a hardship waiver, which cannot be guaranteed.

The Martinez family has become an integral part of their community in California. They are active in their faith community. They volunteer with community-based organizations and are, in turn, supported by their community. When I first introduced this bill, I received dozens of letters of support from their fellow parishioners, teachers, and members of their community.

The Martinez family truly exemplifies the American dream. Jose worked his way through the restaurant industry to become a chef and an indispensable employee at a renowned restaurant. With great dedication, Micaela has worked hard to raise three daughters who are advancing their education and look forward to continuing the pursuit of their goals.

I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN: S. 558. A bill for the relief of Esidronio Arreola-Saucedo, Maria Elena Cobian Arreola, Nayely Arreola Carlos, and Cindy Jael Arreola; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I offer private immigration relief legislation to provide lawful permanent resident status to Esidronio Arreola-Saucedo, Maria Elena Cobian Arreola, Nayely Arreola Carlos, and Cindy Jael Arreola. The Arreolas are Mexican nationals living in the Fresno area of California.

Esidronio and Maria Elena have lived in the United States for over 20 years. Two of their five children—Nayely, age 30, and Cindy, age 28—also stand to benefit from this legislation. The other three Arreola children—Robert, age 25, Daniel, age 22, and Saray, age 20—are U.S. citizens. The story of the Arreola family is compelling, and I believe they merit Congress’s special consideration for such an extraordinary form of relief as a private bill.

The Arreolas are facing deportation in part because of grievous errors committed by their previous counsel, who has since been disbarred. In fact, the attorney’s conduct was so egregious that it compelled an immigration judge to write to the Executive Office of Immigration Review to demand the attorney’s disbarment for his actions in his clients’ immigration cases.

Esidronio came to the United States in 1986 and was an agricultural migrant worker in the fields of California for several years. As a migrant worker at that time, he would have been eligible for permanent residence through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers, SAWA, Program, had he known about it.

Maria Elena was living in the United States at the time she became pregnant with Nayely. She returned to Mexico to give birth because she wanted to avoid any immigration issues.

Because of the length of time that the Arreolas were in the United States, it is likely that they would have qualified for suspension of deportation, which would have allowed them to remain in the United States legally. However, the poor legal representation they received foreclosed this opportunity.

One of the most compelling reasons for my introduction of this private bill is the devastating impact the deportation of Esidronio and Maria Elena would have on their children—three of whom are American citizens—and the other two who have lived in the United States since they were toddlers. America is the only country the Arreola children have ever known.

Nayely, the oldest, was the first in her family to graduate from high school and the first to graduate college. She recently received her Masters in Business Administration from Fresno Pacific University, a regionally ranked university, and now works in the admissions office. Nayely is married and has a young son named Elijah Ace Carlos.

At a young age, Nayely demonstrated a strong commitment to the ideals of citizenship in her adopted country. She worked hard to achieve her full potential both through her academic endeavors and community service. As the Associate Dean of Enrollment Services at Fresno Pacific University states in a letter of support, “The leaders of Fresno Pacific University saw in Nayely, a young person who will become exemplary of all that is good in the American dream.”

In high school, Nayely was a member of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college preparatory program in which students commit to determining their own futures through attaining a college degree. Nayely was also President of the Key Club, a community service organization. Perhaps the greatest hardship to Nayely’s U.S. citizen husband and child, if she were forced to return to Mexico, would be her lost opportunity to realize her dreams and contribute further to her community and to this country.

Nayely’s sister, Cindy, is also married and has a 7-year-old daughter and a 5-year-old son. Neither Nayely nor Cindy is eligible to automatically adjust their status based on their marriages because of their initial unlawful entry.

The Arreolas also have other family who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents of this country. Maria Elena has three brothers who are American citizens, and Esidronio has a sister who is an American citizen. They have no immediate family in Mexico.

According to immigration authorities, this family has never had any problems with law enforcement. I am told that they pay their taxes every year from 1990 to the present. They have always worked hard to support themselves.
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As I mentioned, Esidronio was previously employed as a farm worker but now has his own business in California repairing electronics. His business has been successful enough to enable him to purchase a home for his family. He and his wife are active in their church community and in their children’s education.

It is clear to me that this family has embraced the American dream. Enactment of the legislation I have reintroduced today will enable the Arreolas to continue making significant contributions to their community as well as the United States.

I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:
S. 559. A bill for the relief of Alfredo Plascencia Lopez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to offer legislation to provide lawful permanent residence status to Alfredo Plascencia Lopez, a Mexican national who lives in the San Bruno area of California.

I offer legislation on his behalf because, without it, this hard-working man, wife who is a lawful permanent resident, and children would face extreme hardship. His children would either face separation from their father or be forced to leave the only country they know and give up the education they are pursuing in the United States.

Alfredo and his wife Maria have been in the United States for over 20 years. They worked for years to adjust their status through appropriate legal channels, but poor legal representation ruined their opportunities.

The Plascencias’ lawyer refused to return their calls or otherwise communicate with them in any way. He also failed to forward crucial immigration documents. Because of the poor representation they received, Alfredo only became aware that they had been ordered to leave the United States 15 days prior to his scheduled deportation.

Alfredo was shocked to learn of his attorney’s malfeasance, but he acted quickly to secure legitimate counsel and filed the appropriate paperwork to delay his deportation and determine if any other legal action could be taken.

Today, Alfredo and Maria have used their professional successes, with the assistance of private bills, to realize many of the goals dreamed of by all Americans. They have worked hard and saved up to buy their home.

They have good health care benefits, and they each have begun saving for retirement. They are sending their children Christina, Erika, and Danny, to college and plan to send the rest of their children to college, as well.

Their oldest child, Christina, is 26 years old, and taking classes at Heald College to become a paralegal. Erika, age 22, graduated from high school and is currently taking classes at Skyline College. Her teachers have praised her abilities and have referred her to as a “bright spot” in the classroom. Danny, age 20, currently attends the University of California and volunteers at his local homeless shelter in the soup kitchen. Daisy, age 15, and Juan Pablo, age 10, attend school and plan on attending college.

Allowing Alfredo to remain in the United States is necessary to enable his family to continue thriving in the United States. His children are dedicated to their education and being productive members of their community.

I do not believe that Alfredo should be separated from his family. I am re-introducing this legislation to protect the best interest of Alfredo’s U.S. citizen children and his wife, who is a lawful permanent resident. I believe that Alfredo will continue to make positive contributions to his community in California and this country. I respectfully ask my colleagues to support this bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:
S. 560. A bill for the relief of Jorge Rojas Gutierrez and his wife, Oliva Gonzalez. The Rojas family, originally from Mexico, is living in the San Jose area of California.

The story of the Rojas family is compelling, and I believe they merit Congress’s special consideration for such an extraordinary form of relief as a private bill.

Jorge and Oliva originally came to the United States in 1990 when their son Jorge Rojas, Jr., was just 2 years old. In 1995, they left the country to attend a funeral and then reentered the United States on “visitors” visas.

The family has grown to include three U.S. citizen children: Alexis, now 24 years old, Tanya, 22 years old, and Matias, now 7 years old. Jorge and Oliva are also the grandparents of Meena Rojas.

The Rojas family first attempted to legalize their status in the United States when an unscrupulous immigration consultant, who was not an attorney, advised them to apply for asylum. Unfortunately, without proper legal guidance, the family did not realize at the time that they lacked a valid basis for asylum. Their asylum claim was denied in 2008, leaving the Rojas family with no further options to legalize their status.

Since their arrival in the United States more than 20 years ago, the Rojas family has demonstrated a robust work ethic and a strong commitment to their community in California. They have paid their taxes and worked hard to contribute to this country.

