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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our refuge and strength, a very present help in turbulent times, thank You that though evil seems to prosper, You continue to guard and guide us with Your loving providence.

Lord, the challenges that our lawmakers face require more than human wisdom. Please shower our Senators with Your wisdom, directing them through life's complexities to Your desired destination. Remind them daily that human life is as fleeting as fading flowers and withering grass. May they find peace in the knowledge that You love and accept them unconditionally. Keep them always in Your care, doing for them more than they can ask or imagine.

We pray in Your Holy 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 clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 6, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

HURRICANE HARVEY DISASTER RELIEF, PREVENTING A DEFAULT, AND FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as I said yesterday, Congress has a number of pressing issues to address in the coming days. There are three critically important things before us that need to be done very quickly: pass disaster relief legislation to allow us to rebuild from Harvey and prepare for future disasters headed our way, such as Irma; prevent a default so those emergency resources can actually get to Americans who need them; and, of course, keep the government funded. These are the President's immediate priorities, these are my immediate priorities, and they are critically important to establishing credibility and stability as our country continues to recover from one record-setting storm and prepare for yet another. Harvey has already unleashed more rain than any other single storm recorded in the continental United States. Irma has already forced the entire State of Florida into a state of emergency.

I would like to repeat two quotes I shared that are even more relevant

now given the further approach of Irma. This is the President's budget director:

Given the need for additional spending as a result of disaster response and initial recovery from Hurricane Harvey, the administration continues to urge the Congress to act expeditiously to ensure that the debt ceiling does not affect these critical response and recovery efforts.

That is the budget director.

That is because, as the Treasury Secretary explained, "If Congress appropriates the money, but I don't have the ability to borrow more money and pay for it, we're not going to be able to get that money" to the States, and they need it. The need for certainty now is incredibly important.

I have been having conversations with the Democratic leader on my view of the way forward on these issues, and this morning he and I, along with House leaders from both parties, will head to the White House for a meeting to discuss the issues further. It is good to see that Congress has already made steady progress.

I again thank the President and his team for working closely with us to ensure that families and States are able to get the help they need and for working with us to prevent a default or lapse in government service that could get in the way of that help actually being delivered.

As we work on these immediate priorities, Members will also continue working on other critically important items, such as tax reform, national security, and filling vacancies across the Federal Government. We clearly have a lot to do in the coming weeks and months, but we will all keep working to tackle these issues as soon as possible.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, 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.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I will speak on leader time. I know that the Senators from Colorado and Virginia wish to follow.

DACA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, the Trump administration made a terribly wrong decision to terminate the DACA Program. The Dreamers came to this country through no fault of their own. Many know no other country but this one. They work every single day in our businesses. They go to our schools. They serve in our military. They are a boon to our economy. All they want is to live, work, and contribute to this country like generations have done before. They want to be Americans, as so many people do, because we are such a great country.

Congress has the ability and, I believe, the responsibility to act and to protect those Dreamers before the program is completely terminated in 6 months. Why not do it right now? President Trump has called on Congress to act; so why don't we?

I would ask my friend the majority leader and Speaker RYAN to put a clean Dream Act on the floor in both Chambers in September. Every Democrat is ready to vote for that legislation. We know many Republicans in both Chambers would vote for it as well. It would likely pass without much fuss. But if we can't get that to happen, we will add it to vehicles that are moving—legislative vehicles—until we get it done. It is that important to us and to America. We could solve this problem tomorrow, rather than letting the fear of deportation hang over the heads of 800,000 Dreamers, who are studying and working, and some are in the military serving in the United States today.

So I would like, again, to say to Leader McCONNELL and Speaker RYAN: Put a clean Dream Act on the floor in

a bipartisan vote. This body—and, I believe, the House—is ready to pass it.

In a short time, Leader McCONNELL, Speaker RYAN, Leader PELOSI, and I will head to the White House to meet with President Trump. We have a lot we need to get done this month: an extension of government funding, raising the debt ceiling, passing aid for the victims of Hurricane Harvey, and protecting the Dreamers. So far, we Democrats haven't heard much in the way of a plan to accomplish all these goals from the Republican leadership, who hold the majority in both Houses of Congress, as well as the President's seat. I hope that this changes this morning. I look forward to hearing the President's plan and the Republican majority's plan for accomplishing all these things that Congress must accomplish in September.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Colorado.

NORTH KOREA

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about North Korea, the most urgent national security challenge for the United States and our allies in East Asia.

Secretary Mattis has said that North Korea is the most urgent and dangerous threat to peace and security. Admiral Gortney, previously the commander of the U.S. Northern Command, stated that the Korean Peninsula is at its most unstable point since 1953, when the armistice was signed. North Korea just conducted its sixth nuclear test, its most powerful to date. An early analysis from experts says:

North Korea has comfortably demonstrated an explosive yield in the range of at least 100 kilotons with this test.

That would be a considerable improvement from the 30 kiloton yield estimated in its fifth test and ideal for targeting U.S. cities—a primary objective in North Korea's pursuit of an ICBM.

Unless drastic and credible measures are taken today, we are fast heading for a nuclear showdown that could cost millions of lives on the Korean Peninsula.

Last year alone, North Korea conducted two nuclear tests and a staggering 24 ballistic missile launches. This year, Pyongyang launched 21 missiles during 14 tests, including the 2 tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles that are reportedly capable of reaching the U.S. homeland. During 6 years of rule as the North Korean dictator, Kim Jong Un has launched more missiles than his father and grandfather combined. Patience is not an option with the U.S. homeland now in the nuclear shadow of Kim Jong Un.

Our North Korea policy of decades of bipartisan failure must turn to one of immediate bipartisan success, with pressure and global cooperation resulting in the peaceful denuclearization of the regime.

Vice President PENCE stated during his visit to South Korea in April:

Since 1992, the United States and our allies have stood together for a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. We hope to achieve this objective through peaceable means. But all options are on the table.

I believe U.S. policy toward North Korea should be straightforward. The United States will deploy every economic, diplomatic, and, if necessary, military tool at our disposal to deter Pyongyang and to protect our allies. But time is not on our side. The international community needs to finally and fully join together to completely isolate this dangerous regime.

As a first step, North Korea should immediately be kicked out of the United Nations and many multilateral institutions from which they derive the benefits of global recognition. Next, the United Nations Security Council should enact a new resolution that imposes a full economic embargo on North Korea that bans all of Pyongyang's economic activities, including petroleum resources.

These economic tools need to be combined with robust military deterrent, including a U.S.-led international naval blockade of North Korea, in order to ensure a full enforcement of United Nations actions. We must also continue frequent show-of-force exercises by the United States and our partners in Seoul and Tokyo, enhanced missile defense activities, and assurances of extended U.S. nuclear deterrence to our allies. Kim Jong Un must know that any serious provocation will be met with a full range of U.S. military capabilities.

The road to peacefully stopping Pyongyang undoubtedly lies through Beijing. I am continuing to call on the administration to block all entities that do business with North Korea, no matter where they are based, from conducting any financial activities through the U.S. financial system. China is the only country that holds the diplomatic and economic leverage necessary to put the real squeeze on the North Korean regime. China accounts for 90 percent of North Korea's trade and virtually all of North Korea's exports. Despite China's rhetoric of concern, from 2000 to 2015 trade volume between the two nations climbed more than tenfold, rising from \$488 million in 2000 to \$5.4 billion in 2015—hardly the sign of cracking down on the rogue regime.

Beijing is the reason the regime acts so boldly and with relatively few consequences. China must move beyond an articulation of concern and lay out a transparent path of focused pressure to denuclearize North Korea. A global power that borders this regime cannot simply throw up its hands and absolve itself of responsibility. The administration is right to pursue a policy of "maximum pressure" toward North Korea, and we have a robust toolbox already available to ramp up the sanctions track—a track that has hardly been utilized to its full extent.

Last Congress I led the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement

Act, which passed the Senate by a vote of 96 to 0. This legislation was the first stand-alone legislation in Congress regarding North Korea to impose mandatory sanctions on the proliferation activities, human rights violations, and malicious cyber behavior. The following is according to a recent analysis from the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies:

North Korea sanctions have more than doubled since the NKSPEA [North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act] came into effect on February 18, 2016. Prior to that date, North Korea ranked eighth, behind Ukraine/Russia, Iran, Iraq, the Balkans, Syria, Sudan, and Zimbabwe.

Even with the 130-percent sanctions increase after the sanctions bill passed last Congress, North Korea is today still only the fifth most sanctioned country by the United States.

So while Congress has clearly moved away from the Obama administration's inaction to at least some action, the Trump administration has the opportunity to use these authorities to build maximum leverage with not only Pyongyang but also with Beijing. I am encouraged by the actions the administration took in June to finally designate a Chinese financial institution. But this should just be the beginning.

The administration, with Congressional support, should now make clear to any entity doing business with North Korea that they will not be able to do business with the United States or have access to the U.S. financial system.

A report released in June by an independent organization known as C4ADS identified over 5,000 Chinese companies that are doing business with North Korea today. These Chinese companies are responsible for \$7 billion in trade with North Korea. Moreover, the C4ADS report found that only 10 of these companies—10 of these 5,000 companies—controlled 30 percent of Chinese exports to North Korea in 2016. One of these 10 companies controlled nearly 10 percent of total imports from North Korea. Some of these companies were even found to have satellite offices in the United States.

Enough is enough.

According to recent disclosures, from 2009 to 2017, North Korea used Chinese banks to process at least \$2.2 billion in transactions through the U.S. financial system. This should stop now. The United States should not be afraid of diplomatic confrontation with Beijing for simply enforcing existing U.S. law. In fact, it should be more afraid of Congress if it does not.

As for any prospect of engagement, we should continue to let Beijing know in no uncertain terms that the United States will not negotiate with Pyongyang at the expense of U.S. national security or that of our allies.

Instead of working with the United States and the international community to disarm the madman in Pyongyang, Beijing has called on the United States and South Korea to halt

our military exercises in exchange for vague promises of North Korea suspending its missile and nuclear activities. That was a bad deal, and the Trump administration was right to reject it.

Moreover, before any talks in any format, the United States and our partners must demand that Pyongyang first meet the denuclearization commitments it had already agreed to in the past and subsequently chose to brazenly violate.

President Trump should continue to impress with President Xi that a denuclearized Korean Peninsula is in both nations' fundamental long-term interests. As ADM Harry Harris, commander of U.S. Pacific Command, rightly noted recently: "We want to bring Kim Jong Un to his senses, not to his knees."

To achieve this goal, Beijing must be made to choose whether it wants to work with the United States as a responsible global leader to stop Pyongyang or bear the consequences of keeping Kim Jong Un in power.

In July, I introduced, with a bipartisan group of cosponsors, legislation called the North Korean Enablers Accountability Act, S. 1562. This legislation takes the first steps toward imposing an economic embargo on North Korea, including a ban on any entity that does business with North Korea or its enablers from using the U.S. financial system and imposing U.S. sanctions on all those participating in North Korean labor trafficking abuses. Our legislation specifically singles out the 10 largest Chinese importers of North Korean goods that we talked about earlier and sends a very clear message: You can either do business with this outlaw regime or the world's largest economy.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation in order to finally put real pressure—maximum pressure—on this regime and its enablers wherever they are based.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado. During his time in the Senate, he has been an advocate for stronger, more diligent policies with the rogue State of North Korea, and I appreciate very much his comments this morning.

(The remarks of Mr. WARNER pertaining to the introduction of S.J. Res. 49 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

HURRICANES HARVEY AND IRMA

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I also stand today in solidarity and support of the residents of Texas and Louisiana as they recover from the epic and deadly storms and flooding.

As a former Governor, I know well the devastation and loss brought by

natural disasters and the ongoing challenge of helping people rebound and recover. The top obligation of elected officials at the local, State, and Federal levels is to do all we can to keep our people safe and to be present and supportive in helping them get back on their feet after a disaster.

As we work toward dealing with the victims of Harvey, may I also express concern about the coming challenges placed by the next hurricane, Irma. Today or tomorrow, it will hit the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, and by the weekend it may make landfall in Florida. So again, my thoughts go out to those potential victims in advance.

FISCAL DEADLINES

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak on the issue that has consumed more of my time and energy during my time in the Senate than any other, and that is the state of our Nation's finances. As a member of the Budget Committee and the Finance Committee, I wanted an opportunity to speak about the looming convergence of several important fiscal deadlines.

The government's ability to continue borrowing money, the so-called debt ceiling—which is an oxymoron since the debt ceiling is simply going ahead and authorizing payment for bills that have already been incurred, but more on that later—obviously must be raised this fall, and the budget year runs out on September 30, the end of this month.

Meanwhile, the White House continues to talk about working on comprehensive tax reform this fall, even though, at least to date, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Senate Republicans, are making it pretty clear they are not going to actually do a major tax reform because they are going to have to rely on a more modest approach, an approach that will require only 51 votes. That sounds as though what may end up coming from the majority will be more of a tax cut than tax reform.

In mid-July, President Trump told an interviewer: "After healthcare, taxes are going to be so easy."

Well, we will see. Making the numbers work, getting the incentives right, making the appropriate tradeoffs—rather than being as easy as the President says, comprehensive tax reform, last done in 1986, actually is more like solving a Rubik's Cube. How this body chooses to act in the face of these deadlines—the debt ceiling, the end of the budget year, and tax reform—will tell us a lot about the fiscal priorities of the House and Senate leadership and the priorities of the current administration in responsibly addressing America's longstanding fiscal challenges.

Even though we are just back from recess, let me share with you what I believe are some very hard truths.

First, nondefense discretionary spending made up only 16 percent of

our 2016 budget. By contrast, mandatory programs—Social Security and Medicare, in particular—made up 39 percent, and the total is 63 percent because there are other mandatory programs included. On a going-forward basis, Social Security and Medicare will make up 51 percent of spending growth over the next 10 years. Over half of all future spending growth will be on automatic pilot.

The first hard truth is, we cannot dramatically boost military spending, cut taxes, invest in infrastructure, and leave our two largest spending programs—Medicare and Social Security—untouched in any type of fiscally responsible way. That means we will have to make dramatic cuts.

The truth is, there will have to be dramatic cuts. Where will those come from? The nondefense discretionary spending. That means programs for people who work for lower wages or otherwise struggle by—all of those programs will be on the chopping block.

For example, in his fiscal year 2018 budget blueprint, the President proposed eliminating funding for the Appalachian Regional Commission. In my mind, this is the height of hypocrisy. The President did extraordinarily well in the parts of my State that are a part of Appalachia. He promised a renewal for folks who used to work in the coal mines. Yet in his first budget, instead of offering renewal and hope, he slashed one of the most successful, long-term, bipartisan-supported programs, the Appalachian Regional Commission, which has invested millions in communities throughout Appalachia over the years.

The President's same fiscal year 2018 budget completely eliminated a program that helps struggling families heat their homes during the coldest months of winter. Again, all of those cuts come out of nondefense discretionary spending, which, in English, means education, support programs, roads, R&D. All of those programs will be subject to cuts within the current budget fiscal outline.

Here are additional facts. Our national debt is approaching \$20 trillion, and debt held by the public as a percentage of the GDP is the highest it has been since we emerged from World War II. The Federal Government spends more money than it collects in revenue. I work in the only place in America where, occasionally, people high-five each other because the deficit on an annual basis got down to \$400 or \$500 billion. No place in the world would operate with those kinds of economics.

By 2029, every dollar of tax revenue will go to programs, in effect, on automatic spending. Those mandatory programs I mentioned earlier, such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, are all good programs. But the truth is, if we don't look at those programs, as well, for reform and if we don't understand that we also need to invest in roads, infrastructure, and other sup-

port programs, that means by 2029 every dollar we spend on those programs, roads, education, research, and also defense will be borrowed money.

The truth is, we have a very inefficient and outdated tax structure. Let me be the first to acknowledge that and also acknowledge that the goals of tax reform are better efficiency, more transparency. Those are goals I can embrace. It hasn't been updated in more than three decades.

The truth is, on both sides of the aisle there is bipartisan agreement that we need tax reform. I think we can all agree that we have a backward tax system. As a matter of fact, in many ways we have the world's combination of the worst. We have an incredibly complicated tax system with, nominally, on the business side the highest corporate tax rate in the world. Yet if you look at the revenues we collect—and I am not talking about business taxes but individual taxes as well. If you look at the revenues we collect as a percentage of our overall economy, where do you think America lands? If you listen to many, you would think America must be the highest taxed State in the whole world. If you look at the 34 industrial nations that make up the OECD, the United States of America's State, local, and Federal taxes combined are 31st out of 34.

I hear many times from colleagues on the other side of the aisle, complimenting, for example, Germany and other countries around the world on their training and infrastructure. I am not suggesting that we move to their tax systems, but they raise the percentage of their GDP some 5, 6, 7, 8 percent—or more—in taxes than we do. I am not saying that we should duplicate Europe, but if we are going to compare apples to apples, we actually have the world's combination of the worst—the most complicated tax system, yet we raise at the bottom of the barrel in terms of revenue.

Let me be clear. The fact is, there is blame on both sides of the aisle. This \$20 trillion of debt did not emerge overnight. This has been growing for 50 years. Both political parties bear plenty of responsibility. The challenge right now is not only our annual deficit, which was the subject of a lot of discussion when our deficit was over \$1 billion, but in a sense, even though the deficit is down, what we have to grapple with now is the accumulated debt. So even though there are those of us who may not have been here for decades, we have to bear the responsibility of those who came before us. The accumulated debt in our country is \$20 trillion.

Now, we have not felt the full effect of that debt because, since 2009, we have had the advantage of there being record low interest rates, but as we have seen from the Fed and as we have seen from many people on both sides of the aisle who are encouraging the Fed to go ahead and raise interest rates, the days of the luxury of not having to

deal with the debt service of our accumulated debt will soon be behind us.

So what does that mean? It means that not "if" but "when" interest rates go up 1 percent—in financial terms, what is called 100 basis points and, in English, what is called 1 percent—the Federal Government will be charged an additional \$160 billion a year in annual interest payments just on that accumulated debt—\$160 billion in additional debt service for every 1 point rise in interest rates. If you were to see a spike in interest rates of 3 or 4 or 5 percent, which we saw in earlier times in our country—I do not think that will happen—it would basically bankrupt the Federal Government.

The truth is, even that relatively minor 1-percent increase in the interest rate and the additional \$160 billion in debt service comes right off the top. That payment comes before we pay Social Security, before we pay our military, before we pay for roads. That \$160 billion is more than we currently spend on the Departments of Education and Homeland Security combined, and that is not an obligation we can avoid paying.

As I mentioned, here is the truth. Fiscal discipline should not depend on who sits in the White House, and fiscal discipline should not depend on who controls Congress. There were many of us who were involved in the so-called Gang of 6, who advocated for the Simpson-Bowles plan a number of years back. It was not perfect, but it would have gotten us out of this challenge.

The truth is, every day, every month, every year we wait to address this structural imbalance, the problem only gets worse. With the tools we have, in plain old balance sheet terms—I have been a business guy longer than I have been in politics—you have to either raise revenue or cut spending, which means the cuts that will have to take place or the reforms that will be required to take place in our entitlement programs or the amount of revenues that will have to be raised will only make it more difficult. As I have said, as to the issue of the deficit and the debt, neither party has clean hands. Frankly, memories in this town are conveniently short.

In the coming weeks, as we head toward the possible convergence of the debt ceiling, government funding, tax reform, and a government shutdown, here is what I have urged my colleagues to pay close attention to.

First, the White House and my Senate colleagues should avoid using rosy scenarios just to make their proposals look fiscally responsible when they are not. Over the next decade, the Congressional Budget Office has said—Congress's official scorekeeper, and let me acknowledge again that, no matter who is in charge, everybody likes to blame the CBO, but it is our referee—it expects our GDP growth to average a little above 1.8 percent per year. I hope we can do better, but that is what the referee says. The Trump administration's budget is based on 7 straight

years of 3 percent growth. Now, that is a great aspiration, but any responsible business would not base its assumptions of its budget on a going-forward basis of rejecting our official referee, the CBO, and in effect plucking a number out of the air.

Why do they do it?

Those rosy and unrealistic economic assumptions allow the administration to claim a fictional \$3 trillion in additional tax revenue over the next 10 years. That is the differential in 1.2 percent of additional growth in 7 years straight. The administration, in its proposal, then uses this fake revenue to cloak additional tax cuts and spending cuts under the banner of fiscal responsibility. That is wrong and irresponsible, and no responsible organization or business would take those actions.

Second, the administration cannot shift costs to others and then claim it as a savings. Look no further than what the Trump budget does with Federal programs for the poor. Over the next decade, it calls for slashing more than \$600 billion from Medicaid, and that does not include the additional cuts to Medicaid that were proposed in its ill-fated healthcare reform. The truth is, Medicaid is a partnership between the Federal Government and the States, and as a former Governor, I am aware of this in real time. So a \$600 billion cut at the Federal level has a direct impact on State Medicaid responsibilities. It simply squeezes the balloon, forcing the States to either dramatically up their shares of the cost to Medicaid or dramatically cut back services.

Third, the administration claims that its tax reform plan will pay for itself and stimulate so much economic growth that it will not add to the deficit. This is maybe the most spurious claim of all made by the administration. Here is the basic problem. The truth is, at least what the Trump proposal has put out so far has really very little to do with comprehensive tax reform. Instead, it is a two-page wish list of tax cuts—a wannabe of every interest group that would like to get its special deal in the Tax Code to its advantage. Every time we promised tax cuts would pay for themselves, it has not worked out.

Let's remember that Ronald Reagan's 1981 tax cut provided a short-term stimulus, but then deficits ballooned, and President Reagan had to raise taxes in 1982 and 1984. Likewise, President George W. Bush's tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 provided that quick sugar high, but ultimately they had little impact on economic growth. Instead, the Bush tax cuts produced large deficits into the trillions and trillions of dollars that moved us from a budget surplus on an annual basis, which he inherited, to the point at which, when President Obama came in, the deficits were approaching \$1 trillion a year.

Fourth, paying for tax cuts through deficit spending is a really bad idea. It

will make reaching any responsible fiscal goal that much more difficult. Also, studies show, tax cuts that add to the deficits are worse for growth over the long term than those that are paid for and actually can reduce growth over time. So any lawmaker who says he supports not paying for tax cuts should also have to explain why he thinks adding to our national debt is a good idea—a national debt that already stands at a record high, a national debt that is already at \$20 trillion, a national debt that when interest rates will go up, which they will, will end up sucking out \$160 billion a year in additional payments on an annual basis just for a 1-percent increase in interest rates.

Fifth, it would be foolish to try to balance the budget by shortchanging investments that actually strengthen our economy and our competitiveness over the long term. The budget proposals we have seen from the administration and the House Republican leadership takes a meat cleaver to a couple of the key areas that actually government should be invested more in—research and development, education and workforce training, and infrastructure. As a former business guy, as somebody who has invested in more businesses, created public companies, was a venture capitalist for almost two decades, I have looked at businesses, and I have based my willingness to invest on whether they had good plans in terms of investing in their workforces, investing in their plants and equipment, and investing and staying ahead of the competition. For a government, that means, with regard to the workforce, investing in education. When investing in plants and equipment, that means infrastructure. Staying ahead of the competition means investing in research and development.

Let's put it like this. I would never have invested in a business that spends less than 10 percent of its revenues on those critical investments. That is not the way for our country to make responsible investments either. The truth is, the Trump proposals would take our current investments in education, infrastructure, and research and development to way less than 10 percent of our total revenues.

Finally, we can achieve fiscally responsible and bipartisan tax reform, and I actively look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on these reforms. There is no area I have spent more time on, and I think I bring something to the table as both a former Governor and, more importantly, perhaps as somebody who has built businesses for more than two decades.

I also strongly suggest that nothing could help our economy more than a bipartisan agreement on a responsible path to making sure we do not simply salute when our deficit is only \$400 billion or \$500 billion a year but when we actually start to bring that deficit down.

Those are the challenges that are before us. In many ways, we will start to see the outlines of those challenges this month. I look forward to actually trying to move the ball forward on these very important issues.

I yield the floor.

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

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

HURRICANE HARVEY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it has been 1 week since Hurricane Harvey hit the State of Texas, and although the rain has now stopped, the damage continues, as much of the water that has moved through Houston is now moving downstream to rivers and bayous and areas south of Houston. People's lives are still being disrupted, and unfortunately more and more bodies are being found, as the water has receded in places that have been flooded. Eight days ago, Harvey's wrath was still being felt.

Of course, we are still counting the cost, and, as one lady in Houston told my staff, "Normal is a long way off." It is more than just days we are counting, though. As families return to their homes and piece their lives back together, the numbers keep rolling in. Numbers are how we keep track, and I want to mention a number of numbers that I think will help all of us understand the magnitude of what has occurred and will help us wrap our heads around what this disaster has meant for not only Texas but for the country.

The largest numbers are the toughest—not the toughest to swallow, and I will get to those in a moment, but simply to comprehend. They are the ones that make your jaw drop.

Twenty-seven trillion—that is the number of gallons of rain that Harvey pummeled on Texas and Louisiana.

Then there is 2.7 million—that is how many liters of water have been provided to Texas by FEMA as of last Friday. Don't forget that parts of the city of Beaumont are without drinking water or are subject to a boil notice for 7 more days.

There is another number: 1 million. That is the number of cars reportedly destroyed by the storm—1 million cars.

Forty thousand—that is the number of homes Harvey permanently wrecked. At least that many people are still, even today, in shelters, living off of cots at convention centers, inside government-funded motel rooms, or living with friends and family.

Next come the middle batch of numbers, slightly smaller and more manageable sums. Some of these actually come as a relief. Some of them remind

us why writer Walker Percy, a native of our neighbor Louisiana, used to say that hurricanes, as terrible and life-altering as they are, sometimes give us hope—because they draw people closer together as neighbor helps neighbor.

Four thousand two hundred—that is the number of pounds of flour employees went through at El Bolillo restaurant in Southeast Houston. The bakers were trapped inside their kitchen for 2 days during the storm, so what did they do? They did what bakers always do: They baked. In this case, they baked up pan dulce—traditional Mexican pastries—for flood victims. Their ovens were on all night for their neighbors. One young girl on Twitter praised the Bolillo bakers as “angels.” They gave people what they needed most, perhaps, during this storm, and that is a sense of normalcy.

Two thousand seven hundred thirty-one—that is the number of cattle, horses, and sheep which various ranchers and helicopter pilots, like Ryan Ashcraft, have saved in places like Brazoria County and which are now inside makeshift stables in fairgrounds and parking lots. Animal rescue has been a crucial and difficult part of the equation in communities affected by the storm. Of course, in the shelters Senator CRUZ and I visited, they had to make accommodation for pets because people wouldn't leave their cat or dog in the floods. They wouldn't leave unless they could bring their animal with them. They have had to make some accommodation—and they have—which made it easier for people to leave their flooded homes.

Then there is another number: 200. That is the number of soaking-wet, stranded Houstonians Jim McIngvale and his staff rescued in their delivery trucks. Most of us from Texas, and especially from Houston, know Mr. McIngvale as “Mattress Mack.” He is in the furniture business, and he opened up his giant furniture showrooms as shelters. They provided portable showers and an inventory of brand-new beds and sofas for folks who had nowhere else to sleep.

Getting rest couldn't have been easy, though, not when so many displaced people were still thinking about the storm and its consequences, still feeling the dampness in their clothes and remembering the pounding rain and wondering what they were going to do to get on with their lives.

One hundred thirty-two—that number represents the speed in miles per hour of the most punishing wind gusts recorded in Port Aransas on August 25. It is hard to imagine the power of the wind attacking homes and structures—eight times faster than a charging bull.

In the days ahead, we need to remember just how strong the storm really was. I brought a few charts to help remind us of that and the aftermath.

This is a picture outside of Houston. I visited a synagogue in a place called Meyerland in the Houston area where they have literally been flooded 3 years

in a row. This is one of the members of that congregation, and she invited me to come to her home so I could see all the damaged drywall, furniture, and other items on her front lawn which have now been pulled out of her house.

Finally, we come to the last set of numbers, the smallest ones but in many ways the most painful, the hardest to forget, numbers like 45, which is the angle in degrees of bent electric poles I saw in Rockport when I toured the destruction after the storm last week. Other electrical poles lay on the ground. The town smelled of gasoline and even natural gas leaks, which we smelled in the Rockport area. Of course, the ground was littered with broken glass and strewn books and things like that. Boats in the marina had been tossed about and smashed, their sails ripped to shreds, as local residents had mostly fled. Here is another picture of that damage in Rockport, TX.

Harder still, though, is the number 25, which is the years Andrew Pasek lived before he tragically stepped on a live electrical wire in ankle-deep water on August 29. A resident of Houston, Andrew was an animal lover, and he was trying to locate and save his older sister's cat when he stepped on this electrical wire and lost his life.

We, of course, offer our condolences to all of those families who have lost loved ones, including Andrew's, in their time of grief, and we pledge to remember him and all of the flood victims in our prayers. Sadly, Andrew was joined by 59 others who lost their lives. As I said earlier, that number continues to grow each day as the waters recede and as we find people who did not leave their homes, perhaps because they were elderly and unable to get out, living alone, for example. So we expect that number to, sadly, get even higher.

Six is the number of family members Samuel Saldivar lost when a van he was driving was tossed by a strong current into the bayou. As with Andrew's family, our thoughts and prayers go out to Samuel during what I am sure has been a dark and trying week, one nearly impossible to make sense of.

But for each story of loss, each family that is hurting, there are many other reasons for hope as we embark on what is a long road to recovery.

Consider five—the number of bed-ridden, elderly patients from Cypress Glen Nursing Home who required special boats to get them out, boats with generators that could power their life support assistance.

We are grateful for Good Samaritans like Dan LeBlanc from Port Arthur, Doug Barles, Jr., and Robert Bode for managing this operation, which was no easy task. Here is a picture of those gentleman. Volunteers with no special expertise in search and rescue, these gentleman saved more than 100 patients.

Finally, the number I will end with is zero. That is the amount of complaining done by a gentleman named

Jim Rath who exemplifies the Texas spirit. His house was destroyed in a flood 2 years ago, and he had just finished rebuilding it when Harvey hit and destroyed it again. Was he shaken by this course of events? Well, sure, he was. But did he complain? No, he did not. Of all his lost possessions, Mr. Rath said, “The main thing is: This is just stuff.” Then, like other Texans are doing now, he rolled up his sleeves. With saws and jackhammers, they are already moving forward.

Zero is also the amount of time we have to waste here in Congress. The Texans I know aren't just sitting around waiting for the government or for government aid, but that doesn't mean we should twiddle our thumbs here in Washington, DC. We have to act. That is why I am working with Senator CRUZ and the entire Texas delegation in crafting an aid request that addresses flood relief but without imposing burdensome mandates or regulations. As Peggy Noonan wrote in the Wall Street Journal this week, this measure needs to be tight and specific. She said:

There should be no larding up or loading it down with extraneous measures. This is an emergency.

But that means we have to act and act with dispatch.

I applaud the House of Representatives for moving quickly today to approve an initial \$8 billion downpayment on disaster relief, and I urge my colleagues in this Chamber to follow the House's lead and expedite passage for this first tranche, this downpayment on what will surely be a more expensive list of costs. We are going to continue to work with Governor Abbott and the team back in the State to make sure the Federal, State, and local actors are all on the same page. But right now, let's quickly send Texas a downpayment. Let's show that we are actually serious.

I was gratified by the outpouring of emails and texts—even the Presiding Officer reached out, and I appreciate that—from people expressing their concern about what was happening in Texas. I appreciate that very much. But now we need to demonstrate that those weren't just words and follow them up with concrete action.

As we all process the numbers from the storm, I believe the important one today is zero—the amount of time we have to lose.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today in support of heroes, in support of unity, and in support of love and compassion. I thank the senior Senator from Texas for his heartfelt remarks and leadership during this time of crisis, and I thank leaders across the State of Texas and across the country who are standing with the people of Texas.

Texas is hurting. This hurricane, Hurricane Harvey, is unlike anything

we have seen. I grew up in Houston. When you live on the gulf coast, you are used to hurricanes. It is part of life. I remember as a kid sheltering in the bathroom with my parents when Hurricane Alicia hit. We had a tree come down in the front yard. Harvey was different. Harvey was unlike anything we have ever seen before. Harvey is being described accurately as a 1,000-year storm, something that occurs every 1,000 years.

In Texas, we have never seen anything like it. Harvey started out as a category 4 storm, hitting South Texas, hitting Corpus Christi, Victoria, Rockport, Port Aransas, and Aransas Pass, all of which I visited in the past 2 weeks. Those communities were devastated by category 4 winds that destroyed homes, that destroyed schools, that destroyed county courthouses, city halls, and buildings and took down wires, took down power, took down water, and took down sewage.

As I visited each of those communities, you would drive down the street, and you would simply see home after home that had been obliterated by hurricane winds. I remember talking to the mother of a high schooler at Rockport High School who doesn't know where her son is going to go now because Rockport High School has been largely destroyed by the hurricane. She was saying how much the kids wanted to graduate from their high school, but their high school is badly damaged right now.

