

Jeffrey Rosen, to be Deputy Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Mr. Rosen has extensive experience serving at both the Office of Management and Budget and at the Department of Transportation. When he last came before the Senate to be the Chief Legal Officer of the Department of Transportation, he was confirmed by voice vote. It is disappointing that we had to file cloture on this bipartisan choice this time around.

Mr. Rosen's work in both the private and public sectors has given him a unique insight into the budgetary and regulatory challenges that infrastructure projects face. I look forward to the Senate advancing his nomination later this afternoon.

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Rosen nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 55, Terry Branstad to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

Mitch McConnell, Jeff Flake, Bob Corker, Roger F. Wicker, Cory Gardner, Marco Rubio, John Boozman, Pat Roberts, Joni Ernst, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Rob Portman, John Thune, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Rosen nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first let me thank my friend and colleague from Iowa for letting me go forward. The two Charles in the Senate work together whenever we can.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

First, Mr. President, I want to thank our Capitol Police, the New York police, and police around the country for the outstanding work they do. Much like our troops overseas, our law enforcement officers risk their lives for our safety.

As we welcome many police officers to the Capitol this week, I would like to express, on behalf of the Senate, our gratitude for their service, their sacrifice, and their countless daily acts of courage. Particularly, I want to say that in New York City, where we are so proud that crime is the lowest of the 25 largest cities in the country, we thank our New York City Police Department for a job well done. I would also like to thank the many police departments, sheriffs' offices, and so many others of our law enforcement in the State of New York. I have gotten to know them, respect them, and admire them as human beings and for the job they do.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Getting back to a less happy subject, Mr. President, the events of last week tested some of the fundamental precepts of our democratic system, including the rule of law and the independence of our law enforcement agencies that were designed to be a check on any abuse of power.

The President of the United States fired the FBI Director, who was conducting an active investigation of the President's campaign and its ties to Russia. The Attorney General, who had recused himself from that investigation, played a role in that dismissal and continues to be involved in the selection of the new FBI Director. The White House gave pretextual reasons for the firing, which were contradicted by the President himself a few days later when he admitted that he had planned to fire Director Comey for weeks and that he was thinking about Russia when he did it. The President then suggested there were tapes of conversations between himself and Director Comey, threatening to release them if Mr. Comey spoke to the press.

These are not the actions of an administration that respects the rule of law or treasures fidelity to the truth. These are not the actions of an administration that is eager for and even open to an independent investigation into a very serious matter—the interference of our elections by a foreign adversary.

The Founding Fathers, in their infinite wisdom—the more I am around, the more I am impressed with them, and I was impressed to begin with—designed three coequal branches of government with appropriate powers to check and balance the others. The Founding Fathers explicitly worried about foreign powers trying to influence our elections and government. They actually wrote into the Constitution protections against that very threat. Their concerns, expressed over 240 years ago, gain new prominence and meaning today, perhaps more than at any time in the past.

We in Congress—both parties—need to exercise the powers afforded to us by the Constitution to check and balance. We need to see that we get all the facts. We need to see that the Russia investigation is allowed to proceed as independently and as impartially as possible. We need to hold this administration accountable for any abuse of their powers.

So first of all, if there are “tapes” as the President has suggested, he should turn them over immediately to Congress and the investigators. To destroy them would be a violation of law. If there are no tapes, he should apologize to James Comey and to the American people for misleading them.

Second, the fact that the President has said that he may have taped Mr. Comey makes the need for a special prosecutor all the more important. If it is true, if there are tapes, a special prosecutor would have the ability to

obtain these tapes undeterred, and then he would examine them to see what wrongdoing, if any, has occurred.

The reasons for a special prosecutor are compelling. A special prosecutor is not subject to day-to-day supervision by the Attorney General or anyone else at the Justice Department. He or she would have greater latitude in whom they can subpoena, which questions to ask, and how to conduct the investigation. He or she would have purview to investigate, not only the subject but also anyone who attempts to interfere with the investigation. There is built-in congressional oversight, and Congress is notified whenever a special prosecutor is appointed, removed, or finished with the investigation. He or she can only be removed for cause, not to quash an investigation.

With the events of the past week—and given that we have different stories coming out of this administration from different people—the need to have someone who is independent and far away from any of the actors, to get to the bottom of this, is so important. Firing the FBI Director is extremely rare and deeply troubling. We need the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Third, we in the Congress need to hear testimony from Director Comey, as well as be briefed by Attorney General Sessions and Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein. I understand that Director Comey declined an invitation to testify tomorrow, but I have no reason to believe he won't be willing to come before the Senate in the future. I hope that he will sooner rather than later and that those appearances are in a public setting. This week, on Thursday, Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein will brief the full Senate on the events of the last week. Again, I thank the majority leader for joining me in that request. Again, I hope we can make as much of that information public as possible. The American people deserve to know the truth just as much, if not more, than the Senate does.

My caucus still believes that Attorney General Sessions must be made available to the Senate in a similar capacity, given his reported role in firing Director Comey and in helping select his replacement. Considering his recusal from the Russia investigation, his close involvement in these events warrants the Senate's questioning as well. To repeat, we need the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Russian meddling is so serious, and it is no place for partisan fighting.

Frankly, we need our Republican colleagues to help to get to the bottom of what happened in the 2016 elections and to hold this or any administration accountable when they don't tell the truth. If only one party is doing the talking, the issue will seem too partisan to the American people. A subject as important as this one—the tampering of our elections by a foreign power, a matter the Founders fretted

about at the dawning of the Republic—shouldn't be colored by partisan politics.