Jorge is a hard-working individual who has been employed by BrightView Landscaping Services, formerly known as Valley Crest Landscape Maintenance, in San Jose, CA, for the past 20 years. Currently, he works on commercial landscaping projects. Jorge is well-respected by his supervisor and his peers.

Jorge, in addition to supporting his family, Jorge has volunteered his time to provide modern green landscaping and building projects at his children’s school in California. He is active in his neighborhood association, through which he worked with his neighbors to build a community center.

Oliva, in addition to raising her three children, has also been very active in the local community. She volunteers with the People Acting in Community Together, PACT, organization, where she works to prevent crime, gangs, and drug dealing in San Jose neighborhoods and schools.

Jorge Rojas, Jr., who entered the United States as an infant with his parents, is now the father of 6-year-old Meena. He is 28 years old and working at a job that allows him to support his daughter. Jorge graduated from Del Mar High School in 2007. He has obtained temporary protection from deportation through the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, Program.

Alexis, age 24, graduated from West Valley College in Saratoga, CA, and is interested in continuing his linguistics studies at San Jose State University. Tanya, age 22, is now in her second semester at San Jose State University.

Their teachers have described them as “fantastic, wonderful and gifted” students.

Perhaps one of the most compelling reasons for permitting the Rojas family to remain in the United States is the impact that their deportation would have on their four children.


Additionally, Jorge Rojas, Jr., has lived in the United States since he was a toddler. America is the only country these children have called home. It seems so clear to me that this family has embraced the American dream, and their continued presence in our country would do so much to promote the values we hold dear.

When I first introduced this bill, I received dozens of letters from the community in Northern California in support of this family. Enactment of the legislation I have reintroduced today will keep this great family together and enable each of them to continue making significant contributions to their community as well as the United States.

I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:
S. 561. A bill for the relief of Alicia Aranda De Buendia; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am reintroducing a private relief bill
on behalf of Alicia Buendia, a woman who has lived in the Fresno area of California for more than 20 years. I believe her situation merits Congress's special consideration.

She is married to Jose Buendia, and together they have raised two outstanding children, Ana Laura, age 28, and Alex, age 26, a U.S. citizen. Both children have excelled in school. Ana Laura graduated from University of California, Irvine, and Alex is currently attending the University of California, Irvine.

I previously introduced bills for Alicia, her husband, and Ana Laura. Thankfully, Jose has successfully secured lawful permanent residency for himself through cancellation of removal. This followed 7 unfortunate years of delay in the immigration courts to determine his eligibility under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 for permanent residence. Ana Laura has obtained temporary protected status from deportation through the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, Program.

However, Alicia, who is eligible to adjust status, is still awaiting a determination on a family-based immigration petition filed by her U.S. citizen son. Additionally, she would be required to file a waiver application, which could result in separation from her family.

Alicia warrants private relief and a chance to start fresh in America. She goes to work season after season in California's labor-intensive agriculture industry in Reedley, CA, where she currently works for a fruit packing company. In the more than 20 years of living in California, Alicia has dedicated herself to her family and community. She and Jose have worked hard to honestly feed their family and have raised two exceptional children who have both pursued and excelled in higher education.

Alicia now has a strong connection to her local community, serving as an active member of her church. She and Jose pay their taxes every year, have successfully paid off their mortgage, and remain free of debt. They have shown that they are responsible, maintaining health insurance, savings accounts, and retirement accounts. Without this private bill, Alicia would be separated from her lawful permanent resident husband, two children who rely on her for love, support, and guidance.

I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:
S. 562. A bill for the relief of Ruben Mkoian, Asmik Karapetian, and Arthur Mkoian; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am reintroducing private relief legislation in the 115th Congress on behalf of Ruben Mkoian, Asmik Karapetian, and their son, Arthur Mkoian. The Mkoian family has been living in Fresno, CA, for over 20 years. I continue to believe this family deserves Congress’s special consideration for such an extraordinary form of relief as a private bill.

The Mkoian family is originally from Armenia. They decided to leave Armenia for the United States in the early 1990s because of the numerous incidents in which the family experienced harassment, vandalism and threats to their well-being.

In Armenia, Ruben worked as a police sergeant on vehicle licensing. At one point, he was offered a bribe to register vehicles, which he refused and reported to his superior, the police chief. He later learned that a coworker had registered the vehicles at the request of the same chief.

After Ruben reported the bribe offer to illegally register vehicles and said he would call the police, his family store was vandaled and he received threatening phone calls telling him to keep quiet. A bottle of gasoline was thrown into his family’s residence, burning it to the ground. In April 1992, several men entered the family store and assaulted Ruben, hospitalizing him for 22 days.

Ruben, Asmik, and their son Arthur, who was 3 years old at the time, left Armenia and entered the United States on visitor visas. They applied for political asylum that same year on the grounds that they would be subject to physical attacks if returned to Armenia. It took 16 years for their case to be finalized, with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals denying their asylum case in January 2008.

At this time, Ruben, Asmik, and Arthur have exhausted every option to obtain immigration relief in the United States. While Ruben and Asmik’s other son, Arsen, is a U.S. citizen, he is too young to file a green card petition on their behalf.

It would be a terrible shame to remove this family from the United States. Asmik, the father from Armenia, who is 20 years old and a U.S. citizen, the Mkoians have worked hard to build a place for their family in California and are an integral part of their community.

The family attends St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church in Fresno. They do charity work to send medical equipment to Armenia.

Ruben works as a driver for Uber. He previously worked as a manager at a car wash business and as a truck-driver for a California trucking company that described him as “trustworthy,” “knowledgeable,” and an asset to the company. Asmik has worked as a medical assistant the past 5 years at the Fresno Shields Medical Center.

Arthur has proven to be a hard-working, smart young man who applies himself. He was recognized nationally for his scholastic achievement, having maintained a 4.0 grade point average in high school and serving as his class valedictorian. After graduating on the Dean’s Merit List from the University of California, Davis with a major in Chemistry, he is now a full-time analyst at a water testing company. He also teaches Armenian School on Saturdays at the church.

Arthur’s brother, Arsen currently attends Fresno State University, is majoring in Computer Science, and maintained a 3.8 GPA. These two young men have already accomplished so much and clearly aspire to do great things here in the United States.

Reflecting their contributions to their community, Representatives George Radanovich and Jim Costa strongly supported this family’s ability to remain in the United States. When I first introduced a private bill for the Mkoian family, I received more than 200 letters of support and dozens of calls of support from friends and community members, attesting to the positive impact that this family has had in Fresno, California.

I believe that this case warrants our compassion. I respectfully ask my colleagues to support this private legislation on behalf of the Mkoian family.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 82—CONGRATULATING THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY APPLIED PHYSICS LABORATORY ON THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE LABORATORY

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 82

Whereas, on March 10, 2017, the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (in this preamble referred to as “APL”), located in Laurel, Maryland, celebrates the 75th anniversary of the founding of APL on March 10, 1942;

Whereas, less than 4 months after the attack on the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, APL developed the perfect tracker and helped field the radio proximity fuze, one of the most closely guarded wartime secrets of the United States;

Whereas historians have ranked the development of the radio proximity fuze as one of the most important technological developments of World War II, along with the development of radar and the atomic bomb;

Whereas, during and after World War II, APL developed the first generation of Navy surface-to-air missiles and associated propulsion, guidance, control, and targeting technologies;

Whereas APL developed the initial “phased array” radar system, called AMPAR, for the Navy that provided a separate, tracking and targeting necessary to defend the ships of the United States against simultaneous aircraft and missile raids;

Whereas APL created the first satellite-based global navigation system, called Transit, the forerunner of modern GPS, to serve the ballistic missile submarine force of the United States and provide enhanced capabilities to the Navy from 1961 until the 1990s;

