

Mr. President, 2017 was a historic year of partisan obstruction by our Democratic colleagues, even for uncontroversial judges who went on to unanimous or near-unanimous confirmation votes. Our colleagues across the aisle used every possible procedural roadblock to delay and drag their heels.

Now 2018 is, unfortunately, starting off the same way.

Mr. Campbell is a Marine Corps veteran and a well-respected lawyer. His record is not partisan. His nomination was reported out of the Judiciary Committee on a voice vote. I look forward to the Senate confirming him, albeit after our Democratic colleagues waste more of the Senate's time.

I implore our Democratic friends to turn the page on the needless obstruction and permit the Senate to function smoothly so that we can attend to more of the people's business.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on a final matter, in the next 11 days Congress needs to reach an agreement to fund the government.

It is imperative that this agreement provide adequate resources for our men and women in uniform. Last week, leadership on both sides of the aisle expressed hopes of working seriously and collaboratively on a solution that enables our Armed Forces to advance critical missions at home and abroad.

At the same time, our Democratic colleagues persist in the notion that we should increase defense spending only if we increase nondefense spending by the same amount. As we lay the facts on the table, this political talking point simply doesn't hold up.

By now, we all know that the Budget Control Act hit defense spending much harder than it hit domestic spending. Since fiscal year 2013, to be precise, discretionary defense spending has been cut by \$85 billion more than discretionary nondefense spending. This might sound like an abstract distinction, but it has very real, tangible consequences for our national security. These disproportionate cuts have reduced the readiness of American forces to meet and address emerging threats.

Our military leaders have explained this over and over and over again. Just months ago, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dunford, told our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee that over the last decade, "The U.S. military's competitive advantage against potential adversaries is eroding." He cited budgetary instability as a key reason.

At the same hearing, Secretary of Defense Mattis added: "No enemy in the field has done more to harm the readiness of our military than sequestration."

"No enemy," Secretary Mattis said, "in the field has done more to harm the readiness of our military than sequestration."

The men and women we trust to lead our military have made it abundantly clear that the status quo in defense funding, let alone the further instability that would result from our failure to reach an agreement, is handicapping our servicemembers.

In the next week and a half, let's put aside partisan rhetoric and start heeding the warnings of our nonpartisan military leaders. Let's give those who keep us safe the resources they need to do the job.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of William L. Campbell, Jr., of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. 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.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to mark a milestone no Senator can be proud of and a milestone every Senator should regret. That milestone is, it has now been 100 days since the Congress failed to extend full funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. The Congress has always looked at this in a bipartisan way. This is for the millions of families, for kids who walk an economic tightrope with their families, the families who balance the rent bill against the fuel bill and the fuel bill against the grocery bill.

I have to say, there was plenty of time in the last Congress to carry out the priorities of the multinational corporations. The people who are well connected, the people who are powerful received permanent, substantial, really massive new tax breaks, and yet the 9

million kids, including 80,000 in my home State who count on CHIP to stay healthy—what they received was a patch. They received something temporary. They received something that didn't resemble the permanent, you-can-count-on-it tax relief the multinational corporations were celebrating at the end of the year. It is a sad statement about the priorities of the Congress at the end of last year and one I hope we will move now in the bipartisan tradition of this program to pass on a permanent basis.

The CHIP program was created in 1997 through a simple idea: No child, regardless of their income, family's status, or geography should go without quality, affordable healthcare. It serves families who make too much to qualify for Medicaid but also don't have access to affordable healthcare through their employer. A lot of these families go back and forth between CHIP and Medicaid, depending on whether a spouse is out of work.

CHIP covers all kinds of essential healthcare for kids from preventive services to dental checkups, to treatment for serious illnesses. For families across the country, that is peace of mind, that is the chance to go to bed at night knowing you aren't going to get crushed by big medical bills in the morning. It means you don't have to have those heartbreaking, right-before-bed conversations about what you are going to do for your sick child, and it doesn't mean you have to just plan on the unexpected emergencies with nowhere to turn. All of that is at risk because of the "negligence" of this Congress, and I use that word specifically.

I talked about the skewed priorities at the end of the year, but right now States are stretching their Children's Health Insurance Program dollars to the breaking point. They are trying to make sure kids stay covered, and what we are faced with is termination notices going out. We have to prevent those termination notices for these families. As I said, Congress put a patch on all this, contrasting this to the permanent relief of the multinationals, and the Congress sent a small amount of money to the States to keep them afloat, but make no mistake about it, it is not going to be long before bedlam sets in, once again, and there are real consequences for children and families.

Now, I also want to note that I have been working closely with Chairman HATCH for months now to get CHIP across the finish line. Chairman HATCH knows what it takes. He created this program with our friend Senator Rockefeller and the late, great Senator Kennedy. They demonstrated that kids' health was an issue that transcends ideological lines, and our country is the better for it today.

Chairman HATCH and I made an agreement in September that extends full funding for 5 years, affirms key protections for kids and their families, and gives States certainty they can

count on to plan their budgets. I note that the leader, Senator SCHUMER, is here. He has been very supportive of this bill. He sat next to me and Senator Rockefeller for years and is supportive of the children's health program.

The Hatch-Wyden bill passed with a strong bipartisan vote in the Finance Committee. Again, I am highlighting the priorities where there was time for the multinational corporations to get that permanent relief, but there wasn't any time to put the CHIP bill—one that had only one vote in opposition in the Finance Committee—on the Senate floor. In the House of Representatives, they weren't pursuing it like we did in the Finance Committee. They never could get past a purely partisan approach, out of line with CHIP's long, bipartisan history.

Now, obviously after months of delay, it is time to act, and I want to wrap up with a quick comment about what is going to happen if you don't move and move quickly. Just last week, the Congressional Budget Office announced that the cost of CHIP has plummeted from \$8.2 billion to \$800 million. That is because premiums in the individual market are set to skyrocket after the repeal of the Affordable Care Act's coverage requirement in the Republican tax bill. Many of the families who currently count on CHIP will have to get their kids' healthcare on the private market at a higher cost. As if Congress needed more reasons to act, the budget office has demonstrated what is now at stake for kids and their families who are counting on quick action for affordable healthcare.

There is a long history, as I have noted, of the Senate working on the Children's Health Insurance Program in a bipartisan way. We started building on that tradition in the Finance Committee with virtual unanimity. Somehow at the end of the last Congress—and your priorities can always be illustrated with what you find time to do—there was time at the end of the year for the agenda of the multinational corporations, but there wasn't time for the youngsters and their families who walk an economic tightrope and depend every night, when they turn the lights out, on making sure there is a way to pay for healthcare if there is an emergency in the morning.

I want it understood that we are working day in and day out now to quickly make sure kids and their families get the certainty and predictability they deserve. They deserve the kind of certainty the powerful got with the tax bill at the end of the year.

So we are going to be on this floor until this critical legislation is passed. It needs to be passed quickly.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, my dear friend and I got to Congress in

1980, and I thank him very much for his leadership on the CHIP issue, as on so many other issues that pass through the Finance Committee, where he has done a terrific job. His caring for kids is unmatched, and he is a great asset to his State of Oregon, to this body, and to our country.

We have 2 weeks until funding for the government runs out. Alongside our talks about extending government funding, we have also been engaged in serious bipartisan negotiations on a number of issues that should coincide with that deadline. We have to lift spending cuts, pass disaster aid, a healthcare package, reach an agreement to enshrine DACA protections alongside additional border security, and of course there is the issue of 702 as well.

Those negotiations, though difficult, have been proceeding quite well. In fact, the four congressional leaders met with representatives from the White House last Thursday and had an encouraging meeting. Unfortunately, following that meeting, the White House issued a series of unreasonable demands entirely outside the scope of our ongoing negotiations about DACA and border security. It is part of a pattern of behavior on the part of this White House during sensitive bipartisan negotiations.

Over the past year, the White House has much more frequently been a disruptive force rather than a unifying force. To throw down a list from the hard-line wing of the White House at the last minute is not a very fortuitous or smart thing to do.

I hope we can keep on the track that we were on because the issues we are facing are mounting, and a major deal requires dedicated, bipartisan effort. Democrats are going to keep working toward a global agreement with our Republican colleagues, one that lifts the spending caps for defense and urgent domestic priorities in tandem, that sends our men and women in uniform the support they need, and that puts a downpayment on tackling the pressing issues here at home, such as combating the opioid epidemic, improving veterans' healthcare, and shoring up pension plans. These are every bit as important as helping our troops.

Our troops are extremely important, but we are a great country, and we don't have to say: To help the troops, we can't help the victims of opioid addiction. To help the troops, we can't help the veterans who once were troops themselves. To help the troops, we can't help working Americans keep the pensions they paid into year after year. All these folks want is to retire to a life of some degree of dignity.

When the majority leader said this morning that he is not for parity, he is saying we can't do both. He is telling victims of opioid addiction, many of whom are soldiers who have PTSD, and he is telling pensioners—some miners in his own State—and he is telling veterans who have to wait in line for

healthcare that this country can't do both, that we can't protect our military, give them the funds they need, and deal with our domestic needs.

When Donald Trump ran, he said that we have to pay more attention to America. What the majority leader is saying is that is not the case. So let no one be fooled. When the majority leader says he is not for parity, he is not for helping opioid folks to the extent they need, he is not for helping veterans to the extent they need, and he is not for helping pensioners to the extent they need. We Democrats are there for both—helping the military and helping these folks here.

Over the weekend, I was in White Plains, which is a suburb of New York City. I stood with a mother who lost her son to an opioid overdose. A mother should never have to bury her son, especially Stephanie Keegan, whose son Daniel was a veteran who served our country bravely in Afghanistan. He did very well in school but had a duty to country. He was in the intelligence unit for a while, he was so brilliant. But he came home, as some do, nerves shattered by war, struggling with a severe case of PTSD. Stephanie told me that her beautiful, brilliant son Daniel—I saw his picture; an all-American boy, if ever there were one—her son Daniel waited 16 months for treatment by the VA and died 2 weeks before his first appointment.

"There are so many things that can be done to change this situation," Mrs. Keegan said. She is right. We can make a real investment in combating the scourge of opioid addiction, putting real resources into treatment and recovery, as well as interdiction. We can make a real investment in improving healthcare at our veterans hospitals so kids like Daniel don't have to wait almost a year and a half before they get the treatment they desperately need.

And what about hard-working Americans who need pensions? Retirement is one of the things Americans worry about most these days. For years, Teamsters and miners and carpenters paid into pension plans week after week, month after month, year after year. They took a little less salary in their negotiations because they wanted to know that when it was time to retire, they could retire with some degree of dignity. No one is going to get rich on these pensions, but at least they are there and provide a little bit of a nest egg for people in their golden years. As they put the money in week after week, month after month, year after year, they were told: You may not become rich when you retire, you may not be able to buy luxuries, but at least you will have a life of dignity.