It is time to put country before party. We need our Republican friends to help us call upon the White House to get an independent investigation on Russia. We need them to speak out when the White House misleads the public. No less than the integrity of our system of government and the rule of law is at stake.

TRUMP CARE

Mr. President, a word on healthcare. As the Senate Republican caucus debates what to do on healthcare, they should take a hard look at the consequences of the House Republican bill on individual Americans. Last week, Senate Democrats met with four Americans who shared their stories and explained how they would be hurt by TrumpCare. Because of the furor over Director Comey's firing, their voices may have been drowned out. So I wanted to repeat a few of their stories.

We heard from Cindi Johnson from Bloomington, IN, whose daughter was born with Down syndrome, a pre-existing condition. Ms. Johnson was approaching the lifetime coverage limit on her plan when healthcare reform was passed, which eliminated the limit. That policy change, as well as Medicaid, helped Ms. Johnson and her family climb out from under a mountain of medical debt and get the care they needed for their daughter. Every parent so much wants to help a child who is sick. That might be taken away from the Cindi Johnsons of the world if the House bill is passed. Under TrumpCare, States are no longer required to prohibit lifetime limits, and Medicaid is cut by \$880 billion. Let's think of the Ms. JOHNSONS and their daughters and sons.

We also heard from Michael Dunkley from Alexandria, VA. Mr. Dunkley is a 64-year-old fulltime caregiver for his wife, who has advanced MS. In 2013, shortly after being laid off, Mr. Dunkley was diagnosed with an aggressive stage IV non-Hodgkin lymphoma, but his insurance coverage through COBRA was set to expire at the end of the year. Mr. Dunkley was able to sign up for insurance on Virginia's marketplace that provided coverage despite his preexisting condition. Under TrumpCare, Mr. Dunkley could be charged five times or more by the insurance companies because he is older. He could also be priced out of insurance because of his preexisting condition.

President Trump and the Republicans promised better and cheaper healthcare for everyone, but these Americans and many more like them—perhaps millions, pretty certainly millions—would be devastated by TrumpCare. It is another colossal promise to folks like Mr. Dunkley, Ms. Johnson, and her daughter.

So my Republican friends in the Senate, I hope you will listen to these stories and the stories of your constitu-

ents saying so many of the same things. To take away healthcare from the Johnsons and the Dunkleys to give a tax break to the very wealthiest of Americans—hundreds of thousands of dollars for people who make tens of millions of dollars—no American would be for that, but that is what is in the bill in the House, and that is where the Republican Senate bill, despite all the talk back and forth, is aiming to go.

My Republican friends here in the Senate, please, listen to these stories. Drop repeal. Drop TrumpCare. Work with Democrats on ways to improve our healthcare system and bring costs down. We can move forward together, or Republicans can move backward on their own.

WORLDWIDE CYBER ATTACK

Lastly, Mr. President, I want to make a note about the worldwide cyber attack. So far, according to the New York Times, the attack has afflicted at least 200,000 computers in more than 150 countries. It is a sobering reminder that cyber attacks are one of the century's greatest challenges. They continue to get larger in scale, broader in scope, and more malicious in intent. It is time we stopped talking about the threat of cyber attacks and actually started doing something about it.

A few years ago, the Senate tried to pass a bill to protect our critical infrastructure from cyber attacks, but some of our friends on the other side of the aisle blocked it to defend a business community that didn't want to share information necessary to fight these challenges. I hope this global cyber attack serves as a wakeup call and renews bipartisan interest in protecting the United States, the country we love, and in protecting our hospitals, our universities, our businesses, our intellectual property, our credit files, election systems, and critical infrastructures from cyber attacks.

I yield the floor for my friend from Iowa.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

REPEALING AND REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, let me assure the Senator from New York that I am willing to listen to his stories about how people might be affected by the health care debate that is going on in the Congress right now if he will listen to some of the stories I have to tell. By the middle of June, people in 94 of the 99 counties in Iowa may not be able to buy insurance through the Obamacare exchanges.

Senator SCHUMER talked about the tough consequences of the House bill on healthcare. I am coming to the Senate floor today to talk about the tough consequences of ObamaCare.

I rise today to speak some more about the Affordable Care Act. The law is collapsing before our eyes. After 7 years of ObamaCare, it continues to overreach, overpromise, and overstay its welcome for the American people. I want to tell you the history about a bridge that relates very much to what is happening to ObamaCare today.

Before I dive into the details of how ObamaCare is denying people in the State of Iowa the ability to get health insurance, I want to share a story about a bridge in the State of Washington.

This bridge is depicted right here. This is the collapse of that bridge. The bridge is called Tacoma Narrows Bridge. It was built in 1940. It was the world's third largest suspension bridge. It was considered a state-of-the-art masterpiece of 20th-century engineering, but the bridge was set to fail from the very beginning.

On July 1, 1940, the \$6 million bridge opened to traffic. Just 5 months later, on November 7, 1940, the bridge collapsed. What caused the massive steel and concrete structure to twist, turn, and drop nearly 200 feet into Puget Sound? Importantly, there was a key foreshadowing clue. The bridge was nicknamed "Galloping Gertie" for its dancing, swaying bridge deck. On most days, it resembled a roller coaster rolling in the wind. But on the morning of November 7, Gertie's dance became twisted in a howling 40-mile-an-hour wind. Dramatic footage shown here shows tons of concrete and steel cables snapping like fishing lines before its collapse. Gertie essentially self-destructed due to design flaws that created sheer havoc in those high winds.