Whereas APL developed prototypes, experiments, ocean physics research, and engineering systems that unlocked the potential of towed sonar arrays, groundbreaking developments that revolutionized anti-submarine
warfare and guided stealth designs for multiple generations of submarines of the United States;

Whereas APL led development of the Navy’s Cooperative Engagement Capability that revolutionized air defenses by enabling ships to engage aircraft and missiles not seen by the radars of the ships by using composite tracks created from the radars of ships within the battle group;

Whereas APL developed a system called SATRACK to ensure the accuracy of the Trident II submarine-launched ballistic missiles and confidently estimate missile accuracy anywhere in the world;

Whereas APL proposed, developed, built, and operated a number of the most innovative low-cost planetary science missions of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, including—

(1) the Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (commonly known as “NEAR”) mission in 2001, the first mission to orbit an asteroid;
(2) the MESSENGER Mercury orbiter, launched in 2004; and
(3) New Horizons, which launched in 2006 and completed a historic flyby of Pluto in 2015;

Whereas APL has been responsible for hundreds of significant contributions to the most critical challenges faced by the United States with respect to national security and space exploration; and

Whereas the sustained commitment by APL to the United States and the Federal Government sponsors of APL allowed APL—

(1) to continuously provide significant contributions to critical challenges faced by the United States with respect to systems engineering and integration, technology research and development, and analysis; and
(2) to serve as the most comprehensive University Affiliated Research Center in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Laboratory;
(2) recognizes the scientific, engineering, and analytical expertise that the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory has applied to solve many of the most critical challenges faced by the United States in the areas of national security and space exploration; and
(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the director of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I have 3 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 7, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Namazis.”

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 from 2:30 p.m. room SH–219 of the Senate Hart Office Building to hold a closed hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 from 2:20 p.m.–2:30 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Senate Hart Office Building to hold a closed business meeting.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following individuals with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Frances Brie Van Cleve, a Democratic fellow, through December 31, 2017; Stephanie Teich-McGoldrick, a Democratic fellow, through December 31, 2017; Patrick Portillo, a Democratic fellow, through December 31, 2017; and Devinn Lambert, a Democratic detaillee, through December 31, 2017.

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

RAISING AWARENESS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 68.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 68) congratulating the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Laboratory.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 68) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s Record under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2017

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 8; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.J. Res. 58.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:16 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE SECRETARY OF LABOR.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

AJIT VARADARAJ PAI, OF KANSAS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS FROM JULY 1, 2016 (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONGRATULATING THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY APPLIED PHYSICS LABORATORY ON THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE LABORATORY

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 82, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 82) congratulating the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Laboratory.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 82) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s Record under “Submitted Resolutions.”)
PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH
OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, on March 7 through March 10, 2017, circumstances beyond my control necessitated my absence from the House and I, therefore, am requesting a leave of absence.

RECOGNIZING DONNA FIALA IN HONOR OF WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Ms. Fiala decided to run for the office of President of the East Naples Civic Association, where she worked to improve her community by adding picnic benches, a playground, a ball field, and outdoor lighting. Her experiences as President influenced her decision to run for Collier County Commissioner.

As Commissioner, Ms. Fiala has represented Collier County and the State of Florida for issues pertaining to the environment and safety in discussions with the National Association of Counties, and has served as chair of the Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged, which works to increase access to transportation for those who are unable to drive.

In May of 2015, the Donna Fiala Community Center at Eagle Lakes Community Park opened in East Naples. This community center serves as a safe place for children and families to gather for events and various activities. Commissioner Fiala’s commitment to helping children and adults live healthy lives has continued. She is currently working to expand the facilities at the park to include a swimming pool complex. This facility reflects her longtime interests in healthy living and improving the appearance of her community.

Commissioner Fiala’s work has improved the lives of many in Collier County. The depth and breadth of her service is nothing short of remarkable. Throughout my time in Congress representing Collier County, I’ve always found Commissioner Fiala to be a dedicated partner as we’ve worked for the betterment of the Southwest Florida community. I am lucky to be able to collaborate with such a hard working woman who cares so deeply about her community.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to know Commissioner Fiala and I greatly admire her service to Collier County. Donna is an exemplary example of a private citizen who has chosen to use her many talents in service of those around her. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

RECOGNIZING THE Honor Flight on September 11, 2016

HON. KEN BUCK
OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, in honor of America’s heroic veterans, the Honor Flight Network conducts two annual Honor Flight ceremonies to Washington, D.C. to give our nation’s heroes a day to visit and reflect at their war memorials. On September 11th of last year, Honor Flight Northern Colorado held its 17th Honor Flight that gave many of our courageous veterans this extraordinary opportunity. I am pleased to recognize the Honor Flight on September 11, 2016, honoring World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans of Northern Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, those who participated in this flight are as follows:


It is my distinct pleasure as the U.S. Representative of the 4th District of Colorado to recognize the honor, courage, and sacrifice of these heroes, along with all members of America’s Armed Forces. I thank them for their dedication and service to this nation.

RECOGNIZING MARI GARDNER IN HONOR OF WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Ms. Gardner was first elected to the Clewiston City Commission in October of 1999 and was reelected in 2003, 2008, and 2012. Ms. Gardner’s work extends far beyond her important role on the Clewiston City Commission. In 2001, Ms. Gardner was appointed Mayor of Clewiston, where she served until 2010, and was elected Mayor once again in December 2016. Her tireless efforts on behalf of the public led her to become part of Governor Rick Scott’s Economic Development Transition Team, where she worked to extend economic opportunities to Floridians across the state.

Ms. Gardner’s public service extends beyond her work on the Clewiston City Commission or her mayoral activities. Ms. Gardner is a Paul Harrison Fellow in the Clewiston Rotary Club. As a graduate of Clewiston High School, her commitment to the Clewiston community runs deep. Whether it is fighting for better schools or more economic opportunities for residents of Clewiston, it’s a safe bet that Ms. Gardner is standing up for her constituents and neighbors.

I have been privileged to work with Mali in her capacity as mayor, and been impressed time and again with her work ethic and devotion to her community.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to know Ms. Gardner and I greatly admire her service to the community. I have known Mali for many years, and she has consistently been among the most active, positive, and forward-thinking individuals I have been privileged to work with.

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

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.
I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing her and her achievements.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DOG AND CAT MEAT TRADE PROHIBITION ACT OF 2017

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Dog and Cat Meat Prohibition Act of 2017, legislation that will prohibit the slaughter and trade of dogs and cats for human consumption in the United States. It might surprise you to learn that consumption of dogs and cats is still legal in 44 states in our nation, where there are no laws prohibiting the purchasing, shipping, transporting, selling, or donating of dogs or cats to be slaughtered for human consumption. This bill will prohibit these practices and impose penalties to ensure that individuals involved in the dog or cat meat trade are held accountable.

The United States’ position on this cruel and brutal practice should be unequivocal: dogs and cats should not be killed in this country for the consumption of their meat. It is with utmost importance that the United States unifies animal cruelty laws in all 50 states and explicitly bans the killing of dogs and cats for human consumption.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this body will expediently pass this measure. Doing so will reaffirm America’s commitment to the humane treatment of our most beloved companions.

RECOGNIZING PATRICIA ANDRADE
IN HONOR OF WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women’s History Month, I rise today to honor Patricia Andrade, an activist and advocate for victims of Venezuela’s oppressive regime.

Ms. Andrade has been recognized as a tireless advocate for Venezuelan exiles arriving in South Florida. After witnessing waves of Venezuelan fleeing persecution, Ms. Andrade founded the non-profit organization Venezuela Awareness. This organization has identified the needs of families fleeing persecution and worked to address them. This includes finding living arrangements, arranging for daily needs, and securing legal assistance.