Harvey wasn't finished after making landfall and wreaking destruction. Harvey then turned north, north and east, and moved over the city of Houston and just sat there, sat there dumping rain, day after day after day.

I was home with my wife and kids. I live in Houston. For every day of those rains, it kept coming and coming. It is actually what made Harvey different. We are used to getting hit by a hurricane. Then it leaves, and you go and repair the damage and pick up the pieces. Harvey didn't have the good graces to leave. It sat there and dumped 27 trillion gallons of rain. Over 50 inches, which is typically as much as Houston receives in an entire year, fell in 4 days.

We saw flooding in parts of the city that had never flooded. I went in an airboat, just north of the Addicks Dam in northwest Houston, riding through a neighborhood with water up to the roofs of houses. It was an ordinary suburban neighborhood. You could see all the vestiges of families playing there. You could see children's toys floating in the water in the backyard. You could see holes in the roof, where either people in the attic had taken an ax and broken through to get out to escape the rising water or where first responders had broken in to get them out.

We took a boat down Clay Road, a fairly large road in northwest Houston. I know Clay Road well. I became a Christian at Clay Road Baptist Church.

Clay Road is completely underwater. It looks like you are in the middle of a lake. You look out and see nothing but water as far as the eye can see. I rode with a local constable right down the middle of Clay Road, going over cars, but the water was high enough—8, 10 feet high—you didn't even know when you were passing over cars that were submerged beneath you. As we were going down Clay Road, we saw an alligator swimming across Clay Road.

The scope of this disaster defies words. It is not one community or two communities or three communities. It is over 250 miles, stretching from Corpus Christi all the way to Louisiana. In the Houston area alone, the flooding is massive—neighborhoods where there is a real possibility that every single home will have to be knocked down and rebuilt, every single government building will have to be knocked over and rebuilt.

On the airboat, I saw the county courthouse up to the roof in water. I saw a local LDS Church up to the roof in water. I saw a gas station with six or seven cars still parked outside. The water was right at the roof of the cars. It shows you just how fast that water rose. They were parked at the gas station. They had presumably stopped for some last-minute supplies, and the water rose so high they couldn't get out. They are still in their parking spots, but yet the water is at their roof.

That same gas station, up high on the door was a red neon sign that said "Open" that was still lit, flickering "Open" as you look out over the vast expanses of water.

The damage continued going east, hitting communities like Beaumont, like Port Arthur, like Nederland, like Orange, and into Louisiana—all of those communities I visited in the past 2 weeks and have massive devastation.

Texas is hurting mightily, and yet, as I said, my remarks today are not about pain and suffering, they are not about death and loss and despair; they are, instead, about hope—hope that begins with the heroes of Harvey. We saw, over the last 2 weeks, incredible illustrations of bravery over and over again, every day, every hour, every minute. There were the first responders, the firefighters, the police officers, and EMS who risked their lives, including, tragically, Sergeant Perez of the Houston Police Department who lost his life in this storm. He went to go to work, and his wife pleaded with him: Please don't go to work. It is too dangerous out there.

He said: I have to go. It is my job to save lives.

He went. He couldn't go to his regular duty station. All the roads were flooded. There was no way to get there so he went to look for another duty station to report to, and tragically he got caught in high-rising water and drowned.

There were the coastguardsmen who flew in choppers and dove into wild

water to save people's lives. I have spent a lot of time in the last 2 weeks visiting with the men and women of the Coast Guard—what incredible heroes—flying in the chopper with them, surveying the damage of the Houston Ship Channel, talking with Coast Guard swimmers. You want to talk about a tough bunch of heroes, the swimmers—almost every one of them ripped as the guys that know their way around a weight room—who in hurricane winds and hurricane waters will dive off of a chopper and swim to someone in distress. Many times the person in distress is so terrified, their first reaction is to grab the swimmer and practically try to pull the swimmer under too. These swimmers have to be strong, strong enough to help someone terrified and at the verge of death get in that basket, get in that basket of life, be pulled up to a chopper. In the last 2 weeks I visited with person after person who was pulled off of the roof of their home by the Coast Guard into a chopper.

The National Guardsmen, I have spent a lot of time thanking them over the last 2 weeks. We had 14,000 National Guardsmen called up in the State of Texas, but National Guardsmen from 41 States across the country came flooding in. That was part of the story of heroes.

There were a great many Houstonians, there were a great many Texans from all over Texas, but there were people from all over the country. When I drove through Refugio—a small town on the gulf coast that had been devastated by hurricane winds—I stopped at the fire department unannounced just to come in and thank the firefighters. Actually, I met a couple of firefighters. They were not the local ones. They had expelled the local firefighters to go home and get some sleep after several days of having no sleep at all. They were a couple of California firefighters who jumped in their truck and had driven east from California to get to Texas.

At the fire station in Rockport, there was a whole line of firetrucks, one after the other. You looked at each firetruck, on the door, and it was the name of a different city. Every one of them had the same story. They saw what was happening and said: I can help. They jumped in the firetruck and they headed to Texas.

The outpouring of love we have seen has been extraordinary. It wasn't just the first responders who were so extraordinary. We cannot overstate the gratitude Texas feels for those heroes of Harvey, but I will tell you the most powerful story of Harvey, I believe, are the thousands of ordinary men and women who stepped up to save their neighbors, who went and grabbed a boat or a jet ski or anything that could float and went into harm's way to pull people out of life-endangering situations—hundreds and hundreds of red-necks in bass boats. Texas at its very finest.

Mr. President, as an Alaskan, I can promise you, you would have been right at home with the rednecks in bass boats. All these guys in duck waders, fearlessly walking into the churning waters, pulling people out, one after the other, after the other.

The Harris County Emergency Operation Center had an entire wall covered with Post-it Notes because when the local officials put out a call, if you have a flat-bottom boat, if you have a personal watercraft and can help, we need your help, hundreds and hundreds of calls began coming in. They put them all on Post-its with the name and cell phone. Then the emergency operation center operated essentially as a dispatch, where a 911 call would come in, somebody in distress, and they would pick up the phone and call someone's cell phone and say: Hey, your neighbor 6 blocks down needs your help. Can you be there?

There were hundreds upon hundreds risking their lives to save their neighbors. Texans helping Texans. We had, among others, Louisiana sending the Cajun Navy—over 100 boats. They would go in and save people and then they cooked jambalaya. That is neighborly love.

I met people who had come from Fort Worth, from Lubbock, from East Texas, from Oklahoma, from Illinois, from Alaska, from New York. I was at the George R. Brown Convention Center, the shelter that was set up. I met an individual there. He was a New York firefighter, a big guy. He told me he was serving the New York Fire Department on September 11. He told me, when 9/11 hit New York, when that terrorist attack hit, the love New York received from across the country, the outpouring of support New York received from across the country made a profound impact on him.

He said now, when there is a major natural disaster, he gets in his truck and heads down to help. He said: You know what. That is my way of saying thank you, my way of saying thank you for what the country did on September 11. He wanted to be in Harvey and pull people out of harm's way to say thank you.

All I could do is simply give him a hug. That heroism was happening every day and every hour. We all mourn the loss of life. There are tragic stories, heartbreaking stories, whether Sergeant Perez, whether it is the young mother in Beaumont who gave her life saving her little girl. Her little girl was pulled from her dead mother's chest, floating in the water, just minutes before being lost forever. As tragic as it is, that little girl will always know the love her mother had for her. There is the story the senior Senator from Texas just told of the van in Houston that took six to their death. Two elderly grandparents dealing with Alzheimer's disease and four children all lost their lives.

We mourn those tragedies, but I will tell you that we celebrate also. This

disaster easily could have seen a death toll 10 times higher or 100 times higher. There were recorded over 51,000 people saved by search-and-rescue missions. Roughly 2,000 pets were saved by search-and-rescue missions. One of the things the first responders told me over and over was this: You had better be able to take the pets because there are a whole lot of people, as the water is rising, who, if you are not willing to take Fluffy or Fido, will stay in the rushing water. So we celebrate the bravery of all those who risked their lives to save others.

In any disaster, there are three phases. Phase No. 1 is the active crisis, where search and rescue is the only priority—saving lives. Let me say that in the city of Houston and the State of Texas, we saw a coordination across levels of government I have never seen before. The city officials, the county officials, the State officials, and the Federal officials were all working hand-in-hand seamlessly, not engaging in the bickering. There were no party lines. There were no Republicans. There were no Democrats. There was no Black, White, or Hispanic. There were Texans and Americans saving the lives of each other. You saw government working seamlessly together, not having the turf wars that in other contexts might so easily shut down getting anything done, by simply saying: How can I help? What can I do? What else do you need?

After the search and rescue is over, after the saving of lives, there is the next phase, and that phase is relief—providing relief to the people who have lost everything right then. We have roughly 260 shelters that have been stood up across the State of Texas by wonderful private organizations. The Red Cross has done a phenomenal job. The Salvation Army has done a phenomenal job. Churches have done an incredible job. Private nonprofits have done an incredible job.

There are individual citizens, such as "Mattress Mack," who owns Gallery Furniture. He is a friend of mine. He is a terrific Houston entrepreneur who opened up his furniture stores as shelters. He said: Come on in. Do you need a bed? We happen to have a furniture store full of beds. It was not only that. He sent out his delivery trucks to pick people up in harm's way.

At one of the shelters last week, I visited with an older woman who was on oxygen and uses a walker. She described how her house began filling with water, and she walked out of her house in waist-deep water pushing that walker.

My mom uses a walker. I know how difficult it is to get around when you are mobility impaired. I cannot imagine how difficult it was for her pushing through the waist-deep water, fleeing for her life. She was picked up by a Gallery Furniture delivery truck. She was picked up and taken to the shelter.

I called Mack and told him that story. I told him just one story of the

lives he was saving. That is just one example of the heroes who stepped forward for their community.

Anheuser-Busch shut down beer production to deliver more than 155,000 cans of water. Now, you know we are in a time of miracles when Anheuser-Busch isn't producing beer, but that is a generosity of spirit.

One of the State officials who was helping lead the disaster relief called Academy. They had a warehouse just west of Houston, out in Katy. He said: How many boats do you have in the warehouse?

The fellow from Academy told him.

He said: Fine, we want them. We want them all.

He said: Great, come take them. They are yours.

DPS sent trucks. They loaded up the boats and sent the boats out to rescue people.

J.J. Watt, the great Texans football player who, I hope, a year from now will be wearing a Super Bowl ring, launched a charity effort raising over \$10 million on Twitter, just saying: Let's help people who are hurting.

Shelters were stood up at the George R. Brown Convention Center and the NRG Center, both of which I have spent significant time at during the last 2 weeks.

I remember one morning at the George R. Brown Convention Center. I was helping to serve breakfast. We were serving oatmeal. There was a fellow standing to my right, and I turned to him and said: Thank you for being here.

Something I try to do a lot of is just to thank people. I don't think you can thank people enough in the midst of a crisis for what they are doing.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for helping other folks.

He just began laughing. He said: Well, you know, I have to be here; my house is under water. He said: I am staying here; this is the only place I have to sleep. Yet he was up at the food line helping to serve others.

There were two gentlemen whom I met at that same shelter, and I asked them, as I tried to ask everyone: How are you doing? How is your home doing?

Two different gentlemen told me: Well, I don't have a home. I am homeless.

One said: I sleep under the bridge.

Both of them were volunteering. Both of them were sweeping the floor. So they weren't just taking shelter. Even in the midst of distress, they were helping out to keep the facility clean and to care for the needs of others.

Earlier this week, I was in Port Arthur. Port Arthur is a relatively low-income community in Texas, heavily minority. It was hit very, very badly by the storm. There were devastating floods in Port Arthur. I was at an African-American church helping to give out food and supplies to people who had lost everything, and I was visiting a

line of cars as people were driving up. You would say to each person: What do you need? They would need some food, some diapers, or maybe some dog food or cat food.

Several things were amazing. One, almost to a person, was what I have heard at least a hundred times in the last 2 weeks when you talk to someone who has lost their car or who has lost their house. You would say: I am so sorry. We are praying for you, and we are with you. Over and over, I heard people say: You know what; there are people a lot worse off than me. I may have lost my home, but at least I have my life. At least I have my kids.

It is powerful to hear over and over, when you try to comfort someone, and they say: Look at everyone else who needs it more than I do. But at the same time, when you would hand something to someone who came in—a young mom would come in who needed diapers—and you would hand her two packets of diapers, she would say: No, no, I will just take one. Somebody else needs that other one. Give that to someone else who needs that.

I heard that at relief centers in Port Arthur, in Beaumont, in Victoria, in Rockport, in Houston. I heard that same message over and over: There is someone else who needs it. At that church in Port Arthur, there was a couple there, both of whom had lost their home. They had lost everything, and they had been from dawn to dusk at the church, volunteering and helping others. They said, actually: Helping others is how we are getting through this.

Now, there are also moments of joy. I visited with two little boys who were in their home and the water rose to waist level, and they had to be rescued, I think, by boat. I think they were about 8 and 10 years old. I asked the boys: Boys, was that scary?

They laughed and said: Are you kidding? We got to swim in our living room.

Those moments of laughter and joy are important, even in the face of fear, death, and destruction. The unity we are seeing has been remarkable.

Then, the third and final phase will be rebuilding. Rebuilding is going to be a project that is going to take days, and, then, it is going to take weeks, and, then, it is going to take months, and it will ultimately take years. The scope of this devastation is massive. There are multiple estimates that this may prove the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history. Having seen firsthand the scope of the disaster and the thousands of homes and businesses destroyed, I can readily believe it.

I am here to say that Texas is coming back. We are going to rebuild.

In East Texas, I visited with the mayor of a small town whose entire town was destroyed. Every home, every building was under water. Her home was under water. The mayor was just in tears. The whole town was gone. She

said: If we rebuild—and I was there with several firefighters, police officers, and a county judge. We all hugged her. We said: There is no “if.” We will rebuild. We will come together. We will stand as one, and we will rebuild.

We are seeing incredible generosity from Texans, and we are seeing leadership. I want to commend leadership at every level of government. I want to commend President Trump for his leadership during this crisis. I have spoken to the President multiple times throughout the course of this storm. From the very first call, right when the storm was about to make landfall, his message was consistent. He said: TED, whatever Texas needs, it has. The answer is yes. When the Governor asked for a disaster declaration, the President signed it while the Governor was still on the phone.

The President convened a week ago a Cabinet meeting via teleconference and instructed every Cabinet member to lean in. Whatever the State needs, give it to them. Give it to them fast. Be there. Every resource we have, make it available.

I began to see Cabinet member after Cabinet member picking up the phone and calling.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services said: All right, on the health side, what more can we be doing? How can we be helping the people in hospitals who are being evacuated?

On the education side, the Secretary of Education said: How can we help the kids whose schools have been flooded?

There was the Secretary of Energy, former Governor of Texas Rick Perry.

The Secretary of HUD focused on the massive housing challenges.

Of course, the Director of FEMA has been down in Texas repeatedly. The Federal Government leaned in with all the resources with a swiftness that I have never seen.

At the State level, let me say that Governor Greg Abbott has done an extraordinary job. He is a close friend and mentor. He has led the State when we had crises playing out. When the city and county officials in Houston told me they didn't have enough emergency response vehicles, enough choppers, enough boats, enough high-water trucks, within hours the Governor and the Federal Government were able to flood the region with assets, with manpower, with the National Guard, with DPS troopers, and with coastguardsmen, so that those thousands and thousands of rescues could happen.

At the local level, all across Texas there are county judges. One county judge in East Texas, whom I visited with a few days ago, just buried his mother. His mother had died right before the storm, and the storm was such that she couldn't be buried in the midst of the storm. So she was in the funeral home until just a couple of days ago, and he was able to put her to rest. Yet he was out there leading the effort.

There are mayors and county judges. In Houston, Mayor Sylvester Turner

and Harris County Judge Ed Emmett—one a Democrat and one a Republican—are working seamlessly as one. That unity has been powerful.

In the next stage of rebuilding, we will have resources available. There are going to be very, very significant State resources. My office is working very closely with Governor Greg Abbott to mobilize the State resources and make them available and then at the Federal level.

I commend the leadership in Congress and the administration for responding swiftly with the relief mandated under statute. The relief efforts are being led by the Texas delegation in the House and by Senator CORNYN and myself here in the Senate, and we will see, I believe, strong bipartisan support for the Federal relief needed to help people come out of this.

But Texas will rebuild. We will come out stronger, and it will be through that same spirit, that same fearlessness, and that same compassion and love and unity that brought us through the crisis and saved thousands of lives. That same spirit will help us rebuild even stronger.

Let me finally say to all the men and women across the State of Texas, across the United States, and across the world who have been lifting us up in prayer, thank you. Thank you for your prayers.

I was at a church in Port Arthur visiting family after family, hugging women and men and children who had lost everything. A message of comfort I tried to give to each and every one of them was this: When you go to bed tonight, you are not alone. You are being lifted up in prayer by millions of people across Texas, across the country, and across the world. You are going through this journey surrounded by prayer warriors.

The day before yesterday, my family and I went to a home in Missouri City. A woman had lost everything in the flood. We joined a church group in helping her clean out her house and helping her tear down the sheetrock the floodwater had destroyed. My girls Caroline and Catherine took part in it. I would say that Caroline, my 9-year-old, we discovered, can wield a mean hammer when it comes to taking out sheetrock. The experience for my girls and my family and that group was just helping, neighbor helping neighbor.

As this woman grieved the loss of priceless memories, she also held on to special and wonderful memories. One thing we found was a note she had written to Santa Claus as a 9-year-old; that was saved. Another was a lock of hair from when she was 3 years old that was in an envelope and carefully preserved; that was safe.

What I shared with her is the same thing I shared with Texans suffering across the State: You are not alone. America stands as one.

Today, there are no Democrats, there are no Republicans. On other days, there may be issues that divide us. We

will continue to debate tax policy and everything else, but today we are all Americans and we are all Texans. We are standing as one. That is the spirit that built our Nation, and it is the spirit that will rebuild Texas and Louisiana after this disaster.

Let me note that it is also the spirit that has us standing in unity with the people of Puerto Rico, the people of the Caribbean, and the people of Florida who are in harm's way as Irma bears down upon them. Our prayers are that the storm will turn into the Atlantic, dissipate, and turn away from people, but whatever happens, if there is to be yet another major storm hitting America, know that we will stand united in harm's way. We will stand as one, and united we can overcome anything.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MONTANA WILDFIRES

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, today I rise to talk about a different natural disaster. It is happening in the great State of Montana, and every corner of our State of Montana has felt the impacts of wildfires.

In Montana, we are experiencing a historic drought. As you can see from the map, the red indicates it is very severe, and it gets less from there. But the fact is, there is a large portion of land along our northern tier that is experiencing incredible drought, and Montana is in the middle of it all. Nearly all of our great State is under historic drought conditions.

With dry grass, high winds, and dry lightning storms, it is no wonder that currently in our State we have nearly 30 high-priority fires raging as I speak today. Just last week, we had over 40 new fires spark in Montana. That isn't counting the ones that are currently in existence; there are over 40 new ones.

Over the last month, I went across my State and saw with my own eyes the fires across Montana. All Montanans are dealing with smoke-filled air, often in highly hazardous conditions. You can see here the chart of the smoke. It has been incredibly debilitating, quite frankly.

I have heard stories of ranchers in eastern Montana—in fact, I am talking about the eastern two-thirds of Montana—who took the shoes off their horses for fear that the metal clicking on rocks might spark and light up dry grass.

Hikers in Glacier National Park frantically parked their cars and fled due to evacuation notices.

Families in Whitehall, MT, left their homes with keepsakes and the sprin-

klers on the roof, just in case the fires crept closer to the only homes they have ever known.

Children in Seeley Lake, a little town in western Montana, saw their first day of school canceled due to fire danger. I might add that the smoke was incredible in Seeley Lake and has been for about the last month.

More than 900,000 acres across Montana have already burned. To put that in context, the State of Rhode Island is about 777,000 square miles. More than 900,000 acres in Montana have already burned. One fire alone—the Lodgepole Complex—burned 270,000 acres. That is larger than the city of New York. As I stand here today, more than 600,000 acres continue to burn. There are active fires on 600,000 acres. Firefighters have spent \$220 million to try to get a handle in Montana alone.

Nationwide, we have seen a 70-percent increase in acres burned this year than last year, when the Federal Government spent \$1.9 billion fighting fires. Let me put that in perspective. We have 70 percent more fires burning this year than last year, and last year we spent \$1.9 billion fighting fires. The bill is going to be huge this year.

In Montana, we have tragically lost two brave firefighters—Trenton Johnson and Brent Witham. These two young men selflessly and courageously put their lives on the line protecting our great State.

We have seen pastures burn, fences turn to ashes, and structures crumble before our eyes. In fact, the Glacier National Park's Sperry Chalet, a hotel that was built way back in 1913, was engulfed in flames and destroyed. It hopefully will be rebuilt, but the truth is, you do not rebuild a chalet that was built in 1913. It is gone. The historic Lake McDonald Lodge, a cornerstone of Glacier National Park, stands in the path of the flames.

Montana's forests, our national parks, our agriculture industry—these are all backbones of our economy in Montana. As these fires rage, Montana feels that economic impact. Tourists stay home, ranchers lose grazing land, cattle that survive the fire go hungry, river guides stay off the smoky water, and Montana's economy suffers.

Montana has been fortunate to have many brave men and women working together to fight these fires. Folks have collaborated at all levels of government to try to fight Mother Nature, but we all know that Mother Nature bats last.

Whether it is the floods in Houston or Hurricane Irma, which is threatening Florida, the wildfires across the West, or extreme drought in the Plains, we cannot deny that our climate is changing. Over the past 10 years, we have seen hundred-year storms every few years. We have seen hurricanes repeatedly besiege the gulf and east coast. Historic droughts are becoming common, and water shortages are routine. Unprecedented disasters are becoming the new normal, and it is put-

ting a strain on our government, on our economy, and on our citizens.

Climate change is real, and we can't continue to sit in silence. We have to take proactive steps to keep it at bay. It is costing taxpayers, it is altering our way of life, and our economy is suffering in the process.

Since Hurricane Sandy in 2012, we have spent more than \$100 billion in supplemental disaster relief. Let me say that again. Since Hurricane Sandy back in 2012—not that long ago—we have spent more than \$100 billion in supplemental disaster relief. That is \$100 billion in addition to what Congress has budgeted for disaster relief. That is \$100 billion we could be spending serving our veterans or improving our schools or building bridges and roads or paying down this Nation's debt.

But as our climate changes before our eyes, Congress continues to bury its head in the sand. We are left mortgaging our children's future to pay for disaster relief today. Look at the money we are going to spend on wildfires this year. Look at the funding we are going to be sending to Texas and Louisiana. I will state that I am all for sending help to those folks. I will be making sure the folks in this body understand that we also have to give resources to folks along the northern tier, especially Montana, because fighting fire is expensive and dangerous, and drought has dramatic impacts on our agricultural economy.

I am very thankful that we have folks like this gentleman pictured on the frontlines fighting fires, trying to direct Mother Nature in those fires in a way that they will do the least amount of damage.

We have heard a lot about the good folks and heroic folks down in Houston. We have seen the generosity, the heroism, the fighting spirit of Texans. Well, as I have traveled around Montana, I saw that same kind of heroism. I saw young men and women from across the country spending their summers fighting fires in our forests and across our Plains. I saw communities coming together and opening up their doors and sending aid from across the State. I saw seamless collaboration between Federal, State, Tribal, and county agencies to mitigate the damages across our State.

We are seeing natural disasters across this country. This isn't a contest or comparison of devastation and misery; it is a testament to the American spirit. No matter what Mother Nature throws our way, we are going to need to work together to overcome it. Saving lives and property when disaster strikes is a fundamental pillar of government. It is not a Democratic or Republican issue, it is an American responsibility.

The country's faith in Washington, DC, is at an alltime low, but I am confident that we can work together to ensure the victims of Harvey get the relief they need and that the States that

are burning and impacted by drought, such as Montana, have the resources they need to protect our citizens, our economy, and our way of life.

As Congress works to get resources to the folks devastated by Harvey, I hope we can all take a page out of the American people's book and work together to get resources not only to the folks devastated by Harvey but the folks in Montana and the folks across the West who have been impacted so greatly by drought and wildfires.

I am asking for each and every one of the folks who serve in this body to look at the photos and stand with the people of Montana as they fight for blue skies and fresh air once again. We need the resources. We do not need a delay. We need to send them quickly because lives and property and a thriving outdoor economy are at risk.

In the meantime, I ask for your prayers for all of the folks who have been impacted by disasters, including the folks from the Treasure State, as we endure the drought and these terrible fires.

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

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

RECESS

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:18 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 3 p.m. today, the Senate recess until 4:15 p.m. to allow for the all-Senators briefing.

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

MONTANA WILDFIRES

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I left Montana yesterday morning to come

back to Washington, DC, to do the work of the American people but, as always, my heart remains in Big Sky Country. That is especially true right now as fires burn across our State. In fact, just yesterday, of the top 30 wildfires in the Nation, 28 of those 30 wildfires were in Montana.

Our crisis in Montana isn't water. It is not too much water. It is not hurricanes. It is fire. It is smoke filling the air and filling our lungs. It is communities being evacuated, Montanans standing on the side of the road looking at the fires moving toward their homes. We have seen the loss of homes and many structures. Montanans are looking at the tons of fuel just lying on the forest floor waiting for a spark to ignite. In fact, in this year alone, over 1,600 fires have burned nearly 1 million acres in Montana. That is nearly the size of the entire State of Delaware.

At my invitation, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke both came to Montana, just about 2 weeks ago—in fact, 2 weeks ago tomorrow—so they could see firsthand the impact wildfires are having on our great State. We went out and saw the Lolo Peak Fire. The impact is devastating.

We need to be sure Montana gets the resources it needs, first of all, to stop the fires. I am very grateful to the men and women who are risking their lives to fight these fires, going on virtually very little sleep, living in tents, fighting these fires. The firefighters battling on the ground are away from their families, and they are giving everything to protect our lives, our lands, and our property. Tragically, already in Montana, two firefighters have lost their lives—Trenton Johnson, age 19, and Brent Witham, age 29.

Preventing wildfires is impossible, but we can do much more to lessen the severity and impact of these fires. Seven million federally controlled acres in Montana are at high risk for wildfire. Five million acres—five million acres—have been designated for accelerated forest management due to insect infestation. We are talking about dead trees. Yet, since 1990, our State of Montana has lost over 40 percent of its forestry workforce and two-thirds of its mills. The remaining mills that we have are not running around the clock, multiple shifts, which they could do, except for the fact they can't get enough logs. We are literally bringing in logs from out of State and even out of the country to our mills in Montana to keep them going.

Let's talk about Mineral County, MT. Mineral County was founded in 1914. This county in Western Montana is well known for its dense forests and abundant natural resources. The first sawmill came to this area around the turn of the 20th century. Multiple others followed suit. For decades, the timber industry thrived. Montanans worked hard, and they earned good money in the timber industry. In fact, the timber industry produced tax reve-

nues to support their schools, teachers, infrastructure, and allow our counties to prosper, but in the early 1990s things changed. Across the State of Montana, environmental lawsuits became a barrier to timber contracts that were awarded to Montana's small businesses. A community that once thrived on the abundant resources surrounding them now sits with one of the highest unemployment rates in the State.

Today, Mineral County has just a single lumber mill. Folks living there today are watching the very resources that supported their grandparents burn. In fact, in Mineral County alone, over 25,000 acres have been torched this fire season, and the fires continue to burn. The weather outlook for September continues with above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. This fire season is not over. We are going to be in it for quite some time.

The mismanagement of our Federal forests and radical environmentalists have prevented hard-working Montanans from having jobs, and this just adds more fuel, literally, to these wildfires. Our inability to act and treat these acres further deteriorates the health of our forests and the communities that desperately depend on them.

I can tell my colleagues—and I can speak on behalf of all of Montana—that we are tired of being told that others know better than we do when we watch our forests burn every summer, our mills close, our neighbors lose jobs, and our counties lay off road crews because they don't have the funds anymore to support basic infrastructure, and our communities suffer from the lack of management of our Federal lands.

A safe forest, a vibrant forest is a managed forest. A healthy forest is a managed forest, and timber jobs are good jobs. A properly managed forest is also good for wildlife habitat. We have teamed with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Their headquarters are in Missoula, MT. If you want to see more elk, if you want to see more wildlife, you need to manage the forests. It is good for wildlife habitat and good for water quality. A wildfire is devastating to the watershed because what happens is the wildfires come through, they wipe out the trees and grasses, and then when the spring rains come—when the snow melt comes from the spring—we see tremendous erosion and devastation of fish habitat and the loss of good sources of water for our communities.

Let's talk about the unspeakable amount of carbon emissions that are produced by these wildfires. I can tell my colleagues that we are done listening to radical environmentalists when they tell us otherwise. Too many forest management projects have been held up in frivolous litigation at the expense of the people of Montana. One such project—the Stonewall project—was halted because of the terrible Cottonwood decision, which is the 21st

century poster child for radical environmental activism. Two fires blazed on the very lands that were set to be managed had it not been for these radical environmentalists. This is wrong.

We need litigation relief. We need to reform the process that our land managers go through to get these projects done. The National Environmental Policy Act—NEPA—was established to provide guidance for land managers to analyze all project alternatives and allow for public comment. This process has become so bogged down with additional steps and litigation that projects now at times take years to get through it. Others never even make it.

When it takes this long to analyze whether to even start a project, the forests continue to get more and more overstocked, more and more littered with fuels. A forest is a renewable resource, but if we do not manage the forests, they become unhealthy. They become prone to wildfire. Something needs to be done to streamline the process while allowing more collaboration between stakeholders. We can't wait any longer.

We need our colleagues to come to the table because we need comprehensive forest management reform. How many more thousands of acres in Montana and all over the West must burn before we act? Tying the hands of the State, tying the hands of the local communities, tying the hands of the people of Montana who best know how to manage these lands has not served us well. We need to change course.

I will work with anyone of any party and at all levels of our government to ensure that forests are managed in a way that reduces the severity of wildfires because Montanans deserve it, and because, quite frankly, it makes sense. Montanans are tired of seeing and breathing the smoke. The firefighters risking their lives out there deserve it as well.

Here is the bottom line. Either we are going to manage the forests or the forests are going to manage us. It is time to put the loggers of Montana back to work. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

WILDFIRES, HURRICANES HARVEY AND IRMA, AND HEALTHCARE REFORM

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, over the last several weeks I have spent a lot of time traveling around my home State of Wyoming, and the Presiding Officer may have in his home State of Arkansas as well. We all do. We talk to a lot of people and hear from a lot of people as we travel around to the rodeos, the fairs, and the parades.

One of the things I have been hearing more and more about because I am seeing it daily in Wyoming—I know both Senator DAINES and Senator TESTER, both Senators from Montana have talked about it—has been the incred-

ible forest fires that have been raging in the West. There are more than 1 million acres of land burning in the West. Smoke is spreading all around the West, certainly in Wyoming—fire as well as smoke—impacting people, impacting land, impacting the soil, air, water, and impacting life, as well as property.

The damage that is happening is dramatic, and in many ways it is similar to the kinds of comprehensive damage and destruction we are seeing with the big storms hitting, like Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, which is on its way to Florida. These are incredible storms, and the people of Wyoming want to express and share their sympathy for the people who have lost family members, who have lost property, and those who are still in danger. We also know in Wyoming that people are wanting to volunteer, wanting to go to help by collecting food, supplies, clothing, taking up collections, as well, in churches, schools, and communities because that is the American spirit.

Today I come to the floor to express my admiration for the resilience of the people of the West, as well as the resilience of the people of Texas, Louisiana, and all Americans who are today dealing with the disasters they are facing in their homes.

The other things I heard a lot about—and this will not surprise us—are the concerns still out there regarding the Obama healthcare law. A lot of people in the media seem to think the discussion about that healthcare law is over. I can tell you, for the people of Wyoming, they are still very concerned about what we are seeing in terms of the collapse of the healthcare system, fewer choices, and higher prices. For them, the conversation is not over, and they want to make sure it is not over in Congress either. ObamaCare is still failing, and the American people are certainly still suffering, so we need to do something about it. We need to act.

There was an article by the Associated Press in the paper on Monday that summed up the situation. The headline was “Millions who buy health insurance brace for sharp increases.”

The article goes on to say: “Millions of people who buy individual health insurance policies and get no financial help from the Affordable Care Act are bracing for another year of double-digit premium increases, and their frustration is boiling over.”

The article says that these are mostly middle-class folks—hard-working people who may be self-employed or work for small businesses that can't afford to offer insurance. It goes on to say that these millions of Americans “pay full freight and bear the brunt of market problems such as high costs and diminished competition.”

That is the exact situation people are facing in Wyoming, and I assume in the Acting President pro tempore's home State of Arkansas as well.