Now those pensions may be stolen from millions in America, in this country. These folks contributed to and earned every penny of their pensions. Are we going to shrug our shoulders and say: We can't do that. Most Americans want us to do that; they don't want it to be an either-or situation.

Our colleagues would say: Well, that might increase the deficit. Don't come talking to us about the deficit anymore when you put together a \$1.5 trillion increase in the deficit, the majority of which went to big tax cuts for the wealthiest individuals and the biggest, fattest corporations in America. No more deficit talk from my colleagues here.

When we Democrats ask for parity in budget agreements, this is what we mean: We mean opioids. We mean veterans' healthcare. We mean pensions.

We need to defend and support the middle class here at home just as we must protect America from her adversaries abroad, which our military does so proudly and bravely. We agree that we need to support our military wholeheartedly, but we don't think that is a reason to leave the middle class behind. So let's do both. Let's lift the spending caps equally for defense and these urgent domestic priorities.

Our two parties can reach a deal like that, just as we can reach a deal to pass a disaster aid package that treats all States and territories fairly; just as we can have an agreement on a healthcare package that acknowledges the new realities of the healthcare markets, which were disrupted by Republicans when they repealed the mandate in the tax bill last year; and just as we can reach a deal on DACA—protecting young people who were brought here as kids through no fault of their own—while at the same time making reasonable, appropriate, and smart investments in border security—something that in the past both Democrats and Republicans have supported.

In conclusion, an agreement can be reached on all these issues. Nobody wants a shutdown. Nobody wants sequestration to come into effect for either the military or the domestic side of the budget. So let's continue to work together. Let's commit to work together in good faith to make progress on these issues and get it done before January 19.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio.

NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING
PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. In a recent proclamation, President Trump continued what President Obama had begun in making this the ninth annual year where we designate our first month of the year to awareness and prevention of trafficking, awareness and prevention of this crime against humanity.

President Trump issued a call to action. The proclamation said, in part:

Human trafficking is a modern form of the oldest and most barbaric type of exploitation. It has no place in our world. This month, we do not simply reflect on this appalling reality. We also pledge to do all in our power to end the horrific practice of human trafficking that plagues innocent victims around the world.

Amen. I commend the President for his strong stance, and I commend the U.S. Senate for the work we have done over the past several years, in a bipartisan way, to help combat trafficking. We made some progress.

About 6 years ago, Senator BLUMENTHAL—who will speak about this topic later on the floor—and I co-founded the Senate Caucus to End Human Trafficking and legislation since that time to increase penalties on people buying sex from children; stop international trafficking by U.S. Government contractors overseas; find missing children more quickly—the most vulnerable among us—by ensuring that their photographs and other identifiers are available; improve data on trafficking to find out what the problem is, where it is going; and, of course, change the paradigm—treat children who are exploited as victims rather than, as they have been treated over the years, as criminals.

We have made some progress in these areas, but I have to tell you, despite these efforts and despite the increasing awareness of the fact that trafficking occurs right here in this country, in all of our States, we now know that one form, at least, of sex trafficking is actually increasing in our country. Think about that. It is increasing in this country, in this century. What experts say when you ask them about it is that is primarily because of one reason; that is, the fact that the internet is being used to sell sex.

By the way, doing it on the internet, it turns out, occurs with ruthless efficiency. Victims I have visited across Ohio tell me, including one this past Friday in Ohio: ROB, it has moved from the street corner to the iPhone, from the street corner to the cell phone, from the street corner to the internet.

There was discussion earlier from my colleague from New York about the role opioids play in causing harm in our society. Of course, the internet combined with opioids is deadly. The young woman I met with on Friday was one of those who had become addicted to opioids—in her case, fentanyl, which is an incredibly powerful, dangerous drug—and depended on her trafficker to be able to provide that. That is one form of dependency you see in sex trafficking. And again, online is where people are increasingly being bought and sold.

This increase in sex trafficking is a stain on our national character. It is only Congress that has the power to stop it.

There is one website—backpage.com—that is the leader in online sex trafficking. They have knowingly sold underage girls online. I say that because we have done an investigation, and we determined that. We now know from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that backpage.com is involved in nearly 75 percent of all child trafficking reports the organization receives from the public.

The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chair, along with then-ranking member CLAIRE McCASKILL and now-ranking member TOM CARPER, has conducted an extensive, 18-month investigation into online sex trafficking and specifically backpage.com. We found that backpage.com knowingly facilitated criminal sex trafficking of vulnerable women and young children. It coached the traffickers on how to edit adult classified ads to post so-called clean ads for illegal transactions, and then it covered up evidence of these crimes in order to increase its profits. All this was done at the cost of human suffering—and sometimes human life—with the sole purpose of increasing the company's profits.

In the fall, I testified on this issue in front of the Senate Commerce Committee—about our legislation. With me at the witness table was Yvonne Ambrose, a mother whose 16-year-old daughter, Desiree, was found murdered on Christmas Eve 2016 after being sold for sex on backpage.

Desiree's death should never have happened—and neither should online sex trafficking of minors happen at all—but this tragic trend is compounded by the fact that backpage has evaded justice for its role in these tragic crimes. Courts across the country have consistently ruled that a Federal law—and this is why Congress has such a key role to play here—called the Communications Decency Act actually protects backpage and others from the liability they should have in sex trafficking.

The Communications Decency Act is a well-intentioned law originally enacted back in 1996, when the internet was in its infancy, and it was meant to protect third-party websites from being held liable for crimes that users might commit on those websites. Ironically, part of the original intention of the Communications Decency Act was to protect children from indecent material on the internet by holding liable users who send explicit material to children. Now this same law is being used as a shield by cynical sex traffickers who promote and engage in online underage sex trafficking with immunity, thanks to this Federal law.

Congress didn't intend for this broad immunity in the law—I am convinced of that—but numerous courts across the country have made it clear that their hands are tied because of the legal precedent that has been formed. As the lawmaking branch of the Federal Government, it is up to Congress to fix this injustice. No one else can do it.

In the most blatant call for congressional action I have seen yet, in August of last year, a Sacramento judge cited the broad immunity provided by the Communications Decency Act in dismissing pimping charges against backpage.com. The court opinion stated:

If and until Congress sees fit to amend the immunity law, the broad reach of Section 230

of the Communications Decency Act even applies to those alleged to support the exploitations of others by human trafficking.

That is an invitation to Congress to act. It is clearly up to Congress to act. It is past time we update this 21-year-old law for the 21st century and allow victims who have had their most basic human rights violated to get justice against those who facilitate these crimes.

We have an opportunity this month during National Human Trafficking Prevention Month to fix this. We can and we must.

The Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act, or SESTA, is a bill I introduced with my bipartisan colleagues—Senator BLUMENTHAL, who will speak later this afternoon, and Senators JOHN MCCAIN, CLAIRE MCCASKILL, JOHN CORNYN, HEIDI HEITKAMP, AMY KLOBUCHAR, and 18 other colleagues. As of this morning, that legislation has 64 cosponsors. It is totally bipartisan, supported by both sides of the aisle. It is popular: 64 out of 100 have already cosponsored it because it will fix this injustice with two very narrowly crafted changes to the Communications Decency Act.

First, it will allow victims to get the justice they deserve by removing the Communications Decency Act's broad liability protections the judge discussed, specifically for websites that knowingly facilitate sex trafficking crimes.

Second, it will allow State attorneys general to prosecute these websites that violate Federal sex trafficking laws. These changes will hold bad actors like backpage accountable while doing nothing to impair the free internet. In fact, they will protect websites that do not actively and knowingly engage in online sex trafficking.

The "knowing" standard is a high bar to meet. The California attorney general, Xavier Becerra, testified at the Senate Commerce Committee about that this fall. He said:

We have to prove criminal intent. We can't win a prosecution unless we can show the individuals we're prosecuting, like Backpage, had the intent—the knowledge—to do what they're doing. The legislation we have before you is very narrowly tailored. It goes only after sex trafficking.

The Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act passed the Senate Commerce Committee by a vote that was unanimous. It was bipartisan. It was unanimous, and the legislation has the support of an extraordinary coalition of law enforcement organizations, anti-trafficking advocates, trafficking victims, survivors, faith-based groups, and even some major tech players, although some in the tech community continue to be concerned. This includes the Internet Association, which now represents companies such as Facebook, reddit, Amazon, and others. It was endorsed by businesses, including Oracle, 21st Century Fox, Hewlett-Packard Enterprise, and the Walt Disney Company. Other companies such as IBM

and others have stepped up to support it.

Last year, 50 attorneys general across this country wrote a letter calling on Congress to amend the Communications Decency Act in the exact way we are proposing in this bill—50.

Again, in the Senate, a bipartisan group of 64 Senators has now cosponsored the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act. Those 60-plus cosponsors are significant because 60 is how many votes we need in the U.S. Senate if there are objections to the legislation to be able to get it passed. We already have that many Senators who have now put their names down. They said they want to be part of the solution to this tragic problem. They want to stop this increase in sex trafficking that unconscionably is happening in this country in this century.

So we shouldn't wait any longer to pass this bill in the Senate. Every day we do, those who sell women and children will be allowed to continue that, continue to profit, and victims will continue to be denied justice.

It is not an issue of politics or partisanship. It is about preventing exploitation and providing justice. I am hoping we can have a vote on this bill in the Senate this month, during National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. This Thursday is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. I urge the leadership to have the bill on the floor as soon as possible. We have every reason to act and no reason not to.

These victims deserve justice, and Congress should help provide it. Passing the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act is an opportunity.

Thank you.

I yield back my time.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I don't know whether it is four, five, or six, but some Senators would like to have colloquy on the issue of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and I ask unanimous consent that we have that privilege.

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

DACA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise with my colleagues to offer remarks about the current status of the negotiations on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA Program, as it is known in the U.S. Senate.

Unfortunately, this body still isn't closer to a legitimate and fair deal that accomplishes two goals: First of all, to promote and protect the interests of the American people in a lawful immigration system and, two, provide a fair and equitable solution on DACA.

Back in December, I introduced a bill, along with Senators CORNYN, TILLIS, LANKFORD, PERDUE, and COTTON. The bill, with the acronym SECURE Act of 2017, was a product of months of discussion between this Sen-

ator, these other Senators I just named, and the White House. Our plan, simply put, has five pillars.

First, based on the hard work and leadership of Senator CORNYN, our bill provided real, robust border security by mandating the construction of tactical and technological infrastructure at the border.

Second, our bill took meaningful steps to end the lawlessness of dangerous criminal aliens by cracking down on sanctuary cities, ending the misguided catch-and-release policies of the previous administration, and, finally, taking steps to address intentional visa overstays.

Third, our bill took steps to eliminate many of the "pull" factors that encourage people to immigrate illegally by permanently authorizing the E-Verify Program and by taking meaningful steps to reduce immigration court and asylum adjudication backlogs.