One of the initiatives of Venezuela Awareness is called Raices Venezolanas, Venezuelan Roots. This program gives donated goods to displaced Venezuelan families. By involving other families, whether of Venezuelan origin or not, this initiative creates a sense of community involvement in these families’ lives.

Currently, Ms. Andrade serves as Human Rights Director for Venezuela Awareness and issues annual reports detailing the human rights violations of the Venezuelan government. Her work on human rights abuses in Venezuela has been used by the Department of State, and her advocacy has allowed some cases to be presented to the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica. My office trusts her information and relies on her to keep us abreast of grave human rights violations under the Chavez and Maduro regimes.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to know Ms. Andrade and to recognize her remarkable work for Venezuelan exiles and for the State of Florida. Her tireless advocacy on behalf of those without many resources is admirable and has made a real impact on many. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable woman.

HONORING TERRY LYNCH

HON. PETER J. VISCOSKY
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I take this time to honor my friend, Terry Lynch, and to wish him well upon his retirement from his position as Vice President of the Heat and Frost Insulators and Welders International. He retired from his post at the end of 2016, and for his many years of service and expertise in the field, he is to be commended. Terry has devoted his life to the interests of men and women in the trades, and for his unwavering dedication, he is worthy of the highest praise.

Terry Lynch has served in numerous leadership roles throughout his illustrious career. In 1970, he began his apprenticeship with Asbestos Workers Local 17 in Chicago, Illinois, before receiving his journeyman card in 1974. In 1980, Terry was elected Vice President of Local 17, before being selected to serve as the union’s Corresponding, Recording, and Financial Secretary in 1984. Terry served in this capacity until 1986 when he was elected Trustee for Local 17’s health, welfare, pension, and annuity funds. He also served as chairman of those jointly funded trusts and for the joint apprenticeship training committee. In 1996, Mr. Lynch was chosen to serve as Business Manager of the Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers Local 17. He was elected to the position from which he retired, International Vice President at Large, in September 2002. Moreover, Terry served the international union as Legislative and Political Director and Health Hazard Administrator. Each and every day, Terry has cherished the honor and responsibility that comes with being an elected union leader. He has worked tirelessly to end the scourge of asbestos and to promote health initiatives to protect families impacted by mesothelioma and other asbestos-related health conditions. Terry has supported mechanical insulation, creating additional work opportunities for his fellow union members. Mr. Lynch is also a member and past admiral of the Pirates, a group comprised of individuals from union labor and management in Northwest Indiana dedicated to helping children with Down syndrome. Terry is truly an asset to the industry and to the community, and his dedication and steadfast devotion serve as an inspiration to us all.

Terry’s commitment to the community and his career is exceeded only by his devotion to his amazing family. Terry and his loving wife of forty-seven years, Denise, have one son, Jason, and one grandson, Connor.

I am proud that Terry Lynch is my friend, and I cannot thank him enough for all that he has done for me over the years. I am even more grateful for what he has done for so many for so long, strangers and friends alike.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring Terry Lynch for his outstanding contributions to Local 17 and the Heat and Frost Insulators International, and to wish him well upon his retirement. For many years, Terry has displayed his unwavering loyalty to members of the insulator trades, and his numerous positions have provided him the opportunity to touch the lives of countless individuals.

IN HONOR OF DR. ANN K. SNYDER

HON. KEVIN BRADY
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of a dedicated community leader and a dear friend, Dr. Ann Snyder.

Ann’s knowledge, faith, and understanding have always been her guide, which may explain her numerous accolades. A committed public servant, Ann served as President and CEO of Interfaith of The Woodlands and the Interfaith Community Clinic for over a decade. Today, she serves on The Woodlands Township and Convention and Visitors Center boards, as well as numerous others.

Ann earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Colorado State University, her Master of Education degree from the University of Missouri at Columbia, and her Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Baylor University.

Her past service as Chair of The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce, President of The Woodlands Rotary Board, and President of the National Charity League Board, in addition to her work on the boards of the YMCA, Friends of the Library, Junior League, and The Woodlands Junior Golf Association, perfectly illustrates why she was named one of Houston’s Most Influential Women in 2015.

Our future leaders hold a special place in Ann’s heart. Whether they were students in her classes at the University of Houston, building scientists participating in the Education for Tomorrow Alliance ‘science fairs, students in the Conroe Independent School District where she served on the Board of Trustees, and students at Lone Star College where she served on the facilities review committee. It is too numerous to name all the organizations Ann has helped faithfully guide.

A devoted member of The Woodlands United Methodist Church, Ann’s many community honors include: Hometown Hero, Montgomery County Woman of Distinction, South Montgomery County Person of the Year, Citizen of the Year, Rotary International’s Service-Above-Self Award, The Woodlands Paul Harris Award, Rotary Hall of Fame, and many more.

In 2013, the Conroe Independent School District ensured that future generations would know of her service by dedicating the Ann K. Snyder Elementary School. I am proud to recognize my friend and community hero, Ann
Mr. Speaker, Anthony Ferreri has spent his lifetime of work and I wish him the best in retirement serving his community and providing quality health care services.

In 2013, after being named as Executive Director of the North Shore—LIJ Health System’s Western Region, Anthony Ferreri was then appointed the Executive Vice President of Staten Island University Hospital just two years later. With his new position came additional duties, as he also became the System’s Chief Affiliation Officer and Regional Executive Director for Westchester County. His established track record of effective partnerships with area hospitals and medical centers made him an ideal choice for this position, at which he excelled.

Anthony has also proven himself a steadfast servant to his community. He has served numerous nonprofit boards, among them the Friends of May Chang Foundation, New York Organ Donor Network, and the Snug Harbor Cultural Center. Furthermore, he is the Chairman of the Board of Staten Island’s Moore Catholic High School. He has been recognized on multiple occasions for his community service. One such example is that he was only the 12th graduate of New Dorp High School to be inducted into its Hall of Fame. Moreover, he was also awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

Mr. Speaker, Anthony Ferreri has spent his life serving his community and providing quality care to hospital patients. I thank him for his lifetime of work and I wish him the best in retirement.

RECOGNIZING ANTHONY FERRERI

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.
OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Anthony Ferreri for his enduring devotion to serving others in need.

A lifelong Staten Islander, Anthony has been at the forefront of providing quality hospital care. President and CEO of Staten Island University Hospital since 2003, he has overseen the hospital’s growth with the addition of the Elizabeth A. Connelly Emergency and Trauma Center in 2009 and the Regina M. McGinn, MD Education Center in 2011. This dedication led Modern HealthCare Magazine to award Anthony its Community Leadership Award.

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Mr. Speaker, Anthony Ferreri has spent his life serving his community and providing quality care to hospital patients. I thank him for his lifetime of work and I wish him the best in retirement.

RECOGNIZING NORTHWEST INDIANA’S NEWLY NATURALIZED CITIZENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY
OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who will become citizens of the United States of America on March 10, 2017. They, too, will be American citizens, and they, too, are guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who will become citizens of the United States of America on March 10, 2017. They, too, will be American citizens, and they, too, are guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.
Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Mr. M. Wayne Hutton. After more than 30 years of serving in law enforcement, Mr. Hutton is retiring as Supervising District Attorney Investigator in Merced. Mr. Hutton's long and distinguished career has earned him recognition among law enforcement officials throughout the San Joaquin Valley and California. He has undoubtedly paved a legacy in public service within our community.

Mr. Hutton's career is characterized by a strong work ethic and a passion for justice. Mr. Hutton began his law enforcement career as a Special Agent in the United States Air Force Office of Special Investigations. During his time as a Special Agent, Mr. Hutton was honored and awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal, four Achievement Medals, and the National Defense Medal. He then went on to serve as a Deputy Sheriff in the Merced County Sheriff's Department. He received a Sheriff's Commendation for implementing the first Citizen's Law Enforcement course, which included the Indiana Commission for Continuing Legal Education, Indiana Trial Lawyers Association, Continuing Legal Education, Indiana Trial Lawyers Association, and the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association.