The ObamaCare exchange in my State has only one company selling in-

surance. It wasn't supposed to happen that way. Democrats in Congress who supported the healthcare law said that it was going to create more competition and would bring down the prices and costs for families. In September of 2009, President Obama said that “without competition, the price of insurance goes up and quality goes down.”

So what is the situation now? All summer long we have heard about insurers who are giving up, pulling back, and dropping out. Millions of Americans will have fewer choices when it comes to their health insurance plans and opportunities in 2018.

On August 24, the largest hospital system in New York State announced that it was going to stop selling an ObamaCare insurance plan it had launched just 4 years ago. This is the home State of the Democratic leader in the Senate, someone who has come to the floor supporting the healthcare law.

The company is blaming the flaws in the Obamacare law and the fact that we haven't been able to do the reforms we need to do. Things I proposed and things that make sense to me—the Democratic leader will not allow us to address the many, many flaws of ObamaCare. Meanwhile, the people of his home State of New York are losing another option to get the coverage ObamaCare requires by law for them to have.

They are not alone. People living in 47 percent of all counties will have only one option for coverage next year, so millions of Americans are stuck in an insurance monopoly under ObamaCare.

Monday was the deadline for insurance companies to say what they will need to charge next year. People across the country continue to be very worried about how much more expensive their health insurance will be.

The lack of competition is one reason for the skyrocketing prices, but other big reasons for the increase in prices are actually the tax increases that were put in place when ObamaCare was passed. The healthcare law included \$1 trillion in new taxes.

One of the biggest ones hitting hard-working families is a tax on every health insurance plan that gets sold. It is called the health insurance tax. There was a new study last month that found this tax is going to raise prices by about \$500 per family next year.

The tax alone is raising the cost \$500 per family next year. That is just to pay for one of the taxes. Republicans want to get rid of the tax. That was part of our repeal-and-replace plan.

Every Democrat voted no—voted no—to removing the taxes, so premiums are continuing to soar because the healthcare law is unsustainable, and the taxes are unbearable for hard-working families. We have to do something to help people and to reverse the damage caused by ObamaCare.

I voted for the repeal legislation in July, and I am going to continue to work to replace ObamaCare. But until

that happens, I am glad to see the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is looking into other ways we can make changes to ObamaCare. The committee is working on ways to stabilize the individual market for next year. They are going to hear from Governors and State insurance commissioners about giving States more flexibility in dealing with some of the healthcare law's mandates. The committee is also going to be listening to doctors and to patients.

When I talk to doctors and nurses and patients back home in Wyoming, they tell me that the healthcare system we have now under ObamaCare isn't working. I see it every day. What I hear and what I see when I visit the hospitals and when I go back to my old medical office is that we need to replace it with something that actually makes healthcare more affordable. That was a big part of the Republican reform effort: Let the States do what works for their State and for the people who live there.

The Obama healthcare law is still hurting Americans. It is not getting better on its own. It is up to us in Congress to do all we can to help Americans who have been trapped in the ObamaCare death spiral.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

TAX REFORM

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is no surprise that Americans consistently rate jobs and the economy as top issues of concern.

A recent survey found that 50 percent of voters consider themselves to be living paycheck to paycheck, and about one-third of voters say they are just about \$400 away from a financial crisis. That means a single, unexpected car repair or healthcare bill could easily put them in the middle of a financial emergency.

Too many Americans have seen their American dream dim in recent years. Hopes for a secure future have turned into worries about where the next rent or mortgage payment is coming from or whether it will be possible to save anything at all for retirement.

We don't have to resign ourselves to the status quo. We don't have to accept the long-term economic stagnation of the Obama administration as our economic future. We can get our economy going again, and we can set it up for strong growth for the long term. But that is going to require some work. It is going to require repealing burdensome and unnecessary government regulations that have slowed economic growth, and it is going to require reforming our complex, outdated Tax Code, which is increasingly strangling our economy.

The Tax Code might not be the first thing people think of when they think of economic growth, but it actually plays a huge role in every aspect of our

economy. It helps determine how much money Americans have left over from their paychecks to save or invest or whether they can afford a car or a house. When it comes to businesses, it can be the key to determining whether a young business gets off the ground or an existing business has the money to grow and hire new employees.

Unfortunately, our current Tax Code is not helping our economy. It is doing the opposite. It limits Americans' opportunities. It punishes their success. It discourages investment and growth. It cripples small businesses. It encourages large businesses to send jobs overseas. It keeps our economy from reaching its full potential.

Reforming our Tax Code is an indispensable part of getting our economy back on the path to long-term health. Without comprehensive tax reform, the economic stagnation of the Obama years is likely to become the status quo going forward.

This fall, Republicans in the House and Senate are going to make comprehensive tax reform a priority, and any legislation we pass will be governed by five principles: First, any bill has to result in increased wages, jobs, and economic growth. Second, it must provide tax relief for the middle class. Third, it has to keep jobs here at home. Fourth, it has to increase American competitiveness in the global economy. Finally, it has to simplify the Tax Code.

Republicans will be talking a lot about these principles over the coming weeks, but today I would like to take just a few minutes to talk about the first of these principles: making sure that tax reform legislation increases wages, jobs, and economic growth.

Flattening wage growth has been a problem in the United States for decades. During the 8 years of the Obama administration, wage growth was almost nonexistent.

Economic growth was also weak throughout the Obama administration. During the last year of the Obama administration—years, I might add, after the recession ended—economic growth was averaging a dismal 1.5 percent. That is barely half of the growth needed for a healthy economy or for what we have seen historically in this country, going back to the end of World War II.

While things have been looking up a little bit lately, we still have a long way to go to get back on the right track. Things need to get better, and they need to get better faster. We want things to get better for the long term. During the Obama administration, there were periods of reasonable economic growth, but they were quickly followed by weak periods.

That is not good enough. We need to put our economy on a strong, healthy footing for the long term. What does the Tax Code have to do with all of this? How is it discouraging wage growth, job growth, and economic growth?

I want to talk about three big ways it is discouraging growth. To start with, tax rates on businesses, large and small, are too high. Our Nation has the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world—at least 10 percentage points higher than the majority of our international competitors. Small businesses face tax rates that can range even higher—up to 44.6 percent for small businesses.

It doesn't take an economist to realize that high tax rates leave businesses with less money to invest, less money to spend on wages, less money to create new jobs, and less money to put back into new property or equipment for their businesses.

This situation is compounded when you are an American business with international competitors that are paying a lot less in taxes than you are. It is no surprise that U.S. businesses struggling to stay competitive in the global economy don't have a lot of resources to devote to creating new jobs and increasing wages.

On top of our high business tax rates, there is another major problem with our Tax Code that puts American businesses at a competitive disadvantage globally—our outdated worldwide tax system.

What does it mean to have a worldwide tax system? It means that American companies pay U.S. taxes on the profit they make here at home, as well as on any profit they make abroad once they bring that money home to the United States.

The problem with this is twofold. First, these companies are already paying taxes to foreign governments on the money they make abroad. Then, when they bring that money home, they end up having to pay taxes again on at least part of those profits and at the highest tax rate in the industrialized world. This discourages them from bringing their profits back to the United States to invest in their domestic operations. Instead, our Tax Code gives them a strong incentive to leave that money abroad and to invest in foreign workers and foreign economies.

The other problem is that most other major world economies have shifted from a worldwide tax system to what is known as a territorial tax system. In a territorial tax system, you pay taxes on the money that you earn where you make it and only there. You aren't taxed again when you bring money back to your home country.

Most of American companies' foreign competitors have been operating under a territorial tax system for years. So they are paying a lot less in taxes on the money they make abroad than American companies are. That leaves American companies at a disadvantage. These foreign companies can underbid American companies for new business simply because they don't have to add as much in taxes into the price of their products or services.

In addition to discouraging growth with high tax rates and with our outdated worldwide tax system, there is

another major way our Tax Code discourages growth, and that is by leaving small businesses with very little cash on hand.

I have mentioned the high tax rates that small businesses face, which already restrict their cash flow. The accounting rules in the Tax Code just compound that problem. Under current law, small and medium-sized corporations are often required to pay tax on income before they receive the cash, and they cannot deduct all of their expenses when they pay the invoices. It can take years or even decades for them to recover the cost of their investments in equipment and facilities.

For instance, right now the cost of a computer is recovered over 5 years and tractors, over 7 years, if you are in the ag sector of the economy, and commercial buildings, over 39 years.

The consequences of deducting investments over so many years is that businesses can be left extremely cash-poor in the meantime, and cash-poor businesses don't expand. They don't hire new workers, and they don't increase wages.

Any bill Republicans consider has to fix these elements in our Tax Code that are discouraging growth. It has to lower rates for businesses, both large and small. It has to shift our outdated worldwide tax system to a territorial tax system so that American businesses are not at a competitive disadvantage in the global economy and so that American businesses have an incentive to invest their profits at home in American jobs and American workers, instead of abroad. Any bill we consider has to address the cost-recovery rules that are keeping small businesses cash-poor, often for years at a time.

I have already introduced legislation to help startups and small to medium-sized businesses recover the cost of their investments faster. It is legislation that I hope will become part of the final bill that we consider in the Senate. I am looking forward to working with Chairman HATCH and my colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee as we work to draft the final bill.

The American people have had a rough few years, but economic worry doesn't have to become the status quo for the long term. American workers and job creators are as dynamic and creative as ever. We just need to clear the obstacles from their path, and comprehensive tax reform will allow us to do just that. I look forward to helping to bring the American people real relief this year.

I yield the floor.

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. THUNE. 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.

RECESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 4:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3 p.m., recessed until 4:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. GARDNER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. 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.

The Senator from California.

DACA

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the need to protect undocumented young people, commonly referred to as Dreamers, from deportation.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or what is called DACA, was announced by President Obama in 2012 to solve an urgent need. Hundreds of thousands of young people brought to this country as children were at risk of being deported. They didn't take the action to come; their parents took the action to come and bring them. President Obama's Executive order temporarily protected these undocumented young people from deportation. DACA also provides the opportunity to obtain work permits and has made it possible for many young DACA beneficiaries to enroll in college.

If Congress doesn't act now and pass a law, President Trump's decision to terminate this program will have devastating consequences for nearly 800,000 families across the United States, particularly those in California. This decision to end DACA without first ensuring that young people have legal protection is why we are demanding a vote on the Dream Act as soon as possible. DACA recipients deserve certainty now, not 6 months from now. These young people trusted our government, and it is time we stopped playing with their lives.

The Dream Act, introduced by Senators GRAHAM and DURBIN, has been considered many times already by this Congress. It was most recently included in the comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the Senate in 2013 with 68 votes. I remember it well. I remember weeks in committee. I remember dozens of amendments. I remember the time on the floor, the hope that we would be able to pass comprehensive immigration reform. It had an agricultural workers program in it. It had this program for undocumented children. It had H2A. It had a whole panoply of reforms in it, and it

went down. It got 68 votes here, although it didn't survive in the House.

I believe there is broad bipartisan support for the Dream Act. I just learned, for example, that polls are saying that 70 percent of the people in this country are in favor of it. And I would be confident that it would pass if given an up-or-down vote. So I call on leadership to ensure there is a clean vote on the Dream Act this month.

As I mentioned, 800,000 young people have been admitted to the DACA Program, allowing them to come out of the shadows. They were educated here. They work here. They pay taxes. They are integrated into American society. These young people are fiercely patriotic. In every way that truly matters, they are Americans.

Listen to this: 95 percent of DACA recipients are working or in school. That is 95 percent of 800,000. The typical DACA recipient came to this country at 6 years old. They have known no home other than this one. Many of them only speak English.

Seventy-two percent of the top 25 Fortune 500 companies—companies such as Apple, Amazon, Facebook, J.P. Morgan—employ DACA recipients. DACA recipients are contributing significantly to our economy. It is estimated that ending the program would mean a \$460.3 billion hit to the GDP over the next decade.

But protecting DACA recipients isn't a matter of politics or economics; it is really about what is right as Americans and human beings. This is particularly important for me, representing California, because 1 in 4 Dreamers—223,000—live, work, and study in California, and I can testify that they are an essential part of the fabric of our communities. So it is important for Senators and the American public to know the very real human side to this issue.

I want to share the story of a remarkable young woman whom I met and whose family I met. Her name is Vianney Sanchez. She was brought to this country when she was just 1. Today she lives in East Oakland. I met her and her family last month, and I last spoke to her on Monday night. Vianney is a 23-year-old graduate student from UC Santa Cruz with a degree in psychology. She is pursuing a career in public service so she can give back to this country.

Vianney's mother, Maria, whom I also met, worked as an oncology nurse at Highland Hospital, and her father, Eusebio, worked as a truckdriver. They had no criminal record. They owned their own home, which I visited, a small home in East Oakland. They paid their taxes. And they were in this country for 23 years. I saw them the week before the mother and father were deported last month, sobbing in their living room. My office has worked on their case for years, and their deportation was truly heartbreaking. I will never forget having to call Maria and tell her that I had spoken to the Acting

Secretary of Homeland Security, begging her not to deport this family, and that she would be deported and separated from her children the next day. It was one of the most painful calls I have ever had to make.

These heartbreaking photos of the Sanchez family were taken by the San Francisco Chronicle and Bay Area News Group before Maria and Eusebio were forced to leave. This is Maria—20 years a nurse at Highland Hospital. This is Vianney, and this is the second oldest child. The oldest child is DACA, and it has now fallen to her to support her two sisters, maintain the house, work, and hopefully start her career. Her mother, her father, and her American citizen youngest brother are in Mexico. I think these heartbreaking photos tell a story. Vianney now is facing the uncertainty that she, too, could lose protection and be deported. Then what would happen to her sisters?

Every day we fail to act means one more day that Vianney, Melin, and Elizabeth are forced to live with this enormous cloud hanging over their heads. And, you know, Senator, the fear is palpable. You talk to these young people on the telephone, and you can sense what is happening. First of all, they know the government knows everything about them. The government knows where they live, what they do. They have to report regularly. This is kind of a conditional program, and so they are up front and out front. And you would think this would give them a sense of security, but it actually gives them a sense of insecurity because they don't know what the future will bring.

I would like to share the story of another talented and ambitious Californian who has taken full advantage of the opportunity she has been given. This is Denisse Rojas. She arrived in the United States when she was just 10 months old, brought here from Mexico. Like many of our immigrant ancestors, her parents wanted to make a better life for their children. This is a very recent photo of her; you can see she is beautiful.

Denisse's family is similar to other families in California. After arriving in Fremont, her father worked full time in a restaurant while pursuing his high school diploma at night. Her mother attended community college part time for 7 years to earn her nursing degree. After years of trying to gain legal status, her parents were forced to move to Canada. That left Denisse.

Denisse excelled in high school, graduating with a 4.3 GPA. She attended UC Berkeley, which is one of the top public universities in the Nation, to study biology and sociology. She dreamt of going to medical school, driven in part by a family member's earlier death from cancer. The cancer was diagnosed at a late stage because the family's immigration status made it impossible to afford health insurance. Denisse worked as a waitress and commuted an hour each way to classes

because she couldn't afford to live on campus. After graduation, she volunteered at San Francisco General Hospital.

This is Denisse today. She is in New York at Mount Sinai Medical School, one of the country's top programs. She is on track to earn her degree in 2019. You can see her in the middle of this photo in her medical scrubs and how proud she is.

To help other students navigate the admissions process and pursue careers in health and medicine, Denisse co-founded a national nonprofit organization called Pre-Health Dreamers. Through Pre-Health Dreamers, Denisse has helped many other students as they work toward their goals.

After graduation, she intends to specialize in emergency medicine and work in low-income communities to provide healthcare to families like her own who too often go without needed treatment.

Parts of California, particularly our rural counties, are very short on doctors. This is a big problem. In the healthcare reform, they are lucky if they have the choice of one insurance. So we desperately need people like Denisse who want to work in communities most in need of skilled health professionals.

Without DACA or passage of the Dream Act, Denisse won't be able to come home. She won't be able to stay. All of the education that has gotten her here—a top-notch university and a top-notch hospital, I assume as an intern or a resident at this time—she wouldn't have the proper work authorization or accompanying documents, and our country would be denied a highly qualified, motivated doctor.

In closing, I really believe we have a moral obligation to do all we can to shield these young people from deportation. Remember, they did not break the law. They were brought here as children, many as babies. Some don't know the language of the land from whence they came. They all speak English very well. They want the American dream. They are motivated, and they are patriotic. I was listening to a young person the other day, and all she wanted to do was be in the military. She is ROTC and wants to be in the military. You know, these are the people who make this country great, and we can't forsake them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, it would have taken moral courage—something he doesn't have—for President Trump to stand in front of the American people to say why he was going back on his word to "deal with DACA with heart" and help these "absolutely incredible kids" in a way that is going to "make people happy and proud."

Instead, he sent out his Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, long a foe of immigration reform, to break the bad news to 800,000 young people and their

families that he was rescinding DACA. This was bloodless, heartless, and completely unjustifiable. In his remarks, the Attorney General composed an elaborate fiction about DACA, a program that has transformed the lives of 800,000 young people, and the Attorney General actually thought the American people would fall for his made-up remarks. He not only claimed that DACA was unconstitutional but also falsely claimed that Dreamers were taking hundreds of thousands of jobs away from Americans and that they deserved to be punished.

The fact is, a strong majority of the American people are siding with the DACA participants. The American people aren't threatened by these inspiring young people. They are not criminals. They aren't causing trouble. They are students, doctors, nurses, teachers, and entrepreneurs making real and meaningful contributions to our society. They are simply asking for the opportunity to pursue their dreams—hence, they are called Dreamers—in the only country they know, the United States of America. It is why so many people across the country are speaking out forcefully against the President's decision to end DACA.

While I was back home in Hawaii last month, I met with activists, community organizations, and State leaders to rally support for DACA and to call for establishing permanent protections for these Dreamers across the country. Hawaii is home to 600 DACA recipients and thousands more Dreamers who could have qualified for the program but were reluctant to expose themselves to the government. I would like to share some of their compelling stories.

Gabriella came to the United States with her family in 2001, fleeing violence in Brazil. They came here out of love and hope for a better future. Every day Gabriella and her family worried about being sent back to the violent situation they escaped. Gabriella graduated from high school with a 3.8 GPA and had big plans to pursue higher education, but at that time she couldn't enroll in college because she was undocumented.

DACA changed her life. She said:

I had been living here undocumented for 10 years and had seen a lot of opportunities pass me by. I knew I couldn't continue to live this way.

[DACA] changed my life for the better. Since getting DACA in 2012, I have been able to get a driver's license, to have a career, to go to school, and leave my home every day knowing that I could come home to my family at the end of the day.

Another story. Mahe came to Hawaii from Tonga when he was a child. When he turned 21, he learned he might be deported. Before receiving DACA, the only job Mahe could find was building rock walls with his uncle in Waiialua. He didn't have a car to get to work. He woke up at 4 a.m. every day to catch a bus to Pearl City, where he switched buses for the ride to Waiialua.

After working in the hot Sun all day, Mahe would have to take a 2-hour bus

ride home to get to bed at 10 p.m. before starting his routine over again the next morning.

Since I got DACA, life has changed a lot. I applied for my first job and got it. I worked really hard and made supervisor. They gave me a company car and a company phone. It was really, really nice just to know that with hard work and effort you can get places.

Eliminating DACA would erase the meaningful economic and social contributions Dreamers like Gabriella and Mahe have made to Hawaii and our country. Multiply their stories thousands of times, and you get a sense of how many lives are being shattered by a President who wouldn't help the young people he claims to "love," even as he was ordering their probable deportation.

According to a report from the Cato Institute, rescinding DACA would cost the State of Hawaii \$577.5 million in the coming decade from unrealized economic growth and lost taxes. That is from 600 DACA participants. There are 800,000 of them throughout the country. Just the economic loss alone would be tremendous.

Of course, the contributions Dreamers make to our country cannot and should not be reduced only to a dollar figure. Standing up for them and their American dream is a moral imperative. It is why leaders from across Hawaii are speaking about DACA and protecting Dreamers.

In an email to students, faculty, and staff yesterday, the president of the University of Hawaii, David Lassner, reaffirmed the university's "commitment to serve all members of our community, regardless of citizenship status," stating:

Well over four years ago the UH Board of Regents adopted a policy to extend eligibility for resident tuition rates to undocumented students, including but not limited to those who have filed for DACA.

I remain on record, with hundreds of my fellow college and university presidents, in public support of DACA. Over the next months we will strengthen our urging of Congress to extend the DACA program and protect the dreamers of our State and our nation.

He goes on:

Our undocumented students are an integral part of our community and will continue to be extended all the rights, privileges, and services available to our students, from application through graduation.

As our state's only higher public education system we have a deep responsibility to provide high-quality affordable education to advance all our people, our communities and our islands. That mission requires that we support and celebrate diversity, respect and caring.

We must overcome hate and intolerance even as we support free speech and free expression. It is clear that UH, like universities around the country, is entering uncharted territory.

Our clear and firm adherence to our values in challenging times is more essential than ever.

So stated the president of the University of Hawaii.

In another very recent development, Hawaii's attorney general, Doug Chin,

joined 15 attorneys general from across the country filing suit against the Trump administration to prevent it from eliminating the DACA Program. They filed the lawsuit on equal protection grounds. I strongly support efforts in the courts to prevent the President from rescinding DACA and putting 800,000 young lives at risk for deportation.

Since the President has kicked the ball to Congress to save DACA, something he could and should have done himself, Congress must step up and do just that. Congress must step up because we cannot count on the President to do the right thing by exerting consistent, comprehensive, or moral leadership. Although it was completely within the President's power to keep DACA in place, Congress can provide the certainty these Dreamers deserve by passing the Dream Act, a bill that enjoys bipartisan support.

I also want to send a clear message to the President and his hardline supporters in Congress. I will join with my colleagues to resist any effort to hold Dreamers hostage to pay for the President's vanity wall, in exchange for sharp reductions in legal immigration or for any other dog whistles to his base. I will do everything I can to fight against this administration's continued efforts to marginalize minority communities or to pit immigrant communities against one another. As an immigrant and minority myself, I certainly know what these communities are experiencing. This is precisely what the President continues to do in an effort to play to White supremacists in his base. Sadly, this is not surprising. It is up to each of us to fight back, and we will.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I want to thank my colleague from Hawaii for her outstanding words. She comes from a State like mine that thrives on diversity, welcoming people from all over the globe and making us stronger, and she has been a symbol of that herself as well as all the millions of wonderful people she represents in Hawaii.

I rise this afternoon alongside my colleague from Hawaii, my colleague from Washington State, and others to make a case for the swift passage of the Dream Act. There are 800,000 Dreamers living in our country today, hard-working folks who came to this country through no fault of their own. To many, America is the only country they have ever known. More than that, they contribute so much to our country. They work in our companies, go to our schools, even serve in our military. All they want is to live and work and contribute to our great country. Why wouldn't we want them to?

The President's decision yesterday to end DACA threw their futures in doubt, threatening to rip apart families and telling people who have worked so hard

to become Americans that they have to leave the country. The President's DACA decision is also bad economics. It would deprive thousands of employers that rely on these hard workers.

The Libertarian-leaning Cato Institute estimates that ending DACA would cost employers over \$2 billion in 2 years alone. The Center for American Progress found it would drain \$433 billion from our GDP over 10 years. That is why more than 500 business leaders—some of the leading business people in our country—have signed on to a letter in defense of DACA. That is why Microsoft recently said that protecting the Dreamers was their No. 1 legislative goal, greater than a cut to the corporate tax rate. That is how much Dreamers mean to them personally and to their bottom lines.

The economic consequence of ending DACA would be far-reaching and likely devastating. There would also be a devastating moral cost if we didn't pass the Dream Act to protect these kids.

I am reminded of a young woman, Kirssy Martinez, who was brought to this country from the Dominican Republic as a very young child and grew up in my city, in the borough of the Bronx. After graduating high school in New York City, Kirssy was stuck in the shadows. She worked small jobs as a waitress and as a babysitter. Though she was a good student coming out of high school and even had a few scholarship offers, she couldn't attend college because she didn't have a green card.

The DACA Program granted her temporary legal status. She worked hard to scrape together enough for loans and enrolled in Bronx Community College. A few years ago, I spoke at her graduation, where she was the valedictorian of her class. I watched her. What a wonderful young lady. She had a perfect GPA, 4.0.

Kirssy represents what we think of as the best of our country. She is part of what makes America great. Like generations before her, she wants to study hard, work hard, and give back to her community. What kind of country would we be—what kind of country have we become if we say that Kirssy and 800,000 hard-working folks just like her are not welcome.

Congress has a responsibility to act. I know the Presiding Officer sees it that way as well, and I very much appreciate it. We should do, as soon as we can, whatever we can.

I repeat what I said to the majority leader and the Speaker of the House this morning at the White House: Put a clean Dream Act on the floor in both Houses. It will receive bipartisan support. I believe it would pass by significant margins in each House. We could remove the fear of deportation and give peace of mind to 800,000 Dreamers if only our leadership would put the bill on the floor. It is that simple. If we don't see a clean Dream Act in September, we, as the minority, are prepared to attach it to legislative vehicles in the fall until it passes.

These Dreamers are Americans in their hearts. They ought to become Americans in the law books as well, and we Democrats will not rest until that happens.

Thank you, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, some 800,000 people in this country woke up this morning with great uncertainty about their future because of President Trump's reckless, hateful agenda. Young men and women in this country are now unsure if they will be able to finish their college degree in the United States. They are unsure if they can keep their job at the hospital or as a firefighter or serve in our military to fight for our freedom. They are unsure if they can keep their homes or remain with loved ones, and they are scared that this country might break its promise and use against them the very information that they submitted to enroll in DACA in order to find them and deport them. That is appalling, and it marks a very sad time for this United States of America.

President Trump has caused a lot of divisive and disheartening moments since the start of the year, but rescinding DACA is an unusually cruel and heartless move even for this administration, and it flies in the face of so much of what and who made this country what it is. So I am here today, with my colleagues, to urge all of us in the Senate to use this moment of uncertainty and division to do what is right—to come together to defend DACA.

Use your voices for the Dreamers in your States and the many others who are calling and writing and marching in our streets, urging all of us to act for our neighbors and our coworkers, our students, our doctors, our engineers, our friends, and our first responders, who are stepping up at this very moment to protect people from the hurricanes that are wreaking havoc in Texas and Florida to the wildfires that are blazing in the West.

Let's stand behind our colleagues, Senator DURBIN and Senator GRAHAM, who have already paved a bipartisan path forward on this issue and who, just hours after the President's announcement, reiterated that they are ready to get this done. I am too.

There are more than 17,000 young men and women in my home State of Washington who are deeply connected to their communities. They were brought to this country as children. Some of them were so young when they arrived that they did not even know they were not born here until years or, maybe, even a decade later when they went to apply for college or to get a job.

Just yesterday, I heard about a young man in my home State who is very distraught. He was brought to the United States as a toddler. He did not know that he was not a citizen until he turned 16 and went to get his driver's

license. As a result, he signed up for DACA. He got his license and he got a job, and he is now in his second year in a science program at a community college, getting straight A's and hoping to transfer to the University of Washington. Now he is frightened that he is going to lose all of that and be forced to go to a country that he has never known. He says that he does not know anyone in Mexico nor has he been there to visit.

That is just one story.

I sat down with a number of Dreamers in my State. They are ambitious, they work hard, they play by the rules, and they do the right thing. They know one home—America. To penalize them for forces beyond their control is simply not what this country is about.

While President Trump may see ending DACA as a political move to pander to his extreme, hard-line base, I know that the majority of people across this country will stand up and fight back. They will not let President Trump strip away protections or use Dreamers as a bargaining chip for his hateful crackdown on immigrants in our communities or on wasteful border wall spending.

As a voice in Congress for my State, I stand ready to work with my colleagues on either side of the aisle to find a solution so as to honor the 800,000 Dreamers who call America home and to honor the very foundation of our immigrant Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I understand that Senator VAN HOLLEN was going to speak, but since he is not here, I ask unanimous consent to make what remarks I need to in morning business and will yield to him when I am through.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is interesting to hear the DACA talk. I think one should take a step back and look and ask: Is it really unreasonable to merely say that so long as we will obey the law, we are going to be all right? I think this President did the right thing when he said: All right, Congress. You take a few months and see if you can come up with some answers. That is a good answer. If that is the case, then that is, maybe, what we should do.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, what I am really concerned about right now is that we are getting ready to do the National Defense Authorization Act. This is something that we will pass. We have passed it now for 55 consecutive years, and it is going to be passed this time. It is important because one of the primary constitutional responsibilities we have is to provide for the common defense of our great Nation, and

recent worldwide events highlight the urgency of this need.

I have spoken numerous times about the grave threat that is posed by North Korea and warned that it would not be long before North Korea could demonstrate the capability of firing an intercontinental ballistic missile that would be capable of reaching the United States. It is not just my saying it; others are saying it. We have a lot of very courageous individuals who have come forth from the military. I am not used to this. I have been here for 23 years; yet I have not seen them come forth and just be clear about the threat that is facing this country.

In April, ADM Harry Harris, the Pacific Command commander testified in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee that it is clearly a matter of when and not if that Korea would develop the capability to strike the United States of America. This has never happened before. In May, Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, who is the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, testified. Actually, he testified before the subcommittee that I chair. He said:

Let me be clear on this point. If left on its current trajectory, the regime will ultimately succeed in fielding a nuclear-armed missile capable of threatening the United States homeland.

We have talked about this being the most threatened position that we have been in in the history of this country. I have often referred to the good old days of the Cold War when we had two superpowers. We knew what they had, and they knew what we had. It was predictable, but it is not predictable anymore. You have countries like Yemen, countries like Iran, countries like North Korea that are developing these capabilities that they now have. It is within reach.

Since then, unfortunately, I have been proven to be correct as the North Korea regime continues to demonstrate its dire threat facing us. On July 4, North Korea successfully launched its first ICBM. It was the first time that they had done it. If fired on a standard trajectory, the missile could have ranged Alaska. Some experts say that it could have gone even deeper into the continental United States.

In light of that test, the Defense Intelligence Agency updated its assessment of the timeline by which North Korea will be able to reliably range U.S. cities—we are talking about Washington, DC—with nuclear missiles as early as the end of next year or even earlier. This past Sunday, September 3, North Korea tested what is believed to be a hydrogen bomb, its most powerful nuclear weapon to date—almost seven times as powerful as the bomb that was detonated over Hiroshima. North Korean media immediately stated that the nuclear test was to determine the “accuracy and credibility” of its “hydrogen bomb to be placed at the payload of an ICBM.”

It does not get any more direct than that. Even if delivered by a relatively

inaccurate ICBM—because they are relatively inaccurate—a nuclear device as powerful as the one that was tested Sunday could devastate its target. Just think about that—7 to 10 times stronger than the one that wiped out Hiroshima. It is important to remember that all of this power is being wielded by an erratic despot, Kim Jong Un.

North Korea's official newspaper relayed the threat of a preemptive strike in April. This is a quote from their newspaper: “[It would] completely and immediately wipe out not only U.S. imperialists’ invasion forces in South Korea and its surrounding areas but the U.S. mainland and reduce them to ashes.” This is a newspaper that is behind this leader over there, and it has made this threat to the United States. We have never experienced anything like this in this country before. Now that we are getting into the NDAA this year, we have to keep this grave threat foremost in our minds, and we are doing it.

I have had numerous conversations with the chairman of our committee, and we are going to make these commitments. We have serious readiness deficits that are going to have to be addressed right away. Over the last 90 days, a spike in accidents across the military services has occurred. I had the CNO of the Navy and the Secretary of the Navy in my office a few minutes ago, and we talked about how they are addressing this thing. It is hard to correlate these accidents with a readiness decline as a result of numerous continuing resolutions and sequestration. It is just another surprise that we have not had before.

Our forces are now smaller than the days of the hollow force. Some of us remember that was back after the Carter administration. It was when our own forces declared that it was a hollow force of the seventies. Yet we had a hearing just the other day, and we had some of the top people in. In fact, it was the vice chiefs of all of the services, and they agreed that our situation right now is worse than it was in the days of the hollow force.

Our Air Force is short 1,500 pilots, and 1,300 of those are fighter pilots. I believe 50 percent of our Air Force squadrons are trained and ready to conduct all of their assigned missions.

The Navy is the smallest and least ready it has been in years. Currently, it can only meet about 40 percent of the demand from regional combatant commanders. More than half of the Navy's aircraft are grounded because they are awaiting maintenance or lack the necessary spare parts.

The Marine Corps is struggling to keep their aging F/A-18 Hornets airworthy. I think the last I heard is that 62 percent of them were not able to address that readiness.

The Army has said that only about one-third of its brigade combat teams, one-fourth of their combat aviation brigades, and one-half of their division headquarters are currently ready. That

is a sobering assessment, and we are again in the most threatened position we have been in as a nation.

The bill that we have presented out of the Armed Services Committee goes a long way toward closing these readiness gaps. Our bill increases end strength and boosts funding for equipment, operations, maintenance, military construction, and it includes a 2.1-percent pay increase for our troops. It also addresses many requirements for the services and combatant commander's unfunded priority lists.