Fourth, thanks to the leadership and advocacy of Senators GRAHAM, PERDUE, and COTTON, our bill eliminated the phenomenon known as chain migration and made a major downpayment toward transitioning to a merit-based immigration system.

Fifth, and finally, our bill provided a bipartisan solution to protect undocumented young people brought to the United States as children by adopting Senator DURBIN's Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy—that has the acronym BRIDGE Act.

Our plan was fair, serious, and bipartisan. Most importantly, it was and is pro-American. As I have continually said since the bill's introduction, this group of Senators is ready and willing to negotiate with our counterparts in good faith and to find an equitable solution to the DACA situation that incorporates our bill's five pillars of reform.

I said negotiate. I had at least one Democratic Senator infer that I could not negotiate in good faith because I did not vote for the Gang of 8 immigration bill in 2013. So, sadly, our good-faith offers have consistently been rejected by Democratic leadership. Instead, they decide to engage in a game of brinksmanship.

So I ask several questions: Why doesn't Democratic leadership negotiate with us? Because we refuse to simply pass what is referred to as the Dream Act, as is, with no proportional border security and interior enforcement majors. As the Democrats see it, it is take it or leave it, their way or the highway. This isn't good faith, this isn't negotiating, and that approach is doomed to failure.

I have to ask: Why do my colleagues in the Democratic leadership refuse to even consider measures that would beef up border security and interior enforcement? Do they want people to continue to immigrate to this country illegally? Do they want sex offenders and human traffickers to continue to manipulate

our porous border and enter our country unchecked? Do they want criminal illegal immigrants—people like Jose Zarate, who murdered Kate Steinle, or Eswin Mejia, who killed Sarah Root, to roam free in our country? Are they comfortable allowing criminal alien gangs like MS-13, whose motto happens to be “kill, rape, and control,” to continue to terrorize immigrant communities?

I am assuming—in fact, I am hoping—the answer to all of these questions is a resounding no. If that is correct, then why does Democratic leadership refuse to discuss the border security and interior enforcement provisions in the SECURE Act?

Despite the hysteria and the hyperbole you may hear from pro-amnesty, open-border immigrant advocates, the SECURE Act does not contain draconian enforcement measures. If anything, our bill contains the commonsense security and enforcement measures this body has been debating, discussing, and considering for years.

Our bill adds new Border Patrol agents, U.S. attorneys, and judges to make it easier to apprehend, prosecute, and deport illegal entrants and criminal aliens. We authorize money for critically necessary port of entry and exit improvements so we can know who is here, how long they are here, and when they left—if they left.

Our bill increases criminal penalties for human smugglers, these offenses that are committed by repeat offenders, often resulting in death, resulting in human trafficking, and including even sexual assault. We also increase penalties for criminal aliens who commit a crime of violence or a drug trafficking crime.

Our bill makes clear that individuals who engage in acts of terrorism, criminal gang members, aggravated felons, and drunk drivers are not admissible to our country, and makes it clear that they can be put into expedited removal if they somehow make it into our country.

Finally, our bill permanently authorizes the voluntary E-Verify Program, and it also provides incentives for employers to participate in that voluntary program. It doesn't make E-Verify mandatory. It just provides employers certainty by making the program permanent.

I hope, as I described these things, they are seen as commonsense measures. Why would my colleagues on the other side ever want to oppose those provisions? It wasn't that long ago that many Democrats supported border security and interior enforcement. I would like to list some quotes from recent Democratic Presidents who supported some of these propositions.

In his 1996 State of the Union Address, then-President Clinton championed his actions to crack down on illegal immigration. He proudly noted his administration was “increasing border patrol by 50 percent . . . [and] increasing inspections to prevent the hiring of illegal immigrants.”

In 2006, then-Senator, later President Obama spoke in favor of enhanced border security and enforcement measures. He acknowledged, even then, that “we need tougher border security, stronger enforcement measures . . . [we] need more resources for Customs and Border Agents, and more detention beds.”

When speaking in favor of the Secure Fence Act, Mr. Obama said: It would “certainly do some good” and would go a long way in “stem[ming] . . . the tide of illegal immigration in this country.”

Do my colleagues no longer agree with former Presidents Clinton and Obama? Do they no longer believe we need to stem the tide of illegal immigration?

My colleagues on the other side consistently talk about how DACA kids shouldn't be used as bargaining chips for any potential deal. What about the innocent American citizens they are using as bargaining chips? What about the thousands of victims every year of crimes committed by dangerous criminal aliens? Do the lives of these people not matter as well? Does the safety of these people, the happiness of these people, the well-being of these people deserve to be bargained away?

This group of Senators whom I have named who are going to participate in this colloquy remain ready and willing to negotiate in good faith and to make tough sacrifices in order to find common ground on this issue. Our counterparts need to be willing to do the same. I am asking them, pleading with them, in all sincerity, to sit down and have an honest conversation.

Let's strike a deal that is fair to all, including to law-abiding Americans. Any deal cooked up by this poor man's version of a Gang of 8 that doesn't have real border security, doesn't have real interior enforcement measures, and doesn't have the other pillars of reform in the SECURE Act—well, it is pretty simple: That is no deal at all, and I will not support that.

I yield the floor.

I call on my colleague, the Senator from North Carolina, Mr. TILLIS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, before the chairman leaves the Chamber, I wish to thank him for his leadership as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He has done an extraordinary job of bringing people together to really come up with a solution to this problem.

This is a problem that has existed for years—almost two decades. The first DREAM Act was filed in 2001, I believe. It has been some 16 years, and they have failed to produce a result. Now, think that through. That was through President Bush, and it was through President Obama. It was actually at a time when, in 2009, not a single Republican vote would have been necessary to pass the DREAM Act. Yet my col-

leagues on the other side of the aisle could not produce a result. So we know we need to do something different.

There are things in the Dream Act that we need to file and put into a bill. In fact, it was instructed into a bill that I and Senator LANKFORD and Senator HATCH filed called the SUCCEED Act. It is a way to provide certainty for the DACA population, but it also needs to be paired up with reasonable border security provisions so that we get the broad base of support we need for enduring policy here.

There are some people who are talking about withdrawing from negotiations and trying to threaten a government shutdown to get something slammed into a year-end spending bill. But if you really care about the long-term certainty that we want to provide these young people who qualified under the DACA Program, the last thing you should do is to play politics and get something half baked into a provision that will always be a target of the next year-end spending bill. Why don't we do something crazy and actually sit down, check our Members on the Republican side and the Democratic side who have extreme views on this issue at the door, and solve the problem.

I have taken a lot of criticism after filing the SUCCEED Act because I had a lot of people who said that I was soft on immigration. Well, I respectfully disagree with some of my friends who are themselves Republicans and conservatives, because I don't think they have it right. I think that the young men and women who qualify under the DACA Program, who were brought to this country through the actions of their parents, through no fault of their own, deserve a respectful, compassionate, physically sustainable solution, and certainty. I have been working on it, and I have been taking the criticism ever since I filed the bill. I even had a congressional district in North Carolina censure me, saying, “shame on you,” for actually coming up with something that made sense.

One thing that I said, though, when we filed that bill, is that what we did in the SUCCEED Act had to be paired with reasonable, sustainable border security measures and interior enforcement measures—things that are important if we want to make sure that a decade from now, 15 years from now we are not back here again worried about a new DACA population that has come across the borders.

I have had some people insisting that having a secure border is not compassionate, that it is unfair, but I would actually submit to my colleagues that not having a secure border is irresponsible. Talking about not being compassionate, allowing things to occur with an unsecured border—to me, having a secure border is a hallmark of compassion. That is a little bit of what I want to talk about. So let's stipulate to that.

Working with Senator DURBIN—and, incidentally, Senator DURBIN and I

have been talking about this issue for about a year and a half—I knew that we were going to be here with the DACA Program and that we needed to work on it. So I reached out to Senator DURBIN and said that I am willing to try to come up with something that makes sense, but we have to be willing to accept something different from all of the random ideas and come with a compromise. We made progress in terms of how to deal with the DACA population, but some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are unwilling to talk about the reality that we should also put into place, and pair with what we do for the DACA population, border security and interior enforcement that makes sense.

Back in February I spent about a week down along the southern border. I was on patrol boats on the Rio Grande. I was riding horseback in certain areas of the border. I was out in the interior area where enforcement actions are taking place every night. I spent a lot of time down there. One thing that struck me was some of the briefings that we received from border security. I am going to get to what I consider to be the most heartbreaking last.

We want to talk about what is going on. We have people come to this floor—my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—and say: We must do something to address the opioid epidemic in this country. I agree. That is why I voted for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I spoke on the floor several times as a first step toward trying to get a handle on something that is poisoning almost 60,000 people a year—killing them. They are dying from overdoses in this Nation. The reality is that the vast majority—and we will get to a slide in a minute—of those illicit drugs, including heroin and fentanyl and the other kinds of drugs that are extracted from opium and are killing people, are coming across the southern border. We simply don't have the resources at our land ports and in the areas where drug smugglers cross illegally to stop them. The consequence of that in a State like North Carolina is that more people are dying from drug overdoses today than are dying from automobile accidents—about 1,400 a year. It is even worse in a number of other States.

We were at a land port in Laredo, and they were saying that on any given day, millions of doses are probably getting through because they are concealed. They are hidden in trucks. They don't have the capacity to inspect every vehicle. So they are coming across this border ostensibly legally—obviously, through the legal process of entry—but carrying illicit drugs, and we are only capturing a fraction of them. A part of what we are proposing in this bill is additional resources to interdict more of those drugs, to make it less likely that somebody could come across the border by use of a pickup truck or by using backpacks full of poison that will ultimately

get into the blood streams of people who will ultimately die—many of them, tens of thousands a year. That is a case—a compassionate case—for border security.

This is the number that I was talking about earlier: 15,469 deaths in 2016 alone related to heroin. A lot of these are coming across the border. But only about 1.5 percent of all of the drugs that are estimated to come across the border are being seized today. How do you actually increase this seizure rate? You put the resources and authorities in place so that the Border Patrol and Customs and immigration resources down on the border can actually find them, and arrest, charge, convict, and incarcerate the people who are poisoning the men and women and boys and girls in this country.

There is also another thing, and this is something that when I was down on the Texas border just stuck with me. I was on a 7,500-acre ranch, which is really, really small in Texas terms. I was talking with the ranch owner, who said that over the last 10 years, they had actually recovered 100 bodies on this ranch alone. If you do the math, that means they are finding a person who has died trying to come to this country illegally about every six weeks on this small ranch. Over the past 20 years, we have had about 10,000 people die crossing the border, and about 1,000 of them are children.

If we had a secure border, at least we would have the knowledge and the situational awareness to know where these people are so that they don't languish somewhere in the middle of nowhere after they cross the border or after they have paid somebody \$1,000, \$5,000, or \$10,000, in some cases, to carry them across the border. Then, they leave them. They take them across the border and then tell them that Houston is just a few miles away. Well, Houston is an hour-and-a-half plane ride away from where they cross the border.