Justice Rucker's colleagues could not hold him in higher esteem, stating that “His work stands as a powerful illustration of the guidance courts provide for the peaceful resolution of disputes encompassing nearly every facet of Hoosier life.” They have said that what is most admirable about him is his commitment to seek equality for all people. “He always had the courage and fortitude to protect the rights of all, regardless of their state in life. He has the ability to stand in the shoes of any person and understand their plight.” For his lifetime of leadership and his truly inspiring career in public service, Justice Rucker is to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the career and achievement of Mr. M. Wayne Hutton. Mr. Hutton has proven to be an inspiring and hardworking individual for Merced County, and I am confident he will continue to demonstrate his passion for public service in the next chapter of his life.
CELEBRATING MARIACHI AZUL Y PLATA'S STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. FILEMON VELA OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mariachi Azul Y Plata of the Ben Bolt Palito Blanco Independent School District for recently winning its second consecutive state mariachi championship in Class 2A.

Ben Bolt High School and the people of South Texas are proud of the musicians of Mariachi Azul Y Plata for their hard work and impressive talent. This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication of these young men and women. Through their tireless efforts, Ben Bolt has set the bar for generations of high school mariachi musicians to come.

The mariachi band is composed of 23 students, who jointly participated in auditions against other schools to attend the competition. Azul Y Plata excelled in their division and continue to embrace the Mariachi culture for years to come.

Congratulations again to the Palito Blanco High School Mariachi band in Ben Bolt for their tremendous achievement.

HONORING CONNERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL SPARTANS BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LUKE MESSER OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Connersville High School on its 2017 IHSAA Class 4A Sectional 9 championship in boys basketball.

The Spartans faced off against the New Castle Trojans, with a standing room only crowd watching, at historic New Castle Fieldhouse, the world’s largest high school gymnasium.

I am proud of these young men for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout this exciting season. I want to commend Coach Kerry Brown as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young men to victory.

Congrats, Spartans.

TRIBUTE TO D.M. MILLER
HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR. OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, one of the finest men I have ever known, Mr. D.M. Miller, was the subject of a lengthy article in the Knoxville News-Sentinel.

The article told of his 48 years in education in my hometown of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Mr. Miller touched thousands of lives in good and positive ways during his career as a teacher, coach, principal, administrator, and school board member.

This country is in a better place today because of the life and service of D.M. Miller.

I include in the Record, the story told by Mr. Miller in the Knoxville News-Sentinel from March 2, 2017.

(From The Knoxville News-Sentinel, Mar. 2, 2017)

(Rebecca D. Williams)

You might say D.M. Miller of Knoxville, 91, a longtime educator, coach, was in school most of his life.

“I remember seeing my first basketball game, at South Middle School, where my aunt was playing. I was 6 or 7 years old,” he said.

“I was born in Roane County on Oct. 22, 1925. My parents were Ben and Stella Schubarmer. My dad had a fourth-grade education and my mom had a fifth,” he said.

By the time he was 10, the family moved to Knoxville and lived in Lonsdale. “This was during the (Great) Depression, and everybody was poor. My dad was a machinist, a motor mechanic, an electrician and a carpenter. He was without work at times,” Miller said.

When he was a student at Lonsdale Elementary School, Miller remembers the marching band from Rule High School going on ‘strike’ and marching around Lonsdale, to protest the fact that Rule only had 10 grades. The kids were in 12 grades so they wouldn’t have to walk to Knox High School, Miller said.

Rule High School had 12 grades by the time Miller got there. He lettered in basketball, track and baseball, and was captain of the football team and vice president of his senior class in 1944. After graduation, Miller joined the U.S. Navy, during World War II.

“Everybody wanted to join up,” he said. “My mom wouldn’t let me drop out of high school to go in. I graduated from Rule High School on a Friday and went right in the Navy, a boatswain’s mate.”

Miller served on the U.S.S. Gomer, an amphibious invasion and casualty evacuation ship in the Pacific. The ship was part of the Okinawa invasion. “There were four of us boys from Rule High School over there, and two of them got killed in Okinawa. We thought we were going to invade Japan, but thank goodness (the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb) and the war ended,” Miller said.

“Then, they sent us to Corregidor (Philippines), and we picked up 2,700 American, Canadian and British prisoners of war. None of them weighed a hundred pounds. They were skeletons,” he remembered.

After the war, Miller returned to Tennessee and enrolled in Maryville College on the G.I. Bill. He majored in education. “All the veterans had come back from the war, and we had a pretty good ball club,” he said. “I played on an undefeated team and in the Tangerine Bowl, a forerunner of the Citrus Bowl, in 1946.”

As a senior, he met Viola “Vi” Marshall, at a dance. “I saw her dancing and cut in,” he said. “We started going together and got married June 2, 1952.”

In 1990, Miller was hired back at his alma mater, Rule High School, as an assistant coach of several sports and teacher of math, science and health. He eventually became the head football coach of the “Golden Bears.”

When the drafting teacher died unexpectedly on a Friday, Miller was asked to take over his class. He had only had one class in drafting in high school, but he studied all weekend to get ready,” he said. “I taught on Monday.”

Mr. Miller went back to the University of Tennessee at night for a master’s degree in administration and became assistant principal of Rule High School for four years, and then principal from 1965 through 1977. It was a time of racial integration of the schools.

“We had on one side of us Lonsdale Homes, and on the other side was College Homes. And in between there were Western Heights, the largest low-income housing project in the area. So we started integrating in 1970. I enrolled 1,625 kids in a school that would hold 1,000. Eight hundred were black. We had the Black Panthers on campus; we had to run them out. It was not easy. I broke up the first fight,” he said.

Discipline back then involved a ‘long paddie,” Miller said. “Our kids were used to it. Mamas would call me and say, ‘Handle it.’ You have to be fair and firm and consistent. There’s no in-between,” he said.

After being principal, Miller was asked to work in the Knoxville City Schools administration as the administrative assistant to the superintendent. He also served on the control board of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association for nine years, during which time he helped TSSAA build an office in Hermitage, reclassify schools, and implement Title IX. He was inducted into its Hall of Fame as an administrator in 1994.

Miller retired after almost 35 years in the city school system, and was elected to the Knoxville City School Board in 1986. The city and county schools merged in 1987, and Miller was elected to the consolidated board for his second term. “I’m the only man to have served on both,” he said.

The Millers had three children, a daughter in 1962, and two sons. Even though he was an educator, Miller’s daughter could not go to public schools.

“Our daughter, Elizabeth, we call her Libby, was born handicapped. They told us we should put her in an institution. We just couldn’t bear to let her go, so we raised her.

”The (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) hadn’t come into effect yet. So she never had any education. We couldn’t get her in a regular school. Her speech was a problem. We had her at every speech clinic, and we had her to doctor after doctor, but she never went to school,” he said.

Libby Miller is 64 today. She lives with the Millers and attends the Miller Center each day for adults with intellectual disabilities.

In retirement, Miller has been very active in his church, New Hope Presbyterian. And Miller still keeps in touch with other students from Rule High School, and joined Rule Alumni in 1991. In 2015, the Rule Alumni honored Miller with a “Greatest Among Us” Award.

“I counted it up one time, and I’ve been in education about 48 years,” he said. “Given my mom and dad’s education, it’s a miracle.”

HONORING 2016 “MR. AMIGO” FERNANDO LANDEROS VERDUGO
HON. FILEMON VELA OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Charro Days Fiesta and commend the 2016 “Mr. Amigo,” chosen by the Mr. Amigo Association of Brownsville, Texas, and Mr. Amigo, Florence P. Vela.