I am also pleased that the Senate Armed Services Committee's NDAA prohibits a Base Realignment and Closure round this year. It is called a BRAC round, which is when they go through and make an evaluation as to what our capabilities are, what changes should be made, and what bases should be closed—decisions like that. The problem with that is if you do this when we have gone through a period of disarmament, as some have called it—and we are in a position right now when we need every nickel that we can have for the military. One thing that is always a certainty is that when you go through a BRAC round, it always costs money for the first few years, and we cannot afford to do it right now.

Our NDAA also fully funds Missile Defense Agency unfunded priorities, which is important considering that, since 2006, the Missile Defense Agency's budget has fallen more than 23 percent. Every amendment that we consider in our NDAA this year should be equally focused on increasing readiness across the Services.

I will wrap up with a quote from General Milley, the Chief of Staff of the Army. This quote is one that we should keep in mind throughout the NDAA process. By the way, I admire our uniforms for coming forth and talking about the dilemma that we are in because it is very difficult for them to do that.

General Milley said it best when it comes to funding our military:

The only thing more expensive than deterrence is actually fighting a war, and the only thing more expensive than fighting a war is fighting one and losing one. . . . We're expensive. We recognize that. But the bottom line is, it's an investment that is worth every nickel.

It is.

I apologize to my friend.

I suggest that this is probably the most significant bill coming up this year, and I think Senator MCCAIN said that we are going to be starting on it next week. It has been the most important bill of the year for the last 55 years, and it will continue to be this year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, at the outset, I say to the Senator from Oklahoma that I agree with his statements with respect to the threat posed

by North Korea, its nuclear weapons program, both the development of nuclear bombs and the most recent explosion, which was a larger yield than ever before, plus their missile program, including their ICBMs. I think it is important that this Congress do its part and act quickly by further economically squeezing North Korea.

I know that the Presiding Officer and Senator MARKEY have a piece of legislation. I, together with Senator TOOMEY, have a piece of legislation in the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee that would further tighten the economic pressure on North Korea. So I hope that the Congress will move forward quickly.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator. I would say only that this is the one thing that we agree on. We disagree on a lot of things in this Chamber, but this is one that we have to agree on and do what is necessary to do our job.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Yes, indeed. I think that that is exactly right. We have 28,000 American soldiers in South Korea and about 50,000 in Japan.

DACA

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I came here to the floor to talk about the Dreamers, and I do think that it is important to start by making the point that many of those Dreamers are serving in our Armed Forces today. They have put their lives at risk for the only country that they know, which is the United States of America.

It was just shortly after the November election, when then-President-Elect Trump told Time Magazine, when he was talking about Dreamers:

We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud.

He was referring to the Dreamers. He continues:

They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen.

That is what President Trump said right after the election.

Yesterday, he delivered the cruel news about what would happen 6 months from now if this Congress doesn't act, which is that those Dreamers will be at risk of being thrown out of our country. They will be at risk of being deported from the United States of America.

So the very President who said he was going to do something to make people “happy and proud” did something that was sad and shameful in our country. A majority of Americans agree that it is wrong to deport the Dreamers. Not just majorities of Democrats or Independents but also majorities of Republicans recognize that it is the wrong thing to do.

As President Trump has acknowledged, these Dreamers were brought to the United States as young children.

Regardless of the acts of adults or their parents, these children have done nothing wrong. They are our neighbors. They attend schools with our kids. They pledge allegiance to the flag every morning at school. They sing the Star-Spangled Banner. They play on the same sports teams.

In fact, many of these Dreamers didn't even recognize that they did not have full legal status until they reached adulthood. It was the DACA Program that provided these young people with at least the assurance that the rest of the country wanted them to stay and that they would not be deported so long as they played by the rules, so long as they did what this country asked of them. That is what they are doing.

Ninety-five percent of the Dreamers are in school or working at American businesses, large and small. They are contributing to our economy. Once they received that stability under DACA, 54 percent went out and bought their first car at local car dealerships around the country. Twelve percent were able to go out and make a down payment on their first home. When they go out to buy homes and buy cars, they are supporting our economy, which is why deporting these 800,000 Dreamers is not only the wrong thing to do from the perspective of humanity and being a fair country, but it is bad for our economy as well.

As I indicated at the outset, these Dreamers participate in our Armed Forces and help protect the national security of our country. In my State of Maryland, we have 10,000 Dreamers who are contributing in many positive ways to our State.

When I think of Dreamers, I think of a young man now whose name is Steven Acuna. He is a Maryland resident. In 2001, he was 8 years old when his family came to the United States from Colombia after they began receiving death threats. Ever since his family arrived 16 years ago, they have lived and worked in this country as productive and law-abiding citizens.

In 2012, they were denied the political asylum they had sought here. So they were actually at that time yanked from their Germantown, MD, home and locked up in a detention center on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. At that time, they reached out to my congressional office, and we joined with advocacy organizations and immigration lawyers and local leaders to make sure that family was not deported.

Then, thanks to the DACA Program, that made it possible for Dreamers like Steven Acuna to stay in the United States legally. He just graduated with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Maryland. Steve aspires to be an orthopedic surgeon. Here is a picture of Steve Acuna with his family, celebrating his recent graduation from the University of Maryland and aspiring to go on to become a surgeon.

The message President Trump sent to Steve Acuna and his family yester-

day is shameful. The message he sent was this: We don't want you in the United States anymore.

It would be a grave mistake—the wrong thing, morally—and it is also the wrong thing from the perspective of making sure we have a community that works for everybody and a strong local economy.

We have invested in Steve Acuna. He wants to go on to be an orthopedic surgeon. Yet this administration is telling him: If Congress doesn't act in 6 months, you are out of here.

So that brings us to what we are going to do here in the Senate and what we are going to do in the House of Representatives. President Trump did not have to make the decision he made yesterday. It was cruel and it was gratuitous, but he has made that decision. Now it is up to us in the Senate and in the Congress to do the right thing. In fact, President Trump has said to Congress: Go ahead and make sure that Dreamers can stay. So, on the one hand, he took an action he didn't have to. He put them at risk. He lit the fuse on a 6-month detonator, and he handed it to Congress. Now it is up to us to do the right thing, and it is essential that this Senate vote on the Dreamers bill in the coming weeks.

We already have it in front of us. It is a bipartisan piece of legislation. Its primary sponsors are Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, a Republican from South Carolina, and Senator DICK DURBIN, a Democrat from the State of Illinois. We have a bipartisan bill that has been introduced in the Senate. Now this is the question: When are we going to get to vote on it? When are we going to be able to take up this legislation?

Because of the action taken just yesterday by President Trump, it is imperative that we act right now to provide stability and confidence to these young men and women who have already done so much to contribute to our country—and many are serving today in our Armed Forces—and to let them and the country know that we can act on a bipartisan basis to do what the overwhelming majority of the American people—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike—want us to do.

So let's take up the Dreamers bill. Let's take it up now. There is no excuse for delay. People should vote in the light of day. People should let their constituents know where they stand on this issue. This is a question not just of fairness, but it is a question of political accountability and transparency.

President Trump has told Congress that we should act. In this case, we have an obligation at least to take a vote on this issue. I am absolutely confident that, when this body takes that vote, we will do the right thing. We will vote to protect the Dreamers and, in doing so, protect the commitments we as a country have made to people who have done nothing wrong. As a country, I hope we stand for the principle that people should not be punished when they have done nothing

wrong, and when, in fact, they have done everything our country has asked of them.

So let's take up the Dreamers bill with dispatch, and let's pass it and let's have the House pass it. It wasn't absolutely clear, but President Trump, in his most recent tweet, seemed to say that he is ready to sign what we send to him. So let's get it done.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. 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. WARREN. Mr. President, our country is in trouble. America—and this government right here in Washington—works great for people at the top, works great for corporations that can hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers, but for everyone else, America isn't working so well. For decades, expenses have gone up while wages have been flat. Economic opportunity is slipping away from too many Americans.

We know how to fix what is happening—by kicking the lobbyists and the lawyers and the rich donors and the giant companies out of the room and putting working families first. The President of the United States isn't interested in doing that. His first major legislative initiative was to try to boot tens of millions of people off their health insurance. His second major legislative initiative is to try to give giant tax breaks to rich folks and enormous corporations while working people pay for them.

I suppose it is not surprising that the President has no intention of helping working families. After all, he is a rich donor, and he personally profits every single day from a giant company he named after himself.

Here is Donald Trump, a man who promised over and over during the Presidential campaign that he would be on the side of working people. Here is Donald Trump doing the exact opposite of what he told the American people he would do. It is the exact opposite of what the American people need him to do. Sooner or later, it is going to catch up with him. President Trump wants to delay that reckoning for as long as possible. From the day he first announced his Presidential campaign, it has been obvious how he plans to do it—by turning us against each other, by telling everyone that the real problem in America is the neighbor who doesn't look like you, the coworker who doesn't worship like you, the guy in the grocery store who doesn't sound like you.

Nowhere has this been more obvious than on the politics of race. In November, President Trump named Jeff Sessions—a man considered too racist to

be a Federal judge—as our Nation’s Attorney General. In January, President Trump rolled out an unconstitutional Muslim ban. In August, after White supremacists marched in the streets, President Trump defended hate. Also in August, he used his first Presidential pardon to shield a racist former sheriff who broke the law.

Yesterday morning, the President continued his campaign to turn us against each other when he decided to end the DACA Program. DACA gives 800,000 young people who were brought to the United States as children the chance to live, work, get an education, and become valuable members of our society. The President said he would end the program. That means over 800,000 young people who have been here their entire lives, who came out of the shadows to contribute to our economy, could be deported to countries they barely know.

Divide and conquer is an old story in America. It is a cold, political calculation. Those with money and power have used it time and time again to keep us fighting with each other—fighting over religion, fighting over race, fighting over anything that keeps us from coming together to fight back against a rigged system.

President Trump wants us to turn our backs on 800,000 Dreamers, including nearly 8,000 Dreamers in Massachusetts. He doesn’t want us to look at these young people and see them for who they are; he just wants us to see them as threats. After all, he launched his campaign by calling immigrants rapists and criminals, and that is exactly what he wants everyone else to see. I would like to introduce three Dreamers from Massachusetts and let the American people decide if that is true.

Reina Guevara fled from El Salvador when she was only 11 years old. She is a model student. She won a scholarship, and right now she is working on her bachelor’s degree at UMass Boston.

Before the DACA Program allowed her to come out of the shadows, Reina worked up to 70 hours a week in a restaurant for a boss who sexually harassed her. On multiple occasions, he propositioned her to have a sexual relationship with him, threatening to call immigration on her if she refused his advances. The harassment became so frequent and so bad that Reina decided to quit her job, forgoing critical income. Knowing there was no one for her to tell, her boss refused to pay her for her last 2 weeks of work.

Reina was an easy target. A woman without official immigration status was a woman who couldn’t complain to HR when she was assaulted, underpaid, or made to work in dangerous conditions. A woman without immigration status was a woman who knew that speaking up could mean immediate deportation.

When Reina entered the DACA Program, her life changed. It meant she could stand up for herself without

being afraid that she would be kicked out of America.

I asked Reina what DACA means to her. This is what she told me: “DACA to me means the opportunity to be the first one in my family to graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree, to work without the fear of being humiliated and exploited due to my status.” Donald Trump wants Reina banished from our country.

Bruno Villegas McCubbin was 6 years old when he left his home. Like most parents, Bruno’s mother and father wanted to keep their children safe. That wasn’t easy when Peru’s economy collapsed. Bruno’s father, who was a traveling salesman, was forced to travel to more remote and more dangerous places. It got so dangerous that on one trip, Bruno said he was attacked by armed robbers and injured by flying glass from gunshots.

After that, Bruno’s parents decided they should escape to America. Bruno’s family settled in Garden Grove, CA, where Bruno and his sister and his parents shared one room in his uncle’s two-bedroom apartment. Bruno’s parents, who had white-collar jobs in Peru, worked 12-hour days in low-wage jobs just to keep food on the table. While his parents were hard at work, Bruno was building dreams. He threw himself into his studies. When he graduated from high school, he was second in his class. Bruno did a lot more than just study; he founded an organization to help struggling students. He served as a tutor. He played the saxophone.

Bruno was in high school when the DACA Program began. Today, he is a junior at Harvard, where he serves as a student coordinator for the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative, which provides financial aid information to promising high school students from low-income families.

I asked Bruno what DACA means to him. He said: “It means the opportunity for many of us to work here legally and achieve the American Dream that this country still boasts, so we can then give back to our families that have sacrificed so much for us, and to the country that helped form us into what we are today.” Donald Trump wants Bruno banished from our country.

I could do this all night, but others want a chance to tell their stories as well. So I am just going to do one more: Elias Rosenfeld. Like Bruno, Elias was 6 years old when his parents brought him and his sister to the United States. He remembers hearing stories every day of violence in Venezuela. A gun was pulled on his mother while her car was at a stoplight, and his grandfather was robbed after making a bank withdrawal. To keep her kids safe, Elias’ mother transferred to a company in Miami on a visa that allows executives and managers from other countries to work in the United States and then to apply for permanent resident status. But she never got the chance to apply for permanent resident

status because when Elias was 11, his mother died of cancer. When he lost his mother, Elias lost his protected status without even knowing it.

In high school, Elias took tough classes, including 13 advanced placement courses. He worked hard, and he earned nearly straight A’s. He served in student government and on the speech and debate teams. He volunteered with the Children’s Trust and also with the Homeless Trust. The activities director at Elias’ high school called Elias his hero. He said: “I’ve been teaching here for 20 years and I’ve never seen a student like this young man.”

Elias’ commitment to academic excellence earned him a Myra Kraft Transitional Year Program scholarship to attend Brandeis University. Earlier this year, Elias worked as an intern in my office. I asked Elias what DACA meant to him. He said it has been a “source of optimism and a light of protection.” He wrote:

For years, before DACA arrived I would sleep in bed at night with a constant fear of deportation, imagining in my head the visual of ICE breaking through my door to deport myself or my sister. When DACA came, this fear stopped. . . .

But Donald Trump wants Elias banished from our country.

America asked people like Elias, Bruno, Reina, and nearly a million young people all across this country to come out of the shadows. We made them a promise: Work hard, play by the rules, contribute to America, get an education, defend our country, help us build an economy that works, and in exchange we won’t knock on your door in the middle of the night and rip you from your home and ship you off to a foreign country you barely remember.

President Trump decided to break that promise. He is hiding behind Jeff Sessions and some flimsy lawyer nonsense, but he is breaking that promise, pure and simple. That means he is failing in his basic, moral duty to protect these people, these children of America.

That is not who America is. America is not a place that punishes children for the sins of their fathers. America is not a place that boots out smart, hard-working, decent young people who have spent nearly all their lives here and who are a core part of our Nation’s future.

Donald Trump wants to turn us against each other. He wants to banish Reina, Bruno, Elias, and hundreds of thousands of other young people from our country. He says that is how we will build a better America.

Well, Donald Trump is wrong. He wants to build a hateful and frightened America. But we have the chance to turn away from the hate and fear. We have the chance right here in Congress to take an important step toward building a stronger, more vibrant America. We have the chance to make DACA the law so that Donald Trump cannot take away the dreams of 800,000

young people like Reina, Bruno, and Elias. We can and we must pass the Dream Act now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, the Senator from Massachusetts has delivered a powerful message, obviously, one from the heart and a compelling message. I want to thank her for that.

We have a bunch of new pages here. They showed up for duty earlier this week, and they are generally, I think, rising juniors, probably 16 years old or so. Most of the 800,000 people who we are talking about here as Dreamers came here before they were old enough to be a page, and many of them were not even old enough to go to kindergarten or first grade. They didn't come here by their own volition.

They were, for the most part, brought here by their parents. They were brought here to flee horrific conditions in countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, where there is violence, murder, and mayhem that is largely created because of our addiction to drugs in this country. They send us drugs trafficked through those countries from South America, and we send guns and money to places such as Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

When we take into custody bad guys, people who are here illegally and who are also criminals, where do we send them? We send them back to Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. We send them criminals, and we send guns and money to those three countries. The conditions that this toxic mix creates are ones that I wouldn't want to submit my children or my family to, and, frankly, a lot of the people in those three countries feel the same way.

We are complicit in their misery. We are complicit in their misery, and that is why so many folks in those three countries, which are called the Northern Triangle, try to escape.

These kids didn't come here on their own. They came here with their parents. Many of them, frankly, don't have any memories of where they were born. We are not looking for them to become American citizens. What DACA attempts to do is to give them some time—to give us some time—to be able to make their stays here legal—something short of citizenship.

If your hearts aren't touched by the stories that Senator WARREN just told us about these three young people, I want to take a little different approach and express why we should care. I came here to the Senate some years ago as a recovering Governor. I was privileged to be Governor of Delaware from 1993 to 2001, and people say that I am still a recovering Governor.

I have focused much of my life on public service and on creating a nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation. Presidents, Governors, Senators, and mayors like to talk about the jobs they created and,

in truth, we don't create jobs. People in our positions try to create a more nurturing environment for job creation, and that includes a quality workforce with the skills that are needed by employers. It includes transportation infrastructure that works. It includes public safety. It includes access to capital to finance the projects. It includes a lot of things: energy, a reasonable tax burden, and common-sense regulations. Those are some of the elements that create a nurturing environment.

One of the top items on that list is always workforce—people who have the skills that employers are looking for, people who have the willingness to come to work and to work hard, to be trained, and to be promoted, in many cases, and people who are honest.

I have not met 800 Dreamers. But at Delaware State University, which is a historically Black college and university in Dover, DE—they have been around for 125 years—there are about 40 Dreamers who are undergraduates there, either freshmen or sophomores, and I have met most of them. They are some of the most remarkable college students I have ever met. These are students who aren't just getting by with a 2.0 average or 3.0 average. These are students who are on the dean's list, who come to school on time, who don't cut classes, who make excellent grades, who work in many cases part-time jobs to help support their time in school, and who are anxious to be able to make real contributions to our community, to our State, and to our country.

One young man, who was from El Salvador, at a public event we had 2 days ago on Tuesday at Delaware State University, said this to us—to the president of the university, Harry Williams, and their new provost, Tony Allen. He stood up, he held his hand over his heart, and he said: Every day since I was the age of 5 in kindergarten, in the school I held my hand over my heart and pledged allegiance to that flag. He said: I don't have any other flag. I don't have any other country. This is my country.

We need young men and young women like him.

I learned early this month, from the Department of Labor jobs report for the month of August, that one of the things it shared with us was that there are millions of jobs in this country that are going unfilled. There are millions of jobs in this country that are going unfilled. We have thousands of them in Delaware. Michigan probably has tens of thousands. I was told by one of the Ohio Senators that there are jobs in Ohio that are not being filled because the people who are applying for them don't have the skills, the work ethic, or the record. In some cases, they can't pass a drug test. Yet these employers in all of our States need workers. In a day and age when we need workers with the academic skills and the work skills—we need them probably more than ever—we are

ready to pack up 800,000 of them and send them back to where their parents came from, where they were born.

It is in America's naked self-interest to ensure that these young people are given a shot to make the kind of contributions that they are capable of to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of employers in this country. Given that opportunity, they will make their parents proud, and they will make us proud. They will make our Nation stronger and more economically vibrant. It is in our interest to let them stay and to welcome them here.

I will close with the words of Matthew 25: When I was a stranger in your land, did you welcome me? Think about that. When I was a stranger in your land, did you welcome me?

Let's welcome these young people. Let's put them to work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, we are here to stand this afternoon for close to 800,000 young men and women—10,000 of them are living in Connecticut—who have relied on a promise, not just any old promise but a promise from the United States of America.

The promise to them was that they could come forward, share information about their cell phones, their addresses, their relatives, their workplaces, their tax information, and they would be permitted to live here, study here, work here, and give back to their communities.

Now America is breaking that promise and betraying its values in the decision by the President of the United States to end the DACA Program. This decision is repugnant to the basic ideals of America. It is repulsive to the values that underlie the rule of law.

I heard a commentator last night saying: You know, these DACA people, when they came here, they broke the law. Think of it for a moment. A 2-year old, a 3-year old brought by their parents, maybe by a stranger, maybe by other relatives, is breaking the law because that relative then failed to go through the steps necessary for documentation. Or there may have been a variety of other circumstances, such as persecution, threatened death and injury in the country where that young man or woman was born.

But we know—because it is part of the DACA Program—that they were minors when they came here. They made no decision to break the law. They have been here for their entire lives, except for a few months or years.

We know also that, for almost all of them, this country is the only one they know, and English is usually the only language they speak. Their lives are here. Their friends are here and families as well. But most important for the United States of America that made that promise, their futures are here. They are, as the President of the United States said, terrific people. We love them, as he also said.

The announcement that he would end their legal status here, that they would be deported, that they would be ejected from this country is the height of hypocrisy and inhumanity. It is cruel and irrational, it will deprive our economy of hundreds of billions of dollars over the next 10 years, it will mean disruption in workplaces, and that is why employers are protesting the decision. It will mean schools will be uncertain about how many students there will be, and that is why university presidents and administrators are condemning it, but, most importantly, it will betray who we are as Americans—a nation of immigrants, a nation that keeps its promise.

Now, let's be very clear. When the Attorney General of the United States says there will be an orderly wind down—I think those are the terms he used. There is no such thing as an orderly wind down of DACA. There is disruption and destruction, already chaos and confusion, terror among the young people who are living their lives now seemingly on borrowed time. It is borrowed time because the President of the United States has thrown a ticking timebomb into this body, in effect playing chicken with their lives. They are the ones whose lives will be blown up if that timebomb explodes. They are, indeed, voices and faces who have come to us in the last day or so, two of them from Connecticut I met with or saw.

The first is Mirka Dominguez-Salinas. She has been in the United States for 16 years. She is pursuing her dream at Southern Connecticut State University of becoming a teacher. She was student teaching last week, but her future career in education has suddenly been jeopardized.

Jonathan Gonzales, too, is a student at Southern. He has a double major in economics and applied mathematics. He also mentors other students at public schools in New Haven. He has the freedom basically to live as anyone else in this country, to drive to work, and his freedom, too, is in jeopardy.

They have come to Washington, DC, today not only to share their stories but to raise their voices and represent those 10,000 others in Connecticut, like Vania, who was born in Mexico and brought to Willimantic at age 3. She thinks of Connecticut as her home. It is the only home she knows, where she went to school and made her friends. Would she be sent back to Mexico, where she knows no one, has no job or connection? Will she go by plane or will she be forced to walk to the border or maybe by car? We are talking about deportation—physical ejection from the country—not a vague concept of maybe in a few years. We are talking about deportation of 800,000 people, beginning in 6 months, on a scale, a magnitude, and scope that is unprecedented in the history of the United States of America—the same country that welcomed my father at the age of 17, when he fled Germany to escape persecution

and knew virtually no one, had not much more than the shirt on his back and spoke almost no English. Just as many of them came to this country at a much younger age, and this country gave them, as it did my father, a chance to succeed.

There is no orderly way to wind down this program. There is only grief, pain and suffering for those 800,000 Dreamers but also for the rest of us, for our economy, for our sense of self and morality.

As far as the rule of law is concerned, these young people are not the lawbreakers. It is the Attorney General of the United States who is wrong about the law but, more importantly, wrong to decline to defend the law and prejudging, instead, what the result would be if this case went to court, if those 10 attorneys general went to court on DACA to prove their case, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

Where does Attorney General Jeff Sessions have the power to prejudge what the Supreme Court of the United States would do?

So we have a decision ahead of us, which is to rise to the challenge, to diffuse that timebomb, to pass the Dream Act, to enable these young people who are faced with terror and anxiety to have a chance to continue productive and important lives and to avoid the economic nightmare for employers and job creators who depend on them.

We have the opportunity and obligation now to make sure these young people are protected, not punished, because their futures are at stake, our future as a nation is at stake, and I am here to say to Jonathan, to Vania, to all of the Dreamers that we will fight as long and hard as possible to make sure the American dream is alive and well for you. That dream was promised to you by a great country, and great countries keep their promises.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I thank my friend and colleague from Connecticut for his thoughtful words and thank all of my other colleagues who come to the floor to speak up for young people who need our voices right now.

“Through no fault of their own” has been repeated over and over again. These young people, oftentimes babies, were brought to this country without documentation, but they were brought here. They didn't know what was happening to them, a 1-year-old, 2-year-old, 5-year-old, 7- or 8-year-old. It wasn't their choice and yet they are paying the price for what happened.

There is no question, we need immigration reform—no question at all. I was very proud and pleased to support a major effort a few years ago, a bipartisan effort in the Senate to do comprehensive immigration reform. It is something we need because our system is broken. There is no question. It hurts families, workers, businesses,

and farmers in Michigan every single day, but targeting these almost 800,000 young people does nothing to solve that problem.

I am anxious to work with colleagues across the aisle to address comprehensive reform so we have a legal system that works, but we have, again, about 800,000 young people right now who stepped forward and are covered by something called the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or DACA, who were told, if they would step forward, provide the government all of their personal information, information about their families, that they—as long as they were following the rules, they were going to school, they were going to college, they were serving in the military, they were doing the right thing—would be allowed to stay and be successful in our country.

In Michigan alone, 10,000 young people have been approved for DACA. Those are some of the numbers, but we are not talking about numbers, as we know. We are talking about people's lives.

We are talking about 10,000 young people in Michigan who are attending college, who are working as nurses or doctors and buying homes and building their own businesses. Maybe they are reaching out in some other way to be successful in the economy. They are serving in our military right now. Somebody serving in our military right this minute could lose their life for our country, the country they love, at the same time the President—and his administration—has turned his back on them. These are people raising American children of their own, with American family members around them. These children aren't numbers. Frankly, they are our neighbors.

In Michigan, we care about our neighbors. One of our neighbors is named Wilfredo. He is a Dreamer who was brought to the United States when he was only 9 years old. Wilfredo works hard. He is a restaurant supply salesman. He owns a home. He is crazy about soccer, and he says he is crazy about his girlfriend. He told Michigan Bridge Magazine that they hope to get married one day, but a future that seemed so bright just a few days ago now has a dark cloud hanging over it. Wilfredo is scared. His girlfriend is scared. His family is scared. Will he be sent back to a country he barely remembers? What will happen to his sister who is an American citizen? Will he ever see her again?

Another one of our neighbors in Michigan, Juan, shares that fear. He was only 1 year old, just a baby, when his parents brought him to the United States. For many years, Juan lived in the shadows, but that changed in 2012 when our country made a promise to Juan and to others to suddenly step forward and change their future. He was able to get a job, go back to school, drive, even buy a house. Juan told the Detroit Free Press: “I know of

no other place.” He was brought here when he was 1 year old. It is not about sending him back somewhere. There is no going back. He doesn’t know any other country. He said: “We love this country and want to make this country a better place.”

Wilfredo, Juan, and so many other young people are great examples of why we need comprehensive immigration reform to happen in the House and Senate, with the White House—not using them in a way that certainly does not show the best about America.

Right now, though, until we can get comprehensive immigration reform, we need to pass the bipartisan Dream Act to protect the young people who have been hurt by this administration’s actions. I know we have colleagues on both sides of the aisle who want to work together to do something, to prove that America does keep its promises.

These Dreamers have done nothing wrong. They have done everything right. We need to show them we do care about them and make sure our country keeps its promises to them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today, along with so many of my colleagues—and Ms. STABENOW, who just spoke—with regard to DACA. We are here to oppose President Trump’s unnecessary, political, and damaging decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, the DACA Program.

To close the door on the American dream for nearly 800,000 people who are American in every way but on paper goes against every measure of sound public policy, productive economics, and basic decency. Today, I join my colleagues in Congress, hundreds of American business executives, thousands of higher education officials and faith leaders, and a majority of the American people who have made their voices heard over the past few days to denounce President Trump’s elimination of DACA, and call for legislative action to protect Dreamers and provide them a realistic and responsible pathway to citizenship.

We must be absolutely clear about what President Trump has done, on his own, without any need or, in my view, legal requirement to do so. By his choice, in less than 6 months, the administration will begin forcing hundreds of thousands of Dreamers, many in their twenties and thirties, out of their jobs, out of our military, out of our schools, and out of the United States—the only country that most of them have ever really known.

It is true that Dreamers were brought here as children outside the appropriate processes, but this was through no fault or decision of their own. Since then, they have pursued higher education, started families, worked hard, paid taxes, and stayed out of serious trouble with the law.

Some have served honorably with our Armed Forces and put their lives on the line to keep us all safe. We gain nothing and lose a great deal by separating these young people from their jobs, their homes, their spouses, and children and sending them to countries they hardly know.

At no point in our debates over immigration have we found a good reason to spend our limited immigration enforcement resources on Dreamers. The premise of DACA was, and continues to be, that we need permanent, comprehensive immigration reform—but until then, Dreamers who contribute to our society should be allowed to come out of the shadows and lead healthy, productive lives.

Rather than pursuing these young Americans, our immigration enforcement resources should focus on practical measures that make us safe, not wasteful and symbolic projects like a border wall. We should improve surveillance of the border and the apprehension of more illegal entrants. We should incentivize legal immigration and make it feasible for people to come here and pursue better opportunities. I am eager to work with my colleagues to craft a tough but fair, and comprehensive immigration reform package that incorporates good ideas from both sides of the aisle. Until then, however, we accomplish nothing by forcing hundreds of thousands of families to live in fear, and regret ever trusting our country enough to register for DACA in the first place.

Too much of this debate is driven by President Trump’s apparent refusal to accept basic truths about who his actions affect and what his decisions mean for our country. His administration’s rhetoric suggests that deporting Dreamers will make us safer and somehow restore the rule of “law and order,” but these are the facts of the matter: first, today, unauthorized immigration continues to decline, as it has every year, since its peak in 2007. Second—and not without controversy—President Obama’s administration deported a record 5 million undocumented immigrants, particularly violent felons. These were important steps, but we have learned that enforcement alone does not solve practical problems for people like Dreamers, and their families and employers.

Moreover, deporting Dreamers does nothing to make us safer. Dreamers qualify for DACA precisely because they have not committed serious crimes, and conflating them with criminals only feeds the false premise that immigrants are prone to criminality when all of the evidence shows that the opposite is true. In fact, studies from the National Bureau of Economic Research and the conservative Cato Institute have concluded that immigrants tend to commit fewer crimes than do people born in the United States, and U.S. Census data shows that, among adult males, immigrants are one-half to one-fifth as likely to be incarcerated here.

Just as insidious is the persistent myth that Dreamers are somehow harming our economy or taking jobs from American citizens. We can and should debate what kind of immigration reform would best support our economy, but there is no credible support for the argument that Dreamers harm our economy or that deporting them would create jobs for anyone. The fact is that, according to the Center for American Progress, ending DACA would result in an estimated loss of over \$460 billion from our GDP over the next decade, including an annual loss of over \$60 million per year in my home State of Rhode Island.

We know from experience that deporting employed immigrants does not raise wages. In fact, many jobs lost tend to go unfilled. And, because of President Trump’s actions, families of Dreamers will sit at their kitchen tables in the coming months and struggle needlessly with questions of how to feed their children and keep roofs over their heads now that the administration has forced mom or dad out of work, or out of the country. These are American families, and doing this to them is the opposite of putting America first.

It is our responsibility to protect our country from economic harm and to uphold our ideals and commitments, and that means keeping faith with Dreamers and their families. We should put ourselves in their shoes and remember how each of our families came to this Nation and worked to achieve the American dream for themselves, their children, and their children’s children.

I applaud Senators GRAHAM and DURBIN for introducing the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important legislation on our way to a meaningful debate on comprehensive immigration reform. I hope that we can find the will to come together and swiftly pass this legislation to strengthen our Nation, keep our economy growing, and keep faith with our best ideals.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to speak about President Trump’s decision to shut down the DACA Program, the so-called Dream program that allows children who were brought here by their parents, often at a very young age, and who grew up here and are now, as far as they know, full Americans—this is their home—to not be thrown out of their adopted country and sent home to a place that they do not know, all because of what

their parents did when they were still children. We don't even hold children accountable for contracts they enter into. You have to be an adult to be held accountable for a contract you enter into. Yet, apparently, this President is willing to take these children, break up their families, and send them to a country they do not know, all because of a decision that was made by their parents, in some cases when these kids were infants.

I have spoken to these kids, who are generally called Dreamers, who have no memory of living anywhere other than this country. I don't know about the Presiding Officer, but it is hard for me to scroll back and come up with any concrete memories of when I was 1 or 2 or 3 years old. These are kids who grew up in American schools. They grew up in American families. They grew up playing American sports. They grew up as a part of our culture. But now, for reasons that really defy humane explanation, the President wants to cast a cloud over about 800,000 children—now turned into young adults in many cases and many more who are right behind them in the program—who were looking forward to this as something they could do when they came of age to get their full-on DACA permit.