Like ObamaCare, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge wasn't built to last, and like Galloping Gertie, ObamaCare is on a self-destruction course with destiny. Galloping Gertie collapsed by a flawed design that was unable to withstand high winds, and every day that goes by without a bipartisan solution to fix the flaws, ObamaCare is moving the American people closer to a calamity.

Sooner rather than later, ObamaCare will become its own bridge to nowhere, with no insurance plans on the exchanges. Millions of Americans will be left twisting high and dry. The warning signs can no longer be ignored. First, many health insurers are bailing. The individual market is near collapse.

Just last week, another insurance company, Aetna, announced it will quit the remaining two States it planned to sell plans in under ObamaCare. That means in 2018, Aetna will sell zero plans on the individual market exchanges. Just a year ago, in 2016, Aetna participated in the individual markets in 778 counties across the country. In 2017, that number fell to 242. In 2018, that number will be zero.

We ought to repeat this story because everybody is talking about what the House health care bill might do to people's health insurance and their healthcare. The fact is that people can't buy health insurance, or if they buy it, the deductibles are so high they can't afford it. That is the story we ought to be telling at least with equal weight with the stories given by people who are talking about not wanting to do anything with healthcare.

My home State has been hit particularly hard by insurers pulling out of

the individual market. In 2016, UnitedHealth Group announced it would leave Iowa the following year. Last month, Aetna and Wellmark announced they would be pulling out of the individual market in Iowa. This leaves 94 of our 99 counties in Iowa with one choice for health insurance on the individual market.

A constituent wrote to me following the news of their departure.

My son recently turned 26 years old and is ineligible to remain on my insurance; therefore, he signed up for his own policy through Wellmark. My son farms with my husband, so while my husband has coverage through me, my son may soon be facing the fact that he will not be able to buy health insurance. My son, a true "beginning farmer," will be forced to leave our farming operation and seek employment solely for the purpose of health care coverage.

If Congress doesn't act, the individual market may come crashing down, just like the Tacoma Narrows bridge. We simply can't ignore another warning sign. Healthier, younger people are choosing the off-ramp. The toll to join ObamaCare is turning out to be unaffordable for them. ObamaCare is unsustainable.

Remarkably, instead of joining us to fix this broken bridge, the other side wants to leave Americans twisting in the wind. In my home State, 70,000 Iowans are enrolled in the individual exchanges, and the last carrier left, Medica, is on the fence about its plans for 2018. That is why I told Senator SCHUMER to listen to our stories. The people in 94 of Iowa's 99 counties may not even be able to buy insurance on the exchange.

The day has come. It is time to cross the bridge. It is time to repeal and replace ObamaCare before it finishes its collapse.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to law enforcement officers from Arkansas and all across the country who are called to serve and to protect. I am grateful for their dedication and commitment because it takes a very special person to put his life on the line every day to protect our communities.

Arkansans are proud of the law enforcement history in our State. In my hometown of Fort Smith, AR, the U.S. Marshals Service has a deep-rooted history that has helped shape our Nation's westward expansion. Today, many people in the area find their family roots traced back to a U.S. Marshal. As home to the future U.S. Marshals Museum, the community and the State have rallied around this proud heritage. The tradition of courageous public service is carried on today by the men and women who keep communities across the country safe 24 hours a day.

This week, members from law enforcement agencies from around the Nation will join together in Washington to honor their fallen brothers

and sisters who have died in the line of duty. May 15 marks Peace Officers Memorial Day, and this week is recognized as National Police Week. We take this opportunity to honor the men and women who have died in the line of duty by adding their names to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

This year, nearly 400 names will be added to the memorial, including these Arkansans: Robert Barker, a patrolman for the McCrory Police Department, who died while serving the people of Woodruff County on September 15, 2016; Corporal Bill Cooper, of the Sebastian County Sheriff's Office, who gave his life in the line of duty on August 10, 2016; and Corrections Officer Lisa Mauldin, who died in service to the community on December 18, 2016.

These Arkansans represent the selfless sacrifice that our law enforcement personnel embody. It is the truest testament to the life that they chose—to serve their communities.

I am sad to say that the name of another Arkansas law enforcement officer will be carved into the memorial. Yell County Sheriff's Deputy Kevin Mainhart was killed in the line of duty last week. He was a veteran officer with more than 20 years of serving and protecting Arkansas communities. I offer my condolences and my gratitude to his family and friends and the law enforcement community as they cope with this unspeakable tragedy.

Our law enforcement officers are true heroes. We recognize, not only during this week but all year long, the devotion of the 900,000 law enforcement officers whose service each and every day makes our communities safer.

I was proud to recognize the service and sacrifice of these first responders and show my support for their commitment to our safety during a tour of Arkansas last year that we called Every Second Counts. First responders invest so much of their lives in public service that one must take the opportunity to commend them for their tireless efforts and willingness to serve in a crisis at a moment's notice.

The role of law enforcement is changing. These men and women perform a variety of roles from responding to emergencies to maintaining public safety and promoting safety services and programs. In Arkansas, we are blessed to have the Criminal Justice Institute, which is a part of the University of Arkansas System. It is a resource to police departments and sheriffs' offices that provides them with updated training and information as they adapt to provide more services to their communities.