So we need border security for the protection of people who are making the poor decision to come across. If we have a secure border, it is much less likely that any of them will ever attempt to do it, except for the legal ones. Then there is the other thing that is happening on the other side of the border. The 10,000 people who have died over 20 years are those whom we have identified—I am sure there are many more who we didn't—who were found on U.S. soil after crossing the border.

One other thing I learned when I was down in Texas is about the criminal actions and the criminal gangs, basically—they call them plazas and cartels—that basically run every mile of the border. If you pass through one of those plazas and you don't pay the toll, you are likely going to die. In one case, there were 72 people who were murdered because the human smuggler failed to pay the plaza bosses the so-called toll when he was supposed to get them across the border. So they or-

dered the execution of men, women, and children just to send a message. This is one of the many examples that we have.

So there is no question in my mind that of the 10,000 people who have died over the last 20 years on American soil, there were probably thousands or tens of thousands or more who have died in the hopes that they could get across the border.

If we have a secure border and if we work on our immigration systems, we can get for those parents and people who want to come to this country legally an opportunity to get here without harming themselves or harming their children. If that is not a compassionate case for a secure border, I don't know what is.

Now we are in the final stages of trying to negotiate a deal, and Chairman GRASSLEY did a wonderful job of summarizing what we have proposed as a starting position for negotiation with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I hope they will be willing to come to the table and negotiate in good faith and recognize that their approach over the last 16 years has failed. They promised the Dreamers a solution, and they failed to deliver. They have failed to deliver under a Republican administration. They have failed to deliver under President Obama, when they had supermajorities. We are not going to let them fail this time.

Giving the DACA population certainty, coming up with a solution that makes sense, getting a border that is secure, making sure that the poison that is coming across the border and killing tens of thousands of people a year is reduced, is, in my opinion, the scope that we need to negotiate to get to an agreement. If we have Senator DURBIN, Senator BENNET, and others who have negotiated portions of the immigration issue open their eyes to the broader opportunity to come up with a balanced policy that addresses the concerns on both sides of the aisle, we can be the Congress and President Trump can be the President who actually solve this problem and, along the way, make it far less likely that it will be another problem for another Congress to solve 10 or 15 years from now and that, then, may take 10 or 15 years to solve.

This will have an enduring impact. This will have a compassionate impact. This will provide certainty to the DACA population. This will allow me to go home and say: I did something meaningful to secure the border and protect our Nation. But we have to have people come together and negotiate in good faith. It needs to start this week, and we need to continue it until we come to terms.

People need to be willing to compromise and accept something less than perfect, because everybody's perfect conceptions of what we should do here have all one thing in common: They have all been resounding failures. They have been unkept promises.

Along the way, our homeland is not as secure as it can be, and people are dying in the process. Hard-working people who are eligible for the DACA Program are uncertain about their future.

So, again, I want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his hard work and his leadership and willingness to engage. I want to thank the President. I was with the President for an hour and a half last week, along with Chairman GRASSLEY and others. We are going to be meeting again in the White House tomorrow. Hopefully, we will be joined by our Democratic colleagues who have been invited to the meeting, and we will negotiate something that makes sense.

Now is the time for us to deliver. The empty promises of the past are insufficient. We need to provide an enduring solution, and an enduring solution is a fair solution for the DACA population and a responsible solution for border security. If we do that, I think we will look at this as something meaningful—something the Presiding Officer and I did when we came in here in 2015.

We got tax reform. That is meaningful.

We have been promising immigration reform forever. This is not all of it. We have more work to do. But this is a big first step, and it requires bipartisanship, compromise, and a genuine commitment to negotiate.

I hope my Democratic colleagues will take the invitation seriously, come to the table, negotiate an agreement we can all be proud of, and we can give the certainty that we should give to the DACA population.

I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak on this and for his continued leadership on this issue.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the Senator has been a leader on this with his separate piece of legislation for a long time.

The next speaker is Senator COTTON; after that is Senator LANKFORD.

In the meantime, I yield the floor to my colleagues as I have a meeting to go to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his leadership on this issue and for offering the SECURE Act, which I and some of the other Senators have supported.

I wish to continue this debate where Senator TILLIS left off. We have heard a lot today about the so-called DACA Program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and the negotiations in which we are currently engaged. Hopefully, those negotiations will reach a solution that will satisfy all the parties and give certain legal protections to the DACA population.

We have heard a lot today about border security and the wall. I want to focus on one other element of a needed, negotiated solution, and that is chain migration—putting an end, once and for all, to chain migration. When you

give legal status to an illegal immigrant, that is a permanent change in law; it will never be reversed. Therefore, you can't simply accept some window dressing at the border—1 year of funding for demonstration or pilot projects. You have to have a permanent change in return for a permanent change, and an end to chain migration will be one of the most important permanent changes to U.S. immigration law in 52 years.

What is chain migration? Under the current law, which dates back to 1965, if you are a citizen, you can bring any one of your relatives to this country, not just your spouse and your unmarried minor kids—your nuclear family—but also your adult kids and their spouses and their children and your adult brother and your adult sister and your parents and then their siblings and so on and so forth. That is why it is called chain migration. Each person is a potential link in a never-ending chain. The vast majority of people who immigrate to our country legally every single year do so for the sole reason that they just happen to be related to someone who is already here.

We have heard a lot of talk about the American dream in recent days—that we are a nation of immigrants; it is part of our core, and that is absolutely right. We are a nation of immigrants. We are a nation where blood ties are not supposed to dictate the path of your life, where you can fulfill your dreams. But we have an immigration system that does the exact opposite—an immigration system that favors the ties of blood, the ties of kinship, the ties of clan, and the ties of tribe. What could be less American than that?

As a result, we have also had a massive wave of low-skilled and unskilled immigrants, over the last 52 years. Today, of the million-plus immigrants who come here every year, only 1 in 15 comes here because of education, job skills, or a job offer. That means we have thousands and thousands of workers, with absolutely no consideration for what it means for the workers who are already here—the workers who are American citizens, who are earning a wage. In many cases, the most recent immigrants are going to face competition from the next wave of unskilled immigrants, so we are putting downward pressure on their wages—the wages of people who work with their hands and work on their feet, who hold the kinds of jobs that require you to take a shower after you get off work, not before you go to work.

Blue-collar workers have begun to see an increase in their wages over the last year for the first time in decades, and that is in no small part because of the administration's efforts to get immigration under control. But it is not enough to stop there.

The real question is, who should our immigration system work for? It should work for the American people, the American worker. It should be crafted for their benefit, not for the

benefit of foreigners. We should have an immigration system that fulfills the needs of our economy, that focuses on jobs and wages for American citizens here, whether your parents came over on the Mayflower or whether you just took the oath of citizenship last week. This is not some radical position. Liberal Democrats used to believe in that.

I understand that in this debate most of the attention is focused on the population of about 690,000 illegal immigrants who came here, through no fault of their own, as young children 15, 20, 30 years ago. I think the concern for them is very understandable. President Trump has shown it. My colleagues have shown it today. I share it as well.

President Obama did them a real disservice by unilaterally and unconstitutionally—therefore unsustainably—giving them legal status in this country to work. President Trump did the right thing by recognizing that President Obama lacked that authority and shouldn't have put them in that position. But nobody in the Senate—I think I can speak for my other 99 colleagues. Nobody is eager to see these people face deportation. Yet, at the same time, if we are going to give them legal status, we have to recognize that inevitably, as an operation of logic, there are two negative consequences that flow from that. You can say that you don't mind them, but you can't say that they don't exist.

First, as you have heard from so many others, you are going to encourage parents from around the world who live in poverty, oppression, strife, and war to illegally immigrate to this country with their small children in hopes of giving their children American citizenship sometime in the future. That is dangerous, and, in my opinion, it is immoral to offer those kind of inducements.

Second, as I have explained, you will create a whole new category of American citizens who can now get legal status for their extended families—to include the very parents who brought them here in violation of law in the first place. As part of this debate, we have often heard the old line that children ought not to pay for the crimes of the parents. Well, if that is the case, can't we at least agree that parents can pay for the crimes of the parents? They are the ones who created the situation in the first place.

President Trump has said, as I have noted, that he wants to protect the DACA population. But at the same time, he has said repeatedly: We must build a wall and secure our border and end chain migration. I agree that we have to build a wall on our border.

I have to say, it is a little amusing to see how our Democratic colleagues have changed their tune on this point. First, they were complaining for weeks that the President hadn't written a border security plan yet. They kept asking for a punch list. A punch list is what your contractor provides you when he is done building your home

but not quite done with every single technical spec. The administration provided that to them just last week.

Now they are complaining that it is too expensive: It is outrageous, in the words from the Senator from Illinois. I want to point out that although the President's proposal would cost \$18 billion—it is over 10 years, so \$1.8 billion a year—the Senator from Illinois has proposed a naked amnesty bill that would cost \$26 billion over 10 years. That is right; \$18 billion is too much to secure our southern border to build a wall and provide more agents and buy more technology, but \$26 billion to provide more welfare for illegal immigrants after they get amnesty is A-OK.

I would also point out that a lot of Democrats supported the Secure Fence Act just over a decade ago—building over 700 miles the physical barrier on our southern border. Maybe I can propose new grounds for starting negotiations. How about we simply agree as a baseline that we will fully fund the hundreds of miles of physical barriers that the Senate minority leader voted for just 12 years ago?

They also supported the so-called Gang of 8 bill 5 years ago, which also would have built hundreds of miles of physical barrier on our southern border. What has changed since then?

All that being said, building a wall will help stop illegal immigration, but it will not fix all the problems to the law itself. That is why I have said, as the President has said, we also have to deal with that second consequence—ending chain migration.

One trial balloon I have heard floated in recent days is that a negotiated piece of legislation could eliminate the immigration preference for the adult, unmarried kids of legal permanent residents, green card holders. That is perfectly fine. We should do that, for sure. But to act as if that alone would end chain migration is preposterous. It will delay a very small part of chain migration—only delay, only delay a very small part—about 26,000 of the more than 300,000 people who come here a year through family preferences. It doesn't even touch the preference for the adult, unmarried children of citizens or parents or siblings of citizens and green card holders alike.

In other words, once these young people in the DACA population become citizens, then they will be able to get legal status for their relatives, which means, far from stopping chain migration, it will actually accelerate the naturalization process and the chain we are trying to stop in the first place.

The time has come to end this foolish, unwise, and, indeed, dangerous policy, as we saw just a few weeks ago in the most recent attempted terror attack in New York, which had at its initiating point someone who had come into this country because of chain migration. Not a single advanced, industrialized nation has such a lax immigration policy as we do when it comes to immigrant families—not Canada,

not the United Kingdom, not France, not Germany, not New Zealand, not Japan.