We have over 1,000 people who are approved under the DACA Program in Rhode Island. We are pretty proud of them. They have served in the military. They have had jobs around the country.

Ninety-one percent of DACA recipients are employed, pay taxes, and contribute to Social Security. When we had the immigration debate, that is what we said we wanted people to do: Pay your taxes, get a job, pay into Social Security, support yourself, and support the system around you. Well, they have done that. But because of a decision they did not even make—a decision that under American law they would be incapable of making because they were not adults—this shadow of punishment and family disruption has been put over them by perhaps the least humane person ever to hold the office of President of the United States. And if this doesn't prove that proposition, there are plenty more that do.

I understand that our leader has urged Speaker RYAN and Majority Leader MCCONNELL to get Senator DURBIN's and Senator GRAHAM's Dream Act up for a vote. I think it will pass. I think it will pass with more than 60 votes. I think we, at least—the decent Members of the Senate—can lift that cloud of fear, threat, and anxiety. I think we should. I think we should do it soon. And if Majority Leader MCCONNELL is not interested in bringing this to the floor, I understand that Senator SCHUMER has made it pretty clear that he is going to insist on attaching this bill to some other measure as we move forward this year. I completely support him.

This President said that he loves these kids and wants to approach this

issue with a big heart. Huh. The White House, which, the last I heard, the President of the United States runs, put out talking points telling these kids to get ready to depart. Get ready for departure from this country. Really? That is the big heart—to threaten 800,000 kids who have played by the rules, who have done what the Government of the United States asked them to do, to get ready to depart? Because of what—some crime they committed? No. They committed no crime, but because their parents brought them here as kids.

Jean came here from Peru. He was brought to the United States by his parents when he was a few months old. He is 23 now. If he were to go back to Peru, he would have to move to a village where he has never lived, that is not in a safe area, that he does not know because he has been here for over 20 years—22 and change if he is 23 now.

Rodrigo Pimental came here from Portugal at 10 months old. Rhode Island has a very vibrant Portuguese community, of which we are really proud. His parents came to join that community, pursue a better life, start a small business, and succeed. Rodrigo doesn't even remember Portugal. He has a computer science degree—a college computer science degree. He says the United States is his home. What is the gain for our country in telling Rodrigo Pimental, with his computer science degree from college, that he needs to go back to Portugal because at 10 months old his parents brought him here in search of a better life? Where the heck is the justice or the decency in that?

These are all Rhode Island kids whom I am talking about. There are hundreds of thousands of stories around the country.

Lesdin Salazar from Guatemala was brought to the United States by her parents at age 7. We are going to break up that family and send her back to Guatemala because why? Because at age 7 she didn't successfully talk her parents out of bringing her here? Or maybe she should have left her parents then: Oh, parents, boy, it would be illegal to go to the United States without the proper paperwork. I can't be a part of that. I am staying in Guatemala. You go.

Is that the expectation we have for a 7-year-old, that we would now punish her with deportation and with breaking up her family? That is the big heart of this President?

I will tell my colleagues about one of her memories. She doesn't remember much of Guatemala, but she does remember sitting in her living room with her parents watching President Obama announce the DACA Program. She says that her family cried tears of joy when that happened—at last, a path forward from the problem that was not of her own making. She does not understand why the United States is giving so many children an education here and then sending them back to other coun-

tries, breaking up their families, and I don't, either. It makes no sense.

Krissia Rivera came to Rhode Island from El Salvador. She came when she was 8. Oh, so maybe that is old enough that she could have broken up with her parents back then or talked them out of coming here. She lived first in Maryland. Interestingly, she went to the same school the President's son now attends. She came to Rhode Island and graduated from college. She is currently in medical school at Brown University—obviously somebody we want to get out of our country. She is scared. She feels exposed.

I would like to have one person come to the Senate floor and tell me what Krissia Rivera did at age 8 that was so wrong that we are willing to take somebody who will have a Brown University medical school degree and throw them out of our country for no reason. Explain that to me.

I will tell my colleagues, there is a lot that is embarrassing about the way our President behaves. This is pretty bad, particularly in the wake of the way he behaved after Nazi flags were paraded through Charlottesville, VA—the city of Thomas Jefferson's great university. He spent the next couple of days winking at White supremacist Nazi types, equating their behavior with the behavior of the protesters who came out. I would hope that if neo-Nazis were walking through Providence, I would go out and protest. Am I as wrong as the Nazis? I don't think so. But President Trump appears to think so—it was just two sides having an evenhanded dispute. I don't think so.

When the President reacted to Charlottesville the way he did, he was winking at the worst impulses in our society: bigotry, hatred, discrimination of people based on color and religion—things that we have fought back against for generations. Fighting back against those evils is part of what makes us Americans. But does President Trump fight back against those evils? No. Just a little wink, a little pat on the head along the way: Keep it up, boys; I don't mind that much. No difference between you and the people who come out because they are outraged to see Nazi flags flying in Charlottesville, VA.

And now this. And now this. Who the hell is President Trump talking to when he does this? Who gets the wink this time? If this isn't another wink to bigotry and hatred and discrimination, I don't know what is. No one can explain to me why an 8-year-old, who is such a good person that she will come to a new country and come all the way to Brown University's medical school, is to be punished for not having broken up with her parents at age 8 when they brought her to this country. It makes no sense.

I see the distinguished senior Senator from Illinois here on the floor. The battle for the DACA Program and for the Dream Act has been a cause of his political life. There is no person in this

Chamber to whom more credit is due for this program than Senator DURBIN. So with great respect, as well as affection, I will yield the floor to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE for his kind words.

I come to the floor to join in with a dozen or more of my colleagues who were here earlier to talk about the situation we now face. Senator WHITEHOUSE is correct—this is an issue that is very personal to me. It is one that dates back to the year 2001, 16 years ago. It was a time when we received a call in my office in the city of Chicago, and the person on the other end was with a program called the Merit music program. She said: I have a problem with one of my students, and I need your help.

The Merit music program is a special opportunity for young people in Chicago's public schools, particularly from low-income families, to be trained on a musical instrument, free of charge, and some amazing things happen. Every student who is part of the Merit music program goes to college—every single one of them. They learn self-esteem, they learn a musical instrument, and it shows. Their lives are transformed.

She told us the story of one of these students. Her name is Tereza Lee. Tereza Lee was born in Korea and brought to the United States by her mom and dad when she was 2 years old. They came through Brazil before they came to Chicago, but they settled in Chicago. Her mom and dad raised her and her brother and sister. They were not well-off at all. In fact, they were poor.

Mom worked in a dry cleaner establishment, which is fairly common in Chicago; Korean Americans probably work there more than any other group. Her father was an aspiring preacher who wanted to open a church for the Korean population, but it never seemed to materialize. Mom worked extra hard, and the kids went to public schools.

At age 12, Tereza Lee heard about the Merit music program, signed up for it, went in, and fell in love with playing the piano. She turned out to be a prodigy. She was extraordinary.

By the time she was ready to graduate from high school, they said: You have to apply to a music school.

Well, she wasn't sure. Nobody she knew had gone to college. But she started to fill out the application and ran into the question about her Social Security number. She turned to her mother and said: What am I supposed to do about this?

Her mother said: I don't know. After we brought you to the United States at the age of 2, we didn't file any papers.

What could they do? They reached out to the Merit music program, and the Merit music program said: Let's call Durbin's office.

They called my office and contacted my caseworker, whose name is Clarisol

Duque. She is now my chief of staff, but back then she was a caseworker. She looked up the law. She called the INS, and they said: The law is very clear. Tereza Lee from Korea is undocumented. She is in the United States. Although she is now 17 or 18 years old, she never filed the appropriate papers, and under the laws of the United States of America, the recourse is for her to return to the last country she was in—Brazil—to wait 10 years, and apply to come back to the United States—10 years.

I thought to myself, and so did my caseworker: Why would you do this to this young girl? She did nothing wrong. In fact, she is a pretty amazing story of success from a poor family.

I sat down and said: Let's write a law to deal with it, and we wrote the DREAM Act. My original cosponsor of the DREAM Act was ORRIN HATCH of Utah. This goes back, as I said, 16 years ago, so when I stand here today and talk about this issue, it is an issue I have come to know in a lot of different ways. Most importantly, I have come to know the young people whose lives have been affected by our laws as they currently exist.

Over the years, an interesting thing has happened. After I wrote the DREAM Act and would go around Chicago and tell the story of this new bill that I had just introduced, there would be a lot of young people, mainly Hispanic youngsters, who would listen to me and not react very much at all. Then, many times, I would go out to my car to go back home at the end of the night, and in the darkness, standing by my car, would be one or two young people. They would look in both directions to make sure no one could hear them, and they would whisper to me: Senator, I am a Dreamer.

These were undocumented children—teenagers, adolescents—who had been taught early in life to be extremely careful: Never, ever admit that you are undocumented; never, ever get involved with the law because you could be deported tomorrow morning, and your family might be deported with you. So they grew up in fear—fear of what might happen with a knock on the door.

So now comes this politician, this Senator, who says: I am going to change the law. I am going to make it right for you.

Well, many of their parents were skeptical. They didn't believe it. Politicians say a lot of things. But these young people did something very interesting. Their approach to this evolved from standing in the darkness and whispering "I am a Dreamer," listening to their parents tell them "Don't say out loud that you are undocumented"; they, of course, did exactly what their parents didn't want them to do. They started standing up and saying publicly: I am a Dreamer. I want to tell you who I am and my story.

They wore T-shirts and buttons, and they rallied, and there was no question

that they were going to come and tell their stories. As they told their stories to me, I decided the best thing I could do was to tell their stories on the floor of the U.S. Senate. So I started telling them. With their permission and a color photograph, I would tell the stories of these young people. Each one of them, standing at this desk and other places in the Chamber, usually captured the attention of the people who would gather because each one of these stories was so compelling. They were compelling stories because here were young people who had all the odds against them.

I remember when I was a teenager, in my insecurity, wondering what I would ever do and afraid of doing the wrong thing. Then I think of these young people, who have the decks stacked against them. They have been told they are not legal in this country, and there are people who would like to see them gone tomorrow. Yet these young people started emerging and telling the stories, and I started repeating them. Then some amazing stories started emerging about what they were doing with their lives.

You see, if you are undocumented in this country, you don't qualify for a lot of things most Americans take for granted—Pell grants to go to college. Students from low-income families receive up to \$5,000 or more a year to go to college. Undocumented students, Dreamers, receive nothing—nothing—from the Federal Government.

The same thing is true about student loans. For the most part, unless there is a State program, these undocumented students can't qualify for any government student loans. They have to find some other way. They usually have to work their way through college—or whatever their aspirations might be.

Over the years, this bill was heard before committees and was voted on from time to time in the House and in the Senate. Unfortunately, we never could quite find that moment when the bill could pass the Senate and the House in the same year and the same session. It never came together. There was a time when we passed it with a majority vote in the Senate, but under our rules we needed 60 votes. So we fell just short of being able to move the bill forward.

Along the way, I had a colleague in the U.S. Senate named Barack Obama, my junior Senator. He was a cosponsor of my DREAM Act. Of course, he went on to bigger and better things and became the President of the United States. I am very proud of him for his achievement. But I didn't waste any time after he was elected President calling him and saying: Help me. We have to do something to help these young people.

I wrote him a letter, cosigned by Republican Senator Dick Lugar of Indiana, asking him to think of a way he might be able to protect the Dreamers from being deported until we passed the law. I didn't get a response.

A year passed—a year. I sent a second letter, this time with 23 Senators signing it, urging President Obama to do something, and he did. He created the DACA program.

The DACA Program was basically an opportunity for young people to come forward, to register with the government, pay a filing fee, submit to a criminal background check, and then see if they qualified for a 2-year protection from deportation and a 2-year opportunity to legally work in the United States.

Well, I was just reminded: August 15, 2012, was the first day to sign up. I joined with my friend and colleague, Congressman LUIS GUTIÉRREZ, of Chicago. We decided we would create a sign-up, an opportunity at Navy Pier, a historic place in the city, and invite young people who qualified for DACA—Dreamers—to come in and sign up. We got volunteer immigration lawyers who wouldn't charge these young people anything, and we sent out the notices to every group we could think of: Come on in if you are eligible to sign up for DACA.

Congressman GUTIÉRREZ and I didn't know how many would show up. We were afraid it might be 200 or 300 people, and we didn't know if we could handle any more than that with the volunteer attorneys we had.

Then something happened. It was amazing. At midnight, the night before, they started queueing up outside of Navy Pier, families—mom, dad, and that young son or daughter who qualified for DACA—and they waited in the dark all night for the chance to sign up. When it was over, it wasn't hundreds, but thousands—thousands—who came to Navy Pier. We couldn't handle them. We had to set up workshops all over the city afterward to give them their chance to sign up.

It was a big risk for them. This was the first time in their lives they were going to trust the Government of the United States with information that they had carefully kept personal, confidential, and secret. They were going to trust this government by signing up for a program because the President of the United States had said: It will protect you. They had the \$500 or \$600 they needed for the filing fee. They were prepared for all the background checks. At the end of the day, after 5 or 6 years of DACA, 780,000 young people have signed up for this protection.

What has happened to these young people is nothing short of amazing. I could go on for a long time about the success stories of the DACA recipients once they got that protection, once they could work.

I love to tell the story about Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. That school decided they were going to open up competition for their medical school to DACA-protected young people—not a special spot for them or a set-aside of quotas or numbers. No, they had to compete with everyone else. But that medical school

said: These young people now deserve a chance.

As a result of that decision, there are 28 medical students at Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, and they are there because there was no place else that would accept them. This college of medicine said: If you are DACA protected, we will let you compete to come to our school.

The word spread around the country like lightning. Some of the best and brightest young people finally got their chance, and they were accepted to this medical school. They are impressive.

Remember what I said: They don't qualify for government loans. Medical school is expensive. My State, under Governor Patrick Quinn and now continued under Governor Bruce Rauner, a Democrat and Republican, set up a loan for them—but with a catch. Our State loans them enough money to go to medical school at Loyola, as long as they promise to give 1 year of medical practice for each year that we loan the money—1 year of medical practice in the inner cities in Chicago, in Waukegan, in East St. Louis, or in rural areas where they can't find doctors, and they anxiously do so. They anxiously do so because this is their chance. I tell that story because it is one that is particularly poignant.

When President Trump and Attorney General Sessions yesterday decided to put an end to DACA, they put into question whether these young people will ever finish medical school. You can't go to medical school and be an intern and work if you cannot legally work in the United States. They can legally work because of DACA. When DACA disappears, their right to legally work disappears. Their ability to be interns and work in the medical school disappears as well.

What is going to happen to them? Is that the end of their medical education? Loyola stuck its neck out and gave them a chance. Filling those slots will be impossible. Second- and third-year students—you just can't fill those slots. It will be a real loss—a loss of great talent and great opportunity.

When President Trump made this announcement with Attorney General Sessions yesterday, I was really troubled. I have had only one face-to-face conversation with the President. It was his Inauguration Day. It is no surprise that I didn't support him, but I went up and shook hands with him, congratulated him on being elected President, and I said: I want to thank you for the kind things you have said about Dreamers.

He looked me in the eye and he said: Don't worry about those Dreamers. We are going to take care of the Dreamers.

I listened then and so many times afterward when he publicly said something very similar. He said at one point: We love the Dreamers. We are going to take care of those kids—over and over and over again. And I was convinced—I want to be convinced—it was a genuine sentiment in his heart that he was expressing.

He has said some harsh things when it comes to immigration. I think they are fundamentally unfair things—calling Mexican immigrants murderers, rapists; travel bans against people of the Muslim religion. Those things are, in my mind, inconsistent with the values of this country. But he said them, and many people found them appealing.

Yet he always had a special comment when it came to Dreamers and DACA, and I thought maybe—just maybe—he is going to give them a break.

He did until yesterday. His announcement that he is going to put an end to DACA in 6 months—that is going to cause a lot of problems for a lot of innocent people. The good thing that has happened—if there is any good to come of this—is that all across America now, there is a sensitivity, an understanding, an appreciation of who these young people are. It is almost amazing to me that many folks can miss the whole debate for a decade or more, but when you start talking about removing this protection under law, people wake up, stand up, and speak up.

In my city of Chicago, which I am honored to represent, John Rowe is an executive. He is of the opposite political faith. I know it. I like him. He likes me. He is retired now and a very generous man—he and his wife—and helps a lot of young people. In Chicago, he has been the leader in gathering over 120 Chicago business leaders who support DACA and the DREAM Act. They are gathering thousands like them around the United States, business leaders. If you saw the news accounts this morning, leaders of Google and Facebook and others are coming out against President Trump's decision to end DACA.

They are not alone. In addition to that, there is an extraordinary outpouring of support for DACA and Dreamers from the faith community across the United States. I am proud that the Roman Catholic cardinal in Chicago, Blase Cupich, has been outspoken in supporting immigration and supporting the Dreamers and those protected by DACA. It is not the only religion where the leaders have said that. In faiths—Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, Muslim religions—you find the support coming forward. It is an indication to me of the growing support across America.

When 76 percent of the American people agree on anything, we ought to stand up and take notice. And 76 percent of the American people believe we ought to treat these DACA-protected people and Dreamers fairly, justly. That is what we should do.

Yesterday on the floor, I talked about Jesus Contreras. Jesus Contreras was brought to the United States at the age of 6, and his family settled in Houston, TX. He went to Lone Star College down there. Again, he is undocumented, a Dreamer. He finished a course in paramedics. He became a licensed, certified paramedic because of DACA. He happened to be there, of

course, when Hurricane Harvey hit, and he worked night and day saving lives, trying to help the victims of the hurricane.

There were thousands just like him, but the important part of this story is that this young man is one of those undocumented folks who really care about the people of Houston, the people of Texas, and America. He calls this home, and he wrote me a letter and told me that. I read it on the floor yesterday.

There are others. I want to tell you about one today. I am going to try to pronounce her name correctly. Ximena Magana. I probably missed that, but I am close. At 9 years of age, she came to the United States from Mexico City. She was raised in Houston and lives there today.

In high school, Ximena served in the U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. It is better known as Junior ROTC. She was the battalion commander of her high school Junior ROTC Program. Under her leadership, Ximena's battalion was named the best in the Houston Independent School District.

Ximena was the captain of her high school soccer team and a regular volunteer at the Houston Food Bank. Currently, she is majoring in communications at the University of Houston. She interned with U.S. Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE and Houston City Council Member Robert Gallegos.

Due to Ximena's community service, she was asked by the mayor of Houston to serve as the youngest member of the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board. She is the first DACA recipient to serve on that board.

Last week, in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Ximena stepped in to help her community, just as she has always done. She volunteered at shelters, helping people with FEMA and Red Cross applications. She was joined by many other DACA recipients.

She wrote me a letter. She asked for only one thing—for President Trump to come and visit Houston and meet the DACA volunteers, to meet those heroes, to look in their eyes, to hear their stories before he made his decision about whether they had a future in the United States.

Ximena and so many others have so much to give to this country. Without DACA, she faces deportation. This President, who said "We love the Dreamers," with his decision yesterday, has said that we are going to deport the Dreamers. Ending the protection of DACA will mean they will be subject to deportation any minute of any day. They would send her back to Mexico, where she hasn't lived since she was 9. If that happened, would America be a stronger country or a better country? The answer is clear.

When we introduced the Dream Act, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, who is my cosponsor and a great ally and friend in this, a Republican from South Carolina, said: "The moment of reckoning

is coming." That moment is here. Republican leaders in Congress have to make a decision about Ximena and thousands just like her. Are we going to be a fair and just society? Are we going to give these young people a chance for a future? Are we going to tell them "No thanks. You are not welcome. Leave"? One of the President's appointees to the voter fraud commission, the secretary of state of the State of Kansas, said that this morning. He said that after the President's decision when it comes to eliminating DACA, it is time for them to leave this country. I think he is wrong.

These people, just like this young lady, deserve a chance to be part of our future. How many times has she stood before that great American flag and pledged allegiance, sang the national anthem—the only one she really knows—and believed this was her country, her flag, her future? And now we are going to tell her "No thanks, Ximena. As good as you are, as much as you have done, America doesn't need you"? I don't think so.

As for this Senator, I am going to do everything in my power to protect those Dreamers and give them a chance to not only live legally in America but to become full-fledged citizens of this country.

To all of the Dreamers who are listening to this debate, don't despair. You had the courage to come out of the shadows and to stop whispering and to stand up and tell the world who you are. Because you did that, we are in a stronger position today to help you realize your dream, to become part of the future of America.

I am joined this evening by a number of visitors in my office. We invited them to come and hear me say a few words on the floor. We really lured them in with pizza. They had a little snack upstairs with me, and they are listening to this speech. They are the Dreamers from Georgetown University, my alma mater.

As we said, we learned of their stories and talked about this. I thought it was a pretty big deal when I transferred from Saint Louis University to come here to Georgetown as a sophomore so many years ago. It was kind of a bold thing. I had never been to Washington. I never visited the campus, and I came to the university. What I did was nothing compared to what they have done. They have fought against much greater odds. They have shown more determination and maturity than I ever had at their age. All they are asking for is a chance to graduate from that great university and become part of this great Nation.

Here is what we need to do. We need to make sure that we don't leave this Senate, this House of Representatives this month or in the next few weeks without passing the Dream Act. All I am asking for—all any of us are asking for—bring it to the floor. Bring it to the floor for a vote. I have confidence that we can find 60 votes in the Senate

to pass it. I think at this moment in history we can.

I open my office door and my heart to those of good faith who want to join us in this effort from the Republican side. From the bottom of my heart, I thank Senator GRAHAM, Senator FLAKE, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator GARDNER—four Republican Senators who have made this, thank goodness, a bipartisan effort in the Senate. We need to do the same thing in the House of Representatives. We need to say once and for all: Your dream of becoming part of the future of America is going to be a reality because we are going to step up today, some day soon, and make it a reality.

Finally, I ask the President of the United States—as disappointed as I was by your announcement yesterday, as disappointed as I was after believing that perhaps it might end differently, we still need your help, Mr. President. If you truly do love these Dreamers, if you do believe these young people deserve a chance, we need you to step up and speak up and join us. Let us pass this measure on a bipartisan basis. Join us in passing this measure. Whatever you are thinking about DACA, whether it was constitutional or illegal, let's put that behind us. Let's pass a real law, and let's have a signing ceremony that says on a bipartisan basis we are going to give these young people across America their day of justice, their day of opportunity, their chance to make this an even greater nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I join with the Senator from Illinois, and I thank him for his great leadership on this issue. He has been doing this for a long time. His partnership with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM is inspiring.

I want to begin by thanking Senator DURBIN and Senator GRAHAM for leading this effort and making it bipartisan and making it possible for us to talk about an issue as Americans and not as Democrats and Republicans and having a discussion about who falls into the category of being an American who is entitled to the benefits of being in this country.

For the last 5 years, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals—or DACA—Program has created security and opportunity for young immigrants across this country. Now, the futures of some 800,000 young people—7,900 of them in Massachusetts—have been needlessly put in jeopardy because President Donald Trump feels the need to keep an ill-considered campaign promise made to his base and to break another one made to the best and brightest of our young people by repealing DACA. And because the House of Representatives has refused to debate and hold a vote on comprehensive immigration reform legislation, our immigration system remains tragically broken.

Yesterday, I met one of these Dreamers, Diana Ortiz. Her mother brought her to the United States nearly 20 years ago. Diana studied history at Pomona College in California, and she recently received a master's degree of divinity from the Harvard Divinity School. She hopes to become a U.S. citizen. Diana literally wants to do God's work here on Earth.

DACA has provided Diana and more than a million other young immigrants safety, security, dignity, respect, and opportunity. These are young people who play, study, work, and live next door to us each and every day.

What will the repeal of DACA mean for the Dreamers and for our country? It will mean bad news for our economy. Many of these Dreamers have started their own businesses and are beginning their careers. Over the course of the past 5 years of the program, 91 percent of the Dreamers have found gainful employment. Removing DACA recipients from the workforce would reduce our gross domestic product by more than \$460 billion over a decade and would cut contributions to Medicare and Social Security by more than \$24 billion over that same 10-year period.

It will mean misplaced criminal justice priorities, with law enforcement focusing not on targeting drug dealers, human traffickers, and the real criminals in our society, but on the Dreamers instead. These young people are not the so-called "bad hombres" that President Trump said would be the focus of his administration.

Most tragically, it will mean unnecessary pain and suffering for countless young people and families across Massachusetts and across the United States whose futures will be uncertain. Instead of going to sleep tonight knowing they will be able to live their lives in peace and plan for the future, they are again left with uncertainty, vulnerable to deportation and unable to work legally.

This is heartbreaking. It is unjust, and it is just plain evil. We should not punish these young people who have no other home than the United States of America. We should not go back on the word we gave when we told these young people to come out of the shadows.

These Dreamers are engineers. They are police officers, teachers, and students, many in our great Massachusetts universities. They serve bravely in our military right now—in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. They are our best and our brightest, and they are making the most of the opportunities that the United States has always provided immigrant communities.

I stand here this evening as a testament to the future that any family can achieve in this country. When I announced for the Senate 4 years ago, I decided—really, for the first time in my life—to go up and ring the doorbell of the house that my father grew up in. You pretty much grow up where your mother tells your father he is going to

live. So my mother was from Malden, and my father was from Lawrence, and we grew up in Malden.

My father always said: Well, Lawrence is just this great city. So I went up to ring the doorbell at 88 Phillips Street in Lawrence, in the shadow of the old south mill. It is a triple decker; that is, a three-family home, stacked one on top of the other. My father grew up on the first floor of 88 Phillips, with five brothers and sisters and a mother and father in this very tiny space.

I rang the doorbell to see who lived there now, and the door opened. It was a Dominican family with their children. The accents were different, but the aspirations are just the same for that family as it existed for the Markeys.

Now, my father graduated from Lawrence High School, from the vocational program, and his son is a U.S. Senator from the State of Massachusetts. That was a dream that my father had or his father and mother had to be here in America and to give opportunities, not so much for themselves but for the next generation.

Well, that is what we are talking about. We are talking about these young people whose parents brought them here to give them a better chance, but the children didn't have a choice in whether or not they would come here. They saw the promise that hard work, education, and opportunity—helped a little bit by the government—worked for the people.

So that is really what we are talking about, and that is why I believe it is a new level of inhumanity for President Trump to betray the foundational values of this Nation by repealing DACA. He is no better than Pontius Pilate by having Attorney General Jeff Sessions make the announcement yesterday. President Trump is providing absolutely no leadership for his party or the American people on an issue that even he says is an important one, and I can only hope that he recognizes and understands the cruelty that repealing DACA will inflict on innocent young families, innocent young people all across this country.

So if President Trump wants to take away these protections, then, Congress must act. The ball is in the court of the Republican leadership in the House and in the Senate. Speaker PAUL RYAN and Leader MITCH MCCONNELL can either listen to a growing chorus of their own colleagues and to the business leaders and CEOs—including Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, General Motors—and to academic leaders and countless college and university presidents who all support DACA, or they can side with the forces of intolerance and injustice.

Congress should pass the Dream Act so that individuals who were brought here at a young age can earn citizenship by serving in the military or pursuing higher education.

Ultimately, the House of Representatives must also debate and vote on

comprehensive immigration reform. I have long supported a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants who are living here in the shadows.

We are the United States of America. We are a nation of immigrants. We are called on not simply to tolerate but to celebrate our immigrant communities, to understand not only the need but the value of our immigrant communities, to embrace not just the differences but the diversity of our immigrant communities.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said: "Remember, remember always that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists." No one knows that better than the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We have always believed that no matter who you are or where you come from, you can achieve the American dream. We recognize that our economy and our security are stronger because of the immigrant families who have enriched our Nation since its founding.

That is why this decision from the Trump administration cannot stand. We will not let it. With Congress now back in session, Republicans should prepare to have a historic debate—a debate about the fairness that we should extend to all of these young people. There are going to be voices, calls, marches, and protests all demanding protections for these innocent Dreamers.

I pledge my support to the 800,000 Dreamers all across our country, and I will not stop fighting for them. We will not stop fighting for them. Millions of people are going to stand up. I believe that the American dream for all of these young people is achievable, and it must be here in the Senate that the realization of that dream begins.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MR. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I want you to imagine for a moment that you are an 11-year-old child. Your mother tells you to pack some things because you are going on a trip. So you pick out four or five of your favorite toys and you put them into a backpack. You put in a bottle of water and some rosary beads as well.

You walk out through the door of your home into the night with your mom. You don't know what is going on. You are just doing what you were told. You hold your mother's hand, and you walk in silence.

Soon you are walking with 20 others through the Mexican desert. You are tired and hungry and carrying everything that matters to you on your back. The sweat is pouring off. The prickly bushes scrape your body. You are overcome by dehydration, and you faint.

Someone comes to your aid. They give you some water from their canteen. You come to and you keep going. Eventually, on this journey, you make

it into the United States of America, into Arizona.

Then, out of the blue, the years pass and you grow up. Fourteen years pass and now you are 25 years old. You have spent more than half your life in the United States of America. You are studying and going to college to get your degree in economics or working full time at the local bank to save money.

You have made friends and built a life for yourself, and things are going well. Then, all of a sudden, your future—everything you had planned for in life—is thrown into doubt. The President of the United States has just said that he views you as a criminal because of the decision your mother made well more than a decade before. Just remember what you did. You followed what your mom said: Put some things into a backpack, and we are going out into the night.

It doesn't matter to President Trump that you had no choice in that decision. It doesn't matter to him all you have had to overcome. It doesn't matter how you have invested so seriously in being a productive part of your community. In the eyes of the President of the United States, you are a criminal.

It really shouldn't be too hard to imagine that story because the story close to that is the story of some 800,000 people living in the United States—young men and women who came here as children, having nothing to do with the decision themselves.

This particular story that I have read to you is the true story of an Oregonian. It is a story that belongs to Hugo, one of 11,000 Dreamers living in Oregon today. Like the hundreds of thousands of others brought to this country as children through no fault of their own, Hugo's future was thrown into complete chaos by the President—thrown into chaos when Attorney General Sessions, acting on orders from President Trump, announced the cruel and heartless decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or the DACA Program. We know this program best as a program for Dreamers, those young men and women who are seeking to do everything they can to have productive lives, to contribute to their community, to establish a financial foundation, and to contribute back to America—those young men and women who know no other nation, who speak no other language, who contribute to society, and who are American in every way that matters. But that is not the viewpoint President Trump has, and so we in the Senate have to act.

The United States is and always has been a nation of immigrants. Unless one is a Native American, each of us—every one of us—is either an immigrant or descended from immigrants who were fleeing famine, immigrants who were fleeing political persecution, immigrants who were fleeing religious persecution, immigrants who were simply seeking a better life, greater oppor-

tunity, greater freedom for their family. That is the foundation on which America has been based.

Our Founding Fathers recognized just how vital immigration was to the growth and strength of our budding Nation. After all, it was James Madison, the author of our Constitution and our fourth President, who declared during the Constitutional Convention that “America was indebted to immigration for her settlement and prosperity.” He continued: “That part of America which had encouraged immigration most has advanced most rapidly. . . .”

Now, we have always had debates and discussions about immigration. At times, we have been shortsighted in banning or limiting one group or another in a generation only to turn around and welcome them with open arms in the next generation. Time and again, we have overcome our prejudices. We have remained true to the loving and compassionate Nation we are, a Nation that has welcomed others to our shores.

If we want to know the true nature of our country, we only need to look to the Statute of Liberty, where there, below the feet of Lady Liberty, are inscribed those words: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” I think that line from the poet Emma Lazarus resonates so powerfully because we know that so many of our lives are connected through our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents to that experience of coming to America's shores poor and tired and yearning to breathe free.

Generation after generation of immigrants saw Lady Liberty, this welcoming symbol of freedom and opportunity, as their first glimpse of America. It has inspired hope and given people across the world permission to dream.

But if we end DACA, if we crush the dreams of these young men and women, we might as well take away those words off of the pedestal of Lady Liberty because we will no longer be that compassionate Nation. We will no longer be that welcoming Nation that has played such an instrumental role in each of our histories.

I can't think of anything more damaging to the well-being or the future of our great Nation because we know that when people come here and add their distinctive cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds to the melting pot of America, we become a stronger country and a stronger people.

This is especially true of our Dreamers, the 800,000 men and women for whom America is the only home they know, the 800,000 who came here as young children, the 800,000 who went to school here and made their friends here and grew up here and invested in creating a future here, the young men and women whom we promised, if they came out of the shadows, if they did everything else right, if they obeyed the laws and met the rigorous requirements asked of them, that we would

protect and look after them in this Dreamer Program—people such as Hugo Nicolas, whose story I just shared, and Zaira Flores, another Dreamer who came to America as a child who grew up in this country and is now giving back to our country.