As a member of the Senate Law Enforcement Caucus, I am deeply committed to supporting the Criminal Justice Institute and advocating for the policies and resources that law enforcement agencies need to successfully carry out their missions, as well as honoring those lives that are tragically cut short while in the line of duty.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor the Honoring Hometown Heroes Act, which allows Governors to order the American flag to fly at half-staff in recognition of the sacrifice of the first responders who make the ultimate sacrifice. The House of Representatives passed similar legislation earlier this month, and I am hopeful that it will also have the support of this Chamber.

I thank the law enforcement officers in Arkansas and across the country who dedicate their lives to protecting our children and communities and seek to bring criminals to justice. These heroes come to our rescue when we need help, and I am committed to continuing to advocate for these officers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, this is National Police Week—a time each year when we remember and honor those who have fallen in the line of duty.

There are more than 900,000 law enforcement officers serving in our country, and tragically every year dozens lose their lives defending our communities and our freedoms.

This year, as part of National Police Week, I am so thankful that Javier Vega, Jr., one of Texas's own, was honored at the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial over the weekend, right here in Washington, DC. Just a few hours ago, I had the honor of meeting his family—his wife, his children, and his parents—along with several of his friends whom he served alongside in the U.S. Border Patrol.

They know, all too well, the high cost paid by our law enforcement officers who put themselves at risk every day. Javier—who was known by his close family and friends as Harvey—grew up in La Feria, TX, a small town in South Texas. He was a man known for putting others before himself—someone who would always serve rather than be served.

That desire turned first into a military career. He enlisted in the Marine Corps right out of high school, and later he put himself through college. Then he decided he hadn't done all he wanted to do in public service so he joined the Border Patrol, and just like everything else he pursued in life, he dedicated himself to tirelessly serving others and serving his country.

Sadly, that service was cut short when he and his family, while out on a fishing trip on a Sunday afternoon, were ambushed by two men who tried to rob them. The clash turned violent. Javier immediately thought of protecting others before himself so he jumped into action to fend off the attackers and defend his family.

Tragically, he was killed by the two men—illegal immigrant criminals who had been reportedly deported but managed repeatedly to find their way back into the country, even after committing serious crimes. What a testament to the great need we have to strength-

en our border security and justice system to keep us all safe.

Now, there is no denying that Javier Vega, Jr., was taken from his family, his community, and from all of us far too soon. So while we consider the fallen this week, like Javier, and their lives of service, I hope we can also take time to consider how we can better support and serve those who have promised to defend us to the point of risking their very lives.

As we learn from the story of Javier, one obvious way we can do that is by making sure our Federal laws are fully enforced to protect our communities from those who would take advantage of our generosity and commit violent crimes, even though they are not in the country legally.

We have a chance to do more for our law enforcement officers, and we should always look for ways to do right by them. Now isn't the time to look the other way or to pretend that real problems facing our Nation and our law enforcement community will simply go away. So during this year's National Police Week, I look forward to playing my part to put forward policies that better support their mission to defend and protect communities all across the country.

Let me thank the family of Javier Vega, Jr.—particularly his wife, his children, and his parents who are here with us today—for letting me share his story and honor his service.

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

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

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize National Police Week and the service and sacrifice of our country's law enforcement officers. As past Governor of the State of West Virginia, I worked with West Virginia State Police very often and saw firsthand their dedication to the rule of law and commitment to keeping West Virginians safe.

Last year, the State of West Virginia lost one of our own, West Virginia State Police first sergeant Joseph Portaro. Joseph was from Clarksburg and joined the State police in 1998 and served in Kingwood. In 2008, he was assigned staff officer at the academy and was then promoted to deputy director of training. Joseph was a veteran of the West Virginia Army National Guard and served in the West Virginia State Police for 17 years.

Although the loss of Joseph will never heal, I know I join all West Virginians and the entire law enforcement community in praying for Joseph's family and friends.

National Police Week acknowledges the service and sacrifice of our coun-

try's law enforcement officers and the safety and protection they provide our communities. Madam President, I know you do too. I go to a lot of schools and talk to the children. I want them to understand that anytime they see a person in uniform, whether it be a policeman, fireman, or EMT, these are people willing to get in front of harm's way for their safety and sacrifice themselves for them. When you have a police officer willing to take a bullet for you, that is a pretty special person. They don't do it for the pay. I think we all know that. They are dedicated and committed to the well-being and safety of every American. We are very lucky to have them in our respective States of Iowa and West Virginia.

This week, we must remember Joseph and the other 139 law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2016 and continue to support their families as they continue to mourn their loss. We can never bring back the person who basically sacrificed for all of us, but we can make sure we never forget their families, and I hope we all do that.

This is a special week and a special day for these people we recognize. One hundred and thirty-nine people gave their lives for us. The least we can do is make sure that not only do we remember them but that we go beyond that in order to support the members of the family, their children who need a father or mother they might not have now, who need the nurturing and the financial support for their education so they can continue to grow to be good, healthy, productive adults. I hope we never forget.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today in strong support of Jeffrey Rosen to be the Deputy Secretary of Transportation. It is my understanding that later this evening we will have a vote on that nomination. It will be the first of a couple of votes.