If we are actually going to fix this problem—if we are going to do right by the American worker, if we are going to promote the American dream and American ideals, then it is time for these mindless family preferences and chain migration to come to an end.

I yield the floor, and I yield to my colleague from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, it is an interesting conversation we can finally have about immigration. This has been that topic which has been discussed for a while but not settled.

For 20 years, this body has talked about solving some of our immigration issues. National security immigration hasn't been a partisan issue until of late. Suddenly, when President Trump brings it up, we have a bunch of folks who used to be for border security but are now against border security because President Trump wants border security—with some of the exact same ideas that have been in the Gang of 8 bill or were in previous versions or were even talked about with a secure wall or fence before. Almost every Democrat in this body voted for the Secure Fence Act of 2006.

It is interesting to me the number of people who contact us saying: We do not want to build a wall. I have said: What about the 650 miles of wall that already exists and was put in place after 2006, which, by the way, President Obama, when he was Senator Obama, wholeheartedly supported and voted for?

This is suddenly a partisan issue. I am trying to help our entire body take a step back and say: Immigration should be a humanity issue and a legal issue, not a political issue.

I had a conversation with a friend of mine this weekend. We have known each other for years. He is a pastor. We started talking about the immigration issue. In that dialogue, he said to me: In the church, we look at every individual as an individual created in the image of God, and the church has a ministry to be able to reach out, regardless of legal status.

Then he said, right behind it: But, in government, we understand there is a different responsibility. The church engages with every person equally, but the government has the responsibility of looking at laws—what is legal and what is not legal—and helping abide by those laws and enforcing those laws.

He is correct. There is an issue of humanity in this. These are people caught in a system, and oftentimes those children in the DACA Program are caught in a gap in which literally they have no home country. They were brought as infants or as young children with a parent who violated the law but did so with a child who came in and has now lived in the country, in some cases 20 years, and they know only this coun-

try. They are literally caught in the middle. While we have great compassion, we are walking this interesting balance between compassion for people, which we as a nation have, and also consistency with the law. The law applies to every person. Whether you are the President of the United States or an undocumented individual who has come in, the law applies to everyone.

What do we do with this? The first thing I think we need to do is take a deep breath and pull the politics out of this and to say border security—in fact, security as a whole is not a controversial issue. I will tell you, as a U.S. Senator, I have the privilege occasionally of going to do interviews. Let me give you an example. CNN has a great studio in Washington, DC. When you go to the studio in Washington, DC, you go through the front door of a big building. There is a security person there, and they will check your ID before you go any farther. Not only will they check your ID, they make sure you are already preregistered to be there to visit with CNN because you can't just walk in. You have to notify them ahead of time you are coming, even if you are the person being interviewed. Then, there is a physical barrier between you and the elevators. Once the security guard clears you, you go through the physical barriers, but you can't go up the elevator because the security guard has to clear you to actually go up that elevator and punch in a certain code to go up to the floor. When you arrive at that floor, you are literally in nowhere land because everywhere around you are locked doors until someone comes in and clears you. You go to another security guard, and you sign in with that security guard, again check ID, and then you have an escort who takes you into the studio. That escort stays with you because as soon as your interview is done, they will smile at you and say: Your time is up. We are going to escort you out.

It is a shame CNN has to do that, but they do because not everybody who walks through their doors means to do them no harm. There are some people who mean to do them harm, and it is right for them to keep that level of security.

For that level of security that we talked about for CNN, all of us see that as rational—unfortunate but rational. I would say to us as a nation, why is that rational at CNN headquarters, and it is irrational for us to be able to do the same thing with our own borders? Not everyone who crosses our border is there to help us. We can all admit, there are some individuals—a few thankfully—who do mean to cross our borders and do us harm. We should be aware of that. We have half a million people a day who legally cross our border, our southern border, alone—half a million people a day who cross back and forth, who legally go through the system. They are doing commerce. They are visiting family. There are all

kinds of individuals who move back and forth through our gates legally every single day. We should ask the question: Why are half a million people moving through legally but yet there are thousands and thousands who are moving through illegally? What is the difference, and should we ask questions of some of those people? Should there be a physical barrier in some spots?

We have seen some places like in Yuma, AZ, when there wasn't a physical barrier and there is a large city right on the border and someone would cross the border quickly, commit a crime, and move right back across the border. When a physical barrier was put in place a decade ago in Yuma, AZ, the crime rate dropped dramatically in that area. The physical barrier helped and did reduce crime.

I have had people say, if you build a 30-foot wall, there will be a 31-foot ladder leaning against it. That is true, but it slows them down and gives enough time in remote areas or in heavily urbanized areas for people to be able to respond and be able to interdict those individuals. Walls don't stop people. They slow people down so you can actually do interdiction and ask: Why are you going over the wall rather than through the gates like half a million other people are doing today?

Why is that happening? That is not unreasonable, but it has become heavily politicized. We need to step back and remove this from a conversation about Presidents and about political parties and move it back to some basic, commonsense things—things this Congress used to do with wide, bipartisan support—things like a physical barrier. There should be a wall in certain areas of the southern border that don't have a wall right now. There should be areas of technology in other areas. There should be an area to have watch towers with cameras that are there. We should add some additional personnel. We are talking about 3,000-plus miles on our northern border, 2,000 miles on our southern border. That is a lot of territory to be able to cover. Some of those areas don't even have broadband access to it, so just getting information to the agents who work there takes a very long time or is unreliable. We do need to have some technology improvements in some of those areas. Should every part of our border have a wall? No, I don't think so. It shouldn't all have a wall, but in heavily populated areas, it probably should because that provides greater security, quite frankly, on both sides of the border.

Some of it is even more simple than that. There are areas where there are large amounts of cane that is growing up in the Rio Grande River, and the Border Patrol agents can't see on both sides of the river who is moving through because people can hide in the cane. Just eradicating the cane that is all through that area on the border, in the river area, would provide tremendous visibility. That would allow people to be able to see farther and, quite

frankly, stop some of the drug movement and allow for more interdiction in those areas. It shouldn't be that controversial. That should be common sense—adding technology, adding sensors, adding greater visibility, adding a wall in areas where a wall is needed, and in other areas that don't need a wall, we don't.

That is not just the issue. Some of the issue is fixing loopholes in the law that get exploited. There are some individuals who cross the border, and they know the rules. The coyotes in Central America who are actually humans smuggling them all the way through Mexico and getting them to the border have told them exactly what to say. When they encounter a Border Patrol agent, they say: Say these words, and you will get access to asylum, whether they are true or not.

The way it typically starts is, they say those words the coyotes have told them to say, and they actually get a quick hearing and what is called a notice to appear for another hearing, which is usually 2 or 2½ years later. They disappear somewhere into the American system, and we have no idea where they are. They are somewhere among 300-plus million Americans in some town, and we don't know where they are. The vast majority of them never show up for the court hearings, but they have a piece of paper that says "notice to appear," which also means they are given legal protections until that court date, and they can move around the country.

That is a loophole in our system. It should be fixed. Nowhere else would they do that. Why do we do that? We allow ourselves to be exploited. There are some words and phrases that we need to be able to clean up in the law and some things that need to be done. Again, that shouldn't be controversial. It should be security related. There should be some basic questions about how we are going to handle immigration.

We allow 1 million people a year to become citizens of the United States legally—1 million people a year. Yet the American system is also ignoring hundreds of thousands of others who are coming into the system illegally and pretending it is not happening. It is. For 20 years, this Congress has not paid attention to it.

Say what you would like to about President Trump, but he is pushing this Congress to do something it has not done in two decades—deal with the issue of border security. This body will have to come to agreement on that. The House of Representatives will have to come to agreement on that, and the President will have to be able to sign it or it will be just another Executive action that will not last very long. If we are going to have lasting, real change in border security, it has to go through the legislative process.

The President is pushing us to get that done before the first week of March. We had 6 months of time. Four

months of that has already run out. It is time to get that document finished, to deal with the basic things the President has asked for—border security, a legal status for those individuals who are in the DACA Program whom the previous President just put into deferred action status—that we will not arrest them, but they are in some sort of legal limbo in between. President Trump wants to have a permanent answer for all of those families. Dealing with things on border security, not just the wall but the other exceptions to it. The President wants to deal with the visa lottery, which is a system where the names of 50,000 people somewhere in the world are just randomly drawn out of a hat to be able to become American citizens.

Many of us said for a long time, that is a foolish way to do your immigration system. Our immigration system should be based on what we need in America—what jobs, what locations—rather than randomly pulling names of people around the world out of a hat. I understand there are millions and millions of people around the world who would love to be Americans, but in America, we want to be able to target those individuals who want to not just be Americans but want to be a part of us, not just culturally but economically, to be part of the fabric of whom we are, to make decisions for ourselves as a nation, and to do it not just in our own policy but also our own immigration policy. It is not too much to ask.

There are basic things that should be done. Dealing with the DACA students who are literally caught in a place where they have no home is a compassionate thing to do, but along with our compassion, we also need to uphold the law. Those kids should not be held to account for what their parents did, but their parents should not have the same access to the American system of being naturalized as the kids do—only because the parents did intentionally violate the law. They chose to break the law and bring their child with them when they did it. The child didn't make that decision. Now they are growing up in a place where they have no country. They should have a shot at being in our Nation. I do not believe the parents of those kids—who broke the law—should have that same access to our system. That may seem heartless, but I will tell you, that is the balance we have to have between compassion for people and upholding the law; that the law does apply to all people. Maybe there is a way to do some other work permits or some other things that could be there, but access to citizenship should be reserved for those individuals who are upholding the law, not violating it.

There are some DACA kids who have done some remarkable stuff, some DACA kids who are pretty amazing individuals. I ask folks in Oklahoma when I am home, if I could identify for you 700,000 people somewhere around the world who speak English, who are excellent students, who have stood up

every day in their school and pledged allegiance to the United States of America, who are in our military already, who are already working in our economy right now, are those the individuals you want to reach out to and be part of that 1 million people a year who become citizens? I have yet to have someone tell me: No, that is not whom we are looking for. Everyone says: That is exactly whom we are looking for.

I get to smile at them and say: They are already here. They just happen to have grown up in this country already, but they have no home and would love to call this one their home.

I would like to give them the opportunity to earn the ability to be naturalized—not automatic, to earn it—and go through the process, to get in line like every other person around the world, to get in line but not have to return to their home country because they don't know a home country, but get in line here to do it.

There is a way to be able to do this. The President has been the first advocate for that. There is a way to be able to actually answer the problems we have dealt with for 20 years on border security so we don't continue to have another DACA Program in 5 years, in 10 years, and over and over again as we are right now. Let's solve it.

Interestingly enough, in 2012, when President Obama announced the DACA Program, he made some pretty blunt, clear statements during that time period. One of them was, for individuals—this was in June of 2012—who are already here, he set a date. He said: For those individuals, our Nation wants to provide an opportunity to not be arrested, and we will work on your status, but for any future individuals who cross our border, you will not have access to this program.