Zaira came when she was just 6 years old. Her younger brother was in need of medical attention, and he couldn't get that medical attention back home in Mexico, but he got it here in America. He underwent years of treatment and surgery, and thereupon Zaira's family decided that this was their home. Two decades have passed. Two decades have passed, and now 26-year-old Zaira Flores works for the State of Oregon. She is a bilingual counselor and volunteer coordinator who assesses social services and disability programs for older adults. Zaira didn't make the decision to come here or to stay here. She didn't have a say in the matter. She doesn't remember her life back in Mexico.

Attorney General Sessions and President Trump may say she is a criminal, but I say she is a contributing member of Oregon who has done everything right to build a solid life, a contributing member to our country, and we need to pass the Dream Act to make sure she can continue to make these substantial contributions. It is the only right thing to do for her, but it is also the right thing to do for our community, for Zaira and Hugo and the hundreds of thousands of talented, driven young men and women just like them who embody the American dream. They have risen up from humble beginnings. They have overcome adversity to thrive. Aren't these exactly the kinds of individuals we want in our Nation? We ought to be celebrating these Dreamers for all they are doing, not punishing them for choices made by their parents.

The eviction of 800,000 Dreamers just doesn't hurt them, it doesn't just punish them, it doesn't just damage their families, it hurts all of us because as punishing as it would be to send Dreamers back to countries they have never known, all of us will pay a price if this is allowed to happen. We will pay the price economically in the estimated \$460 billion the economy would lose over the next 10 years, and we would pay the price morally as our Nation's standing as a beacon of hope and opportunity is tarnished in the eyes of the world.

If President Trump will not do the right thing, if he is willing to turn his back on these 800,000 young men and women, then it is up to all of us in Congress to stand up for them. It is what many of my Republican colleagues, both here in the Senate and over in the House, have said they want to accomplish, including Speaker RYAN and Majority Leader MCCONNELL. It is what President Trump's friends in the business sector have said they want. Just this past weekend, more than 400 industry leaders signed a letter pledging

their support for DACA and urging the President to continue it. It is what nearly three-quarters of the American people say they want to see happen in the most recent polls.

So let's listen to our business leaders, let's listen to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's listen to the American people, let's listen to our hearts and our minds on this issue before us, and let's act expeditiously—not in 6 months, with days to spare before President Trump's clock runs out. Let's act within 6 days. Let's act quickly because for every single day that passes now, these individuals and their extended families are in a whirl of pain and uncertainty. That simply isn't right. Let's protect these Dreamers who are here through no fault of their own, who have contributed an enormous amount to our country, and who are American in every single way that matters.

To paraphrase President Madison, we are a nation that is indebted to immigration for our incredible success. We cannot—we must not renege on that debt by turning our backs on the Dreamers. It would undermine our Nation's moral standing. It would hurt our economy. It is cruel. It is mean. It is absolutely just plain wrong. Let's get that bill on this floor and let's pass it expeditiously.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. 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. SANDERS. Mr. President, I think I will shock nobody by telling the Chair that I disagree with almost every policy President Trump has brought forth.

No, I do not believe that we should throw 23 million Americans off of health insurance and give hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks to the top 2 percent. No, I happen to believe that at a time of massive income and wealth inequality, it is high time for the wealthiest people in this country and for large, profitable corporations to start paying their fair share of taxes.

No, I do not believe, as President Trump does, that we should cut Pell grants and food stamps and afterschool programs and Medicaid and nutrition programs for pregnant women and heating assistance programs. I believe that in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, we must protect those who are the most vulnerable.

No, I do not believe, as President Trump does, that climate change is a hoax. I believe it is the greatest environmental crisis facing our planet and that it is already causing devastating harm throughout our Nation and throughout the world and on and on it goes.

There is very little in public policy on which I agree with the President, but there is one area in which my disagreement with President Trump goes much deeper than public policy. The truth is, every President in recent history, including conservative Presidents like George W. Bush and liberals like Barack Obama, has understood that one of the prime functions of being President of the United States is to bring the people of our country together, whether you are Black or whether you are White or whether you are Latino or whether you are Asian American or whether you are Native American. Every President has instinctively understood that one of the prime responsibilities of a President is to bring our people together as proud Americans.

Unfortunately and tragically, this is something Donald Trump does not understand. At a time when this country faces so many serious crises, whether it is the high cost of healthcare, whether it is climate change, whether it is the proliferation of low-wage jobs and a starvation minimum wage, whether it is the huge national debt we face, whether it is inadequate educational opportunities, whether it is a broken criminal justice system, instead of bringing our people together to address those important issues and trying to solve them, what this President is doing, uniquely in modern history, is trying to divide us up by the color of our skin, by our sexual orientation, by the country we were born in, by our religion.

Instead of bringing us together to solve the many problems we face as a people, he is trying to divide us up in order to gain political support from a segment of our population. He is trying to divide us up based on the color of our skin, which is what his attacks on affirmative action are all about. He is trying to divide us up based on religion, which is what his Muslim ban is all about. We are not supposed to like Muslims. He is trying to divide us up based on sexual orientation, which is what his attacks on transgender individuals serving in the military is about. We are supposed to hate transgender people and discriminate against them, and he is trying to divide us up based on our country of origin and our immigration status.

In my view, Trump's decision to end the DACA Program for some 800,000 young people is the cruelest and most ugly Presidential act in the modern history of this country. I cannot think of one single act which is uglier and more cruel.

These are 800,000 young people—often exemplary young people—the kind of kids we are proud of. These are kids who know this country—the United States of America—as their only home. In fact, many of these young people know English as their only language. These are young people who today are in college, they are in law school, they are in medical school, and they are proudly serving in the U.S. military.

What this President has done is to take away the legal status by which these young people can work and find jobs, go to school, and live without fear. If they don't have that legal status, it means that anytime they walk down the street, they are frightened they could be arrested and deported from this country and separated from their families.

This act, on the part of Donald Trump, is an abomination, and Congress must reject Trump's action and pass DACA into law.

This is exactly what the American people want us to do. A recent poll—I think it came out yesterday—done by Morning Consult and Politico reports that 76 percent of those who were polled said the government should allow immigrants brought to the United States illegally as children to remain here—76 percent. Eighty-four percent of Democrats support the Dreamers having legal status, while 69 percent of Republicans surveyed also favor such a policy.

In another poll in April of 2017, 73 percent of Trump supporters said Dreamers should be allowed to stay in the United States and become legal residents. In other words—and I say this to the young people who are in DACA—please do not think for one moment that you are being deserted by the people of this country. You are not. You are being attacked by a President of the United States who chooses to divide us up, and you are today's victims. Tomorrow it may well be another minority group.

So this is a pivotal moment in American history, and we need to tell those young people that we will not see their legal status removed. We will not see them thrown out of the only country they have ever known. We need strong, bipartisan support to pass the Dream Act, and I hope we will do that as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO SISTER JANICE RYAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on September 13, 2017, the Vermont Community Foundation will pay tribute to Sister Janice Ryan for the many contributions she has made to our State of Vermont and its residents. The foundation will present Sister Janice with its Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service—just 1 day before she celebrates her 81st birthday, having been born September 14, 1936, on the family dairy farm in Fairfield, VT.

In the case of Sister Janice, “community service” extends well beyond the borders of our small State. Through her lens, the community is global.

Perhaps it was the work ethic and the duties of stewardship that she learned growing up on the farm or the responsibility that comes with being raised the eldest of six children, but since joining the Sisters of Mercy as a teenager, Sister Janice rose to whatever challenge she was presented and brought her trademark energy, compassion, and influence to every task.

Before most of us even heard the phrase “mainstreaming,” Sister Janice worked tirelessly to ensure that children with special needs received the education they deserved, first at the State level, and later in her work as a staff member in the U.S. Senate. Later, serving as project director of the Catholic Campaign to Ban Landmines, she was a great ally with me in the work we did in the 1990s and since then to rid the world of landmines. Her passion and commitment to that issue inspired me and many others.

Sister Janice’s titles have been many and varied: professor and college president, deputy corrections commissioner, criminal justice reformer, human rights advocate, and, of course, Catholic nun. What is common to all of her work is her heartfelt belief that we cannot and we must not lose sight of the poor and vulnerable among us.

Representing the Sisters of Mercy, Sister Janice has always done this work in a quiet but most effective manner. Her no-nonsense personality cuts straight to the core of the issue and to the pressing need. She is masterful at bringing opposing sides together and finding the common language needed to move us forward. In these times we live in, we need many more people like Sister Janice in the world.

Upon receiving an honorary degree from the University of Vermont in 2008, Sister Janice spoke about the role that faith has played in her life. She told an interviewer that she was first drawn to the Sisters of Mercy because of its emphasis on education and its work with immigrants.

“I truly believe we have purpose and that it is related to some greater force,” she said at the time. “It is almost impossible to imagine my life without a belief in a higher power, to put it in secular terms. There is so much in the universe that calls out for it.”

Marcelle and I have seen Sister Janice answer that calling many times over. For that, our State, our Nation, and our world are better. We are so very grateful.

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in recognition of National POW/MIA Recognition Day, today I wish to call attention to the importance of maintain-

ing focus on efforts to bring home America’s prisoners of war, POWs, and missing in action, MIA. Let us join in honoring America’s servicemembers, including those who have yet to make it home, and recognizing the enduring service of military families who watch and wait for the return of their loved ones.

We must continue to seek answers until all American servicemembers are home. Many American families have waited decades for resolution about the fate of their loved ones who went missing while serving our Nation. I commend those who are working to bring America’s servicemembers home and who keep a spotlight on the service of those who remain missing. Idahoans, including members of the POW/MIA Awareness Rally Corp., raise awareness about the continued need to return our missing servicemembers, holding annual rallies and other events to keep a spotlight on the service of those who remain missing and the need for answers for their families. Their efforts are greatly valued in helping to ensure that the return of American servicemembers is prioritized.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency reports that more than 360 Idahoans are among those who have not yet been recovered following their service in World War II, the Korean war, and the Vietnam war. Their service and return must be ever fixed in our national attention. My prayers are with their families and friends that they may experience the long-awaited return of their loved ones. We cannot let up in the search. As Americans, it is our duty to bring home those who have given so much for us.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PAM TESTROET

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize and honor the president-elect of the Louisiana REALTORS, Mrs. Pam Foreman Testroet. Pam is a distinguished realtor in Louisiana whose career has been defined by her devotion to ethics and her ability to make people comfortable while making important life decisions.

The Louisiana REALTORS, LR, is a trade association tasked with helping its members in the business of real estate in Louisiana. LR represents its members on real estate issues before the State and Federal governments while also providing legal assistance and professional development opportunities. As president, Pam will ensure LR achieves its mission of “providing optimum member resources while serving as the advocate for REALTORS and consumers.”

Pam began her career in Baton Rouge working for the Louisiana State Legislature and the constitutional convention. She held various jobs in New Orleans and Houma, LA, before pursuing her dream of a career in real es-

tate in 2003. After receiving her real estate license, Pam became actively involved in REALTOR organizations, serving as a director on boards at the local, State, and national levels.

Pam’s top career priorities include client satisfaction, ethics, communication, technology, and education. As evidenced by her numerous awards, Pam has excelled at those priorities. Pam’s awards include: 2005 Rookie of the Year, 2007 REALTOR of the Year, 2008 Congeniality Award, 2010 RE/MAX Cooperative Spirit Award, Louisiana REALTORS 2013 REALTOR of the Year, 2016 Louisiana REALTORS secretary/treasurer, and, finally, 2017 president-elect of Louisiana REALTORS.

I would like to congratulate Pam on her astounding career and her ascension to the position of president of the Louisiana REALTORS. Her election as president is a testament of her work ethic and the positive impact she has had on those with which she has come in contact. I know Pam will excel in this position, and I am proud to have her in the great State of Louisiana.●

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF CASCADE, IDAHO

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, my colleague Senator JIM RISCH joins me today in honoring the city of Cascade, ID, in its 100th year since its incorporation.

One hundred years ago, Cascade got its start as a prime location along the railroad tracks that crossed Valley County, ID, and developed into the county seat. Cascade became a central place for transporting the timber harvested nearby to area sawmills and a hub for mining. Like its neighbors in other parts of Valley County, Cascade has faced booms and downturns in the logging, mining, and agriculture sectors, with resilience and ingenuity. The beauty of the local landscapes and natural resources continue to attract recreation and other outdoor activities to this picturesque community, and residents embody the industriousness and warmth at the heart of the community and its historical roots. Cascade’s chamber of commerce aptly highlights Cascade’s “scenic beauty, fresh mountain air, warm friendly people and unlimited recreational activities.” It is truly a treasure of our great State.

Congratulations to the residents of Cascade on 100 years of accomplishments in developing Cascade that is a wonderful home and destination to so many. We wish you well as you continue to work for the advancement of this great community and its residents.●

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE TOWN OF ESTES PARK

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the centennial celebration of the town of Estes Park, CO. For

more than a century, Estes Park has been the primary entrance point into one of our national treasures, Rocky Mountain National Park. Millions of tourists visit the national park each year, beginning their journey in Estes Park.

Before the formal incorporation of the town, many Native American tribes spent time in the region, including the Utes, Arapaho, Shoshone, and the Comanche. Settlers began to come to the area when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act into law in 1862, encouraging them to travel West and explore unchartered territory. In 1863, Joel and Patsy Estes traveled from Kentucky, in search of fertile land to begin their cattle ranch in Colorado, and they found it in the area that later bore their name. By 1874, many more settlers had traveled out West and made Estes Park their home.

The original Coloradans living in Estes Park were resourceful and ingenious, building schools and homes from the ground up in this rugged, mountainous terrain. The present Coloradans living in Estes Park are also resilient—surviving floods and severe damages to the town and surrounding area in 1982 and again in 2013. Following the devastation of the flooding in 2013, U.S. Highway 34, one of the main roads into Estes, was in need of extreme restoration. Through bipartisan efforts in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, the Colorado delegation was able to ensure this highway received the funding it required to keep the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park open.

I would like to congratulate the Town of Estes Park on this exciting milestone, and I look forward to the town's many more years of prosperity and success.●

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS CERRA

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Thomas Cerra, a noble veteran, an inspiration to his community, and a beloved member of my home State of West Virginia.

Growing up in the northern panhandle of our beloved State, it is ingrained in each West Virginian that you have to work hard for what you want in life. Tom is indeed one of the hardest working men I know. Early on, he worked odd jobs during summers and after school and learned the value of a customer service mentality.

Prior to joining the military, Tom worked on the B&O Railroad, drove a truck for a meat-packing plant and worked for the State road, while also attending night school for industrial drafting.

In 1959, Tom joined the U.S. Army to serve his country and was honorably discharged in 1962. This experience only added to Tom's outstanding character, as he continued to develop his leadership skills and discipline. His service will never be forgotten.

One of my favorite stories about Tom is that, once he was discharged from the Army, he returned to the YMCA where he had trained and instructed for many years. It was the year of West Virginia's centennial celebration, and the community hosted the Mister West Virginia Centennial Weightlifting Contest. Tom won the top award in the 181-pound lifting class and the physique contest and was crowned "Mister West Virginia Centennial." Throughout all of his training, Tom never missed a day of work and still had time to get his weightlifting trophy engraved 2 weeks ahead of time. His sharp wit and sense of humor only add to his unforgettable character.

Tom worked all over the country, but found an opportunity to come home to Wheeling when he applied for a job with then-Ohio Valley Builders Exchange. After a few short years with the company, he convinced the board of directors to change the name of the company to more accurately define what they did, and so it became the Ohio Valley Construction Employers Council, Inc. Tom then led the charge to form a labor management organization in order to promote the contractors and building tradesmen to their customers. The group adjusted the name to Project BEST: Building Efficiency by Striving Together and was incorporated in 1982.

Project BEST is now comprised of hundreds of contractors and thousands of building trades craftsmen and apprentices in the Upper Ohio Valley region. This group is known for providing annual scholarships to area universities and colleges, promoting workplace safety and productivity, and provides a forum for the discussion of industry matters with all those involved with economic development endeavors.

What remained the same throughout the years was Tom's dedication to his parents, Christine and Thomas, and his brother, Jimmy, who always provided him with unwavering support throughout his career. It is my hope that he enjoys his well-deserved retirement with his loved ones—including his son, Bryan, his niece, Tina Marie, his grandchildren, Makayla, Angelina, and Wyatt, and his entire family.

Tom is the epitome of the American Dream. He worked hard his entire life and always stroved to give back to his community after he served his country. It is my great privilege to recognize his accomplishments and to extend thanks, on behalf of all West Virginians, for his unwavering service.●

TRIBUTE TO LUCIANO "LUCKY" VARELA

● Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to longtime New Mexico State Representative Luciano "Lucky" Varela, who passed away on September 2, 2017. Lucky served the State of New Mexico for over five decades—first as a financial expert for the State finance department and then as a respected

legislator in the New Mexico House of Representatives. We will remember Lucky as a champion for all of New Mexico, for his expertise and legislative skills, and also for his kindness, civility, and great heart.

Lucky was born to Celestino and Catalina Varela in Pecos, NM, on February 17, 1935. Growing up during and right after the Great Depression, his early jobs including hauling firewood to miners working near Pecos. He developed a strong work ethic and a love of the outdoors. Those early experiences informed his work in the State legislature, including his effort to keep New Mexico rivers and streams open to sportsmen and recreationists.

Lucky graduated from Pecos High School and joined the U.S. Army in 1957. He served 2 years in the Army and 6 years in the Army Reserve. He graduated from the College of Santa Fe with a degree in accounting. He then earned a law degree from LaSalle University.

Lucky worked as a comptroller for the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s. There he got to know the State's finances inside and out—knowledge that would be key to his success in the legislature.

After retiring from State government, Lucky couldn't sit still. He ran for a seat in the New Mexico House of Representatives and represented District 48 in Santa Fe for 30 years, from 1987 to 2016.

Lucky's knowledge of State finances was legion. It is said that he knew State agency finances better than the agency heads. He served as chair of the legislative finance committee and deputy chair of the house appropriations and finance committee. Lucky understood the numbers, but just as importantly, he understood the people behind those numbers—their struggles, hopes, and dreams. He championed public education, seniors, State employees, and technology, fighting for increases funding for public schools, higher salaries for teachers, raises for State employees, and modernizing State government technology.

During the fiscal crisis of 2009, Lucky is credited with singlehandedly developing the budget that balanced the budget and saved State finances. This ensured schools stayed open, State employees were not laid off, and State police got paid.

One of his final accomplishments was a 2013 bill he cosponsored to overhaul the Public Employees Retirement Association pension fund—helping make sure State retirees are secure in their retirement.

Lucky gave selflessly to the people of Santa Fe, the entire State of New Mexico, and our Nation, but he was even more devoted to family. Lucky is survived by his three children—Jeff, James, and Bernadette—and nine grandchildren. New Mexico is a better place thanks to Lucky's over 50 years of service. We will miss him dearly.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, 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.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:50 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1843. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from carrying out seizures relating to a structuring transaction unless the property to be seized derived from an illegal source or the funds were structured for the purpose of concealing the violation of another criminal law or regulation, to require notice and a post-seizure hearing for such seizures, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2864. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow certain issuers to be exempt from registration requirements, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3110. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1616. An act to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Bob Dole, in recognition for his service to the nation as a soldier, legislator, and statesman.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 69. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

At 2:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agreed to the amendments numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 601) to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes; and further, that the House agreed to the amendment numbered 6 of the Senate to the aforementioned bill, with an

amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1843. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from carrying out seizures relating to a structuring transaction unless the property to be seized derived from an illegal source or the funds were structured for the purpose of concealing the violation of another criminal law or regulation, to require notice and a post-seizure hearing for such seizures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 2864. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow certain issuers to be exempt from registration requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following joint resolution was read the first time:

S.J. Res. 49. Joint resolution condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President's Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups.

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-2688. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the mobilizations of selected reserve units, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2689. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on Distribution of Department of Defense Depot Maintenance Workloads for Fiscal Years 2016 through 2018"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2690. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to an alternative plan for monthly basic pay increases for members of the uniformed services for 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2691. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Libya that was originally declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2692. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 28, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2693. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order with respect to Venezuela that takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 28, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2694. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports relative to Executive Order 13783; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2695. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Louisiana; Volatile Organic Compounds Rule Revision and Stage II Vapor Recovery" (FRL No. 9965-62-Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2696. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; AK; Adoption Updates and Rule Revisions" (FRL No. 9966-80-Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2697. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Major New Source Review" (FRL No. 9966-78-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2698. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Permits, Approvals, and Registrations" (FRL No. 9966-79-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2699. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval and Air Quality Designation; TN; Redesignation of the Knoxville 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} Nonattainment Area to Attainment" (FRL No. 9966-93-Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2700. A communication from the Wildlife Biologist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

“Migratory Bird Hunting; Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations on Certain Federal Indian Reservations and Ceded Lands for the 2017–18 Season” (RIN1018–BB40) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 31, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2701. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “The Medicare Secondary Payer Commercial Repayment Center in Fiscal Year 2016”; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2702. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Examination of Returns and Claims for Refund, Credit, or Abatement; Determination of Correct Liability” (Rev. Proc. 2017–44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2703. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Section 305 Treatments of Elective Dividends by Publicly Offered REITs and RICS” (Rev. Proc. 2017–45) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2704. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “National Average Bronze Plan Premium” (Rev. Proc. 2017–48) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2705. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “General Arbitrage Rebate Rules” (Rev. Proc. 2017–50) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2706. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to amendments to part 121 of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2707. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of fully automatic rifles, semi-automatic pistols, and silencers with extra magazines and accessories to Indonesia in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17–053); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2708. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2017–0149–2017–0158); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2709. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Administration’s fiscal year 2017 Commercial Activities Inventory and Inherently Govern-

mental Activities Inventory and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2710. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Waiving Departmental Review of Appraisals and Valuations of Indian Property” (RIN1093–AA20) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2017; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–2711. A communication from the Acting Register of Copyrights and Director, United States Copyright Office, Library of Congress, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Proposed Schedule and Analysis of Copyright Recordation Fee To Go into Effect on or about December 18, 2017”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2712. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting proposed legislation entitled “Electronic System for Travel Authorization Fee Act”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2713. A communication from the Chief of the Border Security Regulations Branch, United States Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Waiver of Passport and Visa Requirements Due to an Unforeseen Emergency” (RIN1651–AA97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 30, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments:

S. 1631. A bill to authorize the Department of State for Fiscal Year 2018, and for other purposes.

S. 1697. A bill to condition assistance to the West Bank and Gaza on steps by the Palestinian Authority to end violence and terrorism against Israeli citizens and United States Citizens.

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. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. KAINE):

S. 1765. A bill to require a comprehensive plan for the sharing of best practices for depot-level maintenance among the military services; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1766. A bill to reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1767. A bill to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 1768. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S.J. Res. 49. A joint resolution condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President’s Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. Con. Res. 23. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the Filipino Veterans of World War II; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 229

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 229, a bill to provide for the confidentiality of information submitted in requests for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, and for other purposes.

S. 243

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 243, a bill to provide for a permanent extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals.

S. 253

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) 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. 326

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 326, a bill to amend the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax-exempt financing of certain government-owned buildings.

S. 385

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 385, a bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes.

S. 589

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 589, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require all political committees to notify the Federal Election Commission within 48 hours of receiving cumulative contributions of \$1,000 or more from any contributor during a calendar year, and for other purposes.

S. 662

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 662, a bill to provide incentives for hate crime reporting, grants for State-run hate crime hotlines, a Federal private right of action for victims of hate crimes, and additional penalties for individuals convicted under the Matthew Shephard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

S. 794

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 794, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act in order to improve the process whereby Medicare administrative contractors issue local coverage determinations under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the issuance of exempt facility bonds for qualified carbon dioxide capture facilities.

S. 967

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 967, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase access to ambulance services under the Medicare program and to reform payments for such services under such program, and for other purposes.

S. 1050

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1050, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1089

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to review and update a report on the energy and environmental benefits of the re-refining of used lubricating oil.

S. 1113

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1113, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 1132

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1132, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the removal of the rental cap for durable medical equipment under the Medicare program with respect to speech generating devices.

S. 1256

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1256, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23d Headquarters, Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company in recognition of their unique and distinguished service as a "Ghost Army" that conducted deception operations in Europe during World War II.

S. 1322

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1322, a bill to establish the American Fisheries Advisory Committee to assist in the awarding of fisheries research and development grants, and for other purposes.

S. 1323

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1323, a bill to preserve United States fishing heritage through a national program dedicated to training and assisting the next generation of commercial fishermen, and for other purposes.

S. 1359

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1359, a bill to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize appropriations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and for other purposes.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to amend the United States Energy Storage Competitive-

ness Act of 2007 to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish new goals for the Department of Energy relating to energy storage and to carry out certain demonstration projects relating to energy storage.

S. 1579

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1579, a bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to establish advisory boards, and for other purposes.

S. 1591

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1591, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and for other purposes.

S. 1706

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, a bill to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States.

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, supra.

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, supra.

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, supra.

At the request of Mr. UDALL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, supra.

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, supra.

S. 1718

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 1718, a bill to authorize the minting of a coin in honor of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1751

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1751, a bill to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator, a high-cost mortgage, and a loan originator.

S. RES. 160

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 160, a resolution honoring the service to United States Armed Forces provided by military working dogs and contract working dogs, also known as "war dogs".

AMENDMENT NO. 592

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 592 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the

Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 605

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 605 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 662

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 662 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 663

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 663 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1766. A bill to reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. 1766

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 “Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2017” or the “SAFER Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. PEDIATRIC SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINERS.

Section 304(c)(2) of the DNA Sexual Assault Justice Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 14136a) is amended—

(1) by inserting “, both adult and pediatric,” after “role of forensic nurses”; and

(2) by striking “and elder abuse” and inserting “elder abuse, and, in particular, the need for pediatric sexual assault nurse exam-

iners, including such nurse examiners working in the multidisciplinary setting, in responding to abuse of both children and adolescents”.

SEC. 3. REDUCING THE RAPE KIT BACKLOG.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 2(c)(4) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(c)(4)) is amended by striking “2017” and inserting “2022”.

(b) REPEAL OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1006 of the SAFER Act of 2013 (42 U.S.C. 14135 note) is repealed.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-4; 127 Stat. 54) is amended by striking the item relating to section 1006.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S.J. Res. 49. A joint resolution condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President’s Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups; read the first time.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I want to welcome all my colleagues back to the Capitol. Obviously, we have a busy time in front of us.

I would appreciate a moment of personal privilege to thank my colleagues—including the Senator from Colorado—who reached out to me in the wake of the horrible events 4 weeks ago in Charlottesville, VA. I appreciated the messages of support for the Charlottesville community and the bipartisan condemnation of the White nationalists and anti-Semitic activists who chose my State and the home of the author of the Declaration of Independence to show the world their hateful, misguided, and violent beliefs.

I have partnered with my fellow Virginian, Senator KAINE, and with Senator GARDNER, Senator ISAKSON, and others on a bipartisan basis to create a resolution condemning the hatred and violence we saw on display in Charlottesville.

Our resolution condemns the White nationalists and White supremacists, the KKK, and anti-Semitic groups. Our resolution also honors the memory of Heather Heyer and the two Virginia State police officers, Lieutenant Jay Cullen and Trooper Berke Bates, who lost their lives in Charlottesville. Our bipartisan resolution also calls upon the Trump administration to do more than track the recent and distressing increase in these violent discrimina-

tory attacks but to actually counter these efforts with a coordinated response that draws upon all the resources of our Federal Government.

Our Nation is better than the vileness and violence we saw in Charlottesville on August 11 and 12. Our Nation also deserves clear and unequivocal condemnation of racist and discriminatory attacks from our Nation’s leaders.

We are introducing the resolution today, and I encourage my colleagues to show their support for the people of Charlottesville and the people of the Commonwealth by cosponsoring this initiative.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 23—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

Ms. HIRONO submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 23

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on October 25, 2017 for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the Filipino Veterans of World War II in recognition of their dedicated military service.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 789. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 790. Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 791. Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 792. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 793. Mr. YOUNG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 794. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 795. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 796. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 797. Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. SULIVAN, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 798. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 799. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 800. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 801. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 802. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 803. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 804. Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. DONNELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 805. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 806. Mr. SCHATZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 807. Mr. GARDNER (for Mrs. SHAHEEN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 920, to establish a National Clinical Care Commission.

SA 808. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 601, to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

SA 809. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 808 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 601, *supra*.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 789. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department

of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____ . UPGRADE OF M113 VEHICLES.

No amounts authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2018 may be obligated or expended to upgrade Army M113 vehicles until the Secretary of the Army submits to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the strategy of the Army for the upgrade of such vehicles. The report shall include the following:

(1) A detailed strategy for upgrading and fielding M113 vehicles.

(2) An analysis of the manner in which the Army plans to address M113 vehicle survivability and maneuverability concerns.

(3) An analysis of the historical costs associated with upgrading M113 vehicles, and a validation of current cost estimates for upgrading such vehicles.

(4) A comparison of total procurement and life cycle costs of adding an echelon above brigade (EAB) requirement to the Army Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV) with total procurement and life cycle costs of upgrading legacy M113 vehicles.

(5) An analysis of the possibility of further accelerating Army Multi-Purpose Vehicle production or modifying the current fielding strategy for the Army Multi-Purpose Vehicle to meet near-term echelon above brigade requirements.

SA 790. Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . STEM(MM) JOBS ACTION PLAN.

(a) ASSESSMENTS AND PLAN OF ACTION.—The Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the Secretary of each military department, shall —

(1) perform an assessment of the STEM(MM) workforce for organizations within the Department of Defense, including the numbers and types of positions and the expectations for losses due to retirements and voluntary departures;

(2) identify the types and quantities of STEM(MM) jobs needed to support future mission work;

(3) determine the shortfall between lost STEM(MM) personnel and future requirements;

(4) analyze and explain the appropriateness and impact of using reimbursable and working capital fund dollars for new STEM(MM) hires;

(5) identify a plan of action to address the STEM(MM) jobs gap, including hiring strategies and timelines for replacement of STEM(MM) employees; and

(6) submit to Congress, not later than December 31, 2018, a report specifying such plan of action.

(b) STEM(MM) DEFINED.—In this section, the term “STEM(MM)” refers to science, technology, engineering, mathematics, maintenance, and manufacturing.

SA 791. Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. ____ . GOVERNMENT MICRO-PURCHASE THRESHOLD MATTERS.

(a) INCREASE IN THRESHOLD.—Section 1902(a)(1) of title 41, United States Code, is amended by striking “\$3,000” and inserting “\$10,000”.

(b) CONVENIENCE CHECKS.—A convenience check may not be used for an amount in excess of one half of the micro-purchase threshold under section 1902(a) of title 41, United States Code, or a lower amount set by the head of the agency. Use of convenience checks shall comply with controls prescribed in Office of Management and Budget Circular A–123, Appendix B.

SA 792. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report setting forth the following:

(1) A description of the work undertaken and planned to be undertaken by the Department of Defense, and the military departments, Defense Agencies, and other organizations and elements of the Department, to test and verify transaction data pertinent to obtaining an unqualified audit of their financial statements, including from feeder systems.

(2) A projected timeline of the Department in connection with the audit of the full financial statements of the Department, to be submitted to Congress annually not later than six months after the submittal to Congress of the budget of the President for a fiscal year, including the following:

(A) The date on which the Department projects the beginning of an audit of the full financial statements of the Department, and the military departments, Defense Agencies, and other organizations and elements of the Department, for a fiscal year.

(B) The date on which the Department projects the completions of audits of the full financial statements of the Department, and the military departments, Defense Agencies, and other organizations and elements of the Department, for a fiscal year.

(C) Beginning with fiscal year 2019, the dates on which the Department expects to obtain an unqualified audit opinion on the full financial statements of the Department, the military departments, the Defense Agencies, and other organizations and elements of the Department for a fiscal year.

(D) The anticipated total cost of future audits as described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

(3) The anticipated annual costs of maintaining an unqualified audit opinion on the full financial statements of the Department, the military departments, the Defense Agencies, and other organizations and elements of the Department for a fiscal year after an unqualified audit opinion on such full financial statements for a fiscal year is first obtained.

SA 793. Mr. YOUNG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following:

SEC. ____. **REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, AND UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

(a) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Concerned that, by avoiding full implementation of recommendations made by the Comptroller General of the United States, agencies are missing opportunities to operate more efficiently and effectively, not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report summarizing the assessment of the Comptroller General of each open recommendation made to an agency specified in paragraph (2) that has not been fully implemented.

(2) AGENCIES.—The agencies referred to in this paragraph are as follows:

(A) The Department of Defense.

(B) The Department of State.

(C) The United States Agency for International Development.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include a detailed description of the following:

(1) The initial response of the agency concerned to each recommendation described in subsection (a)(1) at the time such recommendation was made.

(2) The actions taken by the agency concerned to implement such recommendation.

(3) The rationale provided by the agency concerned for not implementing, or partially implementing, such recommendation.

(c) FORM.—Any information included in a report under this section shall, to the extent practicable, be submitted in unclassified form, but may be set forth in a classified annex.

(d) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

SA 794. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. **REPORT ON SIGNIFICANT SECURITY RISKS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRIC GRID.**

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Energy, submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the following:

(1) Identification of significant security risks to defense critical electric infrastructure posed by significant malicious cyber-enabled activities.