Fernando Landeros Verdugo is a caring philanthropist and founder of the Fundación Teleón. His institution’s efforts have united both Latin America and the U.S. over the last
20 years with the purpose of providing opportunities to children with disabilities and their families. His hard work has gained him the admiration of many, and he is an excellent choice to represent the spirit of friendship.

First awarded in 1964, the title of "Mr. Amigo" is an annual tribute to an outstanding Mexican citizen who has made a lasting contribution during the previous year to international solidarity and goodwill. "Mr. Amigo" acts as an ambassador between the United States and Mexico and presides over the annual Chorro Days Fiesta.

Chorro Days dates back to 1937, when the citizens of Brownsville organized the event in the midst of the Great Depression to celebrate the cultural heritage shared between Brownsville and its sister city across the Rio Grande, Matamoros. The first Chorro Days celebration featured a parade with horse-drawn floats and participants dressed in traditional Mexican costumes reminiscent of charros, or Mexican cowboys.

From these humble beginnings, Chorro Days has evolved into a multi-day event, which includes dances, fiestas, a children's parade, and the Gateway International Parade. Thousands of participants from both sides of the border celebrate these traditions each year.

The 80th annual Chorro Days celebration commenced on February 19th, with a grito, or celebratory yell, and on February 25th, the Mayor of Brownsville and the Mayor of Matamoros met at the Gateway International Bridge to extend their hands across the border, symbolizing the friendship between the two cities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to honor the Chorro Days Fiesta and for joining me in recognizing the importance of this annual celebration, which continues to strengthen the relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros, and the bonds between the United States and Mexico.

HONORING GREENSBURG COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL PIRATES BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LUKE MESSER
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Greensburg Community High School on its 2017 IHSSA Class 3A Sectional 29 championship in boys' basketball.

The Pirates faced off against the Lawrenceburg Tigers on their home court and defeated them 55–41.

I am proud of these young men for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout this exciting season. I want to commend Coach Stacy Meyer as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young men to victory.

Congrats, Pirates.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL BALISTRIERE

HON. GWEN MOORE
OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael "Mike" Balistriere who is retiring from Milwaukee Area Labor Council on March 17, 2017. Mike is a labor leader, veteran, father and advocate.

Mike Balistriere has been a proud union member since 1969 when he began his career at Evinrude Motors. Mike served in Vietnam as a United States Marine from 1969–1971 and returned to Evinrude after his service. He became an active member with the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 1302, while at Evinrude and was elected Chief Steward in 1974 and served on the bargaining committee for 15 years. As a member of USW Local 1302, Mike served on a variety of committees at the behest of his union.

Mr. Balistriere was called upon by his International Union to help with the Firestone/Bridgestone strike as part of a statewide committee. The United Steelworkers won that hard fought fight benefiting the workers which led to the merger of the United Steelworkers and Rubber Workers. In 1997, Mike left Evinrude to assume the position of Community Service Liaison at the United Way of Greater Milwaukee and later for the Milwaukee Area Labor Council.

In his position as Community Service Liaison, Mr. Balistriere has served as a member of the AFL-CIO Union Veterans Council, Co-Founder of the Veterans Community Relations Team, and Treasurer for the War Memorial Board. Further, he worked closely with the HIRE Center, Wisconsin Election Protection, and chaired the St. Bens Annual Cook Out for the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County for the past 10 years.

Some of Mike's notable achievements include preventing the hostile takeover of the Milwaukee County War Memorial, moving the statue of General MacArthur to the lakeshore, meeting with the Japanese, Korean, Australian, and the Philippines consulates in Chicago about the Gen. MacArthur Memorial Lakefront Event. One of Mike Balistriere's proudest moments was to lead the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance before President Barack Obama speeches at both the Bradley Center and Laborfest.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to know Mike Balistriere and work with him for many years on labor issues, veterans' issues and voting rights. I join with friends and his family, Sarah, and Nathan to congratulate him as he transitions into a different phase of his life.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Mike Balistriere and to call him friend. The citizens of the Fourth Congressional District and the State of Wisconsin are privileged to have someone of his ability and dedication serving the workers of this district for so many years. I thank him for all that he has done. I am honored for these reasons to pay tribute to Mike Balistriere.

HONORING DR. Lester Tenney

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Lester Irwin Tenney of Carlsbad, California, who recently passed away on February 24, 2017 at the age of 96. I am proud to recognize his memory as his Congressman and admire his life's work to strengthen ties with our allies in Japan.

Dr. Tenney served our nation during World War II on the 192nd Tank Battalion in the Philippines. Immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, his battalion continuously fought against the Japanese assault until his command surrendered on April 9, 1942. He became a Prisoner of War and survived the infamous Bataan Death March, while thousands of his American and Filipino counterparts perished. He was then forced to work in a Japanese coal mine until the conclusion of the war. Upon returning to the U.S., Dr. Tenney studied business at San Diego State University, taught finance at Arizona State University, and started his own financial planning firm.

After publishing his memoirs documenting the atrocities he experienced as a POW, Dr. Tenney made it his mission to forgive his captors and establish friendships with Japanese citizens. As national commander of the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, he met the Japanese Ambassador to the United States,
Ichiro Fujisaki, and arranged for a public apology on behalf of Japan to the surviving POWs. He also worked with the Japanese government to establish the U.S.-Japan POW Friendship Program, which allows former POWs and their families to visit Japan annually. Finally, Dr. Tenney received a personal apology from Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2015 and just last month received a letter of apology from Mitsubishi Materials Corporation, one of the companies that profited from POW labor at the time. I have been fortunate enough to know Dr. Tenney. His courage and tenacity are an inspiration to all, and his moving story demonstrates how much impact one person can have on world affairs.

Dr. Tenney’s legacy is admirable and his impressive achievements in U.S.-Japan relations will be remembered for years to come. He is survived by his wife, Betty, and his son, two stepsons, seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. I extend my condolences to his family in this difficult time.

HONORING NORTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL KNIGHTS BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LUKE MESSER
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Northeastern High School on its 2017 IHSAA Class 2A Sectional 41 championship in boys’ basketball.

The Knights faced off against the Union County Patriots, defeating them 54–41. I am proud of these young men for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout this exciting season. I want to commend Coach Brent Ross as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young men to victory.

Congrats, Knights.

HONORING THE LIFELONG CONTRIBUTIONS OF PAUL KALINIAN

HON. JIM COSTA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Fresno Paul Kalinian, a philanthropic and award winning filmmaker known especially for his documentary on Armenian-American William Saroyan.

Paul Kalinian was born in Beirut, Lebanon on February 14, 1932, but spent the majority of his childhood in Damascus, Syria. At age 14, he discovered his passion for photography and began learning the skill at the Photo Gulbenk Studio in Damascus. Four years later, he returned to Beirut, opening his first photography studio, Photo Paul in 1961. In 1964, he moved to Canada, then to the United States to further pursue a future in photography and filmmaking. Attending the New York Institute of Photography, Paul received degrees in Photography and Motion Picture Production in 1967. That same year, he returned to Beirut to marry his longtime sweetheart, Araxie Deuveltian. They immigrated to the United States and were blessed with twins: a son Harold and a daughter Susie, making Fresno, California their permanent home, the birthplace of his childhood hero William Saroyan.

In 1972, Paul opened his second studio, Paul’s Photography Studio, in Fresno, California. Throughout the years, he photographed countless people from all walks of life, from politicians and generals, to models, musicians and clergy leaders. His works have been published in over a dozen books, and numerous newspapers and magazines, and have been displayed in over a dozen different locations such as government buildings, museums, schools and libraries.