That is President Obama who made that statement in 2012. While I have heard individuals say we should abide by the words of our Presidents, when President Obama made those statements to those kids in 2012, I would remind us as a nation, we should honor all of those statements, if we do any of those statements, including President Obama's statements saying that this will end, and people who are crossing our border will be returned to their home country.

As he announced publicly, there is a right way to be able to do immigration. Let's do it the right way. We already receive 1 million a year. Let's do it the right way, and you will find a very welcoming United States of America.

That is where I think we can go, and I hope in the days ahead we can finish out a negotiation and be able to resolve some basic things—not everything in immigration but at least the core issues of immigration and border security so we can resolve the issue not only for the kids in DACA but continue to be able to work on how we are securing our Nation for the future.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, before I turn to the main portion of my remarks, I wish to speak briefly on the situation in the Middle East.

The protests across cities in Iran reflect the failed leadership of a corrupt regime. The Ayatollah's negligence in denying the basic rights of his own people is inexcusable. Instead of allocating resources to care for families in need, the regime has chosen to use what economic gains it has accrued through the Iran deal to fund terrorism and sectarian violence in Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and elsewhere in the region. I stand with the Iranian people in their demand for prosperity and freedom, and I call upon my colleagues in Congress to do the same.

REMEMBERING THOMAS S. MONSON

Madam President, I wish to devote the remainder of my remarks to honoring the memory of a dear friend, President Thomas S. Monson, a beloved leader whose love for God and his fellow man defined a lifetime of selfless service. President Monson passed away quietly last week, with friends and family gathered by his bedside.

Today, I join millions across the globe in mourning the loss of an extraordinary man whom, as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have long looked upon as a prophet, seer, and revelator. I also wish to extend my deepest sympathies to President Monson's family, especially his children—Thomas, Ann, and Clark. Although we are saddened by President Monson's passing, we take comfort in knowing that he has been reunited with his wife Frances, his lifelong friend and eternal companion.

President Monson was born in Salt Lake City in 1927 to G. Spencer Monson and Gladys Condie Monson. Growing up during the Great Depression, young Tom was greatly influenced by his parents, who taught him the importance of taking care of others. From an early age, Tom displayed a remarkable concern for the most vulnerable among us, and throughout his life, he showed that concern and worked on solving problems for them.

When Tom was just a boy, he had two beloved pet rabbits, to which he tended every day, but when he heard of a destitute family in his neighborhood, a family so down on their luck that they had nothing to eat for Christmas dinner, Tom did what few little boys would ever do: He gave his two pet rabbits to his neighbors so they could have a nice Christmas meal. Yet, when little Tommy returned home to see his empty rabbit hutch, tears filled his

eyes, but these were tears of gratitude for the joy he had felt in helping others. Selflessness, service, and sacrifice—these would soon become the virtues by which Thomas Monson lived his life, and everybody who knew him knows that.

Following graduation from West High School, President Monson attended the University of Utah, where he met Frances Johnson during his freshman year. Around the same time, he joined the U.S. Navy and served in the waning days of World War II. After the war, he graduated cum laude from the University of Utah with a bachelor's degree in business management. Shortly thereafter, he married Frances in the Salt Lake Temple.

Following graduation, President Monson was hired by the Deseret News to work in the paper's advertising department. He worked in various positions for the newspaper and eventually became the general manager of the Deseret Press.

As he was just beginning his professional career, President Monson was called at the exceptionally young age of 22 to be a bishop of a Mormon congregation. That hardly ever happens in the LDS Church. In this position, he was charged with leading a congregation of more than 1,000 members. Then, at the age of 31, Tom was again called to a leadership position typically reserved for older men when he was asked to serve as president of the LDS mission in Canada and preside over a whole raft of young missionaries. When he was only 36, Tom was called as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, among the most influential positions in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 2008, he was sustained as president of the church, overseeing the day-to-day operations of a faith with millions of followers. The church witnessed record growth during his tenure as president, with more than 2 million men and women joining the ranks of converts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Whether as a prophet, as an apostle, as a mission president, or as a friend, President Monson simply took care of people. One particular story stands out among the rest. When he was a young bishop, there were 84 widows in his congregation. During the Christmas holiday, he would visit each and every one of them, ensuring that they were all provided with a good holiday meal. Even after President Monson was released as bishop, he continued to stay in contact with each one of these widows—writing letters, making phone calls, and frequently visiting them in their homes. In fact, President Monson remained so close with each of these 84 widows that he eventually spoke at all of their funerals. That is a real record.

President Monson's example of intimate, individual ministry underscored what was most remarkable about his leadership. Although he presided over a church of millions, his focus was always on the one. Although tasked with

making administrative decisions affecting thousands of people the world over, his lifelong commitment was to serving individuals in need. Although an expert manager, he was first and foremost a disciple of Jesus Christ, a man of remarkable kindness, unwavering love, and preternatural empathy.

President Monson was a servant first and a leader second. Endless are the stories in which he would drop everything, sometimes even leaving church meetings early over which he was presiding, to visit a grieving widow, bless a sickly child, or minister to a family in need. Both on macro and micro levels, President Monson was intimately involved in building up the Kingdom of God, and he was perhaps the greatest living example of Christ's admonition to find the one lost sheep who has gone astray and take him back to the fold.

Of President Monson's boundless charity, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin once said:

Tom has given everything to [those in need], including the shirt off his back. I mean it! I've seen him give away his suits and his shirts and his shoes.

President Monson was among the greatest men I have ever known. Service was his motto and humility his hallmark. Countless were the lives he touched as a prophet, father, and friend. He emulated Jesus Christ in every particular, helping all of us draw closer to God by drawing all of us closer to each other.

I am so grateful for the life of my dear friend and for the example he left for everyone to follow. He was a friend of mine. He showed me great friendship and at times stood up for me. I will never forget one time he leaned over to me and said: "I vote for you." That meant so much to me. All I can say is that having his vote was very important to me. The man was one of the greatest men I have ever met on this Earth—a man of humility, a man of effort, a man of distinction, a man of love and compassion, a man who really knew how to work with other people, a man who loved his fellow men and women, a man who worked in a consecrated manner all the days of his life for Jesus Christ and his ministry. I am going to personally miss him. I believe that his imprint on not just the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—commonly nicknamed the Mormon Church—but around the world is going to be very difficult to ever forget.

God bless the remaining family. I hope everything will go well with them. I intend to attend the funeral if I can and hopefully lend whatever I can to honoring one of the greatest men I have ever met in my life, and I have met a lot of really great men and women.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 nomination of William L. Campbell, Jr., of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Mitch McConnell, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker, James M. Inhofe, Johnny Isakson, Mike Crapo, Tom Cotton, Chuck Grassley, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, Michael B. Enzi, James Lankford, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, Todd Young.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of William L. Campbell, Jr., of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 2 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Baldwin	Cotton	Hoeven
Barrasso	Crapo	Inhofe
Bennet	Daines	Johnson
Blumenthal	Duckworth	Jones
Blunt	Durbin	Kaine
Booker	Enzi	Kennedy
Boozman	Ernst	King
Brown	Feinstein	Klobuchar
Burr	Fischer	Lankford
Cantwell	Flake	Leahy
Capito	Gardner	Lee
Cardin	Gillibrand	Manchin
Carper	Graham	Markey
Casey	Grassley	McCaskill
Cassidy	Harris	McConnell
Cochran	Hassan	Menendez
Collins	Hatch	Merkley
Coons	Heinrich	Moran
Cornyn	Heitkamp	Murkowski
Cortez Masto	Heller	Murphy

Murray
Nelson
Paul
Peters
Portman
Reed
Risch
Rounds
Rubio
Sanders

Sasse
Schatz
Schumer
Scott
Shaheen
Shelby
Smith
Stabenow
Sullivan
Thune

Tillis
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wicker
Wyden
Young

NAYS—1

Hirono

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander
Corker
Cruz
Donnelly

Isakson
McCaïn
Perdue
Roberts

Tester
Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 1.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Texas.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this last weekend I had the honor of going to Camp David with Members of both the House and the Senate to meet with the President and Vice President and members of his Cabinet to talk about the prospects for 2018. After a very successful 2017, we are now looking forward to what sort of legislation we can do on a bipartisan basis that will help us build on those successes of 2017. Many of these are domestic priorities, but, of course, others are national security in nature.

Our internal strength, of course, affects our diplomacy and military effectiveness abroad, and where we were located, at Camp David, actually demonstrates that. It was, after all, the site for secret talks to negotiate the Camp David Accords, historic peace agreements signed by Israel and Egypt in 1978. What happened on American soil ultimately changed the global landscape, and it wasn't the only time. Over the years, Camp David has come to represent peace. It is a place where leaders put aside their differences to look to avoid conflict.

Nonetheless, today we have to admit, given the global environment, that peace is imperiled. We have recently seen that in Iran, where the largest wave of protests in more than a decade have revealed widespread discontent not only with Iran's economy but also as a result of the actions taken by its military, which has supported Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations around the world. As a matter of fact, Iran is the No. 1 state-sponsor of international terrorism, which is one reason why many of us blanched at the idea of releasing money to Iran as part of the joint agreement on Iran's nuclear program—money that they could then plow back into their support for organizations like Hezbollah and their aggressive support for terrorist organizations generally.

Last week the Trump administration imposed sanctions on five entities tied to Iran's ballistic missile program. Apparently, Tehran continues to care more about funding its terrorist proxies across the Middle East than supporting its own citizens, and frustrated

Iranians rightfully have said: Enough already; we are not going to take it anymore.

As Secretary Mnuchin said last week, here in the United States we shouldn't "hesitate to call out the [Iranian] regime's economic mismanagement, and diversion of significant resources to fund threatening missile systems at the expense of its citizenry." The Secretary is exactly right.

Meanwhile, the situation in North Korea remains precarious. That country—and I say this unequivocally—must denuclearize. That is why I recently introduced a resolution with many of my colleagues here in the Senate.

The purpose of the resolution is to expressly declare that Congress is unified in its condemnation of the increasingly hostile and intransigent behavior of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Since Kim Jong Un took power 6 years ago, he has ordered at least four nuclear tests, including the September detonation of what his regime—and outside experts generally agree—said was a hydrogen bomb.

Despite great efforts made by the United States, including a recent Executive order by the President, North Korea's history as a bad-faith negotiator continues unabated on the world stage. It obstinately violates diplomatic norms and human rights at will and was recently redesignated, itself, as a state sponsor of terrorism.