I would just ask my colleagues on the Democratic side and on the Republican side to look carefully at his qualifications and to be in a position to support this good public servant to be the new deputy at Transportation.

I recall that this body overwhelmingly supported Elaine Chao to be the Secretary of Transportation. She is doing a terrific job, in my view. She needs help, and she needs a deputy in place. Jeff has gone through the proper process. We have had hearings, and he has been voted on in committee. It is time to get him there to help Secretary Chao to be able to have her team in place and accomplish the goals that so many of us share.

Jeffrey is a graduate of Northwestern University and Harvard Law School. Here in DC, where there are lots of lawyers, he is one of the most respected ones. He has 30 years of experience handling very complicated, high-stakes cases. He has litigated in more than 20 States. He has been in just about every setting imaginable: jury trials, bench trials, arbitrations, appellate arguments—on every topic—contracts, antitrust, securities, business torts, enforcement actions, product liability, and class actions. You name it, and he has been involved.

He has a lot of experience. Maybe particularly relevant to this job at Transportation, in 2003 he was unanimously confirmed by this body to serve as the Chief Legal Officer at the Department of Transportation. There he supervised more than 400 lawyers at the Department of Transportation. As the top lawyer there, he wasn't afraid to roll up his sleeves and get involved in lots of issues, including policy issues. I think the kind of experience he gained there will make him very well qualified to serve now as Deputy Secretary of that same agency.

He did such a good job that in 2006 I reached out to him and asked him to join my team at the Office of Management and Budget. I wanted somebody who was a good lawyer but also someone who could manage well and give me good advice, and Jeffrey Rosen was that person. I recruited Jeff to serve as general counsel and senior policy advisor at OMB. In that role, he was always vigilant about the use of taxpayer dollars, a guy who understands those hard-earned dollars need to be stewarded properly. He was someone who focused on management in the Department. He understood the need for us to ensure that taxpayers are getting the best bang for the buck, and, finally, maybe most important, he gave me good advice. He was insightful but also honest. I think that kind of candid advice is exactly what every Department Secretary or leader would want, and that is what he will provide should he become Deputy Secretary.

Since that time, I have stayed up with Jeff. He has continued to give me good advice and counsel. He is a guy who is well regarded in the legal community here in town and someone who understands how the Department of Transportation works and what is needed to ensure that it will be successful.

One thing that Jeff and I have in common is we married way over our heads. Kathleen is an Ohioan. She has the Ohio commonsense that makes Jeff, in my view, an even better public servant. They have three amazing kids—Anne, Sally, and James—and for all of Jeff's personal and professional accomplishments, he would be the first to say that his greatest pride is in his family—and rightly so, by the way.

In my view, Jeff has the judgment, he certainly has the experience, he has the skills, and he has the right apti-

tude to be the Deputy Secretary of Transportation. He is needed now, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the cloture motion today on his nomination and in favor of his nomination to ensure we can get him in place to help move the Department of Transportation forward.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise to honor and recognize the folks who are first to respond when crisis strikes—the folks who patrol our streets, keep our families safe, and are willing to enter harm's way on a daily basis.

I rise today to honor our police officers in Montana and every corner of the country. Police officers answer a call to duty to protect and defend our communities. While this Nation's police forces are on patrol, it is critical that the folks in this body are doing everything we can to keep them safe on the job and to honor their service.

To recognize National Police Week, I have partnered with Senators BOOZMAN, GARDNER, MORAN, UDALL, BLUMENTHAL, and CARPER to introduce the bipartisan Honoring Hometown Heroes Act. Our bill will provide the Governor of each State the ability to fly the American flag at half-staff to honor a police officer or any first responder who dies in the line of duty. This bill will treat our fallen responders with the respect they deserve.

In the past, Republicans and Democrats have worked together to strengthen resources for local police officers, and we have ensured that our first responders have access to critical healthcare services, but this bill is a bit different. This bill makes sure that our police officers and their families receive the recognition they deserve for their selfless service to their communities. When tragedy strikes, I think it is important the entire State takes a moment to honor that police officer who was lost while serving others.

This bipartisan bill has the support of police officers and first responders from across the country—from the Fraternal Order of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the International Association of Firefighters, just to name a few.

The Honoring Hometown Heroes Act will give our fallen first responders the honor they so much deserve, but for the police officers we have already lost, it is too late. Today is Peace Officers Memorial Day. Across the country, the names of fallen officers will be carved

into granite, and their photos will be hung in stations for all to see. Yet these folks and their families did not have the honor of seeing their entire States mourn alongside them because flags were never flown at half-staff.

To ensure that these folks get the recognition they deserve, today I enshrine in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of 128 law enforcement officials who have died in the line of duty. They have made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting their neighbors and keeping our communities safe. I ask unanimous consent that their names be printed in the RECORD.

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

Anaconda Police Dept.: Lieutenant Timothy Sullivan, 2/10/1985; Assistant Chief of Police Edwin E. Stuart, 6/6/1939; and Policeman Patrick Dougherty, 6/3/1904.

Beaverhead County Sheriff's Dept.: Sheriff Raymond Lamar Davis, 8/9/1980 and Sheriff Cyrus King Wyman, 4/21/1920.

Big Horn County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff Janet Louise Rogers, 6/14/1990 and Sheriff Robert Peter Gilmore, 10/19/1926.

