

air their grievances, and have school boards focus more resources on trying to resolve those issues. This will help teachers attain and deliver the curricula they desire by coordinating cost saving measures, all without breaking the town budgets. The students of America, our future generation, deserve an education without interruption.

We need to have teachers and leadership communicate constantly to get the schools and outcomes we desire. By engaging in productive, civil and persistent dialogue between all parties, teachers serve as models in promoting the behaviors they want to instill in their students, like myself, and the community: standing up against injustice, making difficult decisions, and insisting on being treated with dignity and respect—despite such actions being perceived as very difficult and unpopular. In essence, continual dialogue among all parties is a more productive, and instructive, model for our teachers and leadership to follow. The process of continual dialogue will help all parties involved identify areas in the system that need funding by communicating and pinpointing the specific areas of interest: materials, professional development, and teacher contracts. This allows leadership to make informed choices about budgeting, which is a more effective use of limited funds.

Education is an essential service, and as such we must strive to make it better. As President John F. Kennedy said, “The race between education and erosion, between wisdom and waste has not run its course.” We are still in the race, and by having teachers, state, and national leadership continue to work together, we can place ourselves in the best position to win the race. As Americans, it is critical for citizens to support the educators that shape our communities into the melting pot of growth and creativity that they are today.

LILY MINER, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, SENIOR

During this first year of the Donald Trump presidency, we have witnessed many questionable decisions being made for our country that not only affect us, but also those around the world in a negative way. One particular decision, however, has set our country on a path to continue the horrific damage being done to Earth. President Trump’s adjudication to pull out of the Paris Climate Agreement has left us as the only nation in the world to oppose it since Syria signed to join in November. The main objective for this agreement was to restrict levels of CO2 emissions from each country. The consequences of Trump’s withdrawal are grave, as CO2 levels in the atmosphere have risen past 400 parts per million—levels that are already superseding what Earth can handle to support the flora and fauna living on it. Continuing this trend will most likely result in a mass extinction event.

Hearing the White House argue that removing us from the agreement will help boost our economy filled much of the American public as well as climate experts around the globe with a sense of outrage. We have already accumulated a surplus of evidence that manmade climate change is having a drastic negative impact. In the past two decades, sea levels have risen at a rate of .13 inches, which is twice the rate of the past century. From 1992 to 2011, Greenland lost 152 billion tons of ice per year, West Antarctica lost 65 billion per year, and the Antarctic Peninsula lost 20 billion per year. Increased intensity in extreme weather including hurricanes, floods, and snowstorms has been recorded since the 1950’s. These are just a fraction of the plethora of examples. Given the massive amount of damage that has already been done, how can it be justified to place the economy as a higher priority?

This choice is especially irresponsible when considering the fact that the United States produces more excess CO2 than any other country. While there are many factors to blame, one of the largest and least necessary of these is the use of fossil fuels. They provide 81% of the energy in the United States, yet they are both incredibly harmful and incredibly easy to replace. A change needs to be made.

It is imperative that we as a global superpower begin to invest in renewable energy such as wind and solar. Many economists agree that the long term benefits from switching to renewable energy would outweigh the short term costs, improving the economy through more environmentally sound means. Certainly a more competent course of action than removing ourselves from the Paris Agreement. Though the cost of installation for these methods are pricier than more conventional ones, they have no fuel costs once they are functioning and the maintenance costs are cheaper. The United States has not only the resources, but the duty to fight against these issues. We need to combat this now, because we will not be given a second chance later.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Cuccia, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4292. An act to reform the living will process under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4292. An act to reform the living will process under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 1551. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the credit for production from advanced nuclear power facilities.

H.R. 2372. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the rules re-

lating to veteran health insurance and eligibility for the premium tax credit.

H.R. 2579. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4137. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Flonicamid; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions” (FRL No. 9971-94) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4138. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9971-95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4139. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Calcium Salts of Phosphorous Acid; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance” (FRL No. 9970-96) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4140. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “*Bacillus thuringiensis* Cry51Aa2.834 16; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance” (FRL No. 9972-62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4141. A communication from the Director of Defense Pricing and Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Procurement of Commercial Items” ((RIN0750-AJ01) (DFARS Case 2016-D006)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4142. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Report to Congress on Repair of Naval Vessels in Foreign Shipyards”; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4143. A communication from the Director of Defense Pricing and Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: State Sponsor of Terrorism—North Korea” ((RIN0750-AJ68) (DFARS Case 2018-D004)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4144. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant