

modernize its armed forces and enhance its defensive capabilities. The proposed sale will help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance and economic progress in the region.

The proposed sale will improve the recipient's capability in current and future defensive efforts. The recipient will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen homeland defense. The proposed sale will improve operational readiness and enhance the electronic warfare capability onboard the ex-KIDD Class destroyers. The recipient will have no difficulty in absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Raytheon Missiles Systems Company of Tucson, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

It is estimated that during implementation of this proposed sale, a number of U.S. Government and contractor representatives will be assigned to the recipient or travel there intermittently during the program.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-70

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b) (1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AN/SLQ-32(V)3 is an electronic warfare system providing shipboard identification and cataloging of the electronic signature of missiles and aircraft. The system consists of sensors and computers which process electronic signals within parameters established in a threat library. The customer currently has an earlier version of this equipment in inventory.

a. The AN/SLQ-32(V)3 upgrade consists of hardware, technical documentation, and software. The highest classification of the hardware to be exported is SECRET. The highest classification of software to be exported is SECRET.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives in the Policy justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) in the United States.

MARKETPLACE CERTAINTY ACT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am expressing sentiments for myself and on behalf of Senators WYDEN and MURRAY, as a fair reading of the Affordable Care Act, ACA, makes clear, S. 1462, the Marketplace Certainty Act, is not necessary to provide a permanent appropriation for the payment of cost-

sharing reductions under the ACA. The ACA already prescribes that such payments are to be made from such a permanent appropriation pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1324. This is because an essential component of the ACA's system for ensuring the availability of affordable health insurance coverage is its two-part package of subsidies: tax credits and cost-sharing reductions. Whereas the premium tax credits make it more affordable for an individual to purchase health insurance, the cost-sharing reductions make healthcare more affordable by reducing the often daunting costs, such as copayments and deductibles, that even those with health insurance must pay to obtain healthcare, ACA, sections 1401, 1402, 26 U.S.C. 36B, 42 U.S.C. 18071. The ACA directs the Secretary of the Treasury to "establish" a single, integrated "program" to "make advance payment" of both subsidies to insurance companies, who are accordingly mandated to reduce individuals' premium payments to insurers, and their cost-sharing obligations to healthcare providers. To assure insurers and covered individuals that these equally essential funds will both be available, the act provides that requisite payments are to be jointly made from a permanent appropriation, 31 U.S.C. 1324, rather than be subject to the year-to-year whims of the annual appropriations process.

Despite the fact that the current permanent appropriation in section 1324 plainly covers these cost-sharing reduction payments, pending litigation brought by the House Republican leadership—which is currently being held in abeyance in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals—and the current administration's mixed signals as to whether it will continue to make these payments required by law, could generate instability in individual insurance markets. S. 1462 removes all basis for any further questions about what is already clear from a fair reading of the ACA as a whole: both subsidies are to be funded from the same permanent appropriation. In addition, the amendment includes provisions that will strengthen the existing subsidy provisions, and, in light of developments since the ACA was enacted in 2010, make insurance more affordable for beneficiaries and help stabilize State-level individual insurance markets.

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Steven Gill Bradbury, of Virginia, to be General Counsel for the Department of Transportation.

LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize LGBTQ Pride Month, a time to openly acknowledge and celebrate the contributions lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning individuals have made to

our Country and the progress they have made over the years toward equality and civil rights.

Pride, equality, freedom—these values are at the core of Pride Month for LGBTQ individuals and families in Maryland and across the United States. Every American deserves the same freedoms, the same opportunities and the same protections under the law to love whom they love.

Respect, dignity, hope—LGBTQ Americans have helped drive the innovation and bold ideas that make America exceptional. They have stood sentry in our military, made scientific advances, created jobs from Main Street to Wall Street, made all of America laugh and cry, and so much more. LGBTQ individuals have enriched our communities and made us a stronger nation.

Fear, apprehension, caution—those of us who defend civil rights every day understand that these are discouraging and uncertain times. It pains me to say the full admission of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning individuals into society has yet to be granted. The open expression of one's sexual orientation and gender identity has been—and oftentimes still is—wrought with discrimination and hardship.

Despite the highs of Windsor and Obergefell, the LGBTQ community feels the pain of the senseless shooting at Pulse nightclub 1 year ago, blatant discrimination in States like North Carolina, and the incomprehensible abandonment of transgender students in schools, and the decades of injustice that reach back far beyond Stonewall. The results of last year's Presidential election brought an unwanted chill to the winds of momentum that had swept through the LGBTQ community. Insensitive language from the current administration adds an ominous cloud over the potential for future progress.

To all of my lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning sisters and brothers, I say this: You are not alone. I support you. I will fight alongside you. We will not allow extremism to take away the inherent rights afforded to each and every one of us. Equality and liberty will prevail over any who would use hate and bigotry to frighten or intimidate others.

I have joined with nearly half of the U.S. Senate as a sponsor of the Equality Act, S. 1006, historic, comprehensive Federal legislation that would ensure full Federal nondiscrimination equality for LGBTQ individuals by adding sexual orientation and gender identity to other protected classes, such as race or religion, in existing Federal laws. Despite major advances in equality for LGBTQ Americans, including nationwide marriage equality, the majority of States still do not have explicit LGBTQ nondiscrimination protection laws. The Equality Act would fill in the gap by explicitly banning discrimination in a host of areas, including employment, housing, public