Billings Police Dept.: Detective Alexander Finalyson Mavity, 2/14/1989; Patrolman Arthur D. Pettit, 12/21/1935; Policeman Enos Nelson, 12/16/1917; and Sergeant Robert T. Hannah, 7/2/1904.

Blaine County Sheriff's Office: Undersheriff Patrick Alan Pyette, 12/14/2011 and Deputy Sheriff Joshua Thomas Rutherford, 5/29/2003.

Butte Police Dept.: Policeman Nicholas Aleksich, 2/28/1937; Policeman Thomas J. O'Neill, 12/25/1935; Chief of Police Jeremiah Joseph Murphy, 9/20/1935; Police Officer Joseph E. Sage, 4/8/1925; Policeman Bart J. McCarthy, 7/22/1916; Policeman James H. Pace, 7/27/1915; Policeman Ivan W. Lincoln, 3/30/1915; Policeman Joseph A. Freshman, 9/23/1906; Policeman Fred A. Parlin, 3/18/1896; Policeman Frederick Kranbeck, 1/15/1895; Policeman Dennis W. Daly, 7/4/1894; and Policeman William F. Jordan, 6/24/1892.

Cascade County Sheriff's Office: Deputy Sheriff Joseph James Dunn, 8/14/2014 and Chief Deputy Sheriff Herbert Locke, 12/11/1928.

Columbia Falls Police Dept.: Town Marshal Leslie A. Green, 10/2/1937 and Town Marshal Jacob Neitzling, 4/19/1931.

Columbus Police Dept.: Town Marshal Charles Davidson, 7/28/1912.

Custer County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff H. M. "Muggins" Taylor, 10/1/1882.

Dawson County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Dominick Cavanaugh, 12/23/1898.

Denton Constable's Office: Constable A. B. Cheney, 10/28/1913.

Dillon Police Dept.: Patrolman Stephen Carl Shaffer, 2/14/1981.

East Helena Police Dept.: Patrolman Clifford Wayne Haskin, 9/14/1985.

Fairview Police Dept.: Chief of Police Orville Edwin Sharbono, 3/17/1990.

Fallon County Sheriff's Dept.: Sheriff William Homes, 8/7/1949.

Gallatin County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff Frank C. Curtice, 10/10/1919; Deputy Sheriff Pomeroy Vrelland, 10/10/1919; Special Deputy Sheriff Jack Allen, 1/24/1897; and Sheriff Silas Ralston, 9/5/1878.

Glendive Police Dept.: Policeman Frank Cavanagh, 7/3/1946.

Golden Valley County Sheriff's Dept.: Undersheriff Arthur "Buzz" Burford, 4/14/1938 and Sheriff Jesse Garfield, 12/18/1920.

Great Falls Police Dept.: Senior Officer Shane Russell Chadwick, 9/7/1994; Lieutenant

Segval "Sig" Semingsen, 11/28/1935; Police Officer Frank H. Connolly, 8/2/1920; Police Officer Luke Curry, 11/19/1898; and City Marshal Commodore Perry Downing, 11/7/1895.

Hardin Police Dept.: Policeman Leo Clinton Shonrock, 8/30/1947.

Havre Police Dept.: Policeman Fred Stevens, 5/25/1904.

Helena Police Dept.: Police Office John W. Flynn, 4/11/1894.

Lake County Sheriff's Office: Reserve Deputy Deborah Jean Hobbs, 1/16/2003.

Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff George W. Huffaker, 7/8/1921; Constable Valmore De Rosier, 9/13/1917; and Deputy Sheriff Anthony Korizek, 8/12/1904.

Lewistown Police Dept.: Patrol Officer Frank J. Draper, 12/1/1925.

Libby Police Dept.: Chief of Police John Ferdinand Bockman, 4/28/1924.

Liberty County Sheriff's Dept.: Undersheriff Otto S. Fossen, 10/5/1957.

Livingston Police Dept.: Chief of Police Peter Holt, 8/21/1929; Police Officer Martin Zollman, 8/21/1929; and Police Officer Charles Wilson, 8/20/1924.

Madison County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Frank S. Metzel, 10/27/1930 and Sheriff James E. Summers, 1/25/1901.

Meagher County Sheriff's Dept.: Sheriff Michael James Bergan, 2/19/1955; Deputy Sheriff James Mackay, 5/13/1893; and Special Deputy Sheriff William Rader, 5/9/1893.

Miles City Police Dept.: Policeman James Fraser, 8/7/1935.

Mineral County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Alfred F. Klugman, 5/21/1915.

Missoula County Sheriff's Office: Sergeant Allen Leslie Kimery, 12/6/1984; Deputy Sheriff Lloyd J. Stringer, 3/11/1941; Sheriff Lyle Ward, 3/26/1934; Special Deputy Edmund Trudeau, 2/14/1904; and Undersheriff James Thompson, 7/1/1878;

Missoula Police Dept.: Police Officer Robert Heinle, 2/12/2010; Officer Stephen A. LePiane, 11/5/1982; Sergeant Donald E. Gregory, 1/27/1976; and Merchant Policeman Alexander David Ross, 3/17/1931.

Mont. Dept. of Corrections—State Prison: Correctional Officer Richard C. Wallace, 12/20/1985; Deputy Warden Theodore Rothe, 4/16/1959; Guard Frank L. Russell, 1/22/1938; and Deputy Warden John Robinson, 3/8/1908.

Montana Dept. of Justice—Division of Criminal Investigation: Agent Randolph Scott Gergesheimer, 2/20/1980.