(2) An assessment of the potential effect of the security risks identified pursuant to paragraph (1) on the readiness of the Armed Forces.

(3) An assessment of the strategic benefits derived from, and the challenges associated with, isolating military infrastructure from the national electric grid and the use of microgrids by the Armed Forces.

(4) Recommendations on actions to be taken—

(A) to eliminate or mitigate the security risks identified pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(B) to address the effect of those security risks on the readiness of the Armed Forces identified pursuant to paragraph (2).

(b) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “defense critical electric infrastructure” —

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 215A(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824o-1(a)); and

(B) shall include any electric infrastructure located in any of the 48 contiguous States or the District of Columbia that serves a facility—

(i) designated by the Secretary of Defense as—

(I) critical to the defense of the United States; and

(II) vulnerable to a disruption of the supply of electric energy provided to such facility by an external provider; and

(ii) that is not owned or operated by the owner or operator of such facility.

(2) The term “security risk” shall have such meaning as the Secretary of Defense shall determine, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Energy, for purposes of the report required by subsection (a).

(3) The term “significant malicious cyber-enabled activities” include—

(A) significant efforts—

(i) to deny access to or degrade, disrupt, or destroy an information and communications technology system or network; or

(ii) to exfiltrate, degrade, corrupt, destroy, or release information from such a system or network without authorization for purposes of—

(I) conducting influence operations; or

(II) causing a significant misappropriation of funds, economic resources, trade secrets,

personal identifications, or financial information for commercial or competitive advantage or private financial gain;

(B) significant destructive malware attacks; and

(C) significant denial of service activities.

SA 795. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2826. **LAND CONVEYANCE, MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, IDAHO.**

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of the Air Force may convey to the City of Mountain Home, Idaho (in this section referred to as the “City”), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property, including improvements thereon, consisting of approximately 4.25 miles of railroad spur located near Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, as further described in subsection (c), for the purpose of economic development.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—

(1) CONSIDERATION REQUIRED.—As consideration for the land conveyed under subsection (a), the City shall pay to the Secretary an amount equal to the fair market value of the land, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Secretary. The City shall provide an amount that is acceptable to the Secretary, whether by cash payment, in-kind consideration as described under paragraph (2), or a combination thereof.

(2) IN-KIND CONSIDERATION.—In-kind consideration provided by the City under paragraph (1) may include the acquisition, construction, provision, improvement, maintenance, repair, or restoration (including environmental restoration), or combination thereof, of any facility or infrastructure under the jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(3) TREATMENT OF CONSIDERATION RECEIVED.—Consideration in the form of cash payment received by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be deposited in the separate fund in the Treasury described in section 572(a)(1) of title 40, United States Code.

(c) MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

(1) FINALIZING LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force shall finalize a map and the legal description of the property to be conveyed under subsection (a).

(2) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary of the Air Force may correct any minor errors in the map or the legal description.

(3) AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal description shall be on file and available for public inspection.

(d) PAYMENT OF COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—

(1) PAYMENT REQUIRED.—The Secretary may require the City to cover all costs (except costs for environmental remediation of the property) to be incurred by the Secretary, or to reimburse the Secretary for costs incurred by the Secretary, to carry out the conveyance under this section, including survey costs, costs for environmental documentation, and any other administrative costs related to the conveyance. If amounts are collected from the City in advance of the Secretary incurring the actual costs, and the amount collected exceeds the costs actually

incurred by the Secretary to carry out the conveyance, the Secretary shall refund the excess amount to the City.

(2) **TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS RECEIVED.**—Amounts received under paragraph (1) as reimbursement for costs incurred by the Secretary to carry out the conveyance under subsection (a) shall be credited to the fund or account that was used to cover the costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out the conveyance, or to an appropriate fund or account currently available to the Secretary for the purposes for which the costs were paid. Amounts so credited shall be merged with amounts in such fund or account and shall be available for the same purposes, and subject to the same conditions and limitations, as amounts in such fund or account.

(e) **USE RESERVATION.**—The Secretary may reserve a right to temporarily use, for urgent reasons of national defense and at no cost to the United States, all or a portion of the railroad spur conveyed under subsection (a).

(f) **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

SA 796. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORT ON AIRPORTS USED BY MAHAN AIR.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2020, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a list of all airports at which aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air have landed during the 2 years preceding the submission of the report; and

(2) for each such airport—

(A) an assessment of whether aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air continue to conduct operations at that airport;

(B) an assessment of whether any of the landings of aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air were necessitated by an emergency situation;

(C) a determination regarding whether additional security measures should be imposed on flights to the United States that originate from that airport; and

(D) an explanation of the rationale for that determination.

(b) **FORM OF REPORT.**—Each report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 797. Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military

activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VII, add the following:

SEC. ____ . ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS SYSTEM FOR THE COAST GUARD.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard operating is authorized to procure an electronic health records system for the Coast Guard that is the same as the electronic health records system of the Department of Defense.

(b) **COMPETITION IN CONTRACTING.**—Procurement of an electronic health records system under this section shall be exempt from the competition requirements of section 2304 of title 10, United States Code.

(c) **AUTHORIZED PROCUREMENT ACTIONS.**—The authority of the Secretary to procure an action to procure an electronic health records system under this section includes the following:

(1) Authority for task orders under the Department of Defense electronic health records contract.

(2) Authority for a sole source contract award.

(3) Authority for agreements made pursuant to sections 1535 and 1536 of title 31, United States Code (commonly known as the “Economy Act”).

(4) Any other procurement authority the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) **SUPPORT SERVICES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may procure, in addition to the electronic health records system, such support services for the system as the Secretary considers appropriate to ensure the electronic health records system is fully interoperable and integrated with the electronic health records system of the Department of Defense.

(2) **SUPPORT SERVICE.**—Support services procurable pursuant to this subsection may include services for the following:

(A) System integration support.

(B) Hosting support.

(C) Training, testing, technical, and data migration support.

(D) Hardware.

(E) Any other support the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) **MANNER OF PROCUREMENT.**—The Secretary may procure support services pursuant to this subsection using the authorities provided in subsection (c).

SA 798. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, add the following:

SEC. ____ . ASSESSMENT OF THE EXPANDING GLOBAL INFLUENCE OF CHINA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) **ASSESSMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense shall enter into a contract or other agreement with an appropriate entity independent of the Department of Defense to conduct an

assessment of the foreign military and non-military influence of the People's Republic of China which could affect the regional and global national security and defense interests of the United States.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The assessment required by subsection (a) shall include an evaluation of the following:

(1) The expansion by China of military and non-military means of influence in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region and globally, including, infrastructure investments, influence campaigns, loans, access to military equipment, military training, tourism, media, and access to foreign ports and military bases, and whether such means of influence could affect United States national security or defense interests, including operational access.

(2) The implications, if any, of such means of influence for the military force posture, access, training, and logistics of the United States and China.

(3) The United States policy and strategy for mitigating any harmful effects resulting from such means of influence.

(4) The resources required to implement the policy and strategy, and the plan to address and mitigate any gaps in capabilities or resources necessary for the implementation of the policy and strategy.

(5) Measures to bolster the roles of allies, partners, and other countries to implement the policy and strategy.

(6) Any other matters the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the assessment required pursuant to subsection (a).

(2) **FORM.**—The report required shall be submitted unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

SA 799. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, add the following:

SEC. ____ . PLAN TO ENHANCE THE EXTENDED DETERRENCE AND ASSURANCE CAPABILITIES OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION.

(a) **FINDING.**—Congress recognizes that North Korea's first successful test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) constitutes a grave and imminent threat to United States security and to the security of United States allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

(b) **PLAN.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Commander of the United States Pacific Command and the Commander of the United States Strategic Command, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan to enhance the extended deterrence and assurance capabilities of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region.

(c) **MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.**—The plan shall include consideration of actions that will enhance United States security by strengthening deterrence of North Korean aggression and providing increased assurance to United States allies in the Asia-Pacific region, including the following:

(1) Increased visible presence of key United States military assets, such as missile defenses, long-range strike assets, and intermediate-range strike assets, to the region that do not violate existing treaties.

(2) Increased military cooperation, exercises, and integration of defenses with allies in the region.

(3) Increased foreign military sales to allies in the region.

(4) Planning for, exercising, or deploying dual-capable aircraft to the region.

(5) Any necessary modifications to the United States nuclear force posture.

(6) Such other actions the Secretary considers appropriate to strengthen extended deterrence and assurance in the region.

(d) FORM.—The plan shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

SA 800. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. ____ . RECOGNITION OF THE AVIATION CADET MUSEUM IN EUREKA SPRINGS, ARKANSAS, AS THE NATIONAL AVIATION CADET MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The Aviation Cadet Museum was founded in 1994 by former aviation cadet and Air Force First Lieutenant Errol Severe.

(2) From 1917 until 1965, the flying cadet and succeeding aviation cadet programs served as the primary production source for nearly 500,000 joint service pilots, navigators, and bombardiers.

(3) The bravery, courage, dedication, and heroism of aviators and supporting ground crews from the Army Air Corps and the Army Air Forces were critical factors in defeating the enemies of the United States during World War I and World War II.

(4) The Aviation Cadet Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, is the only museum in the United States that exists exclusively to preserve and promote an understanding of the role of aviation cadets in the 20th century.

(5) The Aviation Cadet Museum is dedicated to—

(A) celebrating the spirit of the United States; and

(B) recognizing the teamwork, collaboration, patriotism, and courage of the men who trained for and fought in, as well as those individuals on the home front who mobilized and supported, the national aviation effort.

(b) RECOGNITION.—The Senate recognizes the Aviation Cadet Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, as the national aviation cadet museum of the United States.

SA 801. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military con-

struction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. ____ . PROGRAM TO DESIGNATE AND SUPPORT MANUFACTURING COMMUNITIES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Made in America Manufacturing Communities Act of 2017”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MANUFACTURING COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM.—The term “Manufacturing Community Support Program” means the program established under section 3(a).

(2) PARTICIPATING AGENCY.—The term “participating agency” means a Federal agency that elects to participate in the Manufacturing Community Support Program.

(3) PARTICIPATING PROGRAM.—The term “participating program” means a program identified by a participating agency under section 3(c)(1)(C).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Commerce.

(c) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall establish a program to improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing—

(1) by designating consortiums as manufacturing communities under subsection (d); and

(2) by supporting manufacturing communities, as so designated, under subsection (e).

(d) DESIGNATION OF MANUFACTURING COMMUNITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (7), for purposes of the Manufacturing Community Support Program, the Secretary shall designate eligible consortiums as manufacturing communities through a competitive process.

(2) ELIGIBLE CONSORTIUMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible consortium is a consortium that—

(i) represents a region defined by the consortium in accordance with subparagraph (B);

(ii) includes at least one—

(I) institution of higher education;

(II) private sector entity; or

(III) government entity;

(iii) may include one or more—

(I) private sector partners;

(II) institutions of higher education;

(III) government entities;

(IV) economic development and other community and labor groups;

(V) financial institutions; or

(VI) utilities; and

(iv) has, as a lead applicant—

(I) a district organization (as defined in section 300.3 of title 13, Code of Federal Regulations, or successor regulation);

(II) an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) or a consortium of Indian tribes;

(III) a State or a political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions;

(IV) an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or

(V) a public or private nonprofit organization or association that has an application that is supported by a State, a political subdivision of a State, or a native community.

(B) REGIONS.—Subject to approval by the Secretary, a consortium may define the region that it represents if the region—

(i) is large enough to contain critical elements of the key technologies or supply chain prioritized by the consortium; and

(ii) is small enough to enable close collaboration among members of the consortium.

(3) DURATION.—Each designation under paragraph (1) shall be for a period of two years.

(4) RENEWAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon receipt of an application submitted under subparagraph (B), the Secretary may renew a designation made under paragraph (1) for up to two additional two-year periods. Any designation as a manufacturing community or renewal of such designation that is in effect before the date of the enactment of this Act shall count toward the limit set forth in this subparagraph.

(B) APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL.—An eligible consortium seeking a renewal under subparagraph (A) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(C) MODIFICATIONS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may renew a designation under subparagraph (A) for an eligible consortium that—

(i) has changed its composition, either by adding or removing members; or

(ii) as part of its application under subparagraph (B), submits a revision to the plan submitted under paragraph (5)(B)(iv) or the strategy submitted under paragraph (5)(B)(v).

(D) EVALUATION FOR RENEWAL.—In determining whether to renew a designation of an eligible consortium under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall assess the eligible consortium based upon—

(i) the performance of the consortium against the terms of the consortium’s most recent designation under paragraph (1) and any post-designation awards the consortium may have received;

(ii) the progress the consortium has made with respect to project-specific metrics the consortium proposed in the consortium’s application for the most recent designation under paragraph (1), particularly with respect to those metrics that were designed to help communities track their own progress;

(iii) whether any changes to the composition of the eligible consortium or revisions to the plan or strategy described in subparagraph (C)(ii) would improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing; and

(iv) such other criteria as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(5) APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible consortium seeking a designation under paragraph (1) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (A) include—

(i) a description of the regional boundaries of the consortium;

(ii) a description of the manufacturing concentration of the consortium, including an assessment of how the manufacturing concentration of the consortium competitively ranks nationally according to measures relating to employment, sales, location quotients for an industry’s level of concentration, or such other measures as the Secretary considers appropriate;

(iii) an integrated assessment of the local industrial ecosystem of the region of the consortium, which may include assessment of workforce and training, such as that involving women and underrepresented minorities, supplier network, research and innovation, infrastructure or site development,

trade and international investment, operational improvements, and capital access components needed for manufacturing activities in such region;

(iv) an evidence-based plan for developing components of such ecosystem (selected by the consortium)—

(I) by making specific investments to address gaps in such ecosystem; and

(II) by making the manufacturing of the region of the consortium uniquely competitive;

(v) a description of the investments the consortium proposes and the implementation strategy the consortium intends to use to address gaps in such ecosystem;

(vi) a description of the outcome-based metrics, benchmarks, and milestones that the consortium will track and the evaluation methods the consortium will use while designated as a manufacturing community to gauge performance of the strategy of the consortium to improve the manufacturing in the region of the consortium; and

(vii) such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(6) EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall evaluate each application received under paragraph (5) to determine—

(A) whether the applicant demonstrates a significant level of regional cooperation in their proposal; and

(B) how the manufacturing concentration of the applicant competitively ranks nationally according to measures described in paragraph (5)(B)(ii).

(7) CERTAIN COMMUNITIES PREVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED.—Each consortium that was designated as a manufacturing community by the Secretary in carrying out the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership initiative of the Department of Commerce before the date of the enactment of this Act shall be deemed a manufacturing community designated under this subsection if such consortium is still designated as a manufacturing community by the Secretary as part of such initiative.

(e) SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATED MANUFACTURING COMMUNITIES.—

(1) PREFERENTIAL CONSIDERATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (D), if a member of a consortium designated as a manufacturing community under subsection (d) seeks financial or technical assistance under a participating program of a participating agency, the head of such agency may give preferential consideration to such member with respect to the awarding of such financial or technical assistance if—

(i) such head considers the award of the financial or technical assistance consistent with the economic development strategy of the consortium; and

(ii) the member otherwise meets all applicable requirements for the financial or technical assistance.

(B) PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—The Secretary shall invite other Federal agencies to become participating agencies of the Manufacturing Community Support Program.

(C) PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS.—The head of each participating agency shall identify all programs administered by such participating agency that are applicable to the Manufacturing Community Support Program.

(D) MULTIPLE MEMBERS OF THE SAME CONSORTIUM SEEKING THE SAME FINANCIAL OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If a participating agency receives applications for the same financial or technical assistance from more than one member of the same consortium designated as a manufacturing community under subsection (d), the head of such agency may determine how preference will be given under subparagraph (A), including by requiring the

consortium to select which of the members should be given preference.

(ii) COORDINATION.—If the head of a participating agency determines that more than one member of a consortium should be given preference for financial or technical assistance under subparagraph (A), he or she may require such members to demonstrate coordination with each other in developing their applications for the financial or technical assistance.

(E) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the head of each participating agency shall submit a report to the Secretary that specifies how the head will give preferential consideration under subparagraph (A).

(2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may make a Federal point of contact available to each consortium designated as a manufacturing community under subsection (d) to help the members of the consortium access Federal funds and technical assistance.

(3) FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the Manufacturing Community Support Program, the head of a participating agency may award financial or technical assistance to a member of a consortium designated as a manufacturing community under subsection (d) as he or she considers appropriate for purposes of such program and consistent with the economic development strategy of the consortium.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A recipient of financial or technical assistance under subparagraph (A) may use such financial or technical assistance to support an investment in an ecosystem that will improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing.

(ii) INVESTMENTS SUPPORTED.—Investments supported under this subparagraph may include—

- (I) infrastructure;
- (II) access to capital;
- (III) promotion of exports and foreign direct investment;
- (IV) equipment or facility upgrades;
- (V) workforce training, retraining, or recruitment and retention, including that of women and underrepresented minorities;
- (VI) energy or process efficiency;
- (VII) business incubators;
- (VIII) site preparation;
- (IX) advanced research;
- (X) supply chain development; and
- (XI) small business assistance.

(4) COORDINATION.—

(A) COORDINATION BY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.—The Secretary shall coordinate with the heads of the participating agencies to identify programs under paragraph (1)(C).

(B) INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION.—The heads of the participating agencies shall coordinate with each other—

(i) to leverage complementary activities, including from non-Federal sources, such as philanthropies; and

(ii) to avoid duplication of efforts.

(F) RECEIPT OF TRANSFERRED FUNDS.—The Secretary may accept amounts transferred to the Secretary from the head of another participating agency to carry out this section.

SA 802. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . . . CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT THAT MILITARY ACTIONS ARE NOT INFLUENCED BY FINANCIAL OR BENEFICIAL INTERESTS HELD BY THE PRESIDENT.

The United States Armed Forces may not take any military action in any country in which the President or the President's close relatives (immediate family, including spouse, children, and sons- and-daughters-in-law) have assets or businesses in which they hold an ownership interest, financial interest, or beneficial interest unless the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff jointly certify to Congress that the proposed military action is not influenced in any way by any financial or beneficial interest held by the President.

SA 803. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . . . EMOLUMENT CLAUSE VIOLATIONS.

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

(1) Article I, section 9, clause 8 of the United States Constitution (commonly known as the "Emoluments Clause") declares, "No title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State."

(2) According to the remarks of Governor Edmund Randolph at the 1787 Constitutional Convention, the Emoluments Clause "was thought proper, in order to exclude corruption and foreign influence, to prohibit any one in office from receiving or holding any emoluments from foreign states".

(3) The issue of foreign corruption greatly concerned the Founding Fathers of the United States, such that Alexander Hamilton in Federalist No. 22 wrote, "In republics, persons elevated from the mass of the community, by the suffrages of their fellow-citizens, to stations of great pre-eminence and power, may find compensations for betraying their trust, which, to any but minds animated and guided by superior virtue, may appear to exceed the proportion of interest they have in the common stock, and to over-balance the obligations of duty. Hence it is that history furnishes us with so many mortifying examples of the prevalence of foreign corruption in republican governments."

(4) The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of the Federal Government and is expected to have undivided loyalty to the United States, and clearly occupies an "office of profit or trust" within the meaning of article I, section 9, clause 8 of the Constitution, according to the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice.

(5) The Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice opined in 2009 that corporations owned or controlled by a foreign government are presumptively foreign states under the Emoluments Clause.

(6) President Donald J. Trump has a business network, the Trump Organization, that

has financial interests around the world and negotiates and concludes transactions with foreign states and entities that are extensions of foreign states.

(7) The very nature of a “blind trust”, as defined by former White House Ethics Counsels Richard Painter and Norm Eisen in an opinion piece in the Washington Post entitled, “Trump’s ‘blind trust’ is neither blind nor trustworthy”, dated November 15, 2016, and the Congressional Research Service report “The Use of Blind Trusts By Federal Officials”, is such that the official will have no control over, will receive no communications about, and will have no knowledge of the identity of the specific assets held in the trust, and that the manager of the trust is independent of the owner.

(8) On January 11, 2017, President-elect Donald J. Trump and his lawyers held a press conference to announce that he would be placing his assets in a trust and turning over management of the Trump Organization to his two adult sons, Donald Trump, Jr., and Eric Trump, and executive Allen Weisselberg; that there will be no communication with President Trump and no new overseas business deals; that an ethics advisor will be appointed to the management team to fully vet any new proposed domestic deals; and that the Trump Organization will donate any profits from any foreign governments that use Trump hotels to the Department of the Treasury.

(9) This arrangement is not sufficient because of its utter lack of independent accountability and transparency, such that the director of the Office of Government Ethics has stated that “[t]he plan the [President] has announced doesn’t meet the standards that the best of his nominees are meeting and that every president in the last four decades have met”.

(10) The director of the Office of Government Ethics has characterized the promise to limit President Trump’s direct communication about the Trump Organization as “wholly inadequate” because President Trump would still be well-aware of the specific assets held and could receive communications about and take actions to affect the value of those assets, especially when those running the business are his own children, whom Trump will see often.

(11) The promise that no new overseas business deals will be agreed to by the Trump Organization fails to explain what constitutes a deal, and whether expansions to existing properties, licensing or permitting fee agreements, or loans from foreign banks like Deutsche Bank AG would qualify as “deals”.

(12) The promise that the Trump Organization will donate profits from any foreign governments that use Trump hotels does not include Trump golf courses and other properties; does not explain whether the promise covers foreign government officials who register under their own names or third-party vendors hired by foreign governments to do business with the Trump Organization; does not explain whether foreign organizations signing tenant agreements with domestic Trump businesses, such as the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, which is Trump Tower’s biggest tenant, qualifies; does not define what constitutes “profits”; does not address the fact that revenue received by a failing business still provides value to that business even if there is no net profit; and has no mechanism for the public to verify that the promise is being fulfilled.

(13) President Trump’s lawyer claimed that “it would be impossible to find an institutional trustee that would be competent to run the Trump Organization” when there are dozens if not hundreds of highly qualified trustees who handle complicated business

situations like the disposition of the Trump Organization.

(14) At the January 11, 2017, press conference, President-elect Trump’s lawyer implied that the only reason people have raised the Emoluments Clause is over “routine business transactions like paying for hotel rooms” and claimed that “[p]aying for a hotel room is not a gift or a present, and it has nothing to do with an office. It’s not an emolument.”.

(15) A comprehensive study of the Emoluments Clause written by Richard Painter, Norman Eisen, and Lawrence Tribe, two of whom are former ethics counsels to past Presidents, has concluded that “since emoluments are properly defined as including ‘profit’ from any employment, as well as ‘salary,’ it is clear that even remuneration fairly earned in commerce can qualify”.

(16) Numerous legal and constitutional experts, including several former White House ethics counsels, have also made clear that the arrangement announced on January 11, 2017, in which the President fails to exit the ownership of his businesses through use of a blind trust or equivalent, will leave the President with a personal financial interest in businesses that collect foreign government payments and benefits, which raises both constitutional and public interest concerns.

(17) Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush have set the precedent of using true blind trusts, in which their holdings were liquidated and placed in new investments unknown to them by an independent trustee who managed them free of familial bias.

(18) The continued intermingling of the business of the Trump Organization and the work of government has the potential to constitute the foreign corruption so feared by the Founding Fathers and to betray the trust of America’s citizens.

(19) On January 20, 2017, President Trump swore an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, the rights, privileges and limitations of which are defined and guarded by the Federal judiciary of the United States.

(20) Congress has an institutional, constitutional obligation to ensure that the President of the United States does not violate the Emoluments Clause of the Constitution, Federal law, or fundamental principles of ethics, and is discharging the obligations of office based on the national interest, not based on personal interest.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) finds the promised actions outlined by President Donald J. Trump at his January 11, 2017, press conference wholly inadequate and insufficient to ensure compliance with the Emoluments Clause of the United States Constitution;

(2) calls upon President Trump to follow the precedent established by prior Presidents and convert his assets to simple, conflict-free holdings, adopt blind trusts managed by an independent trustee with no relationship to Donald J. Trump or his businesses, or take other equivalent measures;

(3) calls upon President Trump not to use the powers or opportunities of his position as President of the United States for any purpose related to the Trump Organization; and

(4) regards, in the absence of express affirmative authorization by Congress, dealings that Donald J. Trump, as President of the United States, may have through his companies with foreign governments or entities owned or controlled by foreign governments as potential violations of the Emoluments Clause.

SA 804. Mrs. FISHER (for herself and Mr. DONNELLY) submitted an

amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 1651(c), strike paragraph (2).

SA 805. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 85, between lines 23 and 24, insert the following:

“(7)(A) The base commander of a military installation impacted by a proposed wind turbine project shall submit to the Clearinghouse a statement of objection or non-objection regarding the impact of proposed project.

“(B) The statement shall include the following elements:

“(i) An analysis of the impact on pilot safety, training, military operations, and readiness.

“(ii) A detailed description of any potential negative impacts on pilot safety, training, military operations, and readiness.

“(iii) Any additional information the base commander determines relevant for consideration in the evaluation process.

“(iv) A statement of objection or non-objection.

“(C) The base commander’s recommendation shall be incorporated into the Clearinghouse analysis and made a matter of permanent record.

“(D) Any decision by the Clearinghouse that contradicts the base commander recommendation shall be accompanied by a report addressing all the points made in the base commander’s statement, and describe how the impacts on pilot safety, training, military operations, and readiness will be prevented.”.

SA 806. Mr. SCHATZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2803. ANNUAL LOCALITY ADJUSTMENT OF DOLLAR THRESHOLDS APPLICABLE TO UNSPECIFIED MINOR MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITIES.

Section 2805 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f) ADJUSTMENT OF DOLLAR LIMITATIONS FOR LOCATION.—Each fiscal year, the Secretary concerned shall adjust the dollar limitations specified in this section applicable to an unspecified minor military construction project inside the United States to reflect

the area construction cost index for military construction projects published by the Department of Defense during the prior fiscal year for the location of the project.”.

SA 807. Mr. GARDNER (for Mrs. SHAHEEN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 920, to establish a National Clinical Care Commission; as follows:

On page 5, line 12, strike “and”.

On page 5, line 20, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 5, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

(5) whether there are opportunities for consolidation of inappropriately overlapping or duplicative Federal programs related to the diseases and complications described in subsection (a).

SA 809. Mr. McCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 808 proposed by Mr. McCONNELL to the bill H.R. 601, to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment.”

SA 808. Mr. McCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 601, to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by House amendment ____, insert the following:

(C) there is the greatest opportunity to reduce childhood and adolescence exposure to or engagement in violent extremism or extremist ideologies.

DIVISION B—SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR DISASTER RELIEF REQUIREMENTS

The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations, and other organizational units of Government for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes, namely:

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY DISASTER RELIEF FUND

For an additional amount for “Disaster Relief Fund” for major disasters declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), \$7,400,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the

amount designated under this heading as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall be available only if the President subsequently so designates such amount and transmits such designation to the Congress.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

DISASTER LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for the “Disaster Loans Program Account” for the cost of direct loans authorized by section 7(b) of the Small Business Act, \$450,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That up to \$225,000,000 may be transferred to and merged with “Salaries and Expenses” for administrative expenses to carry out the disaster loan program authorized by section 7(b) of the Small Business Act: *Provided further*, That none of the funds provided under this heading may be used for indirect administrative expenses: *Provided further*, That the amount provided under this heading is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the amount designated under this heading as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall be available only if the President subsequently so designates such amount and transmits such designation to the Congress.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for “Community Development Fund”, \$7,400,000,000, to remain available until expended, for necessary expenses for activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster declared in 2017 pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.): *Provided*, That funds shall be awarded directly to the State or unit of general local government at the discretion of the Secretary: *Provided further*, That as a condition of making any grant, the Secretary shall certify in advance that such grantee has in place proficient financial controls and procurement processes and has established adequate procedures to prevent any duplication of benefits as defined by section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155), to ensure timely expenditure of funds, to maintain comprehensive websites regarding all disaster recovery activities assisted with these funds, and to detect and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds: *Provided further*, That prior to the obligation of funds a grantee shall submit a plan to the Secretary for approval detailing the proposed use of all funds, including criteria for eligibility and how the use of these funds will address long-term recovery and restoration of infrastructure and housing and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas: *Provided further*, That such funds may not be used for activities reimbursable by, or for which funds are made available by, the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Army Corps of Engineers: *Provided further*, That funds allocated under this heading shall not be considered relevant to the non-

disaster formula allocations made pursuant to section 106 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5306): *Provided further*, That a State or subdivision thereof may use up to 5 percent of its allocation for administrative costs: *Provided further*, That in administering the funds under this heading, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may waive, or specify alternative requirements for, any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with the obligation by the Secretary or the use by the recipient of these funds (except for requirements related to fair housing, non-discrimination, labor standards, and the environment), if the Secretary finds that good cause exists for the waiver or alternative requirement and such waiver or alternative requirement would not be inconsistent with the overall purpose of title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding the preceding proviso, recipients of funds provided under this heading that use such funds to supplement Federal assistance provided under section 402, 403, 404, 406, 407, or 502 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) may adopt, without review or public comment, any environmental review, approval, or permit performed by a Federal agency, and such adoption shall satisfy the responsibilities of the recipient with respect to such environmental review, approval or permit: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding section 104(g)(2) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5304(g)(2)), the Secretary may, upon receipt of a request for release of funds and certification, immediately approve the release of funds for an activity or project assisted under this heading if the recipient has adopted an environmental review, approval or permit under the preceding proviso or the activity or project is categorically excluded from review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.): *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall publish via notice in the Federal Register any waiver, or alternative requirement, to any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers pursuant to title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 no later than 5 days before the effective date of such waiver or alternative requirement: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, up to \$10,000,000 may be transferred, in aggregate, to “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Program Office Salaries and Expenses—Community Planning and Development” for necessary costs, including information technology costs, of administering and overseeing the obligation and expenditure of amounts under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That the amount designated under this heading as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall be available only if the President subsequently so designates such amount and transmits such designation to the Congress.

This division may be cited as the “Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements, 2017”.

DIVISION C—TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT

SEC. 101. (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply for the period beginning on the date of

enactment of this Act and ending on December 8, 2017.

(b) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS ISSUED DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—Effective on December 9, 2017, the limitation in effect under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall be increased to the extent that—

(1) the face amount of obligations issued under chapter 31 of such title and the face amount of obligations whose principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States Government (except guaranteed obligations held by the Secretary of the Treasury) outstanding on December 9, 2017, exceeds

(2) the face amount of such obligations outstanding on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) RESTORING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONAL DEBT. (1) EXTENSION LIMITED TO NECESSARY OBLIGATIONS.—An obligation shall not be taken into account under section 101(a) unless the issuance of such obligation was necessary to fund a commitment incurred pursuant to law by the Federal Government that required payment before December 9, 2017.

(2) PROHIBITION ON CREATION OF CASH RESERVE DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall not issue obligations during the period specified in section 101(a) for the purpose of increasing the cash balance above normal operating balances in anticipation of the expiration of such period.

DIVISION D—CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations, and other organizational units of Government for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, namely:

SEC. 101. (a) Such amounts as may be necessary, at a rate for operations as provided in the applicable appropriations Acts for fiscal year 2017 and under the authority and conditions provided in such Acts, for continuing projects or activities (including the costs of direct loans and loan guarantees) that are not otherwise specifically provided for in this Act, that were conducted in fiscal year 2017, and for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were made available in the following appropriations Acts:

(1) The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division A of Public Law 115-31) and section 193 of Public Law 114-223, as amended by division A of Public Law 114-254.

(2) The Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division B of Public Law 115-31), except section 540.

(3) The Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017 (division C of Public Law 115-31).

(4) The Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division D of Public Law 115-31).

(5) The Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2017 (division E of Public Law 115-31).

(6) The Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2017 (division F of Public Law 115-31), except section 310.

(7) The Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division G of Public Law 115-31), except that the language under the heading “FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund” in the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior shall be applied by adding at the end the following: “*Provided further*, That notwithstanding the first proviso under the

heading and notwithstanding the FLAME Act of 2009, 43 U.S.C. 1748a(e), such funds shall be available to be transferred to and merged with other appropriations accounts to fully repay amounts previously transferred for wildfire suppression”.

(8) The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division H of Public Law 115-31) and sections 171, 194, and 195 of Public Law 114-223, as amended by division A of Public Law 114-254.

(9) The Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2017 (division I of Public Law 115-31) and section 175 of Public Law 114-223, as amended by division A of Public Law 114-254.

(10) The Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division A of Public Law 114-223), except for appropriations for fiscal year 2017 in the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “Medical Community Care”, and division L of Public Law 115-31.

(11) The Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (division J of Public Law 115-31).

(12) The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (division K of Public Law 115-31), except sections 420 and 421.

(13) The Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (division B of Public Law 114-254).