Aside from having a passion for photography, Paul had a dream of one day being able to photograph internationally renowned Armenian-American Pulitzer Prize and Oscar winner, William Saroyan. After 12 years of chasing this dream, Paul was finally able to capture portraits of the famous writer and playwright on March 26, 1978. One such characteristic portrait was selected by the United States and Soviet Union Postal Services, among 400 other photographs, to be used for their Commemorative Postal Stamps. This was the first time in history that an individual was selected as a humanitarian symbol of peace and friendship between two superpower nations. First-day-issue ceremonies took place simultaneously on May 22, 1991 in Fresno, California and in Yerevan, Armenia.

After William Saroyan’s death in 1981, Paul created a 22 minute presentation of Saroyan’s portraits, along with his narration “How I shot Saroyan,” which was shown over 100 times in various cities, and televised on public stations. In light of the positive response, Paul and his daughter, Dr. Susie Kalinian, decided to collaborate and create a documentary film about Saroyan’s life and works, narrated by another famous Fresno whom Kalinians admires and respects, television and motion picture star, actor Mike Connors. Entitled William Saroyan; The Man The Writer, the film was written and directed by Paul and produced by his daughter. It is a symbol of Paul’s admiration for Saroyan as one of the greatest writers of our time. The film was produced to preserve and present Saroyan’s works, recognize his dual cultural heritage, and spread his message of peace and hope around the world. The film, a labor of love, won numerous awards of recognition, including six international film festival awards and a Gold Award for Best Documentary Film among 12 competing nations. The film premiered on April 9, 1991 in Fresno at the William Saroyan Theatre. Today, over one million people have seen the film in more than 60 cities in 19 countries around the world. This film not only pays tribute to Saroyan, but pays tribute to Armenians and Fresno, California.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating a man who has dedicated his life to preserving American and Armenian culture through the art of photography and film. It is both fitting and appropriate that we recognize Paul Kalinian for his educational and philanthropic contributions to his community, his country, and our world. I join Paul’s family in wishing him health and happiness for years to come.

HONORING SOUTH RIPLEY RAIDERS BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the tenth anniversary of PublicResource.Org, a nonprofit organization promoting openness and transparency in all three branches of the federal government.

In the past decade, organizations like Public Resource have been instrumental in utilizing modern technology and the Internet as vehicles to make the proceedings and reports of the House of Representatives readily available to the general public. While I served as Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, our staff worked with Public Resource to upload a video archive of all its deliberations to the Internet and used official transcripts to add closed captioning to our hearings. In addition to the Oversight Committee, their team uploaded over 3,000 hearings from all committees to the Internet Archive, particularly documenting activity in the House from 2005 through 2011.

In the Judicial Branch, Public Resource published all the historical opinions of the U.S. Court of Appeals and millions of pages of briefs from significant judicial opinions. They also worked with numerous executive agencies, including the Department of Defense, the Archivist of the United States, the National Technical Information Service, and the Internal Revenue Service to post thousands of government videos and upload over 9 million tax documents of nonprofit organizations for the public record.

As the organization celebrates this milestone, I would like to congratulate Public Resource for its service to Congress and the ongoing effort to provide American citizens with the tools they need to scrutinize the activities of the federal government.
HON. ROBERT E. LATTA
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the City of Findlay, Ohio for being named a 2016 Top Micropolitan Community in the United States. This is the third year in a row that Findlay has been selected by Site Selection magazine for this honor.

Site Selection ranks micropolitan areas, which have populations ranging between 10,000 and 50,000, by evaluating different sets of criteria for opportunities to provide proven sustainable success. Findlay, once again, ranked highest out of these cities with 22 projects that secure and grow the local economic growth of the community.

Findlay has made quite a name for itself by focusing their efforts on steady economic development. Site Selection has deemed this the “Findlay Formula,” the building of strong, reliable partnerships from the local government arena to both business and nonprofit organizations.

Mr. Speaker, the success in Findlay is a testament to the strong leadership and tight-knit community that exists in Hancock County. I’m excited about potential future development and the benefits it will bring to residents and businesses that are proud to call Findlay home. Congratulations once again to the City of Findlay for being named a top Micropolitan community.

HON. LUKE MESSER
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Hauser High School on its 2017 IHSAA Class 1A Sectional 60 championship in boys’ basketball.

The Jets faced off against the Oldenburg Academy Twisters, defeating them 64–61. I am proud of these young men for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout this exciting season. I want to commend Coach Bob Nobbe as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young men to victory.

Congrats, Jets.

HONORING PACKANACK LAKE FIRE COMPANY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th Anniversary of the Packanack Lake Fire Company No. 5, located in Wayne, New Jersey.

Beginning in 1942, during the midst of World War II, the Packanack Lake community of 500 homes at the time was very concerned about the threat of attacks from the Axis powers. Six residents found the need for a local fire department in order to provide protection to the community. The residents applied for use of Civil Defense equipment. With great effort, they were organized as a civil defense unit and equipment was allocated. Funds were later loaned in order to purchase a truck from a nearby fire company in Mountain View, New Jersey. Over the years two more trucks were added; increasing the capabilities of the fire company. In 1946, the state of New Jersey passed legislation that officially recognized the Packanack Lake Fire and Emergency Squad as a fire company, and allowed Wayne Township to allocate extra funds to the emergency squad. After several expansions of the emergency squad, the need for a fire house emerged. Property was donated by Packanack Homes and a two story fire house was built by the volunteer firefighters themselves. Materials were gathered from nearby demolished buildings and construction was complete by 1948. While construction was nearing completion the spouses of the volunteers formed the Packanack Lake Ladies Auxiliary who dedicated their time raising funds and supporting the fire company. And, the Auxiliary remains very active today!

Today, the fire company is a prominent entity in Packanack Lake. Membership has never been higher and they are now equipped with four trucks and one heavy rescue truck. With over 700 calls a year the fire company is always utilizing these resources to the best of their abilities. From six residents who saw the necessity to protect their community, grew a fine fire company who still supports and protects their community.

Like all fire companies, the Packanack Lake Company is more than fighting fires. From serving as a safe haven during natural disasters, floods in particular, the first to respond to home emergencies, and to functioning as a social hub for the community to connect with one another, I commend Company #5 for its distinguished 75 years and its support of the four other Wayne companies and their mutual aid to neighboring towns.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in congratulating Packanack Lake Fire and Emergency Squad No. 5 on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary.
Chamber Action
Routine Proceedings, pages S1607–S1647

Measures Introduced: Twenty-seven bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 536–562, S.J. Res. 34, and S. Res. 82. Pages S1638–39

Measures Passed:

Federal Land Policy and Management Act Rule: By 51 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. 82), Senate passed H.J. Res. 44, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Pages S1609–25

Modern Slavery: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 68, raising awareness of modern slavery, and the resolution was then agreed to. Page S1647

Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory 75th Anniversary: Senate agreed to S. Res. 82, congratulating the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Laboratory. Page S1647

Measures Considered:

Department of Education Rule—Agreement: Senate began consideration of H.J. Res. 58, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues, after agreeing to the motion to proceed. Pages S1625–33

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the joint resolution at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, March 8, 2017. Pages S1625, S1647

Small Business Capital Formation Enhancement Act Referral—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be discharged from further consideration of S. 416, to amend the Small Business Investment Incentive Act of 1980 to require an annual review by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the annual government-business forum on capital formation, and the bill be referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. Page S1623

Verma Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Seema Verma, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services. Page S1625

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, March 9, 2017. Page S1625

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. Page S1625

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

R. Alexander Acosta, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor.

Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2016. Page S1647

Messages from the House: Page S1635

Measures Referred: Pages S1635–36

Executive Communications: Pages S1636–38

Executive Reports of Committees: Page S1638

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S1639–41

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S1641–47

Additional Statements:

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Page S1647

Privileges of the Floor: Page S1647

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—82) Page S1625

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:16 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 8, 2017. (For Senate’s program, see the
remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today’s Record on page S1647.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