Montana Highway Patrol: Trooper David James DeLaittre, 12/1/2010; Trooper Michael Warren Haynes, 3/27/2009; Trooper Evan Frederick Schneider, 8/26/2008; Trooper David A. Graham, 10/9/2007; Patrolman Michael M. Ren, 4/8/1978; Patrolman Richard E. Hedstrom, 7/19/1973; Patrolman James H. Anderson, 7/24/1954; and Patrolman Robert G. Steele, 11/2/1946.

Park County Sheriff's Office: Undersheriff Roy Hodges, 4/18/1954 and Sheriff George T. Young, 11/9/1900.

Poplar Police Dept.: Police Officer Oscar Theodore Peterson, 11/18/1950.

Powell County Sheriff's Dept.: Undersheriff George Warburton, 4/20/1920.

Ravalli County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff William Wolfe, 8/24/1997.

Richland County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff George Eikhoff, 2/6/1962.

Rosebud County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff William Moses, 1/19/1914 and Undersheriff Orville Bitle, 12/16/1911.

Shelby Police Dept.: Chief of Police Ed TenBroeck, 12/22/1935.

Sheridan County Sheriff's Dept.: Sheriff Tom A. Courtney, 4/4/1913 and Undersheriff Richard Burmeister, 4/4/1913.

Silver Bow County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff Batt Arrigoni, 12/29/1911; Special Deputy Sheriff Charles B. Streb, 7/24/1911; and Deputy Sheriff John J. Streb, 12/20/1900.

Sweet Grass County Sheriff's Dept.: Undersheriff H. Frank Whitsel, 8/24/1931 and Deputy Sheriff Joseph S. "Joe" Brannin, 11/16/1911.

Teton County Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Sheriff Julius B. Olson, 9/30/1935.

Thompson Falls Police Dept.: Chief of Police Don Richard Williams, 1/7/1974.

Toole County Sheriff's Dept.: Undersheriff James Shelton Alsup, 12/22/1935.

Treasure County Sheriff's Office: Undersheriff Irving Keeler, 12/9/1921.

Valley County Sheriff's Office: Posseman Charles Hill, 6/15/1903 and Deputy Jack Faul Williams, 6/6/1903.

West Yellowstone Police Dept.: Police Officer Patrick Roy Kramer, 11/22/2006.

Whitefish Police Dept.: Police Officer Lloyd Eugene Murphy, 4/26/1956.

Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office: Deputy Sheriff David Leroy Briese, Jr., 11/3/2006; Undersheriff Ed O'Donnell, 6/26/1941; Sheriff Russell J. Sage, 7/6/1926; and Sheriff James T. Webb, 3/24/1908.

Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks: Game Warden Robert M. May, 12/6/1988; Game Warden Delbert E. Bloom, 6/2/1979; Game Warden Eugene Sara, 1/7/1974; Game Warden I. L. Todd, 12/27/1967; Game Warden John C. Thompson, 11/10/1960; Game Warden Marion R. Ammerman, 2/13/1958; Game Warden Roy Thompson, 8/19/1957; Game Warden Harold Gartside, 4/24/1955; and Deputy Game Warden Charles B. Peyton, 10/18/1908.

Mr. TESTER. In going forward, it is critical that our police officers receive the honor they so much deserve.

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. THUNE. 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. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise to voice my strong support for the nomination of Jeff Rosen to be the next Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

Mr. Rosen has had a long and distinguished career in transportation policy and public service. He is currently a partner at the law firm of Kirkland & Ellis, where he has worked on a range of regulatory and litigation matters for more than 30 years. Prior to starting his career at the firm, he obtained his bachelor's degree in economics at Northwestern University and his law degree from Harvard Law School.

Mr. Rosen's private sector experience has been punctuated by significant leadership positions in the public sector. Mr. Rosen served as the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation from 2003 to 2006 after winning Senate confirmation by a voice vote. He also served as the General Counsel and Senior Policy Adviser at the White House Office of Management and Budget from 2006 to 2009. Mr. Rosen's prior experience in government is a testament to his ability to lead, manage, and effectively operate within the Federal Government.

If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Rosen will be responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Department. He will also

oversee the DOT's 10 modal administrations and approximately 55,000 employees and will exercise stewardship for the Department's budget and its efforts to provide funding for State and local transportation projects.

Mr. Rosen's fundamental responsibility will be to ensure that the DOT's crucial mission—the safe and efficient movement of goods and people across our Nation and the world—is achieved while fostering innovation and maintaining the reliability of our infrastructure.

As I mentioned, Mr. Rosen brings valuable experience to this position. As the DOT's General Counsel during the George W. Bush administration, Mr. Rosen had responsibility for the DOT's regulatory programs, enforcement, litigation activities, legal issues relating to international transportation activities, and legislative proposals. He acted as counsel to Secretary Norman Mineta. Later, as General Counsel and Senior Policy Adviser at the OMB, Mr. Rosen served as the Bush administration's top lawyer for regulations, fiscal issues, and executive orders.

Of note, during the past 2 years, Mr. Rosen has served as chair of the American Bar Association's Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice, where he has been praised for revitalizing the section with more debate and programs while seeking consensus on recommended changes to the Administrative Procedure Act. His thoughtful leadership will be valuable as the Department of Transportation looks toward a pro-growth agenda in the transportation sector.