The resolution I referred to a moment ago asserts that the United States, as well as the United Nations Security Council and our regional allies, should continue to implement the absolute strictest of sanction regimes in an effort to get the regime's attention and hopefully bring them to the table as part of this path forward toward denuclearization. We must continue to exhaust every reasonable diplomatic option necessary to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

Our resolution also recognizes that the President has the constitutional responsibility to protect the United States and our allies, but it emphasizes that congressional authorization is necessary prior to committing U.S. forces to a sustained military operation on the Korean Peninsula. In other words, under the Constitution, the President has his responsibilities and duties, and Congress has its responsibilities and duties, and this resolution recognizes both. We look forward to working together closely with the President in a unified front this year to confront North Korea, as well as rogue actors elsewhere.

President Trump, we know, does not take our national security threats lightly. He has a world-class national security team, with General Mattis, Secretary Tillerson, and Director Pompeo, just to name three. In an im-

portant speech last month, the President outlined the four pillars of his administration's national security strategy.

He said the first pillar is to protect our homeland. We can't secure our Nation if we can't secure our own borders, and we can't secure our borders unless we confront, both at home and abroad, the threat of terrorism and ideologies bent on doing us great harm.

Second, the President said that we need to promote American prosperity because the only way we are going to be strong militarily and at the homeland is if we have the resources and economy to pay for it. Economic growth at home is critical for our influence around the globe as well. We, of course, took a big step in this direction by passing tax reform last month, but a lot more needs to be done to continue to grow our economy and to return America to its historic prosperity—like updating and not scrapping the North American Free Trade Agreement and other trade agreements, for example, and rebuilding our national infrastructure, which was also on the agenda at Camp David this weekend.

The President's third pillar of the national security strategy is to preserve peace through strength. We usually attribute that concept to Ronald Reagan, but of course he is not the first or the last to recognize the joinder of peace and strength. President Trump said in his speech that "weakness is the surest path to conflict, and unrivaled power is the most certain means of defense."

I think he is exactly right—which means we have to end the defense sequester that started with the Budget Control Act of 2011. I supported our efforts to rein in discretionary spending, but the fact is, only about 30 percent of the money that the Federal Government spends is actually appropriated, and a little more than half of that is defense spending. I simply cannot in good conscience agree to continue those budget caps for defense spending without considering the increase in risks to our men and women in uniform and our country's national security generally. We have to continue to modernize our military, which we started last year by reauthorizing the Defense Authorization Act.

Fourth, the President's strategy asserts that we have to advance American influence in the world through strong alliances and by championing our core values without apology. As the President said:

A nation that does not protect prosperity at home cannot protect its interests abroad. A nation that is not prepared to win a war is a nation not capable of preventing a war. A nation that is not proud of its history cannot be confident in its future. And a nation that is not certain of its values cannot summon the will to defend them.

I couldn't have said it any better myself.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

CHIP AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today marks a sad and, frankly, shocking day for too many of America's children and hard-working families because it has now been 100 days since funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and community health centers expired.

History has shown us that there is a whole lot that can get done in 100 days. It took Thomas Jefferson only 17 days to write the Declaration of Independence; the brave allied forces who landed on D-day advanced through France and liberated Paris in only 80 days; and Congress managed to pass 15 major pieces of legislation during President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first 100 days in office. Yet, here we are, 100 days past the deadline of September 30, and Congress still hasn't managed to pass long-term legislation to reauthorize what we call CHIP—the Children's Health Insurance Program—and to fund our community health centers.

We have a strong bipartisan bill funding CHIP, which was passed out of committee. I give our chairman and ranking member kudos for working together. I was proud to work with them. It came out of committee with only one "no" vote and has waited and waited and waited on the floor of the Senate. Senator BLUNT and I have a bipartisan bill to continue funding community health centers, and 70 Members of the Senate have signed a letter supporting long-term funding for community health centers, which expired September 30—100 days ago.

Right now, we are in a situation where 9 million children and their parents don't know what is going to happen long term. As soon as this month, 100,000 children and their families in Michigan have begun to get letters saying that their children will lose coverage, and they are trying to figure out what is going on.

Imagine being a parent who is working hard. A lot of folks I know are working two jobs, trying to hold it together. You don't have health insurance; you earn too much for your children to be able to get Medicaid health insurance, so the Children's Health Insurance Program is your lifeline. It is your lifeline. It gives you peace of mind to know that if your daughter falls and breaks her arm or your son gets a cough that won't go away, you can take them to the doctor.

What if those children have something worse than a broken arm or a cough? What if they are diagnosed with type 1 diabetes or asthma or cancer? Just imagine being that parent and getting a letter which says that your child may no longer have health insurance. It is not necessary. This is not necessary.

We could do this tomorrow. If we thought it was important enough to bring it to the floor, we could get a vote—and I believe it would be overwhelmingly bipartisan—tomorrow if

there were a sense of urgency, an understanding, about how these parents feel and how these children feel.

So what would you do if you got that letter? Would you tell your kids? You don't want them to worry about it. What would you do? I believe hard-working families—and we are talking about working families, people with jobs, working—deserve better.

Then we have community health centers that serve 25 million people across the country, including 300,000 veterans and 7.5 million children. Our health centers are doing a phenomenal job. At more than 260 sites across Michigan, our health centers are serving 681,000 people, including about 13,000 Michigan veterans.

This month, health centers that were supposed to receive a new 12-month grant are only getting a small amount of funding to get them through the next few weeks, not knowing what is going to happen again. By June, Michigan's community health centers will lose over \$80 million in funding, and over 99,000 patients will lose care.

Last month, I had the opportunity to visit two of our great Michigan community health centers, each of their networks operating more than one site—Hamilton Community Health Network in Flint and Western Wayne Family Health Centers in Inkster. Like clinics across Michigan, these centers are serving literally thousands of Michigan families every day—people of Michigan who don't have medical care for one reason or another. Now those thousands of people are at risk of having no place to go if they get sick or if they need preventative care so that they don't get sick.

Hamilton Community Health Network will run out of funding in April, and Western Wayne Family Health Centers will not get their full funding this month. They were asking me: Should they lay people off? How should they be planning for their centers? What should they be doing?

That means 15,500 people are wondering what will happen to them if they or their children get sick or slip on the ice—which there is a lot of in Michigan—and sprain an ankle.

Felicia knows what it is like to live under that cloud of fear. She wrote me a letter indicating that in 2011 she was an AmeriCorps volunteer serving in Lansing and didn't have health insurance. When she started feeling tired all the time and losing weight, she went to the Center for Family Health in Jackson, MI, another great center. The Center for Family Health, which served 29,000 patients in 2016, will run out of funding in March if we don't act.

Felicia was diagnosed with stage 4 Hodgkin's lymphoma—pretty scary stuff. The Center for Family Health helped her get her health coverage through Medicaid and care from the University of Michigan, including chemotherapy and later a stem cell transplant.

Felicia wrote me:

Now I am feeling awesome, I am cancer-free, and I am working part time while I am finishing up college. I feel that I owe my life to the Center for Family Health.

Felicia knows the importance of community health centers; one in Michigan saved her life. People like Felicia and children who are covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program, which we call MICHild in Michigan, shouldn't have to wait a day longer. They are counting on us to get this done. It has been 100 days of uncertainty that did not have to happen.

Let me say that again. We have a bipartisan bill reported out of the Finance Committee. The House has reported their version. There is no reason we can't immediately put a 5-year extension on the floor of the Senate.

Senator BLUNT and I and our cosponsors of our bill have always assumed that once CHIP came to the floor, we would be adding in community health centers, for which there is strong support, and we would be able to get this done. People would know that their neighborhood health center is there. Their children can go to the doctor instead of sitting for hours in the emergency room. They would be able to see their doctor if they got sick. It has been 100 days since funding has expired for community health centers and children's health insurance. That is 100 days too many.

I have been coming to the floor every week to say: Let's do it today. Let's do it tomorrow. We don't have to wait and hold them as bargaining chips in some bigger appropriations negotiation. These are families. These are kids. These are people who want to have confidence in us that we will do our jobs. This one can get done. It could have gotten done before the holidays. What a great Christmas present that would have been. It can get done now.

On behalf of the 25 million people who use those community health centers, the 9 million children and their parents who use the Children's Health Insurance Program, I call on all of us to have the sense of urgency and the leadership—the leader—to bring this up. We can get it done in a day. We would all feel good about it because it would be something we would be doing together instead of having these families wait and wait.

Mr. President, before yielding, I want to acknowledge our newest Senator, Mr. JONES, who is here, and thank him. Even as he was in his happiness, and rightly so, on the evening he found out he was going to be the next Senator, he mentioned CHIP. In listening to that acceptance speech, it did my heart good to know that children's health insurance was at the top of our newest Senator's mind at that important time, and it is a pleasure to see him on the floor this evening.

I believe the Senator from Arizona is here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

DACA

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, over the past couple of months, we have seen a lot of effort with regard to immigration reform and in particular to address the situation of the so-called DACA kids, the Dreamers who were brought here through no fault of their own and are now protected—many of them—through the DACA Program. But those protections will run out on March 5. In fact, some have lost their protections already. So there is a great impetus and urgency to deal with this program.

I have said from the beginning that in order to establish a long-term resolution and to provide regulatory certainty, a true DACA fix must be a bipartisan solution. Over the past year, the two big items this Chamber and the Congress have dealt with—healthcare reform and tax policy—have been done under rules of reconciliation, meaning that if we could get a bare majority of Republican votes, that would be enough, if we could keep all the Republicans together. That is no longer the case with our approach to DACA. We are not under rules of reconciliation. It will require 60 votes, meaning that only a bipartisan solution will do. That is why I have been working on such a measure with my Republican and Democratic colleagues in Congress, as well as the White House.

As I have said repeatedly, on this issue, I believe that the President's instincts are better than some of the advice that he gets. I truly believe that he does want a solution for these young immigrants. I hope we can get there. We will have a meeting tomorrow at the White House—a bipartisan meeting—to try to get a little farther down the road.

Let me stress that a lot of words that are highly charged are thrown around this immigration debate. No word is perhaps more highly charged than the word “amnesty.” That has been thrown around by a number of my colleagues. I would suggest that is not the case here with the DACA kids. Amnesty, by definition, is an unconditional pardon for a breach of law. I don't think a child who was brought across the border by the parents has committed a violation of the law—not the child; certainly the parents but not the child. To provide relief for those kids and to allow them to stay in the only country they know I don't think should be called amnesty. Yet that highly charged word is often used. To suggest that anyone pursuing a bipartisan solution is proposing amnesty I think is misleading, and it sets back the cause of trying to fix the situation.

A proposal that we are drafting—this bipartisan group—offers a pathway to citizenship for only a specific group of young immigrants—as I mentioned, those who were brought here through no fault of their own. These are immigrants who are serving in the military, who are seeking education, who are holding good jobs. They will be required to continue to do so before they

can have a chance to earn citizenship. As for the parents of these young immigrants, nobody can deny the fact that they did break the law, and any bipartisan proposal on DACA cannot and will not reward them for this behavior.