RUSSIA’S POLICIES AND INTENTIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs concluded a hearing to examine a broader understanding of Russia’s policies and intentions toward specific countries in Europe, after receiving testimony from Pavlo Klimkin, Ukraine Minister of Foreign Affairs; Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States; Andris Teikmanis, Ambassador of Latvia to the United States; David Bakradze, Ambassador of Georgia to the United States; Rolandas Krisčiunas, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the United States; and Eerik Marmei, Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to the United States.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Lt. Gen. Herbert R. McMaster Jr., USA, for reappointment to be Lieutenant General.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Rod J. Rosenstein, of Maryland, to be Deputy Attorney General, who was introduced by Senators Cardin and Van Hollen, and Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General, who was introduced by Senators Grassley and Ernst, both of the Department of Justice, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 46 public bills, H.R. 1374–1419; and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 173, 176–177 were introduced. Pages H1592–94

Additional Cosponsors: Pages H1595–96

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows: H.R. 375, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse” (H. Rept. 115–23); H.R. 1174, to provide a lactation room in public buildings (H. Rept. 115–24); H.R. 985, to amend the procedures used in Federal court class actions and multidistrict litigation proceedings to assure fairer, more efficient outcomes for claimants and defendants, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–25); H. Res. 174, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1301) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–26); and H. Res. 175, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 725) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder (H. Rept. 115–27).

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Simpson to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H1539

Recess: The House recessed at 12:48 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. Page H1544

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Gary Studniewski, St. Peter’s Catholic Church, Washington, DC. Page H1544

Recess: The House recessed at 2:13 p.m. and reconvened at 5 p.m. Page H1545

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures: Naming the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa’aua’a Hunkin VA Clinic: H.R. 1362, to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa’aua’a Hunkin VA Clinic, by a 2⁄3 yea-and-nay vote of 411 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 127; Pages H1545–47, H1571

Designating the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in
Nashville, Tennessee, as the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse”: H.R. 375, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 719 Church Street in Nashville, Tennessee, as the “Fred D. Thompson Federal Building and United States Courthouse”;

Fairness For Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2017: H.R. 1174, amended, to provide a lactation room in public buildings; and

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017: S. 442, to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Question of Privilege: Representative Eshoo rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted a resolution. The Chair ruled that the resolution did not present a question of the privileges of the House. Subsequently, Representative Eshoo appealed the ruling of the chair and Representative McCarthy moved to table the appeal. Agreed to the motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair by a recorded vote of 227 ayes to 186 noes with 1 answering “present”, Roll No. 128.

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on pages H1571.

Quorum Calls Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1571, H1573–74. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Committee Meetings

INNOCENT PARTY PROTECTION ACT; DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Committee On Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 725, the “Innocent Party Protection Act”; H.R. 1301, the “Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017”. The committee granted, by voice vote, a closed rule for H.R. 1301. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instruction. Testimony was heard from Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Representatives Visclosky, King of Iowa, and Cohen.

SHAPING THE FUTURE: CONSOLIDATING AND IMPROVING VA COMMUNITY CARE

Committee On Veterans’ Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Shaping the Future: Consolidating and Improving VA Community Care.” Testimony was heard from Senator McCain; David J. Shulkin, M.D., Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs; Michael J. Missal, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Randy Williamson, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine investing in America, focusing on funding our nation’s transportation infrastructure needs, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine saving lives through medical research, 10:30 a.m., SD–138.
Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, to receive a closed briefing on cybersecurity from the Defense Science Board, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine the global nuclear weapons environment, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine an original bill entitled, “Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act”, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Elaine C. Duke, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: to hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian affairs priorities for the Trump Administration, 2:15 p.m., SD–628.

House

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing entitled “Members’ Day”, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, hearing for public witnesses, 10 a.m., 2358–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on quality of life in the military, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Military Assessment of Nuclear Deterrence Requirements”, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.


Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled “An Independent Fleet Assessment of the U.S. Navy”, 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1304, the “Self-Insurance Protection Act”; H.R. 1101, the “Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2017”; and H.R. 1313, the “Preserving Employee Wellness Programs Act”, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Full Committee, markup on a committee print of Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Repeal and Replace of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; and H. Res. 154, of inquiry requesting the President of the United States and directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to transmit certain information to the House of Representatives relating to plans to repeal or replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the health-related measures of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, 10:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.


Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, markup on a committee funding resolution, 10:45 a.m., 1310 Longworth.


Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1293, to amend title 5, United States Code, to require that the Office of Personnel Management submit an annual report to Congress relating to the use of official time by Federal employees; the “Official Time Reform Act of 2017”; H.R. 653, the “Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017”; H.R. 680, the “Eliminating Pornography from Agencies Act”; H. Res. 38, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that offices attached to the seat of Government should not be required to exercise their offices in the District of Columbia; the “SOAR Reauthorization Act”; H.R. 745, the “Federal Records Modernization Act of 2017”; and the “Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Government Operations; and Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled “Examining IRS Customer Service Challenges”, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 720, the “Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2017”; H.R. 985, the “Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act of 2017”, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Space, hearing entitled “Regulating Space: Innovation, Liberty, and International Obligations”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Small Business Cybersecurity: Federal Resources and Coordination”, 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Air Transportation in
the United States in the 21st Century”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 369, to eliminate the sunset of the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes; H.R. 1181, the “Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act”; H.R. 1259, the “VA Accountability First Act of 2017”; H.R. 1367, to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physician and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the entitlement to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs for members of the Armed Forces awarded the Purple Heart, 11 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, markup on Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Remuneration from Certain Insurers; Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Repeal of Tanning Tax; Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Repeal of Certain Consumer Taxes; Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Repeal of Net Investment Income Tax; and Budget Reconciliation Legislative Recommendations Relating to Repeal and Replace of Health-Related Tax Policy, 10:30 a.m., 1100 Longworth.
Next Meeting of the SENATE
9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 8

Senate Chamber
Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of H.J. Res. 58, Department of Education Rule.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 a.m., Wednesday, March 8

House Chamber
Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 1301—Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017 (Subject to a Rule). Consideration of measures under suspension of the Rules.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

| HOUSE | Diaz-Balart, Mario, Fla., E279, E279, E280 |
| Brady, Kevin, Tex., E280 |
| Buck, Ken, Colo., E279 |
| Costa, Jim, Calif., E282, E285 |
| Costello, Ryan A., Pa., E286 |
| Donovan, Daniel M., Jr, N.Y., E281 |
| Duncan, John J., Jr., Tenn., E283 |
| Frelinghuysen, Rodney P., N.J., E286 |
| Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E280 |
| Issa, Darrell, Calif., E284, E285 |
| Moore, Gwen, Wisc., E284 |
| Rush, Bobby L., Ill., E279 |
| Vela, Filemon, Tex., E283, E283, E284 |
| Visclosky, Peter J., Ind., E280, E281, E281, E282 |
| Latta, Robert E., Ohio, E286 |

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| Buck, Ken, Colo., E279 |
| Costa, Jim, Calif., E282, E285 |
| Costello, Ryan A., Pa., E286 |
| Donovan, Daniel M., Jr, N.Y., E281 |
| Duncan, John J., Jr., Tenn., E283 |
| Frelinghuysen, Rodney P., N.J., E286 |
| Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E280 |
| Issa, Darrell, Calif., E284, E285 |
| Moore, Gwen, Wisc., E284 |
| Rush, Bobby L., Ill., E279 |
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| Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E280 |
| Issa, Darrell, Calif., E284, E285 |
| Moore, Gwen, Wisc., E284 |
| Rush, Bobby L., Ill., E279 |
| Vela, Filemon, Tex., E283, E283, E284 |
| Visclosky, Peter J., Ind., E280, E281, E281, E282 |
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