On March 29, 2017, I held a hearing in the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee to consider his nomination. I was impressed, as were my colleagues on the committee, with Mr. Rosen's credentials, experience, and depth of knowledge on transportation policy.

On April 5, 2017, the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee acted by a rollcall vote to favorably report his nomination to the floor. While it is my hope that the Senate will confirm this exceptionally well-qualified nominee today, it is my understanding that some of my Democrat colleagues will oppose him. It is my understanding that their decision is, in large part, because Mr. Rosen refused to publicly oppose President Trump's proposed budget at his confirmation hearing last month. I think this is an unfair basis for opposing such a well-qualified nominee.

I believe Mr. Rosen's extensive and distinguished career in transportation policy and prior public service will be an asset in addressing the infrastructure challenges our Nation faces.

I look forward to confirming Mr. Rosen's nomination, and I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the

Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, Dan Sullivan, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, Mike Crapo, Lamar Alexander, Richard Burr, John Thune, Jerry Moran, James E. Risch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: The Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 128 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cassidy	Heller	Rubio
Cochran	Hoeven	Scott
Collins	Inhofe	Shelby
Corker	Johnson	Strange
Cornyn	Kaine	Sullivan
Cotton	Kennedy	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Warner
Daines	Manchin	Wicker
Donnelly	McCain	Young
Enzi	McConnell	
Ernst	Paul	

NAYS—42

Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Bennet	Gillibrand	Nelson
Blumenthal	Harris	Reed
Booker	Hassan	Sanders
Brown	Heinrich	Schatz
Cantwell	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—6

Flake	Moran	Sasse
Isakson	Murkowski	Toomey

Three PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam 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.

ANTI-LGBTQ VIOLENCE IN CHECHNYA

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, today, with deep concerns, I wish to speak about the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer—LGBTQ—individuals in Chechnya, in southern Russia.

Starting in early April of this year, news reports from the region told the horrific story of gay men being detained, tortured, and in some cases killed on the basis of their sexual orientation. At least 100 gay men—and according to some press reports, as many as several hundred—were held and tortured in secret detention facilities in Chechnya. At least three men were killed: one after being tortured by authorities and two following calls by local officials encouraging so-called honor killings. As one Russian gay rights activist noted, "there is little doubt that we are dealing with crimes against humanity." Stories of men being tortured and interrogated to reveal fellow LGBTQ individuals are also deeply disturbing.

Ramzan Kadyrov, the Head of the Chechen Republic, has made a number of troubling comments that LGBTQ individuals "don't exist" in Chechnya, an abhorrent denial of the human rights of LGBTQ individuals in Chechnya. According to accounts by the British Foreign Ministry, Kadyrov is planning to "eliminate" gay men in Chechnya before the beginning of the religious month of Ramadan at the end of May. State-sanctioned violence that targets individuals based on their sexual orientation demands international condemnation, and the United States must be a strong voice for the human rights of all individuals.

Though Russian President Vladimir V. Putin has stated he will support an inquiry into these reports, Russia's track record shows a lack of serious commitment to human rights, particularly on LGBTQ issues.

I commend the work of nongovernmental organizations in Russia and abroad who have worked to evacuate LGBTQ individuals from Chechnya,

and I am heartened by the advocacy of many Ohioans on this important issue. The U.S. must stand as a fierce advocate for the inalienable rights of all individuals. I urge the administration to take a strong stance in defense of human rights and publically condemn these acts of barbarous inhumanity. We must never forget lessons of the past concerning what happens when we allow unchecked hatred and bigotry to manifest, and we must always preserve the U.S. as a beacon of hope for individuals around the world.

TRIBUTE TO HMONG AMERICAN VETERANS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am honored to recognize a remarkable coalition of veterans today. Every year on May 15, Alaskan Hmong American Vietnam veterans come together to celebrate Hmong American Veterans Memorial Day in remembrance of General Vang Pao's final flight out of Laos.

From February 1961 to May 1975, Hmong fighters from the hill country in Laos risked their homes, their families, and their lives to join the United States and South Vietnam in the fight against communist oppression. They undoubtedly knew that, whether they won or lost the war, life would never be the same for them; yet they willingly chose to serve. For nearly three decades, their involvement was kept a secret, in what is now commonly referred to as "the Secret War."

Mr. Pasert Lee, a resident of the Mountain View neighborhood in Anchorage, AK, is one of those honorable Hmong American veterans. He served as a lieutenant in General Vang Pao's army and played a role in rescuing downed American pilots and returning them to American Forces in South Vietnam. He tells me that, under the leadership of the general, Hmong forces rescued nearly 50 pilots and were responsible for saving countless American lives. Many people do not realize that more than 40,000 Hmong were killed or wounded in support of freedom in Vietnam.

May 15, 1975, marked the beginning of the exodus of the Hmong people from their homes in Laos. Mr. Lee, like most of our honorable Hmong American veterans, have never returned home—even to visit—in fear for their lives.

Having lost tens of thousands of our Hmong allies in support of the United States in Vietnam, it is appropriate that we acknowledge and honor the sacrifices of those like Mr. Pasert Lee and all the Hmong veterans who worked tirelessly to protect, rescue, and defend American servicemembers and downed American pilots on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The efforts of the Hmong people have never properly been acknowledged and, like many of our Vietnam veterans, were never properly appreciated.

Today, more than 40 years after the end of "the Secret War," I would like