(b) The rate for operations provided by subsection (a) is hereby reduced by 0.6791 percent.

SEC. 102. (a) No appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 for the Department of Defense shall be used for: (1) the new production of items not funded for production in fiscal year 2017 or prior years; (2) the increase in production rates above those sustained with fiscal year 2017 funds; or (3) the initiation, resumption, or continuation of any project, activity, operation, or organization (defined as any project, subproject, activity, budget activity, program element, and subprogram within a program element, and for any investment items defined as a P-1 line item in a budget activity within an appropriation account and an R-1 line item that includes a program element and subprogram element within an appropriation account) for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were not available during fiscal year 2017.

(b) No appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 for the Department of Defense shall be used to initiate multi-year procurements utilizing advance procurement funding for economic order quantity procurement unless specifically appropriated later.

SEC. 103. Appropriations made by section 101 shall be available to the extent and in the manner that would be provided by the pertinent appropriations Act.

SEC. 104. Except as otherwise provided in section 102, no appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 shall be used to initiate or resume any project or activity for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were not available during fiscal year 2017.

SEC. 105. Appropriations made and authority granted pursuant to this Act shall cover all obligations or expenditures incurred for any project or activity during the period for which funds or authority for such project or activity are available under this Act.

SEC. 106. Unless otherwise provided for in this Act or in the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2018, appropriations and funds made available and authority granted pursuant to this Act shall be available until whichever of the following first occurs:

(1) the enactment into law of an appropriation for any project or activity provided for in this Act;

(2) the enactment into law of the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2018 without any provision for such project or activity; or

(3) December 8, 2017.

SEC. 107. Expenditures made pursuant to this Act shall be charged to the applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization whenever a bill in which such applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization is contained is enacted into law.

SEC. 108. Appropriations made and funds made available by or authority granted pursuant to this Act may be used without regard to the time limitations for submission and approval of apportionments set forth in section 1513 of title 31, United States Code, but nothing in this Act may be construed to waive any other provision of law governing the apportionment of funds.

SEC. 109. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, except section 106, for those programs that would otherwise have high initial rates of operation or complete distribution of appropriations at the beginning of fiscal year 2018 because of distributions of funding to States, foreign countries, grantees, or others, such high initial rates of operation or complete distribution shall not be made, and no grants shall be awarded for such programs funded by this Act that would impinge on final funding prerogatives.

SEC. 110. This Act shall be implemented so that only the most limited funding action of that permitted in the Act shall be taken in order to provide for continuation of projects and activities.

SEC. 111. (a) For entitlements and other mandatory payments whose budget authority was provided in appropriations Acts for fiscal year 2017, and for activities under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, activities shall be continued at the rate to maintain program levels under current law, under the authority and conditions provided in the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2017, to be continued through the date specified in section 106(3).

(b) Notwithstanding section 106, obligations for mandatory payments due on or about the first day of any month that begins after October 2017 but not later than 30 days after the date specified in section 106(3) may continue to be made, and funds shall be available for such payments.

SEC. 112. Amounts made available under section 101 for civilian personnel compensation and benefits in each department and agency may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to avoid furloughs within such department or agency, consistent with the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2017, except that such authority provided under this section shall not be used until after the department or agency has taken all necessary actions to reduce or defer non-personnel-related administrative expenses.

SEC. 113. Funds appropriated by this Act may be obligated and expended notwithstanding section 10 of Public Law 91-672 (22 U.S.C. 2412), section 15 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2680), section 313 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (22 U.S.C. 6212), and section 504(a)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3094(a)(1)).

SEC. 114. (a) Each amount incorporated by reference in this Act that was previously designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism or as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act

of 1985 or as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of such Act is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism or as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of such Act or as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of such Act, respectively.

(b) The reduction in section 101(b) of this Act shall not apply to—

(1) amounts designated under subsection (a) of this section;

(2) amounts made available by section 101(a) by reference to the second paragraph under the heading “Social Security Administration—Limitation on Administrative Expenses” in division H of Public Law 115-31; or

(3) amounts made available by section 101(a) by reference to the paragraph under the heading “Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Account” in division H of Public Law 115-31.

(c) Section 6 of Public Law 115-31 shall apply to amounts designated in subsection (a) for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism or as an emergency requirement.

SEC. 115. During the period covered by this Act, discretionary amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2018 that were provided in advance by appropriations Acts shall be available in the amounts provided in such Acts, reduced by the percentage in section 101(b).

SEC. 116. Notwithstanding section 101, amounts are provided for “Department of Agriculture—Domestic Food Programs—Food and Nutrition Service—Commodity Assistance Program” at a rate for operations of \$317,139,000, of which \$238,120,000 shall be for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

SEC. 117. The final proviso in section 715 of division A of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied during the period covered by this Act by adding “from amounts first made available for fiscal year 2018” after “unobligated balances” and as if the following were struck from such proviso: “the carryover amounts authorized in the first proviso of this section for section 32 and”.

SEC. 118. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Department of Commerce—Bureau of the Census—Periodic Censuses and Programs” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain the schedule and deliver the required data according to statutory deadlines in the 2020 Decennial Census Program.

SEC. 119. Section 1215(f)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112-81; 10 U.S.C. 113 note), as most recently amended by section 1223 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328), shall be applied by substituting “2018” for “2017” through the earlier of the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act or the date of the enactment of an Act authorizing appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense.

SEC. 120. (a) Funds made available by section 101 for “Department of Energy—Energy Programs—Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to avoid disruption of continuing projects or activities funded in this appropriation.

(b) The Secretary of Energy shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than 3 days after each use of the authority provided in subsection (a).

SEC. 121. Section 104(c) of the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (43 U.S.C. 2214(c)) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) for “September 30, 2017”.

SEC. 122. (a) Notwithstanding section 101, the third proviso under the heading “Power Marketing Administrations—Operation and Maintenance, Southeastern Power Administration” in division D of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$51,000,000” for “\$60,760,000”.

(b) Notwithstanding section 101, the third proviso under the heading “Power Marketing Administrations—Operation and Maintenance, Southwestern Power Administration” in division D of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$10,000,000” for “\$73,000,000”.

(c) Notwithstanding section 101, the third proviso under the heading “Power Marketing Administrations—Construction, Rehabilitation, Operation and Maintenance, Western Area Power Administration” in division D of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$179,000,000” for “\$367,009,000”.

SEC. 123. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, except section 106, the District of Columbia may expend local funds under the heading “District of Columbia Funds” for such programs and activities under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2017 (title IV of division E of Public Law 115-31) at the rate set forth under “Part A—Summary of Expenses” as included in the Fiscal Year 2018 Local Budget Act of 2017 (D.C. Act 22-99), as modified as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 124. (a) Notwithstanding section 101, amounts are provided for “General Services Administration—Allowances and Office Staff for Former Presidents” to carry out the provisions of the Act of August 25, 1958 (3 U.S.C. 102 note), at a rate for operations of \$4,754,000.

(b) Notwithstanding section 101, no funds are provided by this Act for “General Services Administration—Expenses, Presidential Transition” and “Executive Office of the President and Funds Appropriated to the President—Presidential Transition Administrative Support”.

(c) Notwithstanding section 101, the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “District of Columbia—Federal Payment for Emergency Planning and Security Costs in the District of Columbia” in division E of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$14,900,000” for “\$34,895,000” and the first proviso under that heading shall not apply during the period covered by this Act.

(d) Notwithstanding section 101, the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “National Archives and Records Administration—Operating Expenses” in division E of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$375,784,000” for “\$380,634,000”.

(e) Notwithstanding section 101, the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “Department of the Interior—National Park Service—Operation of the National Park System” in division G of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting “\$2,420,818,000” for “\$2,425,018,000”.

SEC. 125. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Department of Homeland Security—Office of the Secretary and Executive Management—Operations and Support”, “Department of Homeland Security—Management Directorate—Operations and Support”, and “Department of Homeland Security—Intelligence, Analysis, and Operations Coordination—Operations and Support” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to carry out activities previously funded under “Department of Homeland Security—Working Capital Fund”, consistent with the fiscal year 2018 President’s Budget.

SEC. 126. Amounts made available by section 101 for “U.S. Customs and Border Protection—Operations and Support”, “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement—Oper-

ations and Support”, “Transportation Security Administration—Operations and Support”, and “United States Secret Service—Operations and Support” accounts of the Department of Homeland Security may be apportioned at a rate for operations necessary to maintain not less than the number of staff achieved on September 30, 2017.

SEC. 127. The authority provided by section 831 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 391) shall continue in effect through the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act.

SEC. 128. Section 404 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-281; 124 Stat. 2950), as amended, shall be applied in subsection (b) by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) for “September 30, 2017”.

SEC. 129. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Department of Homeland Security—Federal Emergency Management Agency—Disaster Relief Fund” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to carry out response and recovery activities under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

SEC. 130. Sections 1309(a) and 1319 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4016(a) and 4026) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act for “September 30, 2017”.

SEC. 131. Section 810 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6809) is amended by striking “September 30, 2018” and inserting “September 30, 2019”.

SEC. 132. The authority provided by subsection (m)(3) of section 8162 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2000 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note; Public Law 106-79) shall continue in effect through the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act.

SEC. 133. In addition to the amounts otherwise provided by section 101, an additional amount is provided for “Environmental Protection Agency—Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program Account” for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, notwithstanding section 5033 of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, at a rate for operations of \$3,000,000.

SEC. 134. (a) The following sections of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act shall continue in effect through the date specified in section 106(3) of this joint resolution—

(1) subparagraphs (C) through (E) of section 4(i)(1) (7 U.S.C. 136a-1(i)(1)(C)-(E));

(2) section 4(k)(3) (7 U.S.C. 136a-1(k)(3));

(3) section 4(k)(4) (7 U.S.C. 136a-1(k)(4)); and

(4) section 33(c)(3)(B) (7 U.S.C. 136w-8(c)(3)(B)).

(b)(1) Section 4(i)(1)(I) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136a-1(i)(1)(I)) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this joint resolution for “September 30, 2017”.

(2) Notwithstanding section 33(m)(2) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136w-8(m)(2)), section 33(m)(1) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 136w-8(m)(1)) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this joint resolution for “September 30, 2017”.

(c) Section 408(m)(3) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 346a(m)(3)) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this joint resolution for “September 30, 2017”.

SEC. 135. Section 114(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1011c(f)) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act for “September 30, 2017”.

SEC. 136. The second proviso under the heading "Department of Health and Human Services—Administration for Children and Families—Children and Families Services Programs" in title II of division H of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied during the period covered by this Act as if the following were struck from such proviso: " , of which \$80,000,000 shall be available for a cost of living adjustment notwithstanding section 640(a)(3)(A) of such Act".

SEC. 137. The proviso at the end of paragraph (1) under the heading "Department of Labor—Employment and Training Administration—State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations" in title I of division G of Public Law 113-235 shall be applied through the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act by substituting "seven" for "six".

SEC. 138. In making Federal financial assistance, the National Institutes of Health shall continue through the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act to apply the provisions relating to indirect costs in part 75 of title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, including with respect to the approval of deviations from negotiated rates, to the same extent and in the same manner as the National Institutes of Health applied such provisions in the third quarter of fiscal year 2017. None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to develop or implement a modified approach to such provisions, or to intentionally or substantially expand the fiscal effect of the approval of such deviations from negotiated rates beyond the proportional effect of such approvals in such quarter.

SEC. 139. (a) Section 529 of division H of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting "prior to the beginning of fiscal year 2018 under section 2104(n)(2)" for "from the appropriation to the Fund for the first semiannual allotment period for fiscal year 2017 under section 2104(n)(2)(A)(ii)"; and

(b) section 532 of division H of Public Law 115-31 shall be applied by substituting "2,652,000,000" for "1,132,000,000".

SEC. 140. Notwithstanding 2 U.S.C. 4577, amounts made available by section 101 for "Legislative Branch—Senate—Salaries, Officers and Employees—Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper" may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain current Senate cybersecurity capabilities.

SEC. 141. (a) The remaining unobligated balances of funds made available under the heading "Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—Construction, Major Projects" in division A of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 and Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-2) are hereby rescinded: *Provided*, That the amounts rescinded pursuant to this section that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to that section of that Act.

(b) In addition to the amount otherwise provided by section 101 for "Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—Construction, Major Projects", there is appropriated for an additional amount for fiscal year 2017, to remain available until September 30, 2022, an amount equal to the unobligated balances rescinded pursuant to subsection (a), for renovations and repairs as a consequence of damage caused by Hurricane Sandy: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, such funds may be obligated and expended to carry out planning and design and major medical facility construction not otherwise authorized by

law: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(c) Each amount designated in this section by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall be available (or rescinded, if applicable) only if the President subsequently so designates all such amounts and transmits such designations to the Congress.

(d) This section shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act.

SEC. 142. Sections 579(a)(1) and (b) of the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 1437f note) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) for "October 1, 2017".

This division may be cited as the "Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018".

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leader.

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:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to hold a hearing entitled "Addressing the Risk of Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in the Federal Communications Commission's Lifeline Program."

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider favorably reporting pending nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 6, 2017 at 10:30., to hold a hearing entitled "Priorities and Challenges in the U.S.-Turkey Relationship."

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Stabilizing Premiums and Helping Individuals in the Individual Insurance Market for 2018: State Insurance Commissioners" on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is au-

thorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10 a.m. in order to conduct a hearing titled "The History and Current Reality of the U.S. Health Care System."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on September 6, 2017 at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nominations."

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S.J. RES. 49

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I understand there is a joint resolution at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the joint resolution by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 49) condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President's Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The joint resolution will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 23, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 23) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the Filipino Veterans of World War II.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion 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 concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 23) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

HONORING THE SERVICE TO UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES PROVIDED BY MILITARY WORKING DOGS AND CONTRACT WORKING DOGS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 160 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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. 160) honoring the service to United States Armed Forces provided by military working dogs and contract working dogs, also known as "war dogs."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I further 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. 160) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of May 9, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 44, S. 652.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 652) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM FOR EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT REGARDING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING NEWBORNS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

(a) SECTION HEADING.—The section heading of section 399M of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–1) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 399M. EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT REGARDING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING NEWBORNS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN."

(b) STATEWIDE SYSTEMS.—Section 399M(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–1(a)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking "NEWBORN AND INFANT" and inserting "NEWBORN, INFANT, AND YOUNG CHILD";

(2) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking "newborn and infant" and inserting "newborn, infant, and young child"; and

(B) by striking "providers," and inserting "providers (including, as appropriate, education and training of family members)";

(3) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the first sentence—

(i) by striking "newborns and infants" and inserting "newborns, infants, and young children (referred to in this section as 'children')"; and

(ii) by striking "and medical" and all that follows through the period and inserting "medical, and communication (or language acquisition) interventions (including family support), for children identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing, consistent with the following";

(B) in the second sentence—

(i) by striking "Early" and inserting the following:

"(A) Early";

(ii) by striking "and delivery of" and inserting "and delivery of";

(iii) by striking "by schools" and all that follows through "programs mandated" and inserting "by organizations such as schools and agencies (including community, consumer, and family-based agencies), in health care settings (including medical homes for children), and in programs mandated"; and

(iv) by striking "hard of hearing" and all that follows through the period and inserting "hard-of-hearing children."; and

(C) by striking the last sentence and inserting the following:

"(B) Information provided to families should be accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date, and evidence-based, as appropriate, to allow families to make important decisions for their children in a timely manner, including decisions with respect to the full range of assistive hearing technologies and communications modalities, as appropriate.

"(C) Programs and systems under this paragraph shall offer mechanisms that foster family-to-family and deaf and hard-of-hearing consumer-to-family supports.";

(4) in paragraph (2), by striking "To collect" and all that follows through the period and inserting "To continue to provide technical support to States, through one or more technical resource centers, to assist in further developing and enhancing State early hearing detection and intervention programs."; and

(5) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

"(3) To identify or develop efficient models (educational and medical) to ensure that children who are identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing through screening receive follow-up by qualified early intervention providers or qualified health care providers (including those at medical homes for children), and referrals, as appropriate, including to early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. State agencies shall be encouraged to effectively increase the rate of such follow-up and referral.".

(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, DATA MANAGEMENT, AND APPLIED RESEARCH.—Section 399M(b)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–1(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence—

(A) by striking "The Secretary" and inserting the following:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary";

(B) by striking "to complement an intramural program and" and inserting the following: "or designated entities of States—

"(i) to develop, maintain, and improve data collection systems related to newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation (including audiologic, medical, and language acquisition evaluations), diagnosis, and intervention services";

(C) by striking "to conduct" and inserting the following:

"(ii) to conduct"; and

(D) by striking "newborn" and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: "newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and outcomes;

"(iii) to ensure quality monitoring of hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and systems for newborns, infants, and young children; and

"(iv) to support newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs, and information systems.";

(2) in the second sentence—

(A) by striking the matter that precedes subparagraph (A) and all that follows through subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

"(B) USE OF AWARDS.—The awards made under subparagraph (A) may be used—

"(i) to provide technical assistance on data collection and management, including to coordinate and develop standardized procedures for data management;

"(ii) to assess and report on the cost and program effectiveness of newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and systems;

"(iii) to collect data and report on newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems for applied research, program evaluation, and policy improvement";

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (D), (E), and (F) as clauses (iv), (v), and (vi), respectively, and aligning the margins of those clauses with the margins of clause (i) of subparagraph (B) (as inserted by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph);

(C) in clause (v) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph)—

(i) by striking "newborn and infant" and inserting "newborn, infant, and young child"; and

(ii) by striking "language status" and inserting "hearing status"; and

(D) in clause (vi) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph)—

(i) by striking "sharing" and inserting "integration and interoperability"; and

(ii) by striking "with State-based" and all that follows through the period and inserting "across multiple sources to increase the flow of information between clinical care and public health settings, including the ability of States and territories to exchange and share data.".

(d) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—Section 399M(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–1(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking "consult with" and inserting "consult with—";

(B) by striking "other Federal" and inserting the following:

"(A) other Federal";

(C) by striking "State and local agencies, including those" and inserting the following:

"(B) State and local agencies, including agencies";

(D) by striking "consumer groups of and that serve" and inserting the following:

“(C) consumer groups of, and that serve.”;

(E) by striking “appropriate national” and inserting the following:

“(D) appropriate national”;

(F) by striking “persons who are deaf and” and inserting the following:

“(E) individuals who are deaf or”;

(G) by striking “other qualified” and inserting the following:

“(F) other qualified”;

(H) by striking “newborns, infants, toddlers, children,” and inserting “children.”;

(I) by striking “third-party” and inserting the following:

“(G) third-party”;

(J) by striking “related commercial” and inserting the following:

“(H) related commercial”;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking “States to establish newborn and infant” and inserting the following: “States—

“(A) to establish newborn, infant, and young child”;

(B) by inserting a semicolon after “subsection (a)”;

(C) by striking “to develop” and inserting the following:

“(B) to develop”.

(e) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION; RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION.**—Section 399M(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-1(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking “which” and inserting “that”;

(2) by striking “newborn infants or young”;

(3) by striking “parents” and inserting “parent’s”.

(f) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 399M(e) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-1(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “(I)” and all that follows through “to procedures” and inserting the following:

“(I) The term ‘audiologic’, when used in connection with evaluation, means procedures—”;

(B) by striking “to assess” and inserting the following:

“(A) to assess”;

(C) by striking “to establish” and inserting the following:

“(B) to establish”;

(D) by striking “auditory disorder;” and inserting “auditory disorder.”;

(E) by striking “to identify” and inserting the following:

“(C) to identify”;

(F) by striking “options.” and all that follows through “linkage” and inserting the following: “options, including—

“(i) linkage”;

(G) by striking “appropriate agencies,” and all that follows through “national” and inserting the following: “appropriate agencies;

“(ii) medical evaluation;

“(iii) assessment for the full range of assistive hearing technologies appropriate for newborns, infants, and young children;

“(iv) audiologic rehabilitation treatment; and

“(v) referral to national”; and

(H) by striking “parent, and education” and inserting “parent, family, and education”;

(2) by striking paragraph (2);

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (2) through (5);

(4) in paragraph (2) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection)—

(A) by striking “refers to providing” and inserting the following: “means—

“(A) providing”;

(B) by striking “with hearing loss, including nonmedical services,” and inserting “who is deaf or hard-of-hearing, including nonmedical services.”;

(C) by striking “ensuring that families of the child are provided” and inserting the following: “(B) ensuring that the family of the child is—

“(i) provided”;

(D) by striking “language and communication options and are given” and inserting the following: “language acquisition in oral and visual modalities; and

“(ii) given”; and

(E) by striking “their child” and inserting “the child”;

(5) in paragraph (3) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection), by striking “(3)” and all that follows through “decision making” and inserting “The term ‘medical evaluation’ means key components performed by a physician including history, examination, and medical decisionmaking”;

(6) in paragraph (4) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection)—

(A) by striking “refers to” and inserting “means”;

(B) by striking “and/or surgical” and inserting “or surgical”; and

(C) by striking “of hearing” and all that follows through “disorder” and inserting “for hearing loss or other medical disorders”;

(7) in paragraph (5) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection)—

(A) by striking “(5)” and all that follows through “refers to” and inserting “(5) The term ‘newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening’ means”;

(B) by striking “and infants” and inserting “, infants, and young children under 3 years of age”.

(g) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 399M(f) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-1(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “such sums” and all that follows through the period and inserting “\$17,818,000 for fiscal year 2018, \$18,173,800 for fiscal year 2019, \$18,628,145 for fiscal year 2020, \$19,056,592 for fiscal year 2021, and \$19,522,758 for fiscal year 2022.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “such sums” and all that follows through the period and inserting “\$10,800,000 for fiscal year 2018, \$11,026,800 for fiscal year 2019, \$11,302,470 for fiscal year 2020, \$11,562,427 for fiscal year 2021, and \$11,851,488 for fiscal year 2022.”.

Mr. GARDNER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 652), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

STRENGTHENING MOSQUITO ABATEMENT FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 45, S. 849.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 849) to support programs for mosquito-borne and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee

on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Strengthening Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act” or the “SMASH Act”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF MOSQUITO ABATEMENT FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM.

Section 317S of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b-21) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)(B)—

(A) by inserting “including programs to address emerging infectious mosquito-borne diseases,” after “control programs.”; and

(B) by inserting “or improving existing control programs” before the period at the end;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, including improvement,” after “operation”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (ii), by striking “or” at the end;

(II) in clause (iii), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “, including an emerging infectious mosquito-borne disease that presents a serious public health threat; or”;

(III) by adding at the end the following: “(iv) a public health emergency due to the incidence or prevalence of a mosquito-borne disease that presents a serious public health threat.”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by inserting “or that demonstrates to the Secretary that the control program is consistent with existing State mosquito control plans or policies, or other applicable State preparedness plans” before the period at the end;

(C) in paragraph (4)(C), by striking “that extraordinary” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “that—

“(i) extraordinary economic conditions in the political subdivision or consortium of political subdivisions involved justify the waiver; or

“(ii) the geographical area covered by a political subdivision or consortium for a grant under paragraph (1) has an extreme mosquito control need due to—

“(I) the size or density of the potentially impacted human population;

“(II) the size or density of a mosquito population that requires heightened control; or

“(III) the severity of the mosquito-borne disease, such that expected serious adverse health outcomes for the human population justify the waiver.”; and

(D) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:

“(6) **NUMBER OF GRANTS.**—A political subdivision or a consortium of political subdivisions may not receive more than one grant under paragraph (1).”;

(3) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “for fiscal year 2003, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2007” and inserting “for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002” and inserting “other medical and public health preparedness and response laws”;

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “2004” and inserting “2018”;

(ii) by striking “2004” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3. EPIDEMIOLOGY-LABORATORY CAPACITY GRANTS.

Section 2821 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-31) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting “, including mosquito and other vector-borne diseases,” after “infectious diseases”;

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “2010 through 2013” and inserting “2018 through 2022”.

SEC. 4. GAO STUDY.

(a) *STUDY.*—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the state of surveillance and control of mosquito-borne infectious diseases in the United States and territories, including the state of preparedness for conducting such surveillance and control. The study shall include—

(1) a description of the infrastructure and programs for mosquito control in the United States, including—

(A) how such infrastructure and programs are organized and implemented at the Federal, State and local levels, including with respect to departments and agencies of the States, and local organizations (including special districts) involved in such control programs;

(B) the role of the private sector in such activities;

(C) how the authority for mosquito control impacts such activities; and

(D) the resources for such infrastructure and programs, including Federal, State, and local funding sources;

(2) how mosquito and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control is integrated into Federal, State, and local preparedness plans and actions, including how zoonotic surveillance is integrated into infectious disease surveillance to support real-time situational surveillance and awareness;

(3) Federal, State, and local laboratory capacity for emerging vector-borne diseases, including mosquito-borne and other zoonotic diseases; and

(4) any regulatory challenges for developing and utilizing vector-control technologies and platforms as part of mosquito control strategies.

(b) *CONSULTATIONS.*—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall consult with—

(1) State and local public health officials involved in mosquito and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control efforts;

(2) researchers and manufacturers of mosquito control products;

(3) stakeholders involved in mosquito abatement activities;

(4) infectious disease experts; and

(5) entomologists involved in mosquito-borne disease surveillance and control efforts.

(c) *REPORT.*—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report containing the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) and relevant recommendations for Zika virus and other mosquito-borne diseases preparedness and response efforts.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered and agreed to, and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 849), as amended, was passed.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to

reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

NATIONAL CLINICAL CARE COMMISSION ACT

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 47, S. 920.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 920) to establish a National Clinical Care Commission.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Shaheen amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion 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 amendment (No. 807) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 5, line 12, strike “and”.

On page 5, line 20, strike the period and insert “; and”.

On page 5, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

(5) whether there are opportunities for consolidation of inappropriately overlapping or duplicative Federal programs related to the diseases and complications described in subsection (a).

The bill (S. 920), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 920

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 “National Clinical Care Commission Act”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL CLINICAL CARE COMMISSION.

(a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—There is hereby established, within the Department of Health and Human Services, a National Clinical Care Commission (in this section referred to as the “Commission”) to evaluate and make recommendations regarding improvements to the coordination and leveraging of programs within the Department and other Federal agencies related to awareness and clinical care for at least one, but not more than two, complex metabolic or autoimmune diseases resulting from issues related to insulin that represent a significant disease burden in the United States, which may include complications due to such diseases.

(b) *MEMBERSHIP.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The Commission shall be composed of the following voting members:

(A) The heads of the following Federal agencies and departments, or their designees:

(i) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

(ii) The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

(iii) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(iv) The Indian Health Service.

(v) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

(vi) The National Institutes of Health.

(vii) The Food and Drug Administration.

(viii) The Health Resources and Services Administration.

(ix) The Department of Defense.

(x) The Department of Agriculture.

(xi) The Office of Minority Health.

(B) Twelve additional voting members appointed under paragraph (2).

(2) *ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.*—The Commission shall include additional voting members, as may be appointed by the Secretary, with expertise in the prevention, care, and epidemiology of any of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a), including one or more such members from each of the following categories:

(A) Physician specialties, including clinical endocrinologists, that play a role in the prevention or treatment of diseases and complications described in subsection (a).

(B) Primary care physicians.

(C) Non-physician health care professionals.

(D) Patient advocates.

(E) National experts, including public health experts, in the duties listed under subsection (c).

(F) Health care providers furnishing services to a patient population that consists of a high percentage (as specified by the Secretary) of individuals who are enrolled in a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act or who are not covered under a health plan or health insurance coverage.

(3) *CHAIRPERSON.*—The members of the Commission shall select a chairperson from the members appointed under paragraph (2).

(4) *MEETINGS.*—The Commission shall meet at least twice, and not more than four times, a year.

(5) *VACANCIES.*—A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

(c) *DUTIES.*—The Commission shall evaluate and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Congress regarding—

(1) Federal programs of the Department of Health and Human Services that focus on preventing and reducing the incidence of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a);

(2) current activities and gaps in Federal efforts to support clinicians in providing integrated, high-quality care to individuals with the diseases and complications described in subsection (a);

(3) the improvement in, and improved coordination of, Federal education and awareness activities related to the prevention and treatment of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a), which may include the utilization of new and existing technologies;

(4) methods for outreach and dissemination of education and awareness materials that—

(A) address the diseases and complications described in subsection (a);

(B) are funded by the Federal Government; and

(C) are intended for health care professionals and the public; and

(5) whether there are opportunities for consolidation of inappropriately overlapping or duplicative Federal programs related to the diseases and complications described in subsection (a).

(d) *OPERATING PLAN.*—Not later than 90 days after its first meeting, the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Congress an operating plan for carrying out the activities of the Commission as described in subsection (c). Such operating plan may include—

(1) a list of specific activities that the Commission plans to conduct for purposes of carrying out the duties described in each of the paragraphs in subsection (c);

(2) a plan for completing the activities;

(3) a list of members of the Commission and other individuals who are not members of the Commission who will need to be involved to conduct such activities;

(4) an explanation of Federal agency involvement and coordination needed to conduct such activities;

(5) a budget for conducting such activities; and

(6) other information that the Commission deems appropriate.

(e) **FINAL REPORT.**—By not later than 3 years after the date of the Commission's first meeting, the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Congress a final report containing all of the findings and recommendations required by this section.

(f) **SUNSET.**—The Commission shall terminate 60 days after submitting its final report, but not later than the end of fiscal year 2021.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 106, H.R. 624.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 624) to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on Federal documents sent by mail, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 624) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 201, S. 1359.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1359) to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize appropriations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1359) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1359

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 “John F. Kennedy Center Reauthorization Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 13 of the John F. Kennedy Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76r) is amended by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

“(a) **MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, AND SECURITY.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Board to carry out section 4(a)(1)(H)—

“(1) \$24,000,000 for fiscal year 2018;

“(2) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2019;

“(3) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

“(4) \$26,000,000 for fiscal year 2021.

“(b) **CAPITAL PROJECTS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Board to carry out subparagraphs (F) and (G) of section 4(a)(1)—

“(1) \$13,000,000 for fiscal year 2018;

“(2) \$13,000,000 for fiscal year 2019;

“(3) \$14,000,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

“(4) \$14,000,000 for fiscal year 2021.”.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR PLAQUE.

(a) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (referred to in this Act as the “Center”) should—

(1) recognize the year 2018 as the 60th anniversary of the National Cultural Center Act (now known as the “John F. Kennedy Center Act”) (20 U.S.C. 76h et seq.), signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on September 2, 1958; and

(2) establish commemorative displays honoring President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the history of the National Cultural Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76h et seq.) during the year 2018.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION FOR PLAQUE.**—The Center shall place within the Center a plaque containing an inscription to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of the National Cultural Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76h et seq.) by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

(c) **SPECIFICATIONS.**—The plaque shall be—

(1)(A) not less than 6 square feet in size; and

(B) not more than 18 square feet in size;

(2) of any shape that the Trustees of the Center determine to be appropriate; and

(3) placed at a location within the Center approximate to the Eisenhower Theater that the Trustees of the Center determine to be appropriate.

(d) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—No Federal funds may be used to design, procure, or install the plaque.

(2) **EXCEPTION.**—Paragraph (1) shall not affect the payment of salaries, expenses, and benefits otherwise authorized by law for members and employees of the Center who participate in carrying out this section.

(e) **PRIVATE FUNDRAISING AUTHORIZED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Center shall solicit and accept private contributions for the design, procurement, and installation of the plaque.

(2) **ACCOUNTING.**—The Center shall—

(A) establish an account into which any contributions received pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be deposited; and

(B) maintain documentation of any contributions received pursuant to paragraph (1).

SEC. 4. COMMEMORATION OF THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.

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

(1) recognize the year 2021 as the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Center; and

(2) appropriately acknowledge and commemorate the mission of the Center as a national center for the performing arts and a national memorial to President John F. Kennedy.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION FOR DISPLAYS AND PROGRAMS.**—The Center may create displays and programs that memorialize the opening of the Center and the programmatic legacy of the Center since its opening in 1971.

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

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

REINFORCING EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany H.R. 601.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendments numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 601) entitled “An Act to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.” and be it further

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment numbered 6 of the Senate to the aforementioned bill, with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 808

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 601, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment (No. 6) with an amendment numbered 808.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to concur with further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative 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 motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 601, with a further amendment numbered 808.

Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Orrin G. Hatch, Roger F. Wicker, David Perdue, Dan Sullivan, John Barrasso, John Thune.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion to concur with amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 809 TO AMENDMENT NO. 808

Mr. McCONNELL. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 809 to amendment No. 808.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent

that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment.”

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. Thursday, September 7; further, 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 the House message to accompany H.R. 601.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 11:31 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 7, 2017, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

KATHERINE BRUNETT MCGUIRE, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR, VICE ADRI DAVIN JAYARATNE.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

JEFF TIEN HAN PON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE KATHERINE ARCHULETA, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

RANDY REEVES, OF MISSISSIPPI, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR MEMORIAL AFFAIRS, VICE STEVE L. MURO, RESIGNED.