I agree with the President when he said that dealing with DACA is a very difficult subject but that we must do so with heart. I believe that has been the case for those in this Chamber who have tried for 16 years to get a solution for these kids.

We have to prioritize border security measures, obviously, to determine which ones are sensible to include in a DACA measure. We will go beyond simply dealing with these DACA kids with some border security measures, but we have to find out which ones are sensible and make sense to include in this limited measure and table those that should be considered for the future.

I have been part of comprehensive immigration reform efforts in the past. I look forward to being part of comprehensive immigration reform efforts later this year, but this is not that. We have a very specific purpose to achieve before the 5th of March. The commitment we got was to have a bipartisan bill on the Senate floor by January 31. I believe we need to have that in order to have enough runway to get this done by March 5.

The White House, after much urging on our part, finally sent a list over as to what should be considered part of the border security plan. As I mentioned, many of these items need to be addressed. Maybe all of the items need to be addressed, but they need to be addressed as part of a larger, more comprehensive effort, not the limited fix we are going to do before March 5. I am all in when it comes to comprehensive immigration reform. I look forward to that debate. But we have to understand that we can't do it all before March 5 if we are going to protect these kids.

Some will say: Well, we get to March 5, if we can't do it, then we just kick the can down the road again with some other protection.

I think the courts have made it clear that what was done prior to this—the DACA Program itself—was not constitutional, and should we simply say we are going to extend that program now, it would be found unconstitutional by the courts. This is a real deadline, and we have to meet it. We have to focus specifically on protecting these DACA recipients. I think Republicans, Democrats, and the President all want this. The question is, Are we going to, just over the next couple of weeks, talk about bigger, broader issues that need to be dealt with but have no chance of being part of legislation?

In 2013, I participated in what was called the Gang of 8. We negotiated for 7 straight months nearly every night. We were in Washington. We as Members negotiated—and our staffs did as well—much longer hours and into the

weekends. Then we brought that piece of legislation to the Judiciary Committee, where we debated it for a couple of weeks. I think we amended it more than 100 times. Then we brought it to the House floor for another couple of weeks and amended it several more times before passing it by a vote of 68 to 32. That was a long process—hard-fought compromises in that legislation. To suggest that we can go through a similar effort in the next couple of weeks—it simply isn't going to happen. The list the White House brought forward is simply something that we ought to consider for comprehensive reform but not for this specific fix.

With regard to the border itself, we all know that we need additional infrastructure on the border. I represent Arizona. We have some 375 miles of border. Some of the border has good barriers in terms of fences. The closest thing we have approximating a wall is these old landing strips from World War II that we put on their end and cemented in. They are opaque. You can't really see through them. We have them in a number of the communities along the border. We have been taking them out because they are not very effective and putting fences in place of them because we need to have visibility to the other side of the border.

Most of what the President is talking about along the southern border is a fence. We do need more fences. In the Gang of 8 bill, I think we authorized 700 miles of additional and improved fencing. Nobody is suggesting we don't need additional infrastructure or barriers on the border. The question is, How much do we provide for it in this legislation?

The President has made a request in the budget for about \$1.6 billion for the coming year. I think that will result in about 74 miles of fence between Texas and California. I think that is a good place to start. How much we authorize going forward will be very much in debate.

I know that during the campaign, the President talked long and hard about building a wall, but every time he mentioned building a wall, he talked about Mexico paying for it. We all know—and many of us knew at the time—Mexico was not going to pay for that wall. They are not. That is why the President is asking for \$18 billion of U.S. taxpayer money to fund that wall. To suggest that the President hasn't changed his position and that we are dealing with a proposal that we have known was coming from the White House simply isn't true. It has changed. The President initially said that Mexico would pay for it. That is not the case. The U.S. taxpayers are going to pay for any infrastructure on the border. That is as it should be. If we are putting up the border fence, we ought to pay for it. To suggest that nobody has changed their position is simply not true.

Deals like this where you need 60 votes necessarily involve compromise.

No party, no individual is going to get everything they want. The White House will not get everything they want. The Democrats in Congress will not, and neither will the Republicans. This will be a compromise.

I am simply suggesting tonight—let's get real about the time involved between now and when we have to fix this and not think that we can simply kick the can down the road and put in some temporary fix, some kind of bridge later that will protect these kids. Those protections will run out on March 5 and may be done at that point. Let's get serious. Let's all get serious, Republicans and Democrats, and not come to the table with unrealistic expectations about what can be done and what can be part of this legislation. Let's have something that we can put on the Senate floor by the end of the month to leave sufficient time to get this fixed by March 5. I hope we can all work together on this, Republicans and Democrats.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to talk about another matter that will be before us in the days ahead. It should not be before us as it should have been done many months ago. In fact, if you want to count it by days, it should have been done about 100 days ago, as we have heard. That is the Children's Health Insurance Program, known by the acronym CHIP.

Most Americans know what the CHIP program is. It is a program that became Federal law a little more than 20 years ago in order to provide an opportunity for healthcare for those families whose incomes were a little bit too high, maybe, to have their children enrolled in Medicaid but those families did not have their children's healthcare paid for by their employers. You had a lot of families—a lot of middle-income families or families near middle income—who were caught in between and didn't have opportunities for healthcare. So CHIP was passed. For the most part, it was bipartisan. All of these years now—decades later—it remains bipartisan, but it is not reauthorized. Probably, the only two numbers I will get into tonight are 9 and 180. What do I mean by that? I will start with Pennsylvania.

So "180" means 180,000. That is the number of children, roughly, who were enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program as of December of 2017. If you look at it over the course of a year—of children becoming eligible and then maybe moving off of CHIP to some other insurance or having other changes—in Pennsylvania, roughly, in the last year, 340,000 children benefited, at one time or another, but the monthly number was 180,000 children just in

Pennsylvania, and “9” was representative of the 9 million children across the country who were enrolled in CHIP. When we have all of these debates about what has to get done in the next couple of days and between now and the middle part of January, I hope that 9 million number will be uppermost in people’s minds. Included within that are 180,000 children in Pennsylvania.

This is really not about a number or a program. It is about real people, real people’s lives. Every Member of the Senate has a constituent he could tell a story about or hundreds, if not thousands, of stories. I will just tell one tonight about a mom whom I met not too long ago, just about a week ago, Jennie Sheeks. Jennie is from Upper Makefield, PA. That is Bucks County, Southeastern Pennsylvania, just north of the city of Philadelphia.

Jennie told us about her son Kam-au. Kam-au is 8 years old, and he is enrolled in the Children’s Health Insurance Program. His brother and his sister have special needs and are Medicaid beneficiaries. So, in one family, you have an example of one child, thankfully, benefiting from the CHIP program and then two other members of that same family benefiting either from CHIP or the Medicaid Program. Thank goodness those programs are in place. Without CHIP and Medicaid, Jennie said her children would be uninsured because, even though both Jennie and her husband work full time, covering the whole family on her plan is too expensive.

This is another example of working families who depend upon these programs for their children. They need these programs. These programs aren’t theoretical. They aren’t some far-off Washington debate about timing and leverage and negotiations and back-and-forth. This is about their real lives right now. As I said, the CHIP program should have been reauthorized 100 days ago, and it is inexcusable that it is not being done now.

We all left here right after the tax vote. Everybody went back to his home State and, I am sure, had a great holiday season. Unfortunately, even though there was a little bit of a patch—a tiny, little patch made for this program—a lot of people left here with no worries at all and went back to their States and communities and neighborhoods, where there were a lot of other people worrying about whether they were going to get the kind of coverage for their children they should have a right to expect.

Back to Jennie and her son. What are they going to do without the Children’s Health Insurance Program? I cannot imagine—and few Senators or House Members can imagine—how Jennie and her son will get from here to there without having the Children’s Health Insurance Program. I cannot imagine what it must be like for Jennie to worry about how she will pay for her son’s care if he loses CHIP coverage. No parent should have that kind of stress

in his life when there is an existing program that covers 9 million kids that should be reauthorized.

When he was a public official, my father used to talk about people who had led lives of real struggle. We have all known them in our lives—people who have to work every day just to make ends meet in order to provide for their families and get through another day, another week, another month, another pay period. He used to refer to those Americans as leading “quietly triumphant lives.” My father’s words for those who struggle—“quietly triumphant lives.”

There are a lot of families out there who lead very difficult lives, and they depend sometimes on the Children’s Health Insurance Program or Medicaid or some other program just to get through another week, and I think about Jennie and parents like her who have to overcome so much to help their children—to love them, to care for them, to protect them, and to educate them. Even the most loving, caring, hard-working, and dedicated parent cannot provide the protections and the care health insurance coverage and quality healthcare can provide, the kind of quality healthcare from professionals that comes to that child because he or she has the protection of health insurance. Those parents—no matter how much they work, no matter how good they are to their children—sometimes cannot provide something as basic, obviously, as healthcare and, of course, the insurance coverage that makes it possible.

We have legislation ready today, the KIDS Act, that is bipartisan. It has already moved through the Finance Committee unanimously. I don’t think there was a single vote against it. If there was, it was not that loud a vote. I hope we can make these children a priority in the coming days, finally, at long last.

There were a lot of deals made in the tax bill, a lot of numbers moved around to get the tax bill done. I understand that is part of any legislation, but if a tax bill can get done in the U.S. Senate, we can certainly have a vote to get the Children’s Health Insurance Program reauthorized now that it is 100 days old.

I see the distinguished majority leader is here so I will wrap up tonight with the words of Jennie’s son Kam-au:

I was happy when I got health insurance because I knew I could go to the doctor if I got hurt or sick. When I didn’t have health insurance, I was a little worried . . . I think we should keep CHIP going so we can stay healthy.

No better words were uttered or spoken about the Children’s Health Insurance Program than Kam-au’s, an 8-year-old, who said CHIP should stay in place so we can stay healthy.

I agree. The American people agree. Let’s get CHIP done.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:15

p.m. tomorrow, all postcloture time on the Campbell nomination be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Campbell nomination with no intervening action or debate; finally, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent due to a flight cancellation out of my control when the Senate voted on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 370.

On this vote, had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 370.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN, BICENTENNIAL

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am proud to pay special tribute today to the people of Macomb County, MI, who are celebrating their county’s bicentennial this year.

The people of Macomb County symbolize the history, sacrifices, and character of people all across our country who have helped create the American middle class. They represent America’s diverse history of immigrants coming to this country to find the American dream. When it comes to hard work, the people of Macomb County are second to none. The county’s rich history has created a resilient people who put family, faith, and community first in their lives.

Macomb County was founded on January 15, 1818. Located on the shores of Lake St. Clair, the county is named in honor of General Alexander Macomb, a veteran of the War of 1812. The county was the third county founded in Michigan and, today, is Michigan’s third most populous county.

Macomb County is known for its innovation and impressive manufacturing might. It is a backbone of the American automotive industry. Fiat